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LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF
CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
MAY 24, 2022
SPECIAL HEARING ON DEPUTY GANGS IN THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

MEMBERS

- COMMISSION CHAIR SEAN KENNEDY
- COMMISSIONER ROBERT BONNER
- COMMISSIONER PATTI GIGGANS
- COMMISSIONER LAEL RUBIN
- COMMISSIONER IRMA COOPER
- COMMISSIONER JP HARRIS
- COMMISSIONER LUIS GARCIA
- COMMISSIONER JAMON HICKS

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ATTENDEES

Commission Chair, Sean Kennedy

COMMISSIONERS:

Robert Bonner

Patti Giggans

Lael Rubin

Irma Cooper

JP Harris

Luis Garcia

Jamon Hicks

Special Counsel: Bert Deixler, Kendall Brill & Kelly,

Patricia Perello

Witnesses

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Inspector General Max Huntsman

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Lieutenant Larry Andrew Waldie

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Anonymous Witness No. 3

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Eliezer Vera

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 CHAIR KENNEDY: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to this
3 special hearing of the Los Angeles County Sheriff Civilian
4 Oversight Commission.

5 We're going to have a hearing on alleged deputy
6 gangs, but before we begin, I think we need to take the roll.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

8 Commissioner Kennedy.

9 CHAIR KENNEDY: Here.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commissioner (Inaudible.)

11 COMMISSIONER 2: Here.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commissioner (Inaudible.)

13 COMMISSIONER 3: Here.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commissioner Garcia?

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Here.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commissioner (Inaudible.)

17 COMMISSIONER 4: Here.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commissioner (Inaudible.)

19 COMMISSIONER 5: Here.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Commissioner Hicks?

21 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Present.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ms. (Inaudible)?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes. Here.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

25 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

1 So before we begin, I just wanted to make brief
2 opening remarks.

3 For decades, there have been allegations from many
4 different quarters that deputy gangs exist within the Los
5 Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Several -- several prior
6 commissions have voiced concerns about the department's gang
7 culture and urged each elected sheriff to act swiftly to
8 eradicate deputy gangs or cliques.

9 Unfortunately, sheriff leadership has refused to
10 investigate, even though allegations about deputy gangs have
11 hurt the relationship between the department and the
12 communities it is supposed to serve. Consequently, last
13 November, the COC voted unanimously to conduct a full-scale,
14 independent investigation whether there are deputy gangs right
15 now within the department. Today is this commission's first
16 special hearing on the matter.

17 The hearing will be conducted by our able
18 Special Counsel, Bert Deixler, and his team of highly skilled
19 lawyers, all of whom have donated their time and expertise to
20 help us investigate the matter of alleged deputy gangs.

21 So, Bert, I'm going to turn it over to you to make
22 some opening remarks.

23 MR. DEIXLER: I'll begin by saying good morning,
24 Commissioners. Appreciate the opportunity to speak with you
25 today.

1 Before I begin, I want to ensure that the lawyers who
2 have participated are known to the commission. I have with me
3 today Lauren Wertheimer of the Vedder Price firm, Ellen Choi of
4 the firm Covington and Burling, and Trent Fujii of the Vedder
5 Price firm, and my colleague, Patricia Perellò, who will be
6 keeping me sane here by making sure the exhibits come up as I
7 had hoped.

8 With your permission, I'd like to give a kind of
9 procedural opening statement and reserve the opportunity to
10 give a substantive opening statement perhaps to another time.

11 The many lawyers who have been engaged to gather
12 information for the commission have interviewed several dozen
13 percipient witnesses with dozens more to go. We've been struck
14 thus far by a number of things.

15 First, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department is an
16 organization of professionals who are mostly heroes. As you
17 will hear, these are people who have volunteered and are
18 committed to community safety at personal risk. Our admiration
19 for them, for the many we've met, is genuine, and our gratitude
20 for their service is real.

21 But within this organization we found a palpable
22 fear, a fear of professional retribution. "Career suicide" is
23 the term we've heard repeatedly, and perhaps more troubling, a
24 fear for physical safety if one is associated and revealed as
25 cooperating in this investigation.

1 Because so many department members have families who
2 serve in the organization -- spouses, children, siblings -- the
3 fear of retribution is not limited to the career of the
4 individual with whom we have spoken but to those near and dear
5 to that witness as well. You will see today written evidence
6 of fear expressed by a department member tasked simply with
7 providing objective information from a dataset to a superior.

8 Also, we'll have a current department member testify
9 anonymously for fear of retaliation. That examination will
10 seek to avoid identifying details. And we will ask the
11 commissioners, should any wish to ask questions, to do so in a
12 fashion that will not assist identification of the witness who,
13 as I say, fears retribution.

14 I should add that a critical witness scheduled to
15 testify today anonymously withdrew Saturday out of fear of
16 retaliation, and another scheduled witness had a surprise call
17 to duty today rendering that witness unavailable -- perhaps a
18 scheduling coincidence.

19 Our investigation has been hampered by the action and
20 inaction of county counsel, which has insisted upon marking and
21 retaining as confidential dozens of depositions taken in
22 pending litigation against the County and Department members.
23 Mind you, of course, the content of each deposition is known
24 both to the plaintiffs in the case, to their lawyers, as well
25 as the numbers of outside counsel representing the County and

1 the individual Department members. The material is not secret.

2 I've been offered the opportunity to review certain
3 depositions. The review, however, was conditioned upon my
4 agreeing not to share the content of the depositions with you,
5 the commission charged with investigating the existence of
6 deputy gangs or cliques. Indeed, I'd be barred from sharing
7 the materials even with the many top-tier, prominent, and
8 experienced lawyers participating in this investigation pro
9 bono. I hope it's not surprising that I've rejected this
10 proposal from county counsel.

11 Finally, if time permits, we intend to question a
12 former LASD chief who has specific relevant information about
13 an issue to be discussed today. The witness is a candidate for
14 sheriff. In calling the witness, we offer no endorsement of
15 his candidacy. No endorsement should be inferred.

16 We have interviewed several other candidates for
17 sheriff, intend to interview more. Each has offered
18 suggestions about the existence of and solutions regarding
19 deputy gangs, each has offered to testify, and, likely, each
20 will be invited to do so at a later meeting. We contemplate
21 calling only one candidate today only because of the ordering
22 of the proof and not for any political purpose.

23 Fairness dictates that I reveal that the only
24 candidate who has thus far refused to meet either informally or
25 to testify at today's hearing is Sheriff Villanueva. I am told

1 that he has sent a lieutenant who serves directly in his office
2 to monitor the proceedings. We intend, with the commission's
3 permission, to invite Sheriff Villanueva to testify at a later
4 hearing, voluntarily or under compulsion.

5 With that predicate, we're ready to call our first
6 witness, if that's how the commission would like to proceed.

7 CHAIR KENNEDY: Yes.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Max Huntsman, please.

9 Be sworn.

10 CHAIR KENNEDY: Yes.

11 Raise your right hand.

12 Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole
13 truth, and nothing but the truth?

14 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do.

15 MR. DEIXLER: Morning, sir. Would you state and spell
16 your last name.

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: Huntsman, H-u-n-t-s-m-a-n.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And, Mr. Huntsman, how are you employed?

19 MR. HUNTSMAN: I work for the County of Los Angeles as the
20 Inspector General.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And prior to your role as inspector general,
22 how long have you been involved in law enforcement?

23 MR. HUNTSMAN: Since 1991 when I graduated from law school
24 and became a senior law clerk for the District Attorney's
25 Office.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And where were you -- where did you go to
2 law school?

3 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yale Law School.

4 MR. DEIXLER: In your role as inspector general, have you
5 had a focus in the area of deputy cliques or deputy gangs?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: I -- we have been investigating them
7 actively almost our entire existence as an office.

8 MR. DEIXLER: To your knowledge, is the issue of deputy
9 gangs or cliques a recently discovered problem in the Los
10 Angeles Sheriff's Department?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: Absolutely not.

12 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to look in a book. I hope
13 the exhibit book is there for Exhibit 1, which I'll ask be
14 placed on the board.

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: I -- yes. Exhibit 1.

16 MR. DEIXLER: And is --

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: Got it.

18 MR. DEIXLER: -- Exhibit 1 a document that you caused to
19 be prepared?

20 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And let me ask you first about the footnote
22 on page numbered 1. Take a look at that.

23 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

24 MR. DEIXLER: An internal LS -- LASD memo dated
25 December 5th, 1973, documented an investigation of a group

1 called the Little Devils. The Little Devils employed a
2 sequentially numbered tattoo of a devil on the left calf, and
3 it goes on to say it identified at least 38 of them by name.

4 Was it a part of your research and background to
5 determine if there had been deputy gangs or cliques in the
6 LA Sheriff's Department at least as of 1973?

7 MR. HUNTSMAN: 1971, I believe, according to that memo.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And the number of identified members was
9 what?

10 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe at that time they identified
11 47 members of the Red Devils, and, of course, subsequently they
12 have identified members of other potential law enforcement
13 gangs.

14 MR. DEIXLER: On the first page at the very top, you make
15 reference to Special Counsel James G. Kolts in 1992.

16 Who is -- who is Judge Kolts?

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: Judge Kolts, at the time of that report,
18 was a retired judge who had served many years as a prosecutor,
19 many years as a judge, and he was brought forward to do an
20 in-depth analysis of LASD, not unlike subsequent ones, partly
21 because he was a Republican, and a -- and a staunch law
22 enforcement judge.

23 MR. DEIXLER: And what was the subject of his report?

24 MR. HUNTSMAN: It was Professionalism in LASD, for want of
25 a better term.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And what, in substance, did he conclude on
2 the subject matter of deputy gangs in the sheriff's department?

3 MR. HUNTSMAN: He -- in his final report, there were a
4 half dozen pages on the subject detailing testimony that he had
5 received in anonymous ways similar to the way Rand operated.
6 And he concluded in a recommendation that the sheriff's
7 department should actively, as you described in your opening
8 statement, root out these groups, create policies to prevent
9 them, and actively investigate to remove this influence from
10 the sheriff's department.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And would you take a look, please, at
12 exhibit numbered 2, which is a September 13th, 2004, memo to
13 Sheriff Baca from William Stonich.

14 MR. HUNTSMAN: Two begins with a memo from Commander
15 Miller, and then attached to it, several pages in, is the memo
16 you referred to.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

18 I'd like you to refer to that portion of exhibit
19 numbered 2.

20 And what, in substance, was Undersheriff Stonich
21 writing about to then Sheriff Baca in 2004?

22 MR. HUNTSMAN: He was writing about a situation very
23 similar to what has been alleged since in East Los Angeles.
24 But in this case he was talking about Century Station, which
25 appeared to have at least two groups that were gang-like in the

1 way they operated, and he described them in that memo and
2 recommended action to respond to the problem.

3 MR. DEIXLER: On the second page of that 2004 memo,
4 there's reference to the Mexican Mafia.

5 You see that reference, sir?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes. That was the name they used to
7 describe one of the groups.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And how did Undersheriff Stonich identify
9 the positions of influence within the Century Station occupied
10 by the Mexican Mafia gang at that time?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: He identified them as detective,
12 scheduling, watch deputy, and field training officer positions.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Were -- and what was the conduct that was
14 identified as unethical activity in 2004 by this deputy gang?

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: As I say, it was very similar to what has
16 been alleged in East Los Angeles and focused primarily upon the
17 use of gang membership in order to influence benefits to
18 employees within the station: Scheduling, overtime,
19 opportunities for advancement, whether or not somebody would be
20 encouraged, if you will, to leave the station, things like
21 that. And -- and there was an -- there was a gang-like element
22 to it.

23 MR. DEIXLER: If you turn your attention to the next page,
24 there's another gang identified called the Regulators.

25 Do you see that?

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And do the Regulators have a means of
3 identifying themselves to others and themselves?

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes. The Regulators use a tattoo which
5 emulates the historical Regulators: A cowboy -- a cowboy
6 outlaws gang and has a -- has a -- a skeleton, but there's a
7 trench coat and tattoo and -- and some -- and guns that are --
8 sometimes have smoke coming from them, depending.

9 MR. DEIXLER: In the fourth bullet point, there's
10 reference to an Angel Homace who was described as a shot
11 caller. Do you see that reference?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And what is the -- is the position of
14 shot caller an officially sanctioned position within the
15 LA Sheriff's Department?

16 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is not.

17 MR. DEIXLER: In connection with the work you've done as
18 inspector general, have you come upon sheriff's deputies
19 identified as shot callers?

20 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

21 MR. DEIXLER: At what station, sir?

22 MR. HUNTSMAN: East Los Angeles, Century, and Compton.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Your -- your October 2020 report refers to a
24 report by the Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence.

25 What was that group?

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: That was a group put in place in response
2 to, again, allegations of unprofessionalism and rampant
3 violence by deputies, in particular in the jails, that came to
4 light after what we're talking about here. And the count --
5 there were a number of responses, but the County's response was
6 to create the Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence to do a
7 deep dive, not unlike what's happening today.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And did the Citizens' Commission on Jail
9 Violence identify groups of deputy cliques or deputy gangs?

10 MR. HUNTSMAN: They did. And similarly, they made
11 recommendations about how to deal with them.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And where were those gangs located?

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: I don't recall all the locations they
14 identified, but I believe they were -- primarily, they were
15 focusing on custody operations; so they had the 2000 and
16 3000 Boys, which were in custody. But I believe they also
17 made reference to -- to other groups that, by then, were known,
18 such as -- I believe they mentioned the Banditos. But -- but
19 by that time, they were present in a number of different
20 stations outside of custody.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And in connection with the 2000 and 3000
22 Group -- Boys, did they identify shot callers?

23 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

24 MR. DEIXLER: In your work --

25 MR. HUNTSMAN: By say- -- excuse me; by saying "identify,"

1 I mean that they -- they concluded that they did exist. They
2 did not name names.

3 MR. DEIXLER: In your work as an inspector general, has it
4 come to your attention that any shot caller was a woman?

5 MR. HUNTSMAN: To my knowledge, I -- I'm not aware of any
6 shot caller being a woman within one of the gangs.

7 I am aware of an allegation that the Banditos had an
8 affiliate who was a shot caller who was a woman. But she was
9 not a member of the Banditos because I have -- I'm not aware of
10 any female ever being a member of the Banditos.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Has your work as inspector general led you
12 to the belief that any shot caller was ever African-American?

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: Not to my knowledge.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ensure that when we use the word
15 going forward of "deputy gang" that we have an agreed term.

16 Exhibit 3 is a copy of Penal Code Section 13670.

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And you're familiar with that Penal Code?

19 MR. HUNTSMAN: I am.

20 MR. DEIXLER: A law enforcement gang is defined as a group
21 of peace officers who identify by a name and may be identified
22 by matching tattoos and who engage in a pattern of on-duty
23 behavior that intentionally violates the law or fundamental
24 principles of professional policing.

25 You're familiar with that portion of the Penal Code,

1 sir?

2 MR. HUNTSMAN: I am.

3 MR. DEIXLER: Is there any question in your mind, based
4 upon the description of the deputy groups, the Mexican Mafia
5 and the Regulators that we've learned about here, that each was
6 a deputy gang within the definition of the Penal Code?

7 MR. HUNTSMAN: As described in the memo, certainly.

8 As to the Regulators, I am aware of additional
9 information that I have acquired since then, and as to both of
10 those groups, they are indeed -- they do meet this criteria.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And why do they meet that criteria?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: Well, for a bunch of reasons that I -- it
13 would take all day to go through. But -- but there are
14 multiple conditions in here that are -- that list the conduct
15 that -- that if you engage in it, you are a law enforcement
16 gang, and they meet multiple ones of those.

17 MR. DEIXLER: So let's -- let's examine a few of them
18 within this section of the Penal Code.

19 The Penal Code goes on to describe indicia of deputy
20 gangs to include excluding, harassing, or discriminating
21 against any individual based on a protected category under
22 federal or state anti-discrimination law.

23 MR. HUNTSMAN: Correct.

24 MR. DEIXLER: So, for example, if a woman could not be a
25 member of one of these deputy gangs, would that be sufficient

1 to constitute a violation of 13670?

2 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe so, yes.

3 MR. DEIXLER: If an African-American couldn't be a member
4 of such a gang, would that be a violation of 13670?

5 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe so, yes.

6 MR. DEIXLER: The Penal Code section goes on to require
7 maintaining a policy that prohibits participation in a law
8 enforcement gang and makes a violation of the policy grounds
9 for termination.

10 Has it come to your attention that the sheriff has
11 terminated any employee because he was a member of a deputy
12 gang?

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is my specific understanding that he has
14 not.

15 MR. DEIXLER: The Penal Code goes on to impose an
16 obligation of law -- of a law enforcement agent to, quote,
17 "cooperate in any investigation into these gangs by an
18 Inspector General, the Attorney General, or any other
19 authorized agency."

20 Do you understand cooperation to include the
21 obligation to provide requested documents?

22 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Do you understand the obligation to include
24 the provision of related information to you as inspector
25 general?

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Let me turn your attention to an incident at
3 Kennedy Hall on September 28th, 2018.

4 Would you briefly describe what the event consisted
5 of.

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: The Kennedy Hall event was an after-work
7 party of East LA deputies in which a lot of alcohol was
8 consumed and people were celebrating. During that party, a
9 group of deputies, who were allegedly Banditos, began to
10 verbally harass a smaller group of other deputies and
11 eventually assaulted them. One of the alleged Banditos started
12 the assault, and three others joined in.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know the names of the alleged
14 perpetrators?

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: Well, my memory is not perfect, so it would
16 help me to refresh but -- but I believe Rodriguez -- you know,
17 I should check my notes. Is that all right?

18 MR. DEIXLER: Why don't you check your notes and see if
19 that'll refresh your memory.

20 MR. HUNTSMAN: Thank you.

21 May I read from my notes, or would you like me to see
22 if my memory is refreshed?

23 MR. DEIXLER: Well, if it refreshes your memory, you no --
24 don't need to read from them. If it doesn't, then you can read
25 it as past recollection recorded.

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: I'll read them as past recollection
2 recorded just to (inaudible).

3 Gregory Rodriguez, Rafael Munoz, David Silverio, and
4 Michael Hernandez.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Okay. And because it may come into play as
6 we look at some other documents, did Rafael Munoz have a
7 nickname?

8 MR. HUNTSMAN: Big Listo.

9 MR. DEIXLER: And what about Gregory Rodriguez? Did he
10 have a nickname?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: He did. G-Rod.

