



VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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August 13, 2012

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VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY

The Honorable Judge Vincent O'Neill, Jr.
Presiding Judge, Superior County of California
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

RE: Grand Jury Report - "Crisis Intervention Team"

Dear Judge O'Neill:

This letter is in response to the Grand Jury's Findings and Recommendations pertaining to the Crisis Intervention Team.

The Ventura County Grand Jury (2011-2012) produced the following statements as documented in their Final Report on the Crisis Intervention Team, dated June 13th, 2012:

FA-23

"All dispatch centers have lists of officers who are CIT trained. However, with the exception of one center (Simi Valley), an officer's CIT training status is not displayed on the dispatchers' screens."

FA-27

"On-duty patrol officers are identified on the dispatchers' screen, but their CIT training is not indicated (except for Simi Valley) – though several other special qualifications are displayed."

The Ventura County Grand Jury established this finding:

FI-10

"All dispatch centers have lists of officers who are CIT trained. Except for one center (Simi Valley), officers' CIT training is not reflected on dispatch screens."

In the Final Report on the Crisis Intervention Team, the Ventura County Grand Jury also presented this recommendation:

R-01

"All County dispatch centers identify officer's CIT status on their 911 displays with other specialized training."

The Grand Jury has requested that the Ventura County Sheriff's Office respond to the Final Report.

Response

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office maintains a dispatch center that utilizes a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system with proprietary software provided by a contracted vendor.

The current CAD system does not allow a dispatcher to automatically know at a glance whether a particular unit (e.g., a deputy) has certain capabilities such as CIT training, is a SWAT member, is bilingual, etc. There is not an upgrade available at this time to have that capability integrated into the current CAD system.

Instead, a dispatcher can use the CAD mouse to select a particular unit, look at the unit history, and see what capabilities the deputy has. The dispatcher also has the ability to refer to the daily schedules that are present at each dispatcher's workspace. Both practices allow the dispatcher to quickly and efficiently identify the CIT trained deputies.

In summary, the current CAD system allows the dispatcher to identify the CIT trained deputies with the click of a mouse and the dispatchers also have daily schedules containing this information.

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office is in the early stages of exploring other CAD systems, with the intent of implementing a new CAD system by the end of 2014. The new CAD system should be capable of displaying deputy capabilities and training.

Additionally, the Ventura County Grand Jury (2011-2012) produced the following statement regarding the number of Sheriff's Office personnel trained in CIT methods:

FA-15

"Though CIT training began in December of 2001, the countywide effort was documented in a MOA in 2004. The following are the current data by jurisdiction:

- Sheriff's Department; 722 officers, 258 CIT trained (36%)..."

Response

In 2001, The Ventura County Law Enforcement Crisis Intervention Team was modeled after Memphis, Tennessee Police Department's Crisis Intervention Team, which calls for twenty percent (20%) of those **primarily assigned to Patrol** duties be trained as CIT officers. While the Grand Jury's finding that 258 of 722 deputies are trained in CIT (thirty-six percent (36%)) is an accurate assessment of the Sheriff's Office **entire** sworn staff, it is not indicative of Sheriff's Office personnel **primarily assigned to Patrol** duties.

The results of a February 2012 survey of the six Sheriff's Office stations by CIT staff found 113 of 203 deputies **primarily assigned to Patrol** duties had received CIT training, or fifty-six percent (56%), well above the Memphis Model's 20%.

In addition, I have made it a priority and a goal to train 100% of Sheriff Office sworn personnel in CIT methods. Toward that goal, the CIT staff has increased the number of CIT Academies per year by one-third.

Sincerely,



Geoff Dean
Sheriff

Cc: Frank Chow, Analyst, CEO
✓ Jay Whitney, Foreman, Ventura County Grand Jury
John Crombach, Assistant Sheriff, VCSO