



COUNTY of VENTURA

Grand Jury

SEP 10 2024

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Response to 2023-2024 Ventura County Grand Jury Report Form (Please See California Penal Code Section 933.05)

Report Title: Linking First Responders: Ventura County Regional Radio System

Responding Entity: Leslie Cornejo, Mayor, City of Santa Paula

FINDINGS

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered: F-07 AND F-08
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered: _____
(Attach a statement specifying any portions of the Findings that are disputed;
include an explanation of the reasons.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendations numbered _____ have been implemented.
(Attach a summary describing the implemented actions.)
- Recommendations numbered R-06 have not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.
(Attach a summary indicating the timeframe for implementation.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ require further analysis.
(Attach an explanation to include: scope and parameters of the analysis or study and timeframe for the matter to be prepared for discussion with the agency or department head. The timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the report.)
- Recommendations numbered _____ will not be implemented because they are not warranted or are not reasonable.
(Attach an explanation.)

Date: 9/4/24

Signed: Leslie Cornejo

Title: Mayor

Number of pages attached: 3



"Citrus Capital of the World" **City of Santa Paula**

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September 4, 2024

The Honorable Kevin G. DeNoce
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
County of Ventura
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93003

Re: City's Response to Grand Jury Report Entitled "Linking First Responders –
Ventura County Regional Radio System"

Dear Judge Kevin G. DeNoce:

On or about May 15, 2024, the Ventura County Grand Jury issued its report titled, "Ventura County Regional Radio System." In the report, the Grand Jury recognized the need for first responders to communicate on a common radio system after researching the readiness, compatibility, and use of the radio systems first responders employ in the event of emergencies affecting Ventura County.

Prior to the Borderline Mass Shooting Incident, various departments within the County of Ventura, including Information Technology Services Department (ITSD) and OES, saw the need for and began taking steps to implement a regional radio system, the Ventura County Regional Radio System (VCRRS). They planned to make this system available to emergency responders and other government agencies throughout Ventura County.

The Sheriff's After-Action Review of the Borderline Mass Shooting states: "When a multi-agency team is deployed in critical incidents, [the agencies must] provide for radio interoperability or sufficient team members who can communicate directly with the agency having primary jurisdiction for the incident."

Radio communication is crucial in facilitating coordination among first responders during a crisis incident, especially when there are numerous responding agencies on the scene. Radios must have the capability to perform and must be operated appropriately by users. To avoid missing critical pieces of information, first responders must adopt a stringent, disciplined approach to communication. First responders must communicate in mutually understood terminology that is delivered clearly and succinctly. Situational updates must be provided in real-time to keep those on the scene and enroute informed of evolving conditions.

The Office of Emergency Services (OES) is a division of the VCSO comprising emergency managers with experience from a variety of backgrounds, including law enforcement, fire, planning, finance and technology experts. OES is responsible for the day-to-day administration of

the county's preparedness, mitigation response and recovery programs. OES is also responsible for the development and maintenance of the county's emergency operations plan, maintaining the county's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and coordinating EOC activities during a disaster.

When completed, the Ventura County Regional Radio System (VCRRS) will provide improved service to the unincorporated areas of Ventura County as well as to the VCISO contract cities. VCRRS can include "interoperability, virtually unlimited concurrent conversations, clearer reception, encryption, location services, prioritized radio traffic and cellular redundancy, which will also supply streaming video and over-the-air programming.

Santa Paula is in the process of developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to present to their city council for consideration to join the VCRRS.

At the conclusion of the Report, the Grand Jury requested a response from the City to Findings F-07, F-08, and Recommendations R-06.

Findings:

F-07. Using the current system, first responders in multiple locations may lose communication.

The City agrees with Finding F-07.

F-08. A MOU for adoption of the VCRRS has not been completed for presentation to the city council.

The City agrees with Finding F-08. The MOU has been completed and the VCRRS MOU authors have responded to any notations and recommendation of the MOU by the city's Chief Technology Officer, we anticipate full execution of the MOU by September 30, 2024.

Recommendations:

R-06. The Grand Jury recommends completing and presenting the VCRRS MOU consideration by the city council by October 2024 (F-07, F-08)

The City will complete recommendation R-06. The City has established its Chief Technology Officer as a stakeholder of the VCRRS project. After completion of the review and recommendations of the VCRRS MOU by the Chief Technology Officer, we anticipate the VCRRS MOU will be fully executed by September 30, 2024.

We thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Report. Should you have any further questions or desire any further information, please contact our City Manager, Dan Singer, by telephone at (805) 933-4201 or by email at dsinger@spcity.org.

Sincerely,



Leslie Cornejo

Mayor

cc: Santa Paula City Council
Dan Singer, City Manager
Don Aguilar, Chief of Police
Rich Williamson, Chief Technology Officer
Lori Macdonald, Foreperson