12 MR. DEIXLER: What about David Silverio? Did he have a
13 nickname?

14 MR. HUNTSMAN: He did. His nickname was Bam Bam.

15 MR. DEIXLER: David Silverio's nickname was Silver, wasn't
16 it, sir?

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: I have heard that said.

18 MR. DEIXLER: Okay.

19 And Michael Hernandez, his nickname was Bam Bam?

20 MR. HUNTSMAN: Correct.

21 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know whether a civil lawsuit has been
22 brought against those individuals in the county of Los Angeles?

23 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes, it has.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And that's been brought by a private
25 attorney, Vincent Miller, and the ACLU?

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: Correct.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And do the allegations in the complaint
3 include, among other things, assertions of retaliation,
4 workplace harassment, discrimination, and violation of state
5 and federal civil rights laws?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: They do.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Do the complaints in the -- does the
8 complaint include allegations regarding injuries that give rise
9 to a possible finding of "great bodily injury," as that term is
10 defined under the Penal Code?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: Not only does the lawsuit, but the internal
12 investigation of the sheriff's department supports that
13 conclusion.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And would it be a correct summary to say the
15 lawsuit relates to a group known as the Banditos?

16 MR. HUNTSMAN: It would.

17 MR. DEIXLER: How large is the Bandito group reported to
18 be?

19 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is reported to be well over 50, and it
20 has been reported that it may have topped out at 100 for
21 procedural reasons, but it certainly is over 50.

22 MR. DEIXLER: Is there a tattoo that you know is
23 associated with the Banditos?

24 MR. HUNTSMAN: There is. It's a skull with a sombrero and
25 guns.

1 MR. DEIXLER: Have there been other lawsuits involving
2 the Banditos, other than this Hernandez versus The County of
3 Los Angeles case?

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And has the County been forced to litigate
6 or settle those cases?

7 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes. So some are pending.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And the cases that have settled, do you know
9 approximately how much money the County has paid in connection
10 with Bandito-related --

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: I cannot give you such a figure. I can
12 tell you that approximately \$50 million has been paid in a --
13 in a recent analysis, or relatively recent, by the County
14 regarding all deputy gangs, but -- or alleged gangs, but I'm
15 not sure about the Banditos specifically.

16 MR. DEIXLER: Did it come to your attention that the
17 Internal Criminal Investigation Bureau, referred to as the
18 ICIB, conducted an investigation of the Kennedy Hall event?

19 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

20 MR. DEIXLER: And who was the lead investigator on behalf
21 of the ICIB?

22 MR. HUNTSMAN: Jeffrey Chow.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Did you review any portion of the ICIB
24 investigation?

25 MR. HUNTSMAN: I did. But, more importantly, my staff did

1 at my direction in great detail.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Based upon your review and the review of
3 your staff, did you draw any conclusions about how the
4 Banditos operated?

5 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

6 MR. DEIXLER: And what was the general conclusion that
7 you drew about the Banditos' activities?

8 MR. HUNTSMAN: The ICIB investigation is not my primary
9 source for conclusions regarding the Banditos' activities as
10 a potential law enforcement gang because the investigating
11 officer appears to have been directed not to investigate that
12 matter, and the record itself is sparse. However, simply based
13 upon that record, one can conclude that there was indeed an
14 influence of that group in a gang-like way at that station and,
15 as you described in your opening statement, deputies were
16 scared of them.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Would you have expected that investigation
18 into the alleged criminal conduct of sheriff deputies upon
19 other sheriff deputies would have asked questions specifically
20 about gang behavior?

21 MR. HUNTSMAN: I cannot imagine a gang investigation that
22 didn't ask questions about gang affiliation. And in this case,
23 it was alleged that this gang, and retaliation against these
24 individuals by this gang for disrespecting the gang, was the
25 motive. So I -- I cannot imagine that not being done in a

1 proper investigation.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a look at exhibit
3 numbered 4, which is the LASD ICIB Case Activity Log relating
4 to the investigation of Kennedy Hall.

5 MR. HUNTSMAN: I see it. It appears to -- Exhibit
6 Number 4 appears to be a redacted version of a log presented
7 by Jeffrey Chow.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And that investigation began on
9 September 28th, 2018, by interviewing the victim in the
10 hospital; is that correct?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: According to this log, yes.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And the investigation occurred with a
13 lengthy list of interviewees; is that so? As many as 90 people
14 were interviewed in connection --

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: Throughout the course of the investigation,
16 yes, there were many interviews. I'm not sure it gets up to 90
17 unless you include some subsequent investigation, but it is a
18 large number.

19 MR. DEIXLER: And the investigation continued through
20 February of 2020; is that the case?

21 MR. HUNTSMAN: I think that's about right. I think that's
22 when it was submitted to the DA's office, and that's also
23 consistent with this log.

24 MR. DEIXLER: In 2018, was there an election for sheriff?

25 MR. HUNTSMAN: There was.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And when was that election?

2 MR. HUNTSMAN: That -- I -- I believe November was the
3 runoff.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And as of November 27th was Alex Villanueva
5 the sheriff of Los Angeles County?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: He was not. On November 26th,
7 Jim McDonnell conceded, at least privately, that he was not
8 going to win the election, and began a transition process. But
9 Sheriff Villanueva was not the sheriff at that time.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Am I correct that the sheriff was sworn in
11 on December the 3rd, 2018?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: That's correct.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Did Alex Villanueva have any authority to
14 give directions as to how the ICIB investigation should be
15 conducted as of November 27th, 2018 --

16 MR. HUNTSMAN: He did not. He had no -- no actual
17 authority.

18 MR. DEIXLER: Let's look at Exhibit Number 4, and the
19 entry of November 9th, 2018.

20 Let me know when you have that.

21 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do.

22 MR. DEIXLER: There is a reference on November 9th, 2018,
23 in this ICIB log to "Also, Lieutenant Chevalier advised me OIG
24 wanted additional questions about subcultures at East LA.
25 Captain Burson confirmed additional questions needed to be

1 asked."

2 Do you see that?

3 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do.

4 MR. DEIXLER: Does that reflect the investigator, Chow's,
5 receipt of a direction from your office about investigation
6 that needs to be undertaken in connection with this matter?

7 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

8 MR. DEIXLER: What does that reflect?

9 MR. HUNTSMAN: It reflects conversations within the
10 sheriff's department about how the positions that OIG would
11 likely take in public reports, such as the one I just
12 expressed, that you -- you have to investigate the motive when
13 you're investigating crime. And, therefore, them determining
14 that they should act accordingly to avoid public embarrassment
15 is what I think that refers to.

16 MR. DEIXLER: I see.

17 And so who's Lieutenant Chevalier?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do not know.

19 MR. DEIXLER: Would you look and read aloud the
20 November 27th, 2018, reference in this ICIB log of the day
21 after Sheriff McDonnell conceded but before Sheriff Villanueva
22 took office.

23 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is dated November 27th, 2018, 1300
24 hours, and it reads:

25 "Canceled interviews due to Captain/Chief Burson.

1 He wanted to make sure I did not have to ask questions about
2 subculture groups at East LA Station. Worked on Sergeant
3 Wilonsky case due to statute date is coming up."

4 MR. DEIXLER: Okay.

5 Did you understand the reference to subculture groups
6 to mean deputy cliques or gangs?

7 MR. HUNTSMAN: I did.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And what would be the proper investigatory
9 reason for such an instruction to be given to Captain, but
10 soon -- soon-to-be Chief Burson?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: I cannot think of a proper investigatory
12 reason.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with the sworn testimony
14 of Investigator Chow that he was told by Captain Burson in
15 connection with the November 27 entry that Captain Burson had
16 to, quote, "speak to the sheriff about pursuing questions about
17 the subgroups"?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: I am familiar with testimony to that
19 effect.

20 MR. DEIXLER: And in the context of the Kennedy Hall
21 investigation, did the reference to subgroups mean Banditos?

22 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Was any subgroup besides Banditos involved
24 in the Kennedy Hall incident?

25 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

1 MR. DEIXLER: Please look, if you will, at the reference
2 that immediately follows on December 7th, 2018, and if you
3 would, read it aloud.

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is dated December 7th, 2018, 0900 hours,
5 and reads:

6 "Received the go-ahead to start interviewing
7 witnesses for this case. Also, the Chief, Burson, informed me
8 that I do not need to ask about subculture groups at East LA
9 Station. Spoke to an attorney, Sherry Lawrence, representing,
10 redacted, and declined to be interviewed."

11 MR. DEIXLER: First, as we've said, Captain Burson, as of
12 November 27th, was a captain. And on December 7th, 2018, four
13 days after the sheriff was sworn in, he became chief.

14 Is that how you understand the flow of this
15 promotion?

16 MR. HUNTSMAN: At least by December 7th he was officially
17 be called chief. Whether or not he had already received the
18 promotion or -- or when precisely he did, I don't know. I know
19 Villanueva made a number of promotions almost immediately upon
20 being elected.

21 MR. DEIXLER: What would be the proper investigatory
22 reason, after checking with the sheriff, to say there's no need
23 to ask about subculture groups at the East LA Station?

24 MR. HUNTSMAN: The only proper reason would be if it would
25 somehow interfere with the investigation. And I -- as I said,

1 I can think of absolutely no reason why it would.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And, again, by subculture groups, we're
3 talking about the Banditos, aren't we?

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: We are.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with the sworn testimony by
6 Investigator Chow that he understood that it was an order not
7 to ask about subculture groups?

8 MR. HUNTSMAN: I -- I don't have that before me,
9 specifically, but you want to refresh my recollection?

10 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: Thank you.

12 MR. DEIXLER: Let me read to you briefly from page 33,
13 lines 2 through 3:

14 "Sir" -- this is Inspector Chow, "Sir, we are a
15 paramilitary organization. He gives me an order, I follow
16 through."

17 And on the same page, at paragraph numbered 14, he
18 says, "Yeah. He had to check with the sheriff. Yes."

19 MR. HUNTSMAN: I -- thank you for refreshing my
20 recollection. I now remember both those statements by
21 Mr. Chow under oath.

22 COMMISSIONER BONNER: I'm wondering, Mr. Deixler, is it
23 possible to give us a date of that deposition --

24 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER BONNER: -- and -- and clearly identify who

1 the deponent was.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Absolutely.

3 The deposition is April 21st, 2022. The witness is
4 Sergeant Jefferson Chow.

5 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Thank you.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with the investigator's
7 testimony that after interviewing 90 witnesses he found no
8 evidence to contradict the victims' claim that they were
9 victims of an unprovoked and unresisted attack?

10 MR. HUNTSMAN: That's my understanding of how he
11 testified, and also, it's consistent with our review of the --
12 of the record of his investigation.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Is the ICIB an authorized agent -- agency to
14 conduct investigations into gangs?

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

16 MR. DEIXLER: Was the instruction to not ask about
17 subgroups a lack of cooperation with that investigation?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: It could be characterized as that. I think
19 it's more serious than that.

20 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Excuse me, Mr. Deixler. Would you
21 identify what the deposition -- where the deposition comes
22 from?

23 MR. DEIXLER: Yes. The deposition comes from the case of
24 Art Hernandez --

25 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Okay.

1 MR. DEIXLER: -- et al, against the County of Los Angeles,
2 against Rafael "Rene" Munoz, also known as "Big Listo"; Gregory
3 Rodriguez, also known as "G-Rod"; David Silverio, also known as
4 "Silver"; Michael Hernandez, also known as "Bam Bam."

5 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you very much.

6 MR. DEIXLER: In addition to the witnesses who testified
7 or were interviewed, were there witnesses who declined to do
8 so?

9 MR. HUNTSMAN: There were. Approximately two dozen.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Is the sheriff in power to direct that
11 witnesses cooperate with investigations?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes. And they're required to do so under
13 sheriff's policy.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Did it ever come to your attention that the
15 sheriff reversed direction and ordered recalcitrant witnesses
16 to testify?

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

18 MR. DEIXLER: Did it ever come to your attention that the
19 sheriff reversed direction and instructed that there be
20 investigation of the involvement of the Banditos in connection
21 with the Kennedy Hall episode?

22 MR. HUNTSMAN: Not in the criminal case.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Did you learn that the investigator, Chow,
24 testified under oath that he believed the District Attorney
25 should have filed a criminal case against the perpetrators of

1 the Kennedy Hall beatdown?

2 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

3 MR. DEIXLER: Did you learn of the investigator's sworn
4 testimony that he was surprised that the DA didn't file a
5 criminal case against the Bandito perpetrators?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe that accurately describes his
7 testimony.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a look at Exhibit 23.

9 MR. HUNTSMAN: Twenty-three appears to be the DA reject in
10 that case.

11 MR. DEIXLER: The DA reject. What do you mean by "the DA
12 reject"?

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: The District Attorney's Office, when
14 presented with a written set of reports from a law enforcement
15 agency asking for a filing of criminal charges, will prepare a
16 charge evaluations worksheet. And when the conclusion is that
17 they will not file it, it is commonly referred to in law
18 enforcement as "the reject."

19 MR. DEIXLER: And the persons under investigation by the
20 District Attorney were Michael "Bam Bam" Hernandez, Gregory
21 "G-Rod" Rodriguez, David "Silver" Silverio, and Raphael
22 "Big Listo" Munoz.

23 Is that what Exhibit 23 demonstrates?

24 MR. HUNTSMAN: That is correct.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And all of those are the defendants in the

1 lawsuit against them and the County claiming they're Banditos;
2 correct?

3 MR. HUNTSMAN: That is correct.

4 MR. DEIXLER: Let me call your attention to page 4 in the
5 third paragraph. That sets forth some of the conduct
6 identifying what the three deputies did with a fellow deputy.

7 Am I understanding that correctly?

8 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

9 MR. DEIXLER: And because my aged eyes are not what they
10 once were, could you read aloud what the alleged conduct was?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: The highlighted portion -- do you just want
12 the third paragraph or the highlighted portion?

13 MR. DEIXLER: Why don't you tell us about Rodriguez,
14 Munoz, Silverio, Hernandez, and Vincent Moran to set the -- set
15 the stage for us.

16 MR. HUNTSMAN: It states that they were all part of an
17 older, more senior generation of deputy sheriffs who expressed
18 their dislike of Gonzales and his work ethic. And it refers to
19 footnote 5, which I believe is significant.

20 But skipping that, the next paragraph reads:

21 "On September 26th, 2018, Rodriguez, Moran, and Munoz
22 confronted Gonzales at the ELA Station barbecue area and took
23 turns criticizing his lack of work productivity, work hours,
24 and being too comfortable for a newer deputy. Moran finished
25 by telling Gonzales to transfer to another patrol station. On

1 September 27th, 2018, Silverio confronted Gonzales at the
2 party and told Gonzalez he was not good at the station. And
3 M. Hernandez approached Gonzales and called him a 'pussy' and a
4 'rat.'"

5 MR. DEIXLER: And this is one sheriff's deputy speaking of
6 another sheriff's deputy.

7 Do I understand that correctly?

8 MR. HUNTSMAN: Speaking directly to.

9 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

10 Let me ask you. Earlier you had suggested that not
11 only was this failure to investigate a failure of cooperation,
12 but something more.

13 How would you characterize the failure to ask about
14 the Banditos in these -- in the investigation to compel the
15 witnesses who declined to testify to testify? How do you --
16 how do you see that, and doing so on the instruction of the
17 sheriff?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: The log that you have introduced or that
19 you have presented as an exhibit I don't believe was ever given
20 to the District Attorney's Office until I gave it to them. So
21 the information that we have here about the way they structured
22 this investigation was not known to the District Attorney's
23 Office when they rejected the case.

24 And I believe the manner in which this case was
25 investigated and presented amounted to a coverup, essentially

1 obstruction of justice.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And the obstruction of justice that you
3 identify starts with whom?

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe it started 50 years ago.

5 But I -- in this -- in the evidence here,
6 Chief/Captain Burson, possibly expecting a promotion, directed
7 that the investigation be conducted in a manner which would
8 specifically not gather evidence regarding the gang motive of
9 the -- of the assault.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to continue on with this
11 DA's declination document and look, if you will, at footnote
12 number 5.

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: Footnote 5 reads as follows:

14 "Although there was some mention of a subculture
15 'Banditos' existing at the ELA Station, the 'Banditos' were not
16 a focus of this investigation, nor were the suspects
17 definitively identified as being part of this subculture.
18 Furthermore, whenever mentioned, the 'Banditos' were simply
19 associated with a group of older, more senior deputies that
20 simply ostracized younger deputies they felt were 'lazy.' At
21 no point in this investigation did any witnesses indicate that
22 the 'Banditos' were equivalent to a gang or any type of
23 criminal enterprise."

24 MR. DEIXLER: And is that a fair summary of what your
25 investigation has determined is the action and behavior of

1 the Banditos?

2 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

3 MR. DEIXLER: And why is that not fair?

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: Because in this specific incident, there
5 was ample evidence that there was prior incidence of -- of
6 the Banditos deputy -- deputies who were members of the
7 Banditos threatening this group in order to have -- have an
8 impact upon their employment opportunities. As we've
9 discussed, the Banditos operated in a gang-like way -- a way
10 that prior to this year could have been described as gang-like,
11 but now must be because of the law that you've already put up.

12 So -- so I think this description of the Banditos is
13 not really having anybody to say they're like a gang, while it
14 might represent the four corners of this -- the document that
15 was submitted to the DA's Office because of the direction of --
16 of Chief/Captain Burson.

17 It doesn't accurately reflect what -- I think even as
18 to that, there was some -- some evidence in it. But it doesn't
19 accurately reflect the state of what the Los Angeles Sheriff's
20 Department knew to be the truth regarding the Banditos at that
21 time and at this time.

22 MR. DEIXLER: So would it be a fair summary to say that
23 the sheriff's department didn't accurately report to the
24 District Attorney the facts it knew regarding the crime that
25 was being investigated?

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe that is more than a fair
2 statement.

3 MR. DEIXLER: Would it be fair to say that the
4 determination of prosecution that -- or non-prosecution made by
5 the District Attorney was based upon the information which was
6 withheld from the District Attorney?

7 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Is that consistent with good law enforcement
9 practice?

10 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a look in this same
12 exhibit at page 11. Again, it's Exhibit 23. It's entitled
13 "Statements of Other LASD Personnel at the Party."

14 MR. HUNTSMAN: I see it.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And that section summarizes that 21 deputies
16 declined to be interviewed.

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: That is correct.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And is it your understanding that that was
19 in addition to the four suspects who also declined to be
20 interviewed?

21 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes. The four suspects would've had a
22 Fifth Amendment right, and it was perfectly appropriate for
23 them to decline. The 21 witnesses did not, as far as I know.

