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JIM McDONNELL, SHERIFF

June 19, 2015

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
30-DAY REPORT BACK ON BODY SCANNERS

At the May 5, 2015, Board meeting, the Los Angeles County (County) Sheriff's Department (Department) was requested to report back in 30 days on the current status of the body scanners being utilized in the Department's Custody Division. Specifically, the Department was asked to discuss staffing and equipment challenges and the next steps in relation to augmenting the body scanner project.

The Department first began looking into the feasibility of body scanners in 2010. In 2011 the Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence (CCJV) made a formal recommendation to utilize body scanners within the County's jail system. On May 29, 2012, the Board approved funding for the Department to purchase approximately 17 body scanners. The approval to purchase the body scanners did not include a request for staffing to operate the equipment.

After a thorough research and bidding process, a vendor was selected on May 6, 2013. The time necessary to purchase and receive the equipment, upgrade Department infrastructure where the equipment was slated to be placed, and gain labor union approval resulted in a pilot project beginning at the Department's Inmate Reception Center (IRC) on April 21, 2014. The IRC pilot project involved placing one body scanner at the IRC intake area and one body scanner at the Department's Men's Central Jail Old Side Court Line. The IRC pilot project and evaluation period came to a conclusion on August 7, 2014. After this successful pilot project period, the pilot project was expanded to the Department's Century Regional Detention Facility from November 10, 2014, through February 8, 2015.

As recognized at the inception of the pilot project, the number of body scanners deployed in the pilot project were insufficient to scan every inmate entering those locations during peak intake periods. Due to lack of capacity to scan every inmate entering the area, random inmates were selected to be scanned as opposed to being subjected to an unclothed body search.

During the pilot project, approximately 19,000 inmates were scanned by the three body scanners deployed in the pilot projects, which represents approximately 20 percent of inmates who passed through the identified areas. A few contraband items were discovered during the routine body scans, which included methamphetamine, a spoon, and a syringe. In addition to routine scanning, jail investigators often used the body scanners for inmates they had received information about possibly possessing contraband. These scans revealed drugs and in one case a handcuff key.

During the Department's pilot project, several challenges arose. Those challenges, along with the actions taken to mitigate them, are listed below:

- Some inmates did not go through the body scanners reportedly because they stated they were ordered by gang members to refuse. Despite preferring the scan to a strip search, the inmates refused out of fear of retaliation from prison gang members. Because a significant portion of the custody population cooperated with the scanning process, the overall refusal rate was approximately 6 percent. The inmates who refused were subjected to an unclothed body search per the Department's Custody Division policy. No contraband was discovered during these body searches.

- Image evaluation of the scanned inmate is a learned skill and formalized training has been limited. The staff operating the body scanners and interpreting the images have had difficulty deciphering the image results. The Department has looked into acquiring advanced training, but there are no local/viable options at this time. Despite this challenge, staff are becoming more experienced and have consulted with medical staff on questionable scans. This has significantly helped raise the skill level of operators. The Department is continuing to look for training opportunities to help in this area, and has asked the vendor to assist with enhanced and ongoing training options.

- Due to staffing shortages, there are times the Department has been unable to use the body scanners. As mentioned, additional staff was not requested or received until the Department had experience with operating the equipment. After having a better understanding of resource needs and intake flow rates, the Department is in the process of analyzing the necessary number of scanners and appropriate staffing models with the goal to eliminate the use of unclothed body searches to the extent possible. The Department has been working with consultants to assist with an independent analysis, and intends to work with the Chief Executive Office to submit

a comprehensive budget request to expand body scanner utilization via the Fiscal Year 2015-16 supplemental budget process.

- There have been service related issues with one of the body scanners. Overall, the machines have performed well with no mechanical malfunctions realized to date. Flooding at one facility caused damage to a body scanner. Despite the fact the damage was not the manufacturer's fault, the time to get the body scanner back online was unacceptable. In speaking with the vendor, they acknowledged service delays, particularly with local parts inventory. Executives from the vendor met with Department and County Counsel staff in March 2015 and discussed the Department's concerns and expectations. The vender is now committed to correcting their systems to ensure satisfactory responses for any future service calls. The vender has obtained a local area to warehouse spare parts and is in the process of modifying their service contract to ensure quicker response times.

Overall, initial deployment of the body scanners has been successful and expansion of the use of body scanners continues. Inmates have stated they prefer the body scan process over traditional strip searches. The Department recognizes the body scanners create a less tense and more humane approach to contraband reduction and detection. The next deployment will be the addition of two body scanners at the Department's Pitchess Detention Center South Facility (PDC South). PDC South houses inmates who work outside of security and pose the greatest risk for smuggling contraband into the County's jail system. These body scanners will be placed in the work change area and will allow the Department to continue to evaluate the scanners and vendor utilizing existing resources. The vendor has indicated that it could take up to 90-days to receive and install these body scanners.

In addition to the next expansion, as previously mentioned, a full review of inmate ingress locations is underway. This evaluation includes quantifying inmate flow rates from low intake to peak intake periods, as well as a full physical plant evaluation, including available space, path of travel, and electrical load issues for each of the County's jails' intake areas. This evaluation will assist in informing the Department and County of the optimal number of body scanners needed to scan the inmates, any physical plant modifications that need to occur, and the number and classification of staff needed by day and shift to meet the goal of eliminating to the extent possible the unclothed body searches throughout the County's jails. The review is underway and is anticipated to be completed by the submittal of supplemental budget changes.

We appreciate the Board's support of this project and look forward to ongoing discussions and expansion of the project.

Should you have any questions, please contact Chief Eric G. Parra, Custody Services Division-General Population, at (213) 893-5017.

Sincerely,

JIM McDONNELL
SHERIFF