



# VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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June 3, 2003

RECEIVED  
VENTURA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

Honorable Bruce A. Clark  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
Ventura County Hall of Justice  
800 S. Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, California 93009

JUN - 5 2003

OFFICE OF THE  
PRESIDING JUDGE

JUN 10 2003

Re: Response to the 2002-2003 Ventura County Grand Jury Report entitled  
*Police Information Systems within Ventura County*

Dear Judge Clark:

As required by California Penal Code section 933.05, this letter is a response to the findings and recommendations of the 2002-2003 Ventura County Grand Jury's Report entitled *Police Information Systems within Ventura County*. The following is my response.

Findings and Recommendations:

R-1: The Sheriff and Police Chiefs charter a working group composed of crime analysts, sworn officers (from gang and street crime task forces) and technical specialists to identify the conceptual design of a data warehouse for Countywide police information.

R-2: The County Information Technology Department should provide technical support to the working group to evaluate the cost and technical characteristics of such a data warehouse.

R-3: The Sheriff and Police Chiefs evaluate this conceptual design and if appropriate:

- Pursue a federal grant to expand the VCIJS to include a data warehouse to also contain City RMS and CAD data.
- Make as part of the grant the acquisition of two integrated RMS/CAD systems for small departments that would be compatible with the data warehouse. These systems would replace the current CAD and RMS systems operational in Port Hueneme and Santa Paula.

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R-4: The Sheriff and Police Chiefs together evaluate, on a Countywide basis, the advantages and organizational, personnel and technical issues in deploying the GPS technology which already exists.

R-5: Considering the technical issues associated with modern policing, we recommend that the Sheriff and Police Chiefs support the establishment of two standing technical working groups. One group formed to consider data systems and a second group for communications.

Response:

In reviewing the above-noted recommendations, I commend the Grand Jury for investing the time and effort to examine this important topic.

All Ventura County law enforcement leaders agree that information sharing is a crucial element to keeping the peace in our respective communities and protecting our citizens from the threat of organized crime and terrorism. As you rightly point out in your report, Ventura County's Integrated Justice Information System (VCIJIS) is worthy of commendation as it was among the first such systems in the State and a model for many other jurisdictions.

I would like to respond in a general way to recommendations R-1 through R-5, as they are all related issues that involve creating working groups to develop data warehouses, communications and data system strategies. I agree that these issues require research and collaboration among local law enforcement agencies. This challenge is being met by our VCIJIS working group, which meets on a monthly basis. The group is chaired by the Information Systems Department (Guy Philips) and includes a diverse membership from County public safety agencies including police departments, the courts and the Probation Agency.

The County's Information Technology Committee (ITC) meets monthly and provides all County department heads the forum to research, develop and approve new technology strategies for the County. Within my department I recently completed a management reorganization that recognized and prioritized the need to focus on technology by creating a new bureau of "Technical Services." Led by a Sheriff's Commander, the bureau coordinates technology issues within the department and collaborates with other public safety agencies. The Ventura County Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee (VCLECC) group meets monthly to review and approve common approaches to law enforcement issues.

I strongly believe that the information sharing recommendations developed by the Grand Jury can be effectively pursued in these venues without dedicating additional resources during the ongoing budget crisis.

Access to CAD and RMS data collected by all local law enforcement agencies continues to be a goal in Ventura County. Because local agencies have different funding sources and timetables for development these databases continue to operate independently. Most systems are relatively new with large financial investments. Most systems were developed with federal grant money, which requires on going support for these systems and prohibits replacing them with new federal monies.

The key to achieving our goal is to find cost effective means of allowing access to existing CAD and RMS systems. To this end we are working on a "Master Message Switch" system that may form a basis for developing a method to bridge these independent systems. I will continue to explore grants that can fund such information sharing projects.

I should remind everyone that records that have the greatest impact on public safety and officer safety are fully integrated now. National, statewide and local warrants as well as parole, probation and gang affiliations are fully integrated and available to all public safety agencies on line. CAD and RMS records availability will have a larger impact on detectives and specialized enforcement units, which currently have to obtain the information by telephone.

Radio communications continue to be an area that the County researches relentlessly. Software Defined Radios (SDR) appear to be a very effective answer to radio compatibility problems. Using commercially available equipment radios on different bandwidths can be programmed to communicate with each other. A practical example would be the California Highway Patrol, which operates on VHF low band communicating with local law enforcement in Ventura County, which uses VHF high band, or Santa Barbara County law enforcement, which operates on UHF communicating with Ventura County Law enforcement on VHF high band. Mitch Evans from County ISD is watching this technology carefully and we will test the equipment as soon as it is available to us.

In conclusion I thank the Grand Jury for its recommendations and for providing a public forum to provide support and energy for these goals to be realized.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Brooks', written in a cursive style.

BOB BROOKS  
Ventura County Sheriff