24 MR. DEIXLER: So 25 percipient witnesses were not
25 interviewed. Is that your understanding?

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe that's correct.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And do you know whether the four principal
3 targets actually asserted their Fifth Amendment right, or just
4 declined to be interviewed and were -- weren't compelled?

5 MR. HUNTSMAN: I -- I don't know the answer to that
6 sitting here. And it would be standard practice in any such
7 investigation not to interview them on the assumption that they
8 would assert their Fifth Amendment right. So it is possible
9 they didn't actually have to do it.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Was there any evidence the sheriff tried to
11 compel the deputies to answer the investigator's questions?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: The 21 deputies?

13 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

14 MR. HUNTSMAN: Absolutely no evidence.

15 MR. DEIXLER: Was the lack of cooperation documented in
16 Exhibit 4 and Exhibit 23 by the giving of that instruction not
17 to ask about subgroups a violation of the Penal Code 13670?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

19 MR. DEIXLER: Does the instruction not to ask about the
20 Banditos and the failure to order deputy cooperation violate
21 the Penal Code section other than 13670?

22 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe it does. It certainly, on its
23 face, violates 13670, but I believe it also amounts to
24 obstruction of justice.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And that obstruction of justice, again,

1 is -- rests with Captain Burson and the sheriff, who gave that
2 instruction, as you understand, in Investigator Chow's
3 testimony?

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: If the sheriff gave that instruction.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Speaking of lack of cooperation, let me have
6 you look at Exhibit 5, please.

7 MR. HUNTSMAN: I see Exhibit 5.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Is that a letter dated January 19th, 2022,
9 to the sheriff from you?

10 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And does that letter reference Penal Code
12 Section 13670 and request information?

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: It does.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And the information requested includes names
15 of potential deputy gang members and documents regarding deputy
16 gangs?

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: Among other things, yes.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And did you receive a response from the
19 Undersheriff Murakami on behalf of Sheriff Villanueva?

20 MR. HUNTSMAN: I don't consider it a response because it
21 didn't come from Sheriff Villanueva, and it didn't give us
22 anything. But I did receive a letter from Undersheriff
23 Murakami.

24 MR. DEIXLER: Well, no surprise.

25 Take a look at Exhibit Number 6, a letter dated

1 February 10th, 2022.

2 And -- and is that the -- the non-response response?

3 MR. HUNTSMAN: That's the non-response response.

4 MR. DEIXLER: Did the sheriff authorize the release of any
5 names?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Did the sheriff author -- authorize the
8 release of any documents?

9 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Did the letter threaten you with a
11 defamation claim?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Did you, on March 21st, respond to the
14 February 10th letter?

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: Well, I'll bet that's Exhibit 7. And it
16 is.

17 I did.

18 MR. DEIXLER: What a coincidence.

19 MR. HUNTSMAN: Thank you.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Did you, in that letter, identify by name
21 the potential law enforcement gangs about whom you sought
22 information?

23 MR. HUNTSMAN: I did.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And would you look at page 5 of that letter?

25 MR. HUNTSMAN: You know, in -- oh, yes. Yes. Here it is.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And what were the names of gangs that you
2 wished to obtain information regarding?

3 MR. HUNTSMAN: The ones I specifically listed, although,
4 of course, in our first, it included all potential law
5 enforcement gangs, are the Executioners, the Gladiators, use of
6 a term "old ink and new ink," which I do not know to be a gang
7 as such but makes distinctions within the gangs. Banditos,
8 Regulators, Jump Out Boys, Gladiators, the Grim Reapers, the
9 Vikings, and any other group alleged by anyone to be a
10 potential law enforcement gang.

11 MR. DEIXLER: From March 21st, when you sent that letter,
12 through today, would you share with the commissioners the
13 information that you've received from the sheriff regarding the
14 requested documents?

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: I cannot 'cause I've received nothing.

16 MR. DEIXLER: Have you received a response?

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: I don't recall. I've received many letters
18 at times from the sheriff and the undersheriff, but not ones
19 providing the documents requested.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Under the Penal Code definition that we've
21 been studying in 13670, would you agree the sheriff -- the
22 sheriff has failed to cooperate with any investigation into
23 gangs by an inspector general?

24 MR. HUNTSMAN: I do wholeheartedly agree with that.

25 MR. DEIXLER: In order for the sheriff to appear for a

1 deposition, did your office serve a subpoena?

2 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

3 But not a deposition. Just testimony.

4 MR. DEIXLER: In the first instance, did the sheriff obey
5 the subpoena?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Was your office, through county counsel,
8 forced to bring an enforcement action against the sheriff to
9 enforce that subpoena?

10 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And after the sheriff lost his motion to
12 quash, did he appear?

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: He did.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And did you regard that having to bring
15 motions to force the sitting sheriff of Los Angeles County to
16 testify as his cooperating, as he was required to do under the
17 Penal Code 13670?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: The Penal Code does have an exception that
19 allows people to assert lawful rights. And so there is an
20 argument to be made that on a matter of first impression that
21 it's legitimate for the sheriff to question the right of the
22 inspector general to serve a subpoena. I believe it is rather
23 clear in the Penal Code. And then having appeared the first
24 time, we had to go back to court to get him ordered to swear to
25 tell the truth.

1 So I suppose there's an argument to be made that it
2 would be an assertion of a proper right for the sheriff to
3 claim that having been forced to appear, he didn't have to say
4 he would tell the truth. But a Court disagreed, and he was
5 ordered to apply.

6 I view it as not cooperating, but I think there's an
7 argument to be made that those legal actions might be -- he
8 might be given a pass on those. But he's done other things
9 than that.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and as we go through the hearings,
11 we'll hear more.

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: You may.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Inspector General, let me ask you, when the
14 sheriff did appear, did he testify?

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: Ultimately, yes. Recently, he came and
16 testified. He answered some questions and not others.

17 MR. DEIXLER: And did he -- was he accompanied by lawyers?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

19 MR. DEIXLER: And how many lawyers did he bring with him?

20 MR. HUNTSMAN: Three lawyers, I believe.

21 MR. DEIXLER: One more thing. I read this in the paper,
22 and I thought I'd give you a chance to talk about it.

23 Are you a Holocaust denier?

24 MR. HUNTSMAN: No.

25 MR. DEIXLER: The sheriff has also stated that you're the

1 subject of a criminal investigation.

2 Is the public announcement that a specific person is
3 under investigation a standard police practice?

4 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is almost never done.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And can you imagine why the sheriff of
6 Los Angeles County would accuse the inspector general of being
7 a Holocaust denier and publicly state that he was under
8 investigation?

9 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And what is that reason that you surmise?

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: I believe that I'm the victim of an
12 extortion attempt under 518 of the Penal Code, along with all
13 the other public officials, including those sitting to my left,
14 and those sitting to my right, who are responsible for
15 oversight of the sheriff.

16 Since he was elected, he has engaged in a campaign to
17 threaten and harass anybody who was a critic of his,
18 particularly those who had the actual legal authority to
19 criticize him.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Pass the witness.

21 CHAIR KENNEDY: Are there -- I'm going to invite the
22 Ad Hoc Committee on Deputy Cliques and Gangs to ask any
23 questions, if commissioners would like to. And then I'll --
24 I'll invite my colleagues on the commission as well.

25 COMMISSIONER BONNER: I -- I guess this is a question.

1 I'm not sure it's to the inspector general or to Mr. Deixler.

2 But just listening to the testimony and the
3 instructions that were given by Captain/Commander/Chief Burson,
4 I'm wondering whether it might be appropriate for the Oversight
5 Commission to consider a subpoena to Chief Burson so we can
6 understand -- well, if anyone gave him instructions to order
7 that there be no questions about the Banditos or subcultures at
8 East LA Station. So I guess I'll put that to Mr. Deixler.

9 MR. DEIXLER: Judge Bonner, it is our absolute intention
10 to serve a subpoena and enforce it, if necessary, to have
11 Chief Burson explain the circumstances of the instruction that
12 he gave, but he's not available today.

13 In our next session, or one after that, we'll do all
14 we can to have the chief explain himself.

15 COMMISSIONER BONNER: All -- all I would say is just --
16 it's an observation, but just given us -- given the length of
17 time it's taking this commission to enforce any of its
18 subpoenas, the sooner we issue it, the better. If you -- if
19 you think a witness is going to be necessary at any point
20 during your -- your investigation on behalf of this -- on
21 behalf of the oversight commission.

22 MR. DEIXLER: I'll present a subpoena to the ad hoc
23 subpoena committee this afternoon.

24 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Thank you.

25 MR. HUNTSMAN: And, Your Honor, I will add in that we have

1 also already subpoenaed him in the Office of Inspector General.
2 And since we are conducting a joint investigation, we will make
3 any information he should provide us, should it be enforced,
4 available to this commission.

5 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Thank you, Mr. Huntsman.

6 CHAIR KENNEDY: Lael?

7 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Yes. Early on in this quite
8 enlightening and incredible testimony, Mr. Huntsman, you made
9 reference to the fact that you separately received information
10 about the Regulators.

11 Can you indicate to us what that separately received
12 information and what the source of that was?

13 MR. HUNTSMAN: In general, I can tell you that the
14 Regulators are a well-known group within the sheriff's
15 department, and I've heard multiple references to them.

16 The specific information I'm referring to you, I
17 cannot share because it is privileged under a bunch of
18 privileges, including the attorney-client privilege.

19 I could tell you some things about it, but it
20 wouldn't do any good 'cause the core matters I couldn't convey,
21 other than to say it's something that I learned about prior to
22 the Rand study, and my concerns about it -- my attempts to
23 investigate are part of what triggered the Rand study.

24 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you very much.

25 CHAIR KENNEDY: Any commissioners have any questions?

1 Irma?

2 COMMISSIONER COOPER: My concern is after finding out that
3 a lot of information was not given to the DA, will there be a
4 correction to that?

5 MR. HUNTSMAN: We published in 2020, on our website and
6 also shared with the DA, the description that -- that you have
7 as an exhibit now. And, unfortunately, it did not result in
8 any action by the District Attorney.

9 We did not have the ICIB log at that time. Upon
10 obtaining it, I made sure the DA's Office got it so they are
11 aware of it. This is a public hearing so they'll be aware of
12 this, and what action, if any, they choose to take will be up
13 to them.

14 COMMISSIONER COOPER: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Wouldn't it be correct though,
16 Mr. Huntsman, that the statute of limitations has run on the
17 assaultive behavior that occurred in 2018?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: That is correct, although the statute --
19 it has not run on some other potential crimes that could be
20 charged around it.

21 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Thank you, Inspector Huntsman, for
22 coming and testifying.

23 A question about -- during your investigation, was
24 there any identification of the tattoos and whether they'd get
25 the tattoos together or get the tattoos separately?

1 MR. HUNTSMAN: Generally, we have learned or been told
2 that it works both ways. There are times when an individual
3 will be invited, and he'll generally be taken by one or more
4 other people to a tattoo artist who's provided a template, and
5 then the tattoo is -- is put on.

6 But there also have been what -- what have been
7 referred to as "inking parties." So it is possible that more
8 than one person got a tattoo at a time. But it's most often
9 one tattoo receiver and one or more members of the group that
10 are facilitating that happening.

11 COMMISSIONER HICKS: I was going to ask about the inking
12 parties.

13 The inking parties, is it the same exact tattoo, or
14 is it a similar tattoo?

15 MR. HUNTSMAN: It -- it tends to be pretty exact.

16 The -- you know, this is -- we're talking about a
17 phenomenon that's existed for 50 years, and there's a change in
18 tattoos over that time. So if you wanted to look at the whole
19 thing as a -- as a -- as one single entity, then certainly
20 there are different tattoos. The -- they're -- they're
21 different groups, but as to any particular one, they seem to be
22 very consistent.

23 And it is alleged as to the 2015 incident, and which
24 recently was publicized, a photograph of a tattoo with a bullet
25 hole in it -- a bullet wound, that is alleged to have been the

1 result of a change in that tattoo that was not found acceptable
2 by "old ink" versus "new ink."

3 So there are some instances of change, but they seem
4 to be resisted, and when -- and for the most part, they do not
5 change. There's a sequential number placed next to each
6 tattoo, so that's different. And then eventually that tattoo
7 is left behind and a new tattoo or a new group is started up
8 is -- is what we generally hear.

9 COMMISSIONER HICKS: One of the groups you mentioned, I
10 believe, was 9-9-8.

11 MR. HUNTSMAN: That was mentioned in that memo from
12 20 -- 2004. 9-9-8 is a reference involving police shootings.
13 It's not a group, as such, I don't believe.

14 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Well, that's what I was trying to
15 understand.

16 Is there -- was there a subculture or gang that
17 identified their group as 9-9-8 for only those that were
18 involved in a deputy-involved shooting?

19 MR. HUNTSMAN: Not in that way, to my knowledge.

20 I -- there have been allegations over the years that
21 some of the guns that are displayed in -- in a gang tattoo will
22 have smoke placed on them if you have been involved -- involved
23 in a police shooting. And -- and I've heard allegations that
24 people are forwarded for membership or offered membership as a
25 result of a shooting. But I've never heard an allegation that

1 there is a gang-specific -- that is, members of those who have
2 -- who've been involved in a police shooting.

3 COMMISSIONER HICKS: What about those that have tattoos
4 that say "9-9-8" that were involved in a deputy-involved
5 shooting?

6 MR. HUNTSMAN: It is not -- it is not unheard of for law
7 enforcement to get a tattoo in response to a police shooting.
8 And 9-9-8 would be something they might put on as a tattoo
9 'cause it's universally known that that's -- that's what that
10 means. That's -- that's not unusual. That allegation has been
11 made and confirmed in some instances independent of gang
12 allegations that -- that deputies who were involved, or
13 officers who were involved in this life-or-death situation
14 sometimes place a tattoo on their body to remember it.

15 It has been alleged that has been -- it's an
16 indicator -- inappropriate conduct, and sometimes that it has
17 to do with a near-death experience of their own, but it's not
18 always associated with gangs.

19 It -- the gang association that I've heard mentioned
20 is -- is the smoke on -- on the gun tattoo, but I couldn't say
21 that that doesn't also happen outside the potential gang
22 context.

23 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Thank you, Inspector.

24 CHAIR KENNEDY: Can you use the microphone so that our --
25 we're live streaming.

1 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Thank you, Max.

2 My question is: From your experience and your
3 investigations and your contact with the department, the
4 sheriff has declared -- and I believe it -- it's also on the
5 website -- that he has taken care of whatever remnants from the
6 past of gang behavior, cliques, et cetera, that he's
7 transferred people from one station to another.

8 Do you have any evidence of knowing the people who
9 were transferred, or that actual -- any action specifically
10 related to the issue of the cliques and the gangs that the
11 sheriff has said that he has taken?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: No. I will say there's two -- two
13 qualifications of that. One is he has publicly talked quite a
14 bit about 26 transfers out of East Los Angeles. And in that
15 instance the captain of East LA, during the time in which he
16 described that, has said under oath that those were not
17 Bandito-related transfers.

18 And I happen from -- based on information I've
19 seen, happened to know that some of them were the alleged
20 victims of the Banditos' assault. So I'm pretty sure they
21 weren't transferred to bust up the Banditos; so that one is --
22 is not supported.

23 And -- and then the -- the general answer is no.

24 I'm aware of some people under the sheriff doing some
25 movement around stations because they got wind of a -- of a

1 gang-related issue and wanted to try to improve it. So it's
2 not the case to say that the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department
3 is oblivious to this problem. But the sheriff actually
4 removing the problem, I -- I'm aware of no evidence of that.

5 CHAIR KENNEDY: JP?

6 COMMISSIONER HARRIS: Thank you.

7 Mr. Huntsman, I'm doing a follow-on to
8 Commissioner Cooper's question.

9 Now that we have this new information that there
10 appears to have been some interference in the investigation,
11 is it possible that the Internal Affairs investigation into
12 misconduct wherein the 21 people who didn't -- or refused to be
13 interviewed by ICIB could be compelled to be interviewed by
14 Internal Affairs? Could that investigation be either reopened
15 or a new investigation started to compel them to tell the
16 department what they know about the Banditos?

17 MR. HUNTSMAN: The -- there was, as is usually the case in
18 any law enforcement agency but particularly in the sheriff's
19 department, an internal affairs investigation that followed the
20 internal criminal investigation. And in that investigation
21 many people were compelled, and some Banditos were identified.

22 And that -- and that is the source of when we wrote
23 to the sheriff and told him we wanted information. We
24 specifically pointed out, you know, "You've conducted a couple
25 of the investigations. You've identified 41 potential gang

1 members." And we identified 10 that they identified. There's
2 a lot more Banditos than 10.

3 And I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for the
4 sheriff's department to solve this problem through an internal
5 investigation, but yes, that can certainly be done.

6 COMMISSIONER HARRIS: Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Could I just -- on a follow-on to
8 that question, I'm -- I'm wondering, do we have the names of
9 the 21 deputies who declined to be interviewed? And if we do,
10 should we consider -- I -- I don't need an answer right now,
11 but should we consider subpoenaing them for a public hearing,
12 that is, before this body, the Oversight Commission?

13 I ask you, Mr. Deixler.

14 MR. DEIXLER: I have the names.

15 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Thank you.

16 We'll -- we'll consider that in due course.

17 CHAIR KENNEDY: Lael?

18 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Yes.

19 Mr. Huntsman, in following up from Commissioner
20 Giggans's question and in statements that you've made, you've
21 indicated that there were transfers from East LA Station.

22 What has happened to the -- to the victims in the
23 Bandito complaint and investigation? Are they still at
24 East LA? Are they still with the department?

25 MR. HUNTSMAN: For the most part, they're still with the

1 department. I do not believe they're at East LA, and
2 Vincent Miller, their lawyer, would be the best person to ask
3 about that. I have not tracked where they are at this time.

4 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you.

5 CHAIR KENNEDY: Anyone else?

6 Max, I just have one question. Chief Matthew Burson,
7 isn't he the person who announced at a press conference that he
8 had been appointed by the sheriff to investigate the Banditos
9 and the Executioners and also conduct a comprehensive
10 investigation throughout the entirety of the department about
11 deputy gangs?

12 MR. HUNTSMAN: Yes.

13 CHAIR KENNEDY: Mr. Deixler, I -- I don't think there --

14 COMMISSIONER BONNER: I think you should follow up. And
15 have we ever seen an investigative report from Chief Burson
16 with respect to the existence of deputy cliques, gangs, or
17 exclusionary subgroups?

18 MR. HUNTSMAN: No. Nor am I aware of any such
19 investigation, any internal report. And the interim sheriff,
20 John Scott, made a similar promise years earlier that also
21 wasn't done. So I -- I don't expect that there is such a
22 report.

23 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Mr. Deixler? Next witness.

24 MR. DEIXLER: No further questions.

25 Our next witness is Lieutenant Waldie.

1 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Commissioner Giggans, before you leave, I
3 will tell you that we will have two witnesses today who will --
4 who will answer your question.

5 CHAIR KENNEDY: Could you raise your right hand?

6 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
7 nothing but the truth?

8 MR. WALDIE: I wholeheartedly do.

9 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Good -- good morning, sir.

11 Would you state your name for the record and spell
12 your last name.

13 MR. WALDIE: My name is Larry Andrew Waldie, and my last
14 name is spelled W-a-l-d-i-e.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And, sir, how are you employed?

16 MR. WALDIE: I'm employed by the County of Los Angeles in
17 the capacity of a law enforcement officer, a deputy sheriff.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And what rank do you currently hold in the
19 LASD?

20 MR. WALDIE: I am a lieutenant.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And how long have you been a member of the
22 LASD?

23 MR. WALDIE: A little -- going on over 22 years, sir.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And I understand, sir, that you are a member
25 of LASD royalty. Let me take -- ask you to take a look at

1 Exhibit Number 2, page number 5.

2 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

3 MR. DEIXLER: And let me -- let's make sure we get it up.

4 I've set as my goal for this examination not dropping
5 the exhibit book.

6 Page numbered 5, of Exhibit Number 2, says, "Chief
7 Ronnie Williams has advised myself and Larry Waldie" -- this is
8 the memorandum dated September 13th, 2004 -- "about his efforts
9 in addressing inappropriate and potentially damaging behavior
10 occurring at Century Station."

11 Would I be correct saying that in September of 2004
12 you were not the Larry Waldie who was investigating a gang in
13 Century Station?

14 MR. WALDIE: That's correct, sir.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and who was Larry Waldie?

16 MR. WALDIE: Larry Waldie is my father. He is currently
17 retired as the former undersheriff.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And so here we are, 18 years later,
19 discussing the same subject matter as your dad had investigated
20 at that time. Well, here we go.

21 Could you summarize for us, briefly, your career in
22 the -- the LASD, in the service of the public?

23 MR. WALDIE: I was -- I came on in 2000 as a deputy
24 sheriff from the academy. I worked the jails, essentially
25 responsible for the -- the care, the welfare of the inmates at

1 Century Regional Detention Facility in Lynwood.

2 I went on to do some minor database applications for
3 the department regarding retroactive contracts. I then became
4 a deputy at Compton Station from 2005 to approximately 2009,
5 working also at Compton Station in 2007 to 2009 for the Gang
6 Unit, Operation Safe Streets Bureau, as a gang enforcement
7 deputy. I then promoted to sergeant in 2009, and I was working
8 Lennox Station on the in-field activities.

9 I was then put on loan to the CCJV's recommendation,
10 the Commander Management Task Force, and that was to analyze
11 significant force incidents or any incidents that looked like
12 they might reach a level of high-risk management issues.

13 And then I promoted to lieutenant, and I -- I did a
14 couple gigs, one up in NCCF -- North Correctional Facility and
15 then Risk-Management Lieutenant, analyzing trends, and
16 reporting on them for managers, unit commanders, within custody
17 facilities. And then I became the operations lieutenant at
18 Twin Towers for a little over a year. Then I came back to
19 Compton as a lieutenant in 2017.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Okay. And I should ask when you first made
21 lieutenant?

22 MR. WALDIE: That was approximately 2013.

23 MR. DEIXLER: And what were the circumstances of your
24 returning to the Compton Station where you had been from 2005
25 to 2009?

1 MR. WALDIE: Well, I was -- I was asked to stay by my --
2 who's now a chief -- my -- my captain, Laura Lecrivain. She
3 said that I had a promising career there in custody 'cause I
4 did a great job for her. However, I wanted to learn the ropes
5 as a field lieutenant; so I put in a transfer to go to patrol,
6 start over again from the bottom.

7 MR. DEIXLER: When you were at Compton, sir, who was the
8 captain in charge?

9 MR. WALDIE: His name is Michael Thatcher. He was the
10 captain at the time I arrived there.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And I should ask, for purposes of candor, do
12 you have a tattoo?

13 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And what is the tattoo associated with?

15 MR. WALDIE: It is associated with a group of deputies
16 from Compton Station, as Mr. Huntsman had placed in a memo.
17 The name is the Gladiators, and it was associated with,
18 essentially, serving the community, hard work, the ability
19 to -- the ability to teach others, share information with
20 others, and do the right thing.

21 MR. DEIXLER: When did you obtain your tattoo as a
22 Gladiator?

23 MR. WALDIE: I believe it was in 2007 after about two
24 years working Compton Station.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And when you arrived at Compton Station as a

1 lieutenant, what were your duties?

2 MR. WALDIE: I was a watch commander on early morning
3 shift, which is graveyard shift.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And are you familiar with the term "shot
5 caller"?

6 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

7 MR. DEIXLER: And what does that term mean within the
8 context of the department?

9 MR. WALDIE: A shot caller is a term, as I heard in
10 previous testimony, that is given to someone within a gang,
11 someone that wields extreme power, and essentially calls the
12 shots for a subset or a specific gang.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And during the time you were at Compton
14 Station, was there a shot caller?

15 MR. WALDIE: Yes.

16 MR. DEIXLER: And who was that shot caller?

17 MR. WALDIE: His name was Jaime Juarez.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And did Jaime Juarez belong to a deputy
19 clique?

20 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And what clique was that?

22 MR. WALDIE: That clique has come to be known as -- lack
23 of a name that I know of, it's been widespread in the media,
24 called the Executioners.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And during the time you were at Compton

1 Station when Jaime Juarez was the shot caller, were there other
2 Executioners other than Deputy Juarez?

3 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And about how many Executioners were there
5 at the Compton Station during the time that you were there?

6 MR. WALDIE: I -- I'm -- off the top of my head, a guess
7 would probably be about 10 to 15 that I knew of.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Can you recall the names of any Executioners
9 who were there at the time you were?

10 MR. WALDIE: I can name a few.

11 Let's see. Anthony Bautista, Jaime Juarez, Edgar
12 Cuevas, David Navarrete. Let's see.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Was a -- was a Deputy Barajas an
14 Executioner?

15 MR. WALDIE: Yes. I found out, ultimately later, that he
16 had been -- in fact, was a member of the Executioners.

17 MR. DEIXLER: What about Deputy Ingersoll? Was he a -- an
18 Executioner?

19 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

20 MR. DEIXLER: As you understood it, was membership in the
21 Executioners opened to people of any gender or race?

22 MR. WALDIE: As far as I understood, and I don't
23 understand where they develop their qualifications for
24 inclusion into their -- their group, but no, I did not know of
25 any women or hear of any -- any blacks, specifically, that were

1 included.

2 MR. DEIXLER: How did the Executioners, if they did,
3 exercise power or influence in the Compton Station?

4 MR. WALDIE: Well, Jaime Juarez was called the shot caller
5 because of -- as Mr. Huntsman mentioned, I believe it was
6 Mr. Stonich had actually written that they had influence over
7 scheduling, overtime, days off, specific -- specialized
8 positions as well as held certain positions within the station
9 that -- that were influential, such as Detective Bureau and
10 training officers.

11 MR. DEIXLER: By the way, do training officers get paid an
12 increased amount of money from a deputy who is not a training
13 officer?

14 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and how much, in addition, does a
16 training officer get?

17 MR. WALDIE: I believe when you're a senior training
18 officer that's pretty much top step after a year of training
19 someone. But best to my knowledge, it's about 10 to 12 percent
20 increase in pay per month.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And so being a training officer is a
22 financially valuable as well as powerful position in -- in the
23 Compton Station at the time you were there?

24 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

25 MR. DEIXLER: Did the Executioners have tattoos?

1 MR. WALDIE: Yes.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a look at Exhibit
3 Number 8, and I'm going to ask you whether that represents an
4 Executioner tattoo.

5 MR. WALDIE: Come to be my understanding that that is, in
6 fact, the insignia that they -- they place on -- on their body.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Well, let's go back -- I want to see the
8 flags. There are two flags.

9 Do you -- what's the one on the left?

10 MR. WALDIE: Left appears to be a pro law enforcement thin
11 blue line as well as pro military flag.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And the one on the right?

13 MR. WALDIE: That appears to be that -- that group at
14 Compton Station.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And is it your understanding those flags are
16 on Deputy Jaime Juarez' vehicle?

17 MR. WALDIE: That is correct.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And let me ask you to take a look at
19 Exhibit Number 9 so we can hone in on an Executioner. That's a
20 publicly published photo of a Deputy Aldana.

21 Was he a deputy in Compton Station when you were?

22 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

23 MR. DEIXLER: And was he a member of the Executioners?

24 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And is that an accurate depiction of what an

1 Executioner tattoo looks like?

2 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir. It's the tattoo he described as
3 having when he was deposed by -- by an attorney regarding a
4 civil lawsuit.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And that's the same tattoo as appears on the
6 flag that we just looked at for Deputy Juarez?

7 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

8 MR. DEIXLER: You've talked about the positions that were
9 occupied by the Executioners which were powerful, and let me
10 focus first on the scheduling deputy position.

11 Who was the scheduling deputy of Compton in 2018 and
12 2019?

13 MR. WALDIE: His name is Jaime Juarez.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And, in your experience, why is that a
15 powerful position?

16 MR. WALDIE: Because he essentially controls deputies,
17 everyone working on the line there, you know, their livelihood:
18 Overtime, as I mentioned, great spots, recommendations for
19 being on loan, items that -- that come up, like, essentially,
20 like, training NDB to -- for -- for deputies to acquire more
21 skills.

22 MR. DEIXLER: And are there parts of the area covered by
23 the Compton Station which are desirable or less desirable?

24 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And what would be an example of a less

1 desirable spot?

2 MR. WALDIE: There are a couple. One would be a traffic
3 unit. No deputy that comes to Compton Station that I know of
4 wants to work traffic. They want to make a difference, make a
5 dent in -- in crime; however, that difference is according to
6 their moral compass. However, there is also a -- a -- a spot,
7 which is a town center, which is guarding a commercial
8 shopping center.

9 MR. DEIXLER: Mall cop job, in effect?

10 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Okay.

12 That would be undesirable position, I gather?

13 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with the term "fast
15 station"?

16 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

17 MR. DEIXLER: And what is the term "fast station" in the
18 lexicon of -- of the LASD mean?

19 MR. WALDIE: Well, our -- our definition of a "fast
20 station" would be a station that sees a high amount of violent
21 crime.

22 MR. DEIXLER: And was Compton considered a "fast station"?

23 MR. WALDIE: Definitely.

24 MR. DEIXLER: Before going to a patrol station, is it the
25 general practice of the LASD that deputies work in the jails?

1 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And was there a particular location in the
3 Men's Central Jail which was regarded as a path to a fast
4 station?

5 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir. I had heard there were a couple
6 floors.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Did the Executioners you knew of generally
8 come from the 3000 floor of Men's Central Jail?

9 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

10 MR. DEIXLER: You heard Inspector Huntsman refer to the
11 3000 Boys and the CCJV.

12 Is it fair to say that the 3000 floor, Men's Central
13 Jail, served as a feeder to -- for Executioners in the Compton
14 Station?

15 MR. WALDIE: For the most part, yes.

16 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know whether the Citizens' Commission
17 on Jail Violence specifically identified the 3000 Boys as
18 particularly dangerous who needed to be broken up?

19 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

20 MR. DEIXLER: I'd like to turn your attention to 2019 at
21 Compton Station. What position did you hold in 2019 at Compton
22 Station?

23 MR. WALDIE: As of the end of 2018, starting in,
24 officially, January 2019, I was made the de facto captain of
25 Compton Station, called the acting captain.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And did there come a time when Deputy Juarez
2 was going to leave the Compton Station, and his position as
3 scheduling deputy needed to be filled by somebody else?

4 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And did you have a discussion with Deputy
6 Juarez about a successor for him as scheduling deputy?

7 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And where did that conversation take place?

9 MR. WALDIE: It took place in my office.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And was it initiated by him or initiated by
11 you?

12 MR. WALDIE: He approached me, sir.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And would you tell me and all the people
14 here what was said by Deputy Juarez on the occasion of his
15 getting ready to leave the Compton Station?

16 MR. WALDIE: Deputy Juarez was -- it was intended that he
17 stay at Compton Station. He was being released to the field
18 because, under a previous administration, he was involved in
19 a -- a large number of deputy-involved shootings, 9-9-8s. And
20 when the sheriff took power, Mr. Murakami, the undersheriff,
21 granted him his ability to go back to patrol.

22 And he asked me first before this meeting if he could
23 stay in scheduling -- he wanted to maintain his power is what I
24 assume -- and I sent it up the chain of command, and they said,
25 no, he had to go back to the line, work as a deputy. And he --

1 MR. DEIXLER: Let me make sure I understand it before we
2 get into it further.

3 He had been relieved of responsibility as a patrol
4 deputy because he had been involve- -- been involved in
5 shootings?

6 MR. WALDIE: He had been relegated to a non-field spot,
7 low-risk management. No contact with the public.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Okay. But remained an LASD deputy with
9 responsible power as a scheduling deputy in a fast station at
10 Compton.

11 Do I understand you so far correctly?

12 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir. He was told not to wear his
13 uniform outside the station.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Okay.

15 So please return, if you will, to the narrative of
16 Deputy Juarez and you in your office on that occasion.

17 MR. WALDIE: When I explained to him that he -- he had to
18 go back to the field, according to the chief and according to
19 Chief Vera, he returned shortly after -- I forget exactly when;
20 it was within a couple weeks -- and announced that he had
21 suggestions for his replacement.

22 MR. DEIXLER: And so Deputy Juarez, who was now being
23 removed from one position to be returned to another, offered
24 the opportunity to advise you as the acting captain who he
25 thought would be up to the task of being the scheduling deputy

1 at Compton.

2 Do I understand that correctly?

3 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And what did Deputy Juarez suggest?

5 MR. WALDIE: Deputy Juarez suggests -- had a list of about
6 10 -- 10 individuals who were, as I could see based on being
7 there for the last year-and-a-half, two years, were loyal to
8 him.

9 MR. DEIXLER: And by "loyal to him," do you mean members
10 of the Executioners?

11 MR. WALDIE: Some of them, yes; some of them, I assumed
12 that were more intimidated and would follow his orders.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and given his suggestion of this
14 group of 10, what was your response, sir?

15 MR. WALDIE: I told him that I was -- I appreciated his
16 suggestion but that I was going to ensure that the station had
17 a scheduling deputy that had no affiliation with any tattoo,
18 including my own, for the fairness of the community, for the
19 fairness of the station because of morale and because of public
20 safety. I did not want that to trickle over into the public,
21 and I -- and he told me that -- well, and that's -- that's what
22 I told him. I said, "Thank you, but no thank you."

23 MR. DEIXLER: And what did he say in response?

24 MR. WALDIE: He said that the guys on the line are telling
25 me that if you do not obey this or follow this request that we

1 are going to initiate a work slowdown.

2 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Initiate the what?

3 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Work slowdown.

4 MR. WALDIE: A work slowdown.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And what does a work slowdown mean in the
6 context of the sheriff's department in Los Angeles County?

7 MR. WALDIE: Well, it's -- it's an exactly -- the way I
8 describe it is it's a -- it's doing less police work
9 proactively, only taking calls for service. And when you do
10 take those calls for service, you ensure that your service is
11 diminished by longer response times for non-priority calls,
12 non-emergent calls, as well as not having a police presence,
13 allowing crime to rise within the community.

14 MR. DEIXLER: During the month of March 2019, was there a
15 slowdown?

16 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

17 MR. DEIXLER: And during the month of March 2019, was
18 there an increase in crime in the area patrolled by Compton
19 deputies?

20 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

21 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a look at exhibit
22 numbered 19.

23 And is this a document that is a document that is
24 obtained from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department?

25 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And it is a document that reflects crime in
2 the city of Compton -- the top part being from August 2017
3 through July 31st, 2018, and the second being from August 1st,
4 2018, through July 31st, 2019?

5 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Would you -- we're focused on a slowdown in
7 March when you say crime increased.

8 First, you had involvement, didn't you, in your
9 career in creation of datasets?

10 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And how much time did you spend analyzing
12 data?

13 MR. WALDIE: I -- I would say I built databases for a
14 couple years prior to coming to Patrol. And then as a
15 risk-management lieutenant, approximately a year analyzing data
16 trends -- sets.

17 MR. DEIXLER: So you were familiar with the analysis of
18 data before we get to this document; is that fair?

19 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

20 MR. DEIXLER: So would you tell me -- first, let's look
21 at -- I guess I should ask how long the slowdown lasted?

22 MR. WALDIE: It lasted approximately four weeks, maybe a
23 little longer.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And that was in the month of March of 2019?

25 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

1 MR. DEIXLER: Okay.

2 So let's take a look, if we can, at the crime
3 statistics for February, the month preceding the slowdown,
4 and -- and contrast that with the numbers of crimes reported in
5 the month of March.

6 How did those numbers compare?

7 MR. WALDIE: Well, it almost doubled.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And how does the March of 2019 compare to
9 the March of 2018?

10 MR. WALDIE: That number is significantly higher.
11 Twenty-one more major crimes.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And after the slowdown ended in early April,
13 what happened to the number of committed crimes in the city of
14 Compton Station?

15 MR. WALDIE: They went down dramatically.

16 MR. DEIXLER: And so was it your observation in real time
17 that there was a slowdown of work in March 2019 that led to a
18 rise in crime?

19 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

20 Before I received this data, I was being told by
21 certain individuals within the station they had pertinent
22 knowledge that -- that a work slowdown had, in fact,
23 occurred -- was occurring.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And let me ask you to take a look at exhibit
25 numbered 11. And that is another official document of the

1 LA Sheriff's Department reporting arrests from January 2018 and
2 January 2019 through March 31st of 2018 and 2019?

3 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And taking a look at the number of arrests
5 in February of 2019 -- I guess we can start in January. Start
6 in January of 2019 through February of 2019 and then look at
7 March. What was the trend prior to March of 2019?

8 MR. WALDIE: It appears the -- the arrests were high, and
9 they began to -- as I have mentioned, the end of February,
10 early March, when the work slowdown was -- was alleged to have
11 started, it started to drop from January to February, and then
12 there was a significant drop of over 100 arrests in the month
13 of March.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Other than the work slowdown initiated by
15 the Executioners, do you know of a legitimate reason for why
16 there would be declining arrests in the midst of a crime wave?

17 MR. WALDIE: I don't know of any other reason based on my
18 experience and based on analyzing the numbers of why this
19 happened.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Was -- was the conduct of a work slowdown by
21 sworn officers consistent with the fundamental principles of
22 professional policing?

23 MR. WALDIE: It was definitely incongruent with the
24 fundamentals of professional policing.

25 MR. DEIXLER: Is there an effect upon the community with

1 increased crime and a police slowdown?

2 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

3 MR. DEIXLER: And how would you describe that?

4 MR. WALDIE: I would say that public safety is
5 jeopardized.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know whether deputies who didn't wish
7 to slow down work were harassed or otherwise pressured to do
8 so?

9 MR. WALDIE: I know of a specific incident, yes, sir.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Would you share that with the commission.

11 MR. WALDIE: I was told that Deputy Ingersoll approached a
12 deputy that refused to slow down and be proactive, and this
13 deputy specifically was told, when he brought a gun arrest into
14 the station, that he was not to bring gun arrests into the
15 station. But he asked him -- Deputy Indersoll asked this
16 deputy if he understood that there was a work slowdown. And he
17 said he did but that he didn't operate in the manner that they
18 did.

19 MR. DEIXLER: And Deputy Ingersoll, you testified earlier,
20 was a -- an Executioner; correct?

21 MR. WALDIE: Yes.

22 MR. DEIXLER: Now, while this slowdown was going on, were
23 there communications in real time that memorialized the fact of
24 the slowdown?

25 MR. WALDIE: Yes.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And let me ask you to take a look at exhibit
2 numbered 12. And for reasons of confidentiality, we have
3 redacted the names of the participant.

4 MR. WALDIE: Sir, there is a name up there right now.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Not here (inaudible) --

6 MR. WALDIE: On the -- up there too, in -- within the text
7 message.

8 MR. DEIXLER: I thought we had -- well, I apologize for
9 it. We'll -- we'll -- I won't ask you about the name of the
10 individual. But tell me, if you will, what this text message
11 reflects.

12 MR. WALDIE: Basically I'm asking this individual to get
13 me the tag number for a 415 business call that, too, I later
14 identified as Executioners weren't responding to in time.
15 They -- they had to be texted, from what I heard. They had to
16 be texted to essentially handle their call.

17 MR. DEIXLER: So let me understand this. It would have
18 been a radio call asking for assistance of a patrol unit?

19 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

20 MR. DEIXLER: And there was no response to it?

21 MR. WALDIE: Right. There was a disturbance at a
22 business, and there was no response, I believe, for over 45
23 minutes.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And so the deputies involved had to receive
25 a text in order to get them to do their job?

1 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And is that consistent with fundamental
3 principles of professional policing?

4 MR. WALDIE: Definitely not.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to look at the third page of
6 this exchange of emails -- texts. I'm sorry.

7 Is the top portion "I'll keep my eye and ear open"
8 written by you or written by the person with whom you were
9 communicating?

10 MR. WALDIE: This is a person whom I was communicating
11 with. And I was asking this individual if I could -- if they
12 had any proof, as well as what I had heard about lack -- a lack
13 of proper response, they had any information related to the
14 work slowdown.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And so you were asking for the accumulation
16 of certain statistics --

17 MR. WALDIE: Yes.

18 MR. DEIXLER: -- is that right?

19 MR. WALDIE: Certain statistics or any type of information
20 that could lead me in the right direction as to who was
21 being -- who was involved in this and the operation of the work
22 slowdown.

23 MR. DEIXLER: And the person -- the member of the
24 department that you're asking to provide this information
25 writes, "But please, between you and I, this could ruin my

1 career. I don't want my name mentioned at all. Please. I
2 can't have that."

3 And you respond "Copy. Thanks. Will do. I
4 understand you're risking a lot, and I appreciate it. I
5 wouldn't do that to you."

6 In that exchange, what did you understand the person
7 with whom you were discussing was fearful of?

8 MR. WALDIE: This individual was fearful of that group,
9 being uncovered as someone that was doing the right thing and
10 would be potentially retaliated against.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And is that a reflection of the culture of
12 the Compton Station in 2019?

13 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And is this kind of reluctance to provide
15 information requested by a superior for fear of retaliation
16 consistent with fundamental principles of professional
17 policing?

18 MR. WALDIE: I'm sorry. Can you say that again?

19 MR. DEIXLER: Yes. Is the -- is the fear of providing
20 requested information consistent with the fundamental
21 principles of professional policing?

22 MR. WALDIE: No, sir.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a look at exhibit
24 numbered 13, which is an email from you dated April 1st, 2019,
25 to Captain Thatcher.

1 And do you have it in front of you --

2 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir, I do.

3 MR. DEIXLER: You'll observe we've redacted the names that
4 you describe.

5 What -- what did this email relate to?

6 MR. WALDIE: This email was essentially my documentation
7 after I was rebuffed, or at least my efforts to inform him that
8 there was a work slowdown were rebuffed. He had told me that,
9 you know, there could be some other explanation. Let's wait
10 'til the numbers come in in April, which I -- which they did.
11 So this was a formal documentation to notify him that I was
12 proceeding further with an inquiry, and these were some
13 individuals that I had in mind.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And in the very first line you say, "FYI.
15 Arrest stats are lower than last year's March numbers, which in
16 2018 had increased from the prior month. Also, they are
17 trending lower in Feb and March of this year. Jaime came to me
18 near the end of February."

19 And who is the Jaime to whom you make reference in
20 Exhibit 13?

21 MR. WALDIE: I was referring to the scheduling deputy, a
22 shot caller.

23 MR. DEIXLER: And let me ask you to take a look at exhibit
24 numbered 14. And that is an April 8th, 2019, email from you to
25 Captain Thatcher.

1 Let -- I should ask: Was -- was Thatcher still a
2 captain, or had he been promoted as of this time that you were
3 communicating with him?

4 MR. WALDIE: When he -- when he was promoted to commander,
5 as soon as Sheriff Villanueva took office, essentially, about
6 three weeks later I was made the captain of Compton Station, so
7 he was now my commander. He still directly oversaw Compton
8 Station.

9 MR. DEIXLER: So we learned that Sheriff Villanueva became
10 the -- became the sheriff in December 3rd of 2018, and you
11 were -- you became the acting captain as of January 2019?

12 MR. WALDIE: Unofficially end of December, he --
13 Captain Thatcher had taken a couple of weeks off. He had heard
14 that he was going to be promoted. So -- but, yes, officially,
15 it was January 4th of 2019, yes, sir.

16 MR. DEIXLER: Okay.

17 And -- and then Captain, but soon-to-be Commander
18 Thatcher had been promoted by Sheriff Villanueva; correct?

19 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

20 MR. DEIXLER: As of this time in -- of the promotion of
21 then Commander Thatcher, was there any question that people
22 were aware of the role of the Executioners in Compton?

23 MR. WALDIE: No.

24 MR. DEIXLER: Was it a secret that there had been a
25 gang-like behavior involving the Executioners as of the time

1 this captain was promoted to commander by Sheriff Villanueva?

2 MR. WALDIE: It was no secret. Deputy Aldana had in
3 2018 and -- and I believe it was my allow from the LA Times
4 that published that story expressing or demonstrating that
5 there was a clique at Compton Station with that tattoo involved
6 in the shooting of Donta Taylor.

7 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and notwithstanding the fact of the
8 knowledge and -- and Thatcher was the captain during that
9 period; is that so --

10 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And notwithstanding the public knowledge of
12 the involvement of the Executioners, Captain Thatcher was
13 promoted by the sheriff to commander.

14 Do I understand that correctly?

15 MR. WALDIE: That's correct, sir.

16 MR. DEIXLER: Okay.

17 So we're back to Exhibit 14, which is an email from
18 you to, I guess, Commander Thatcher.

19 "I heard they called off the work slowdown. I'm
20 hearing his support was dwindling."

21 So that's an email that you sent to the commander; is
22 that true?

23 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And when you make reference to "his
25 support," to whom were you referring?

1 MR. WALDIE: I was referring to Jaime Juarez.

2 MR. DEIXLER: So it's fair to say that by the first week
3 of April or so that the slowdown had -- had ended.

4 MR. WALDIE: That's as far as I understood it, yes.

5 MR. DEIXLER: When you say, "His support was dwindling,"
6 what do you mean by "support dwindling"?

7 MR. WALDIE: Well, I -- I felt there were -- the -- the
8 fact that he was no longer a scheduling deputy and he was
9 assigned to the line and I had a -- a female operating as the
10 scheduling deputy with no affiliation with any tattoo -- she
11 was impartial -- that he had no ability to coerce anyone to do
12 as he said.

13 And I felt also there -- there might have been some
14 collusion between the commander, most likely, after my email
15 seven days prior telling him -- telling Jaime Juarez that this
16 guy is onto you and -- and you better knock it off quickly.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a look at Exhibit
18 Number 15. And that is an email from you to -- is it
19 commander?

20 MR. WALDIE: That -- that is now Chief Lecrivain. But at
21 the time a lieutenant who was attempting -- well, was planning
22 on interviewing for Compton Station captain during the
23 interview process.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And what was the purpose of your sending
25 that email to now Chief Lecrivain?

1 MR. WALDIE: Well, I -- to be completely honest, I -- I --
2 she asked for stats so that she could understand, you know,
3 the -- the current state of crime within Compton, if she was to
4 be asked these stats during an interview with stakeholders --
5 city stakeholders.

6 I -- I threw in there, on purpose, because I didn't
7 feel like I was supported by executive level, that there was a
8 work slowdown. I was letting her know that there was a work
9 slowdown. She was the operations lieutenant a couple
10 operations lieutenants before me; so I thought she would take
11 an interest in that.

12 MR. DEIXLER: You say you didn't feel supported by
13 executive level. What did you mean by that?

14 MR. WALDIE: I felt that Commander Thatcher was operate --
15 undermining me and essentially supporting these individuals
16 that were violating 13670.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you to take a quick look at
18 exhibit numbered 16.

19 And am I correct that those are public documents that
20 reflect a collection of reports involving four separate
21 officer-involved shootings by Deputy Juarez?

22 MR. WALDIE: Give me a second, sir, Mr. Deixler. I will
23 quickly verify that.

24 Yes. They appear to be the reports that I saw during
25 a shooting analysis committee.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And do they reflect four shootings by him in
2 the period 2006 to 2015?

3 MR. WALDIE: It appears so, sir.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And in your experience is that a -- an usual
5 number of shootings for a deputy?

6 MR. WALDIE: My personal experience, yes.

7 MR. DEIXLER: And -- well, you are a 22-year career LASD
8 officer. How many officer-involved shootings have you been
9 involved in?

10 MR. WALDIE: None.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Was Deputy Juarez initially removed from
12 Patrol?

13 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Was he returned to the streets when Sheriff
15 Villanueva took office?

16 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Would you take a look at exhibit numbered
18 22. And what is Exhibit Number 22?

19 MR. WALDIE: Exhibit Number 22 is a -- an
20 investigator/deputy list. It was promulgated on -- a few days
21 ago on the 20th of May. And it lists Jaime Juarez as the
22 number two -- well, second individual -- second highest-scoring
23 individual for a detective position within the department.

24 MR. DEIXLER: So is this a list that was published on
25 Friday regarding promotions in the LASD?

1 MR. WALDIE: Well, yes. It was those who were eligible
2 for promotion based on this test, these candidates. Yes, sir.

3 MR. DEIXLER: Let me make sure.

4 Is this the same number 2 here -- is this the same
5 Jaime Juarez, the Executioner, who led the slowdown and has
6 been involved in at least four officer-involved shootings?

7 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

8 MR. DEIXLER: During the time that you were at the station
9 in Compton, was an Executioner involvement in a shooting
10 something that was celebrated, to your knowledge?

11 MR. WALDIE: I did not initially know that, but I --
12 ultimately, in July of 2019, after a deputy-involved shooting,
13 I found out that that was the case.

14 MR. DEIXLER: What is a 9-9-8 debrief?

15 MR. WALDIE: I -- I would liken it to from what I -- what
16 was explained to me by the individual telling me about it
17 happening, or it was to happen in real time, that it was a
18 celebration of a shooting.

19 MR. DEIXLER: Would you take a look at Exhibit Number 17,
20 please.

21 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

22 MR. DEIXLER: So the -- these are texts between you and --
23 and whom?

24 MR. WALDIE: So an unidentified -- another source had
25 texted me, and you'll see the screenshot embedded in this page,

1 and it was to Commander Thatcher sending him that screenshot.

2 MR. DEIXLER: "Nothing urgent. I was just wondering if
3 Juarez had invited you to Ingersoll and Barajas' 9-9-8 debrief?
4 That's all."

5 And -- and what did you understand that to mean?

6 MR. WALDIE: I didn't understand at first. I -- I was
7 asking this individual what debrief, Juarez, like, as in
8 "What's going on with him?" Like, "What's he organizing?"

9 And he goes on to explain "Celebration."

10 MR. DEIXLER: And you -- you previously identified
11 deputies Ingersoll and Barajas as Executioners.

12 Did I understand that portion of your testimony
13 correctly?

14 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And let me ask you, if you would, to turn
16 the page in this exhibit.

17 "I'll see if I can find out. Since it's in my town,
18 I'd like to know if you can find out."

19 "Copy. I'm trying right now."

20 "Don't worry if you can't."

21 What did you find out was to be the location of the
22 celebration of a shooting by two deputies who were
23 Executioners?

24 MR. WALDIE: I had found out that information given to me
25 that it was going to be at Heroes Sports Bar and Grill in

1 downtown Fullerton.

2 MR. DEIXLER: As an acting captain, would such a
3 celebration of a shooting be of concern to you?

4 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Why?

6 MR. WALDIE: Well, you -- you know, in this particular
7 instance, these deputies, when they came across this vehicle
8 that they were ultimately involved in a shooting with, they had
9 knowledge -- prior knowledge from a day before that the same
10 vehicle -- this -- this vehicle, matching the description of a
11 drive-by shooting nearby, couple blocks over, and resulted in
12 multiple AK-47 rounds being sprayed at a house.

13 They knew this as they were detaining an individual
14 on the street, and this vehicle passed by them.

15 I thought it was concerning that they initiated a
16 pursuit of this vehicle after throwing this detainee in their
17 backseat and driving this detainee in a two-to-four-minute
18 pursuit as they're taking rounds from an AK-47.

19 I also found it concerning that someone would be
20 celebrating this shooting after a Ricky Starks, a uninvolved
21 bystander civilian, was shot and killed by the AK-47 fire, from
22 what I understand.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Did you bring the fact of this celebration
24 by the Executioners to the attention of anybody superior to you
25 in the LASD?

1 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir. To Commander Thatcher.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And what was Captain Thatcher's willingness
3 to rein in this behavior?

4 MR. WALDIE: He essentially told me it shouldn't be a
5 problem, that they couldn't get too rowdy.

6 MR. DEIXLER: And, again, when Sheriff Villanueva took
7 office, what happened to Captain Thatcher?

8 MR. WALDIE: He was promoted to commander.

9 MR. DEIXLER: After you left Compton, were there other
10 officers -- officer-involved shootings involving Executioners?

11 MR. WALDIE: After I left Compton as a Lieutenant?

12 Yes, sir.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and what do you know about other
14 Executioner-involved shootings after you left Compton?

15 MR. WALDIE: Well, I -- I don't know if they were
16 specifically Executioners. I had heard that they were
17 prospects. These were individuals that worked 3000 floor back
18 in the day.

19 And yes, there was a shooting of Andres Guardado in
20 June of 2020.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And when you say, "prospects," what do you
22 mean by that?

23 MR. WALDIE: From -- from what I understood from
24 deposition of Austreberto Gonzalez that these -- these were
25 individuals that were trying to attain a tattoo from this

1 unlawful clique, this specific one at Compton Station.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Now, Lieutenant, you have filed a lawsuit
3 and a grievance against the County of Los Angeles.

4 Do I understand that correctly?

5 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

6 MR. DEIXLER: And is one of your complaints that you
7 believe you were blocked for promotion because you stood up to
8 the Executioners?

9 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And is it your belief that the Executioners
11 are being protected by the command staff of the LASD?

12 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And does that include the Undersheriff
14 Murakami and Sheriff Villanueva?

15 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

16 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you this: As a 22-year veteran
17 of the department, the son of a man who devoted his
18 professional life to the department, how do you feel about
19 working in an organization which tolerates and perhaps rewards
20 gang behavior?

21 MR. WALDIE: Well, I'll -- I'll tell you, I'm -- I'm
22 disheartened. This is a calling for me, a noble cause. My
23 father instituted or instilled in me values that he learned,
24 and I learned also. We're a Catholic family.

25 And I felt that this was a -- it's essentially

1 spitting in the face of -- as Mr. -- as -- as you, actually,
2 sir, mentioned, the majority of these deputies in our
3 department are good individuals who do the right thing. I
4 think that's a slap in the face of -- of that work and that
5 calling.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Thank you for your testimony.

7 I pass the witness.

8 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

9 Are there any questions from the Ad Hoc Committee on
10 deputy cliques and gangs?

11 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Yes.

12 CHAIR KENNEDY: Lael.

13 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: First of all, I want to thank you,
14 Lieutenant Waldie, for your very insightful, and what must be
15 very difficult for you, your testimony today. It is evident
16 from your voice and your body language that this is not easy
17 and you have a lot of concerns.

18 Understanding that you have filed a complaint, do you
19 have any immediate fear of retaliation to you and your family
20 as a result of your filing of the complaint and of your
21 testifying here?

22 MR. WALDIE: Yes. Rightly so, ma'am. I do.

23 I -- I have seen that individuals such as yourselves
24 have been retaliated against publicly, without any fear.

25 And I am actually not external to this department;

1 I'm internal. So I think I'm in -- within closer reach of any
2 type of retaliation, whether it be a -- putting a case on me,
3 initiating an investigation on me for whatever reason that
4 might pop up and yeah, definitely for my family.

5 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: And what about fear of your safety
6 and the safety of your family?

7 MR. WALDIE: I -- I -- I feel fear because I don't know at
8 what lengths individuals might go. I -- I like to believe that
9 people would not follow orders if they came from the top,
10 any -- any -- to enact any violence against my family, but I
11 mean, it's always a possibility. So it's -- it's -- it's a
12 fear in the back of my mind, yes.

13 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you very much.

14 CHAIR KENNEDY: Anyone else?

15 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Thank you so much for being here
16 today. I might have missed it, but what is your role right
17 now, status in the department?

18 MR. WALDIE: I -- I -- after I was -- my opportunity to
19 interview for the position that I was doing -- managing for
20 about 10 months as the captain, I wasn't allowed to interview.

21 So I -- I was chosen by a specialized unit, and
22 Mr. Murakami squashed that. He told them to take the number
23 two, not the number one, which I was, choice for specialized
24 unit. So I decided to take care of my body, which was a fusion
25 surgery.

1 And when I came back from fusion -- fusion surgery
2 in -- after about a-year-and-a-half off, I was -- I -- I
3 transferred voluntarily 'cause I didn't want to go back to
4 Compton as a watch commander on the line.

5 So, essentially, a demotion but, I mean, I love it.
6 I'm making a difference there with the deputies, and I do that
7 as a watch commander on the line on dayshift in Marina del Rey.

8 CHAIR KENNEDY: Jamon, you had a question.

9 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Thank you, again, Lieutenant, for
10 your testimony. A few follow-up questions.

11 I know some of the emails that we've seen reflect
12 back to 2019. Is it your position that still in 2022 the
13 Executioners exist?

14 MR. WALDIE: Yes. These individuals are still in the
15 department, from my understanding.

16 Jaime Juarez and a couple of other ones that were
17 involved in some incidents after I left, specifically a TMZ
18 video with Dalvin Price in Compton, these individuals have been
19 scattered and are awaiting the investigation at Compton
20 regarding deputy cliques. And I have no idea where they're at,
21 other than I know Jaime Juarez is at Logistics handing out
22 equipment. But yes, I mean, they still have a tattoo, you
23 know, and they're still in the department.

24 COMMISSIONER HICKS: And I know we've -- we've seen
25 emails about the report -- or not emails -- we've seen the

1 reports of Mr. Jaime Juarez as far as officer-involved
2 shootings. But are there other uses of force that he's been
3 involved in outside of just shootings?

4 MR. WALDIE: I don't know. I don't have the answer to
5 that. All -- all I've reviewed during the shooting analysis
6 committee when I was the acting captain were those specific
7 shootings that they had reviewed prior to Villanueva taking
8 office. It was a normal process to review these shootings, and
9 usually they would -- they would -- they would ensure that he
10 stayed indoors.

11 And so after that analysis committee, I -- I reviewed
12 those shootings, and that's the only -- those are the only
13 shootings or use of force that I know that Deputy Juarez was
14 involved in prior to my arriving there.

15 COMMISSIONER HICKS: I've heard some testimony about
16 inking parties, these tattoo parties.

17 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

18 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Do you know if the 9-9-8 debriefings
19 -- do the inking parties happen at the debriefings, or is that
20 a separate --

21 MR. WALDIE: I don't have knowledge of -- of how it works.

22 Like I mentioned, I've never been involved in a
23 shooting, and yes, I do have a tattoo. But we never
24 celebrated, not that I know of, any of my partners when I was
25 there were involved in shootings.

1 So I don't know how that would work if -- if there
2 was a shooting, if someone's celebrating it, and, like, in this
3 case.

4 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Exhibit 9 with the -- oh, I'm sorry.
5 Exhibit 8 with Juarez' truck -- his pickup truck -- the flag,
6 that is the same as the tattoo on Exhibit 9; correct?

7 MR. WALDIE: It appears so.

8 COMMISSIONER HICKS: And 28, what does that represent, if
9 you know?

10 MR. WALDIE: Twenty-eight, that's the number of our
11 station. Stations are -- are numbered. It's a department's
12 number.

13 COMMISSIONER HICKS: So 28 is for Compton Station?

14 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

15 COMMISSIONER HICKS: And then Exhibit 13, you listed -- I
16 know they're redacted, but in the email to Mr. Thatcher, there
17 are, I believe, nine deputies that are listed that were
18 redacted?

19 MR. WALDIE: Yes, sir.

20 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Are any of those Executioners?

21 MR. WALDIE: All of them were.

22 COMMISSIONER HICKS: All of them?

23 MR. WALDIE: Uh-huh.

24 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Okay. Thank you.

25 CHAIR KENNEDY: JP?

1 COMMISSIONER HARRIS: Yeah. Just for clarification, if
2 you know, when was Thatcher promoted to captain, and then --
3 and made commander?

4 MR. WALDIE: I believe he was promoted to captain in 2016
5 under McDonnell.

6 COMMISSIONER HARRIS: Okay.

7 MR. WALDIE: Sheriff McDonnell.

8 COMMISSIONER HARRIS: And did he immediately go to Compton
9 Station as captain?

10 MR. WALDIE: That's -- that's what I understood, yes.

11 COMMISSIONER HARRIS: Okay.

12 And then he was promoted to commander?

13 MR. WALDIE: Approximately -- let's see. Three years
14 later, in 2019. January.

15 COMMISSIONER HARRIS: All right. Thank you.

16 I too want to thank you for your testimony. It was
17 very powerful. Appreciate it.

18 MR. WALDIE: Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER HICKS: I have one followup.

20 Outside of Juarez, are you aware if other
21 Executioners have been involved in officer-involved shootings?

22 MR. WALDIE: Well, we had Deputy Aldama and Deputy Orrego,
23 his partner at the time, in 2016, were involved in that
24 shooting with Donta Taylor. He was a Cedar Block Piru member.
25 And yes, that involved a lawsuit which resulted in \$7-million

1 settlement. And that settlement only occurred from what I --
2 what I understand after the -- the County was ordered --
3 compelled to release the names of other people in that clique.

4 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Do you know a Deputy Vega or a Deputy
5 Hernandez as part of Executioners?

6 MR. WALDIE: Those, as I mentioned, were from what I
7 understand -- what I heard from deposition from Austreberto
8 Gonzalez, are prospect -- were prospects.

9 They're currently relieved of duty for an incident
10 prior to the shooting with Andres Guardado where they were
11 alleged to have, which I believe was settled, kidnapped a
12 skateboarder.

13 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Do you know if they're under criminal
14 investigation still?

15 MR. WALDIE: I don't know. I don't have internal
16 knowledge of that.

17 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Okay. Thank you.

18 CHAIR KENNEDY: Irma?

19 COMMISSIONER COOPER: Thank you for coming up here. I
20 know what impact it may have on your family and you.

21 My question: During the work slowdown, you mentioned
22 that the officers took longer to respond to citizens' calls,
23 but was that information about the work slowdown given to the
24 citizens of Compton, or did you receive any phone calls from
25 them to say, "Why is the officer taking 'X' amount of time?"

1 MR. WALDIE: It normally -- you -- we may receive calls,
2 that would be Dispatch would receive those calls. Our -- our
3 policy is if there is going to be a delay that is going to
4 exceed our response times, our -- our mandated response times
5 depending on the type of call, that we advise them of the
6 delay. But that information wouldn't necessarily reach my
7 level unless something in this -- like, in this scenario was a
8 work slowdown and someone's trying to do the right thing and
9 tell me about it.

10 And no, I did not notify the City about it.
11 Personally, it's embarrassing. I did not want to raise any
12 flags, and I was trying to deal with it internally. And when
13 it slowed down, I -- I didn't even -- even further my inquiry
14 because I was relieved, to tell you the truth, that it had
15 stopped. It was essentially mutiny.

16 CHAIR KENNEDY: I have a question: As a longtime member
17 of the department, can you give us any insight into why the
18 LASD leadership would be protective of a tattooed deputy gang
19 like the Executioners?

20 It -- it doesn't make any sense to me. And I'm
21 wondering if you have any insight to why they would be
22 protected.

23 MR. WALDIE: Well, I think it -- it -- this is just my
24 personal opinion. I think it boils down to we're law
25 enforcement, and law enforcement typically doesn't want to be

1 policed. It's a culture within the sheriff's department.
2 It's -- it -- and that -- and that's how, essentially, without
3 proper management, proper -- holding deputies accountable,
4 that's how deputies grow to think within this department.

5 CHAIR KENNEDY: Is there no consideration of the risk they
6 pose to the community if they are allowed to operate unchecked
7 like this?

8 MR. WALDIE: I believe it's -- it's a tribe/absolution-
9 type of philosophy where you believe the people around you,
10 they're doing the same thing as -- as you are, keeping quiet.
11 You've been forgiven, or at least it's okay to continue to
12 think like that.

13 CHAIR KENNEDY: Any other --

14 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Well, let me just follow up on that
15 because I -- I agree that it's very puzzling to me, and I've
16 had the experience of heading several fairly large law
17 enforcement organizations.

18 But why would the leadership of the sheriff's
19 department want to tolerate a situation in which there's shot
20 callers who break the chain of command, let's say, from the
21 captain to the lieutenant to the sergeants?

22 I mean, just from that point of view alone, it seems
23 to me that you would want to root this out so that you -- you
24 had -- you could effectively implement whatever your policies
25 or goals are as the sheriff or the -- the leadership of the

1 department.

2 I mean -- so if you could explain that to me, I --
3 I'd really appreciate it, Lieutenant Waldie.

4 MR. WALDIE: Well, I would -- I would love to tell you
5 that I completely understand it, sir.

6 In this particular case, I believe that Commander
7 Thatcher, as a captain, had taken care of these individuals and
8 he had already set his course in terms of ensuring that they --
9 they controlled the station when -- when he needed them to.
10 And I believe that -- I mean, the fact that he went to
11 Orrego's -- Deputy Orrego, Deputy Aldama's partner, who was
12 fired -- terminated, he went to a Civil Service hearing after
13 Villanueva was elected and tried to get his job back.

14 That says a lot even after knowing that a lawsuit was
15 filed and that he had lied and disparaged other law enforcement
16 officers in the city of Orange through an investigation of a
17 DUI arrest.

18 So I believe that Thatcher had already set course,
19 and there was no way he was going to reverse course 'cause
20 these were the individuals that Jaime Juarez was sponsoring.

21 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Now, but you're talking only about
22 Thatcher, and I'm just saying I can't conceive of any other law
23 enforcement organization -- federal, state, or local -- that
24 would tolerate the existence of gangs, cliques, exclusionary
25 subgroups, whatever you want to call them, actually having

1 control over assignments, the plum assignments within a station
2 and the like. I mean, that would be total anathema to
3 anybody -- to at least any police chief I've ever known or head
4 of any law enforcement organization I've ever known.

5 And I -- and so it's not just Thatcher. This thing
6 so permeates so deeply into the culture of the sheriff's
7 department that apparently nobody over the last 30 to 50 years
8 has actually taken the bull by the horn and said, "We've got to
9 get rid of these gangs -- these deputy gangs and cliques within
10 the department," and -- and really taken it seriously and done
11 it.

12 And I just -- I -- I -- to the life of me -- I
13 understand what you're saying about Thatcher, but I just can't
14 understand why the command staff of Sheriff Villanueva,
15 Murakami, all the -- all the people that are currently running
16 the department and have run the department before, why they
17 didn't tackle this and get rid of it. So it has to be some --
18 something very deeply embedded within the culture of the
19 sheriff's department.

20 MR. WALDIE: I -- I can tell you now, sir, if I can add to
21 that?

22 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Yeah.

23 MR. WALDIE: My father was on the department. He did not
24 tolerate that. I think he relied on people to deal with it.
25 I -- I know in this current administration the feeling I get,

1 and I -- I don't know about McDonnell. I don't think -- I think
2 he wanted to do the right thing too. But I think it all boils
3 down to the fact that sheriffs are elected, and it's -- it's
4 a -- it's sacrificing public safety for power. And I believe
5 that's essentially what's happening now.

6 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Interesting point, for sure.

7 Thank -- and by the way, thank you for your -- your
8 testimony, for your candor, and for your courage, Lieutenant
9 Waldie.

10 MR. WALDIE: Thank you, sir.

11 CHAIR KENNEDY: Seeing no other questions, and it being
12 11:00 o'clock, I think our very able special counsel deserves a
13 break. And we're all going to take a 15-minute break. We'll
14 resume at 11:16.

15 (Recess taken from 11:00 a.m. to 11:16 a.m.)

16 CHAIR KENNEDY: Mr. Deixler, whenever you're ready.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Yes. I would like to call our next witness
18 who has agreed to testify, but only anonymously, so we won't
19 see his or her face, nor will we see his or her actual voice.
20 The witness will be speaking through a voice distorter.

21 So if I might just ask the witness to indicate that
22 you can hear -- hear us now?

23 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

24 CHAIR KENNEDY: Before we begin, can we -- I guess, we'll
25 just do it this way.

1 Anonymous Witness, can you raise your right hand?

2 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and

3 nothing but the truth?

4 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: I do.

5 CHAIR KENNEDY: Go ahead.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Are you a current LASD employee?

7 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And where are you stationed?

9 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: East LA Station.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And have you been an LASD employee more than
11 five years?

12 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And why have you requested to testify
14 anonymously?

15 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: The fear of retribution or
16 retaliation.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Tell us, if you will, why you first decided
18 to work for the LASD.

19 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: I believe it was my calling in
20 life to help other people out.

21 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with the term "shot caller"
22 as it's understood within --

23 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

24 MR. DEIXLER: -- the department?

25 And what is --

1 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

2 MR. DEIXLER: What is a shot caller at the East LA
3 Station?

4 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: That is a deputy who has a
5 certain amount of power at the station.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Are there shot callers currently in East LA
7 Station?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

9 MR. DEIXLER: And who are the current shot callers at the
10 East LA Station?

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Miguel Ortiz and Luis Valle.

12 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with a "Rene" Munoz?

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And was Rene Munoz a shot caller in East LA?

15 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

16 MR. DEIXLER: In the East LA Station currently, what
17 authority or responsibility does a shot caller hold?

18 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: They have influence over the
19 schedule, what deputies can work, spots that are considered
20 evident (phonetic), and which deputies who are shunned.

21 MR. DEIXLER: In East LA, are more patrol areas more
22 desirable than others?

23 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: The North End, yes. That be- --
24 the East LA.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And why is the North End more desirable for

1 a deputy than other portions of the East LA Station coverage?

2 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: In East LA area, the deputies
3 will have a partner with them. You work as a two-man car. In
4 the South End -- Commerce, Maywood, Cudahy -- deputies work by
5 themselves in single-man cars. It is desirable to have a
6 partner in a car.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Does the scheduling deputy have the power to
8 assign deputies to desirable or undesirable locations?

9 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Is -- is Luis Valle a Bandito?

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

12 MR. DEIXLER: Is Miguel Ortiz a Bandito?

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Is Rene Munoz a Bandito?

15 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

16 MR. DEIXLER: How do you know that they are Banditos?

17 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Common knowledge throughout the
18 station.

19 MR. DEIXLER: And how long have you been aware of the fact
20 that Luis Valle and Miguel Ortiz are Banditos?

21 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: For a while. More than -- more
22 than a couple years.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Are there other Banditos at -- currently at
24 the East LA Station other than Deputy Valle and Deputy Ortiz?

25 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And about how many Banditos are there at
2 East LA currently?

3 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Between 12 and 15.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And how do you know that?

5 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Common knowledge at the station.

6 MR. DEIXLER: What positions do these Banditos hold in the
7 East LA Station currently?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Usually detective at the
9 station, or TOs, which are training officers.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And is being a training officer a desirable
11 position in the East LA Station?

12 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and why is that?

14 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: It's a coveted testing spot
15 where you get a pay increase for training a deputy.

16 MR. DEIXLER: You get a pay increase for being a TO?

17 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Correct.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And that's a determination made by the shot
19 caller in the East LA Station?

20 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

21 MR. DEIXLER: What's the level of influence of the
22 Banditos in East LA currently?

23 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: They decide which deputies are
24 considered BO, which means a deputy who's not considered up to
25 the job. Those people will be shunned, or they'll have their

1 reputation demolished or flashed, or they'll say that a deputy
2 is a good dude and that person is actually welcomed into the
3 fold.

4 MR. DEIXLER: In connection with becoming a TO, do you
5 know of examples of people who scored highly on the TO position
6 test and were passed over because of the instruction of the
7 Banditos in East LA?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

9 MR. DEIXLER: Would you please tell the commission about
10 that experience.

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: A deputy scored very high on the
12 training officer test and was told that that deputy was BO, and
13 they would not allow that person to be a -- a training officer
14 at the station. So a character assassination was ordered to
15 make this person look incompetent and so they could pass that
16 person up and put either a Bandito or a Bandito associate in
17 that TO place.

18 MR. DEIXLER: Now, was there a captain in the East LA
19 Station who was responsible for the administration of that --
20 of that station?

21 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

22 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and who was the captain in LA
23 responsible -- in East LA responsible for the growth or the
24 continuance of the Banditos?

25 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Rick Mejia.

1 MR. DEIXLER: Richard Mejia.

2 Is Richard Mejia still the captain in East LA?

3 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

4 MR. DEIXLER: What -- what rank does Captain Mejia now
5 hold, if you know?

6 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Commander.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Was Richard --

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: I believe commander.

9 MR. DEIXLER: Was Richard Mejia promoted by Sheriff
10 Villanueva from captain to commander?

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

12 MR. DEIXLER: During your experience at the East LA
13 Station, are the Banditos controlled by the captain?

14 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

15 MR. DEIXLER: How -- how do the Banditos get to exercise
16 the control that they have in the East LA Station currently?

17 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Usually it's -- it's by playing
18 things like softball, or other sporting events with -- with the
19 Banditos or the associates. The captain, at the time, would
20 befriend the Banditos, and they would use their friendship with
21 the captain to get the things they want.

22 MR. DEIXLER: Sheriff Villanueva has spoken of his effort
23 to clean up East LA by bringing in a strong captain.

24 First, do you understand what "a strong captain"
25 means within the context --

1 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yeah.

2 MR. DEIXLER: -- of the department?

3 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

4 MR. DEIXLER: What is a strong captain?

5 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: A leader within the station. A
6 person with integrity who will lead the deputies and instruct
7 them and mentor.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Was Richard Mejia, now Commander Mejia, a
9 strong captain in the East LA Station?

10 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Was the fact that he was not a strong
12 captain widely perceived in the East LA Station?

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and why was he not considered a
15 strong captain during the time he was at the East LA Station?

16 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: He was easily manipulated by the
17 Banditos and seemed focused on making friends with the
18 deputies.

19 MR. DEIXLER: I'm sorry. He befriended the deputies, and
20 what else did he do? It was a little hard to understand what
21 you said.

22 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: He befriended the Banditos, and
23 it appeared his focus was to become friends with the deputies
24 and to be a part of their -- of -- of the clique.

25 MR. DEIXLER: Are the Banditos in East LA currently

1 composed of a particular ethnic group?

2 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

3 MR. DEIXLER: And do the Banditos have a tattoo?

4 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Are there women who are members of the
6 Banditos?

7 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

8 MR. DEIXLER: What ethnic group are the Banditos,
9 currently, in East LA?

10 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Hispanic.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Are there African-American Bandito members?

12 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Have you experienced examples of the
14 Banditos, while at work, engage in conduct that you believe was
15 contrary to fundamental principles of professional policing?

16 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Could you please share with the commission
18 what you have observed that constituted what you believe were
19 those violations.

20 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: In one incident, there was a
21 deputy-involved shooting where the suspect was -- was caught
22 and the deputy -- two deputies were told to transport the
23 suspect. A use of force, I believe, happened after the person
24 was caught. Two deputies were told to transport that person to
25 the hospital after the use of force.

1 The two deputies were sidetracked while they were
2 en route to the hospital, stopped the car, physically assaulted
3 the suspect, put him back in the car, and then took him to the
4 hospital.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And was that an incident which was known or
6 should have been known by the captain and other authorities in
7 the East LA Station at the time?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

9 MR. DEIXLER: And to your knowledge, did it go to Captain
10 Mejia or others who were captains or in positions of authority
11 at the time?

12 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And do you know what actions were taken in
14 connection with this taking a prisoner out of a car, beating
15 him up, and then resuming taking him to the hospital?

16 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: I believe an internal affairs
17 investigation was opened.

18 MR. DEIXLER: And do you know whether those deputies
19 remain deputies in East LA?

20 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: They're still at East LA.

21 MR. DEIXLER: Have you had experience in which one deputy
22 pointed a gun at another deputy in a locker room?

23 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

24 MR. DEIXLER: Would you describe, for the commission's
25 benefit, that incident.

1 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: It was a deputy at East LA
2 Station, which some of the deputies did not like. They
3 perceived him to be -- we use the term "5150."

4 They did not like this person, for whatever reason,
5 and there was an incident in the locker room -- the male locker
6 room -- where a deputy told the deputy that the -- the victim
7 deputy that he needed to wait his turn. And I don't know what
8 that was about.

9 An argument ensued, and one deputy pointed his gun at
10 the other deputy's head.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And that occurred in the locker room.

12 Were there other deputies who witnessed it?

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Was that the kind of behavior that you would
15 have expected would have been observed or reported to by the
16 captain at East LA?

17 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

18 MR. DEIXLER: Is turning a gun on a fellow deputy
19 consistent with good police practices?

20 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

21 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know whether the deputy who -- who
22 pointed the gun at his colleague in the locker room was
23 disciplined?

24 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

25 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know whether that deputy was a

1 Bandito?

2 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: He was a Bandito associate.

3 MR. DEIXLER: And what do you mean by "a Bandito
4 associate"?

5 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: A Bandito associate is a person
6 or a deputy -- deputy who is next in line to becoming a
7 Bandito.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And are Bandito associates people that can
9 be identified by those of the deputies who are in the East LA
10 Station currently; that is, do you have an idea of who these
11 associates are?

12 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and the fact that these associates
14 are identifiable by other deputies, is that something which is
15 knowable by the captain of the station?

16 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Have you observed that people who do not do
18 as directed by Banditos are made outcasts at the station?

19 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Could you describe some of the ways that
21 these people are outcasts?

22 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Usually Banditos, the
23 associates, or even some people who are training staff --
24 training deputies, they will turn their back to that person in
25 the hallway, or in the report writing room. So when that

1 person walks in the room, everyone turns their back to him.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Now, is the fact of a person walking into a
3 room and having his or her colleagues turn their back something
4 that is observable by anybody who is in the hallway?

5 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Is that something that a captain of a
7 station should be aware of?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

9 MR. DEIXLER: Is directing that sort of behavior to a
10 colleague deputy sheriff consistent with good police practices?

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Can you repeat the question,
12 please?

13 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

14 Is turning your back on a colleague in this fashion
15 to show disrespect consistent with good police practices?

16 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Have you observed that deputies refuse to
18 provide backup when called to do so by disfavored colleagues?

19 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Can you provide an example for the
21 commissioners?

22 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

23 A deputy who used -- used to work at the station was
24 involved in a shooting. The deputies did not like this
25 particular deputy because they believed that he was an

1 undercover FBI agent. He was involved in a shooting, and the
2 deputies put the word out that it was a fake shooting and the
3 deputy was no good.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And what -- what followed from that
5 situation?

6 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: The word was put out not to back
7 that person up, that he was no good.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And were there incidents --

9 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Stay away from that person.

10 MR. DEIXLER: I'm sorry.

11 Were there --

12 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: And to stay away from that
13 person.

14 MR. DEIXLER: It's a little harder than it is when you're
15 sitting in the room.

16 Were there instances in which you were aware that the
17 deputy sought backup and it was refused?

18 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

19 MR. DEIXLER: And do you have in mind any two deputies in
20 particular who were involved in that refusal to attend to a
21 call from a colleague?

22 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: At this time, the names, no. It
23 was just station knowledge that it happened.

24 MR. DEIXLER: Have you observed that the Banditos have
25 directed work slowdowns when they were in disagreement with

1 their superiors?

2 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

3 MR. DEIXLER: And when is the last time that there was a
4 work slowdown, to your knowledge, because of a disagreement
5 with superiors in the East LA Station?

6 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Last summer.

7 MR. DEIXLER: And could you briefly describe those
8 circumstances.

9 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Deputies believed they were
10 getting disciplined unfairly by the captain or the sheriff, and
11 the Banditos called for a work slowdown.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and was that slow down effective?

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: For the deputies, yes.

14 MR. DEIXLER: And did that -- well, how does it -- how did
15 it evidence itself that there was a slowdown in the East LA
16 Station last year?

17 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: The arrests at the station
18 dropped. No one was actually taking anyone to jail, and it
19 raised a lot of red flags.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you about a physical danger that
21 you may be familiar with.

22 Have you learned of a practice of Banditos loosening
23 lug nuts on cars with the goal of putting at risk the safety of
24 a disfavored deputy?

25 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: I've heard about that at the

1 station, yes.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And how recently has that information come
3 to your attention?

4 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Within the past month or so.

5 MR. WALDIE: What is a jacket within the meaning of the
6 term as it's used in the LASD?

7 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: A jacket is a false
8 (inaudible) --

9 MR. DEIXLER: I'm sorry. Could you -- could you repeat
10 that? I didn't hear it. I didn't quite understand.

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

12 A jacket is a false report of a deputy when you go to
13 a new station. It's a reputation -- a false or negative
14 reputation that follows you to the next assignment. When you
15 go to the next assignment, people will believe you are no good.

16 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and have you heard that the Banditos
17 engage in the creation of jackets of -- of deputy sheriffs who
18 are transferring?

19 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Can you think of any specific examples that
21 you know about?

22 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes. A deputy was sent to
23 Compton Station. A jacket was put on that deputy at Compton
24 Station and also Century Station. The deputy was -- on his way
25 to work, he had a negative encounter with a Century deputy that

1 he didn't know who knew everything about him.

2 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with a deputy
3 Christina Smith?

4 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And did Christina Smith have a jacket placed
6 upon her?

7 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And would you describe the circumstances
9 surrounding Christina Smith.

10 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Her jacket was that she was BO,
11 no good, and officer safety issues, and it was spread to her
12 new assignment. This is -- this is the person that they were
13 getting.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with the circumstances
15 surrounding Deputy Matthew Hernandez and his receiving a
16 jacket?

17 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

18 MR. DEIXLER: Would you describe for the commissioners,
19 please, that circumstance.

20 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: The jacket was he was 5150,
21 which means mentally ill, and he was a liar.

22 MR. DEIXLER: Are you familiar with a circumstance
23 involving Ed Hernandez?

24 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And would you share with the commissioners

1 the circumstances of Ed Hernandez getting a jacket.

2 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: His was he was no good, not a
3 team player, and you need to watch him.

4 MR. DEIXLER: How is it that in a paramilitary-structured
5 organization that deputy sheriffs get to establish the policies
6 and enforce the policies at East LA Station currently?

7 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Lack of leadership from the
8 superiors.

9 MR. DEIXLER: And who is to blame for that lack of
10 leadership?

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: The captain.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And how long --

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: And --

14 MR. DEIXLER: I'm sorry. Please continue.

15 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: The captain and whoever placed
16 the captain there.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Were you familiar with persons transferred
18 from East Los Angeles at the commencement of Sheriff
19 Villanueva's tenure as the sheriff of Los Angeles County?

20 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and how did you obtain that
22 familiarity?

23 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Just station knowledge.

24 MR. DEIXLER: How many Banditos were transferred from the
25 sheriff, when he took office -- by the sheriff when he took

1 office in 2018?

2 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Transferred or left the station?

3 MR. DEIXLER: Well, start with transferred, and then we'll
4 talk about left the station.

5 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Zero.

6 MR. DEIXLER: And what about left the station? How many
7 left the station?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Over 30.

9 MR. DEIXLER: And were the people who left the station
10 voluntarily or involuntarily forced to leave?

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Voluntarily.

12 MR. DEIXLER: I'm sorry. You said "Voluntarily"?

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Voluntarily.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

15 Was there anything about the transfer of these 30 or
16 so people which cleaned up the Banditos problem in East LA?

17 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

18 MR. DEIXLER: As a current employee of the LASD stationed
19 in East LA, what do you believe the commission should recommend
20 as the means to end the dominance of the Banditos at that
21 station?

22 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Placement of strong leadership
23 at the station and the removal of all Banditos.

24 MR. DEIXLER: Is there anything else?

25 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

1 MR. DEIXLER: Would the strong leadership that you
2 described be entirely new leadership, or would it just be to
3 bring in another captain with the same group of people at the
4 East LA Station?

5 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: A whole new group of
6 administrative staff.

7 MR. DEIXLER: A whole new administrative staff, you said?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

9 MR. DEIXLER: Let me close by asking you in light of what
10 you've experienced why do you wish to remain an LASD employee?

11 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: This was my call. This job is
12 what I was made to do. And I'm going to do -- do it no matter
13 what.

14 MR. DEIXLER: I have no further questions. I pass the
15 witness.

16 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

17 Rob?

18 COMMISSIONER BONNER: I wonder if I could ask the witness,
19 first of all, are the -- you -- you've described the term
20 "Banditos" and "Banditos associates."

21 Are the Banditos associates -- are they inked, or is
22 it only Banditos that are inked?

23 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Associates are not inked. Only
24 the Banditos are inked.

25 COMMISSIONER BONNER: All right.

1 So can you estimate approximately how many Bandito
2 associates there are in the East LA Station?

3 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: I would say between 10 and 15.

4 COMMISSIONER BONNER: So about the same number of
5 associates as there are Banditos currently; is that accurate?

6 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

7 COMMISSIONER BONNER: And when was the -- if you know --
8 and I'll take hearsay here, but when was the last inking of a
9 Bandito, to your knowledge, at the East LA Station?

10 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Roughly a year-and-a-half ago,
11 18 months ago.

12 COMMISSIONER BONNER: And do you know how many deputies
13 were inked as Banditos back a year-and-a-half ago? Roughly.

14 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Ten.

15 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Ten?

16 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Ten, yes.

17 COMMISSIONER BONNER: All right. Thank you.

18 CHAIR KENNEDY: Anybody else?

19 Lael?

20 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you for your testimony.

21 If Captain, now Commander, Mejia told members of this
22 commission last year that there are no longer any Banditos at
23 East LA Station, is that not truthful?

24 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: That is not truthful.

25 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you.

1 CHAIR KENNEDY: Anyone else?

2 I think that's -- oh, Jamon.

3 COMMISSIONER HICKS: I don't know if this was testified
4 to, but is Commander Mejia a Bandito?

5 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No.

6 COMMISSIONER HICKS: And do you know how someone becomes a
7 shot -- a shot caller?

8 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Every station has different ways
9 of getting a shot caller. Sometimes it's just a bad person who
10 is well-liked by the group.

11 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Is there a requirement that a shot
12 caller has been involved in an officer-involved shooting?

13 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Requirement, no.

14 COMMISSIONER HICKS: What about an expectation --

15 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: But it happens often.

16 COMMISSIONER HICKS: What about an expectation that
17 they've been involved in an officer-involved shooting?

18 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER HICKS: Thank you.

20 CHAIR KENNEDY: Patti?

21 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Thank you for your testimony.

22 A technical question: How many deputies are
23 stationed at the East LA Station?

24 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: I do not know. I don't know.
25 Maybe over 100.

1 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Okay.

2 And is it -- can -- can one be a shot caller without
3 being a Bandito or another -- have another tattoo?

4 ANONYMOUS WITNESS NO. 3: No. A person who's -- is a
5 stand-alone, who is strong, is usually frowned upon, and
6 they'll get a jacket.

7 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Okay. Thank you.

8 CHAIR KENNEDY: Okay. Seeing no other questions.

9 Mr. Deixler, your next witness.

10 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

11 Thank you for your testimony, sir or ma'am.

12 Eli Vera, I believe, is in the witness room.

13 May I go find him?

14 CHAIR KENNEDY: We have someone coming.

15 MR. DEIXLER: Somebody to do it. Okay.

16 CHAIR KENNEDY: Would you please raise your right hand.

17 Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
18 nothing but the truth?

19 MR. VERA: Yes, sir.

20 MR. DEIXLER: Would you state your name for the record,
21 sir, and spell your last name.

22 MR. VERA: Yes. My complete name is Eliezer Vera,
23 V-e-r-a.

24 MR. DEIXLER: And, sir, are you employed?

25 MR. VERA: I am retired as of March 30th.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And until your retirement what was your
2 profession, sir?

3 MR. VERA: Thirty-three and-a-half years in the Los
4 Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

5 MR. DEIXLER: And what was the highest rank you achieved
6 in your 34 years at the LASD?

7 MR. VERA: I was a division chief.

8 MR. DEIXLER: And would you share with the commissioners,
9 briefly, your history over the 34 years at LASD.

10 MR. VERA: Yes.

11 I was hired in 1988. I initially worked at Men's
12 Central Jail. I worked our gang detail inside the jail.

13 I went on to work our special investigation unit on
14 loan to the DEA -- the DEA Task Force.

15 I worked patrol at Lynwood Station and at Century
16 Station from 1992 to 2001. I served as a patrol deputy,
17 training officer, and a detective at the station.

18 I was promoted to Detective Division. Worked on our
19 Cargo CATs, Criminal Apprehension Team.

20 I promoted to cap- -- to sergeant in late 2001 where
21 I worked patrol at Lennox Station as a patrol sergeant, then
22 later as a crime impact team sergeant.

23 I worked as a crime impact team sergeant at Compton.

24 I worked in the executive office -- the office of the
25 sheriff -- for about two-plus years.

1 I was a lieutenant at Century Station as a watch
2 commander.

3 I was a SWAT commander for the sheriff's department
4 at our SEB, Special Enforcement Bureau, for a number of years.

5 I promoted to captain of South Los Angeles Station.

6 For about a year and a half I was a captain of our
7 reserve forces bureau, of our communications and fleet
8 management bureau.

9 I was a commander at court services and a chief in
10 central patrol division and technology and support division.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Well, that's a full -- that's a full life in
12 the department. Thank you for your service.

13 On October 7th, 2020, Sheriff Villanueva conducted a
14 social media public statement about his actions at East LA, and
15 let me play a portion of that for you. Exhibit Number 21.

16 "The 18. The very first thing I did before I even
17 sworn in publicly was I went to East LA Station, and I relieved
18 of command the captain of East LA Station for failing to do his
19 job. That was my very first act in office. And that is very
20 significant. And from there, we transferred out 36
21 individuals. They were -- some of them were near retirement,
22 or we convinced them to move on to greener pastures. And --
23 but 36 people -- the entire leadership of East LA Station was
24 turned over. And that was on purpose because they had failed
25 in their job to lead the station. And then the criminal

1 investigation that had been started by my predecessor, I
2 continued it. And this thing was delivered to the District
3 Attorney's Office in around, I think, June or July 2019 --
4 2019. And we -- they did a good job. They interviewed all the
5 parties involved. They interviewed all the..."

6 We've heard about the quality of the investigation.
7 But let me ask you about the allegation offered by the sheriff
8 that he transferred 36 people.

9 Are you familiar with the facts which underlay that
10 statement?

11 MR. VERA: I am.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And how did you gain your familiarity with
13 that?

14 MR. VERA: I actually was the person that was responsible
15 for creating a process to move forward to try -- try to change
16 the culture in the station.

17 It was a multifaceted approach, partially was -- part
18 one was transferring people from the station so we could start
19 to change the culture. It -- it would also include officers, so
20 you would have a different set of training officers that would
21 train the new deputies coming to the station. And then it also
22 involved changing out the supervision to bring strong
23 supervision at the station level from sergeant all the way up
24 to captain.

25 MR. DEIXLER: And did that multifaceted approach actually

1 take place?

2 MR. VERA: It did not.

3 MR. DEIXLER: What about this suggestion of the 36 people
4 who were transferred? Were those the leaders and the Banditos
5 who were occupying East LA?

6 MR. VERA: It was not.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Who were the 36 people who were transferred?

8 MR. VERA: These were a group of deputy sheriffs that
9 were -- some were transferred, some promoted, some retired,
10 some were -- you know, received other assignments in the
11 organization. None of those transfers were forceful transfers.
12 They all occurred voluntarily.

13 There's actually an email -- an email chain that
14 corroborates the fact that these individuals decided to leave
15 voluntarily from the station. And they -- they sent those
16 emails through the chain of command to -- to make sure that
17 everyone knew very clearly that this was as a result of
18 voluntary -- movement voluntarily as opposed to forced
19 transfers.

20 MR. DEIXLER: And is the statement that 36 people were
21 transferred or a statement that Banditos were transferred a
22 true or a false statement?

23 MR. VERA: That's false.

24 MR. DEIXLER: Who's -- who is Ernest Chavez?

25 MR. VERA: Ernest Chavez is a commander on the sheriff's

1 department and was the former captain of East LA Station.

2 MR. DEIXLER: And are you familiar with Ernest Chavez'
3 testimony under oath on March 8th, 2021, in the case of
4 Hernandez, et al. versus the County of Los Angeles, in which he
5 was questioned about a statement he had made to a reporter for
6 the Los Angeles Times?

7 Let me read it to you to see if it refreshes your
8 memory.

9 "Question: Sheriff claims he transferred from the
10 station 36 people who were associated with the Banditos or were
11 otherwise identified as problematic."

12 "Answer [sic]: You told the reporter that just as
13 you testified today that the 36 transfers were simply a general
14 group of deputies that left the station; correct?"

15 "Answer: Yes, sir."

16 Do you agree with the sworn testimony of now
17 Commander Chavez that the 36 people were not involuntarily
18 transferred and were just a group of deputies who generally
19 left the station?

20 MR. VERA: Yes, sir.

21 MR. DEIXLER: In the statement that we've heard that
22 Sheriff Villanueva made to the public, did you have the
23 opportunity to discuss with him and the undersheriff the truth
24 or falsity of that statement?

25 MR. VERA: I did. Each individually.

1 MR. DEIXLER: Would you first start by telling us what you
2 discussed with Undersheriff Murakami.

3 MR. VERA: I told the undersheriff that statements that
4 the sheriff had made on that occasion, and several other
5 occasions following that, were not accurate; they were false.
6 There had been no forceful transfers.

7 I explained to him that he had been part of the
8 process from the onset. "He" being the undersheriff, he knew
9 very well that it was part of a voluntary -- voluntary transfer
10 process that we were in and that the evidence would show, you
11 know, clearly that that did not occur.

12 There were no -- there were no grievances that were
13 filed by the employees as a result of being forcefully
14 transferred, not a single one, which would have been an
15 impossibility if you were forcefully removing people from the
16 station.

17 MR. DEIXLER: And what did the undersheriff say in
18 response?

19 MR. VERA: He acknowledged it. He knew that the sheriff
20 was using this statement to make it appear to the public that
21 he had essentially handled the issue and transferred the
22 Banditos out of the station.

23 MR. DEIXLER: Did you have the opportunity to discuss that
24 same topic with Sheriff Villanueva yourself?

25 MR. VERA: I did.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And would you share with the commissioners
2 that conversation.

3 MR. VERA: It was very similar to what we just discussed.

4 He was aware of the process from the onset that we
5 were going to start by transferring individuals from the
6 station.

7 He was aware we -- 'cause we had this personal
8 conversation, and -- and in a group as well, talking about the
9 appropriate administrative and, if necessary, criminal
10 investigations that needed to occur during the same time
11 period.

12 And I reminded him very clearly that this was a
13 voluntary process and that he was aware that it was a voluntary
14 process because, procedurally, in the sheriff's department, you
15 can't move people out of what we call "break up," which is the
16 organized transfer process without receiving approval up the
17 chain of command. And it has to be orchestrated because if
18 you're moving, let's say, six or seven individuals in a short
19 period of time, now you leave the -- the station in a vacuum
20 where it doesn't have enough personnel to do the job. So you
21 have to have support from the entire upper chain of command.

22 And -- and I -- I told him that I knew that he was
23 doing this because it was good for PR, but it was completely
24 false, and he needed to stop.

25 MR. DEIXLER: As of the time that the sheriff assumed his

1 position on December 3rd, 2018, was it perceived in the
2 department among its leadership that East LA was a station with
3 problems related to tattooed deputies and cultural issues?

4 MR. VERA: Yes, sir.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Was that a problem that was a secret in
6 the -- in the LASD?

7 MR. VERA: Absolutely not.

8 MR. DEIXLER: At the time of his inauguration, do you
9 believe the sheriff -- sheriff contributed to enhancing the
10 problematic East LA culture?

11 MR. VERA: I do.

12 MR. DEIXLER: Would you describe what you observed at his
13 swearing in on that occasion, on December 3rd, 2018?

14 MR. VERA: What I saw was something that I found very
15 disturbing, and not just something that I found disturbing.
16 There were several other executives in the -- the organization
17 that -- that made the same observations that I did.

18 Day one, for his swearing-in ceremony there was the
19 front of the auditorium had been reserved for the East LA
20 Station.

21 And the problem with that is you are now the sheriff
22 of Los Angeles County. So that means you are the sheriff to
23 everyone in the county of Los Angeles and to the entire
24 organization. And to section off the front of the auditorium
25 for the purposes of highlighting a particular station signals

1 to the rest of the organization, right from the onset, that
2 East LA Station is going to hold a very special place in -- in
3 how I conduct business, in my heart, in the organization,
4 whatever the case is. But as a professional law enforcement
5 officer that is a very, very bad signal for the -- for the
6 organization internally.

7 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know whether the sheriff, after that,
8 took steps to reintroduce the Fort Apache logo at the station?

9 MR. VERA: He did.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And what was your view of reintroducing the
11 Fort Apache logo at a station which was populated with
12 Banditos?

13 MR. VERA: The department was trying to move in a
14 different direction, professionalizing the organization and
15 getting rid of problematic emblems or offensive emblems, things
16 of that nature. So there were a host of issues with that.

17 Part of it was it -- it -- it said Fort Apache, you
18 know, another thing, but it was always the kick in the pants.

19 So it was -- it was a problematic gesture that kind
20 of re- -- or not -- it re-emphasized that East LA was going to
21 be treated a little differently.

22 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you: Do you know whether this
23 decision was influenced in some way by one of the sheriff's
24 family members?

25 MR. VERA: It was.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and what family member do you believe
2 influenced that decision?

3 MR. VERA: A family member was specifically his wife,
4 Vivian Villanueva, and department member -- eventual department
5 member, again, was Danny -- Danny Batanero.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Who's Danny Batanero?

7 MR. VERA: Danny Batanero's a retired -- or was a retired
8 sergeant from the sheriff's department that was a friend of the
9 sheriff.

10 He's actually the person that the sheriff wanted to
11 make the captain of East LA Station when he was initially sworn
12 in. He wanted to bring back this retired sergeant from --
13 that -- that was from East LA and make him a captain. And
14 that -- that's who he wanted to be the captain of the station.

15 MR. DEIXLER: So let me ask you: First, is it possible to
16 bring a retired sergeant back and make him a captain under the
17 Civil Service Rules as they then applied?

18 MR. VERA: Absolutely not.

19 MR. DEIXLER: And was there any historic baggage that
20 former Sergeant Batanero carried with him with regard to his
21 background?

22 MR. VERA: We didn't know factually, but the perception
23 that was common knowledge internally in the organization was he
24 was involved with the origination of the Banditos.

25 MR. DEIXLER: So let me see if I can understand that.

1 It was the sheriff's desire to bring back as a
2 captain a retired sergeant, which would have been contrary to
3 the Civil Service Rules, with the wide perception that he had
4 been involved in the Banditos.

5 Did I understand that correctly?

6 MR. VERA: Yes, sir.

7 As a matter of fact, there's a memorandum that was
8 authored in -- and signed by the sheriff that stated clearly
9 that the -- he -- he, the sheriff, had intended to bring back
10 Mr. Batanero to the sheriff's department, reinstate him, and
11 then assign him to East LA Station.

12 MR. DEIXLER: We were on the subject matter of the -- of
13 the sheriff's wife's involvement in at least the decision
14 regarding the Fort Apache logo.

15 How do you know about that?

16 MR. VERA: It was discussed in a meeting, at least in my
17 presence, in the sheriff's conference room where Mr. Batanero
18 and Vivian Villanueva had consulted members of the Apache
19 Nation, allegedly. And they claimed that they were not
20 offended by that title, or by -- by that phrase, and that was
21 the argument as to why they wanted to -- to keep that statement
22 on the station pin.

23 MR. DEIXLER: So it was reported that Mrs. Villanueva had
24 investigated with representatives of the Apache Nation to
25 determine whether referring to the East LA Station or using the

1 Fort Apache logo including the words and the picture "kick in
2 the ass" was approved by the Apache Nation.

3 Was that the substance of it?

4 MR. VERA: Yes, sir. Essentially.

5 MR. DEIXLER: Was -- at the time was -- was the sheriff's
6 wife an employee of the LASD?

7 MR. VERA: No. She's a retired deputy.

8 MR. DEIXLER: Do you know whether Mrs. Villanueva has been
9 involved in approving or determining promotions and transfers
10 since her husband became the sheriff of the department?

11 MR. VERA: She has.

12 MR. DEIXLER: How do you know that?

13 MR. VERA: I was in the room.

14 MR. DEIXLER: Would you describe for the commissioners,
15 please, what you saw and observed on that occasion.

16 MR. VERA: So early in his administration we were
17 considering the promotions of lieutenants to captain. It was
18 in his conference room, which is adjacent to his main office.
19 And during the course of the discussion of various lieutenants
20 that were being considered for promotion, the sheriff got up
21 multiple times and stepped into his office and got on his phone
22 and was -- was making calls. At that point I suspected he was
23 calling his wife, but I didn't know specifically.

24 Later that same day, he was sitting at the head of
25 the table; we were on a break. We had -- we were still

1 discussing a particular employee, and he called her directly,
2 called her by her name, discussed the employee, and gave us a
3 thumbs down and shook his head, and he was not promoted.

4 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you. In your -- is it 34 years?

5 MR. VERA: Yes.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Thirty-four years of service to the LASD,
7 have you had other experiences in which non-employee spouses of
8 senior executives of the department have opined on hiring
9 decisions?

10 MR. VERA: Absolutely not.

11 MR. DEIXLER: Was this unusual, in your experience?

12 MR. VERA: Absolutely.

13 MR. DEIXLER: Why did you want to change the culture in
14 the East LA Station?

15 MR. VERA: It -- it wasn't just the East LA Station. It's
16 the culture across the board in the -- in the department.

17 In -- in my opinion, we can't take step one in
18 rebuilding -- I'm not going to say public trust because we're
19 so far away from public trust that that's not even a
20 conversation right now -- it's public confidence. And as long
21 as we have secret societies operating within the sheriff's
22 department -- station tattoos, cliques, whatever you may want
23 to call it -- we will never be able to take step one in trying
24 to regain the confidence of the community.

25 So the practice needs to -- needed to come to an end,

1 and it had to be much deeper than just policies. It's a
2 cultural change in a much deeper dive.

3 So, for me, when the sheriff came into office, I
4 found that as the most critical issue for the organization to
5 be able to start to heal and regain public trust or confidence.

6 MR. DEIXLER: Let me ask you a question -- cultural
7 question and some observations.

8 Is one way that the culture is expressed by the way
9 people -- sheriff deputies talk to each other on the radio?

10 MR. VERA: Yes.

11 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and would you talk a little bit about
12 what your observation was about the use of the radio in
13 connection with recent times in the department.

14 MR. VERA: In my previous assignment, I was the commanding
15 officer of our Communications and Fleet Management Bureau, so
16 that is your -- your dispatch center.

17 9-1-1 calls get routed to the station, then they go
18 to a central location that -- that were -- where the emergency
19 and priority calls were dispatched.

20 So I would constantly monitor the radio because of
21 the position I held, and what I heard in East LA was -- was
22 very troubling, is a lot of references to deputies by monikers,
23 by nicknames, things of that nature, that were very
24 unprofessional and unsettling to hear.

25 MR. DEIXLER: Monikers, like, used by gangs?

1 MR. VERA: Some, yes.

2 MR. DEIXLER: I understood that under -- under the
3 ordinary circumstances you would have been the person
4 ultimately responsible for supervising the investigation of the
5 Kennedy Hall incident. But a physical problem prevented you
6 from doing that, I guess, an operation of some sort.

7 Did it come to your attention when you returned from
8 your surgery that the investigation had been criticized?

9 MR. VERA: Yes.

10 MR. DEIXLER: And -- and how did it come to your
11 attention?

12 MR. VERA: I initially heard about the inspector general's
13 report, and then I read the inspector general's report, which
14 was very concerning when I saw all the shortcomings in the --
15 in the investigation and the lack of depth of the
16 investigation.

17 MR. DEIXLER: Did you yourself have the opportunity to
18 interview a deputy who described to you treatment received by
19 that deputy at the hands of the Banditos?

20 MR. VERA: Yes. Earlier -- earlier in my career, yes.

21 MR. DEIXLER: Would you describe that.

22 MR. VERA: That particular deputy had experienced some
23 retaliation, not being backed up on calls, being shunned
24 because they were -- the station was -- or the leadership in
25 the station was looking to make this person a training officer.

1 Just a very unprofessional, unbecoming environment of
2 harassment to this particular employee.

3 The particular employee had to leave the station and
4 at one point came to interview me -- with me. I -- I -- I had
5 never met the person before, but she described some very
6 troubling situations. So I had a position that I placed her on
7 to remove her from -- from that environment so that she could
8 work in a professional environment, in a safe environment.

9 MR. DEIXLER: That was a person who transferred because he
10 or she felt endangered and harassed in her workplace; is that
11 fair?

12 MR. VERA: That's correct.

13 MR. DEIXLER: And was it unusual for you to hear stories
14 about the East LA Station and other stations in which there
15 were patterns of harassment?

16 MR. VERA: Directly as the captain because my position
17 wasn't, you know, working in a patrol environment anymore.
18 I -- I wasn't hearing this directly. I would hear rumors at
19 times, but it was unusual to actually have an employee come to
20 you and tell you some circumstances that -- that I found very
21 concerning.

22 MR. DEIXLER: It -- I understand that you are a candidate
23 for sheriff of Los Angeles County.

24 Do I have that correct?

25 MR. VERA: I am, sir.

1 MR. DEIXLER: And once you announced your candidacy for
2 sheriff, did you or your family face any retaliation?

3 MR. VERA: Unfortunately I did.

4 MR. DEIXLER: And what -- what position did you hold on
5 the day that you announced that you were candidate?

6 MR. VERA: I was a division chief.

7 MR. DEIXLER: And did that position change?

8 MR. VERA: It did.

9 MR. DEIXLER: What happened to change that position?

10 MR. VERA: I was eventually demoted to the rank of
11 commander.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And what was the explanation that was
13 offered, if any?

14 MR. VERA: The explanation was that I was running for
15 sheriff.

16 MR. DEIXLER: And have you -- I understand your wife is or
17 has been employed by the LASD?

18 MR. VERA: My wife, sir?

19 MR. DEIXLER: Yes.

20 MR. VERA: Yes.

21 MR. DEIXLER: And what -- what position does she hold in
22 the LASD?

23 MR. VERA: She's been retired for a little over a year.

24 MR. DEIXLER: When did you announce your candidacy?

25 MR. VERA: April of last year.

1 MR. DEIXLER: So a little over a year ago.

2 MR. VERA: Yeah. She had been retired for about a month
3 or so when I announced my candidacy.

4 MR. DEIXLER: Was -- were you or your wife subject to an
5 internal investigation after you announced your candidacy?

6 MR. VERA: Threats of internal investigations, inquiries,
7 unannounced visits by law enforcement or sheriff's department
8 investigators that -- that came to my -- my property.

9 MR. DEIXLER: You have a son who is interested in becoming
10 a deputy sheriff in the LASD?

11 MR. VERA: I do.

12 MR. DEIXLER: And was that -- was your son's application
13 determined that he was qualified for the position?

14 MR. VERA: He was.

15 MR. DEIXLER: And what happened to that application?

16 MR. VERA: After he received a conditional offer of
17 employment, like his brother and sister who were on the job, he
18 was bypassed a number of times for the position of deputy
19 sheriff and on several academy classes to the extent that he
20 had to apply with another agency.

21 And in speaking to the background investigator that
22 completed his background from the other agency, they read his
23 file. And clearly on his file it stated that he had been
24 cleared for academy, cleared for hire. But that did not happen
25 as a result of my announcement for my candidacy for the sheriff

1 of Los Angeles County.

2 MR. DEIXLER: I have no further questions. I pass the
3 witness.

4 CHAIR KENNEDY: Any questions?

5 COMMISSIONER BONNER: I just have -- it's not a question,
6 but I do want to just state for the record that we would very
7 much liked to have had Sheriff Villanueva here to testify today
8 and respond to questions. You can see why, I think, just from
9 what's happened so far.

10 The record of this hearing should reflect that on
11 behalf of the commission, the special counsel to the Civilian
12 Oversight Commission, Mr. Deixler, invited Sheriff Villanueva
13 to -- to -- to this very hearing by a letter dated May 6, 2022,
14 in which he said -- and I'm just quoting from the letter:

15 "On May 24th, 2022, at Loyola Law School, in the
16 Robertson Courtroom, the commission will conduct an evidentiary
17 hearing addressing certain information relating to the subjects
18 described above to include the existence, operation, and impact
19 of deputy gangs, cliques, and exclusionary subgroups within the
20 LASD. I anticipate there will be testimony about deputy
21 subgroups known as the Banditos and Executioners. Please
22 accept my invitation to -- to the commission's hearing on
23 May 24th."

24 This letter from Mr. Deixler was responded to on
25 May 16th, 2022, by a Lieutenant O'Donnell, who is in the office

1 of the sheriff, who says -- and I'll just quote the pertinent
2 part of the letter of May 16th:

3 "Unfortunately Sheriff Alex Villanueva will not be
4 able to attend the hearing on May 24th, 2022."

5 And I just want to say, "Yes, Sheriff Villanueva, it
6 is unfortunate that you're not here."

7 I have no question, though, of the witness.

8 CHAIR KENNEDY: Lael?

9 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you, Chief Vera, for your --
10 for your testimony.

11 You've talked about the knowledge that you have about
12 East LA Station and your proposal or your being responsible for
13 process for changing the culture of the station. We've had
14 testimony, and there have been numerous reports in the media
15 about deputy gangs at stations other than East LA.

16 Do you have any first-hand knowledge or experience
17 about deputy gangs at stations other than East LA?

18 MR. VERA: The sheriff's department has long embraced a
19 culture of -- and -- and this is the background as opposed to a
20 justification -- of tattoos that identify certain stations.
21 And it -- it -- my understanding from 34 years on the
22 department comes from military-type of practices. So the
23 majority of the stations in the sheriff's department, at some
24 point or currently -- and I don't know about currently -- have
25 had various tattoos that identify stations.

1 Certain stations have had individuals who have been
2 terminated, severely disciplined, and some prosecuted with, you
3 know, criminal behavior. So whether some of it has definitely
4 been consistent with that criminal behavior that we're
5 discussing, and some of it had -- many of them have never had
6 an issue with the department.

7 But I think the -- the -- the bigger issue is the
8 fact that the practice needs to be completely terminated. And
9 the culture has -- has to change because you -- just the
10 existence of these, you know, secret societies, I think are --
11 are extremely problematic not only to the department, but to
12 the community.

13 And -- and like I stated earlier, you will never be
14 able to gain any semblance of public confidence as long as this
15 practice is -- is occurring. And the only one that can change
16 the practice is the sheriff. The sheriff is the one that's
17 responsible for, at the end of the day, using the resources
18 that are available to him in collaboration with county counsel,
19 with the inspector general, with the COC to come together and
20 figure out, okay, how do we put a permanent end to this
21 process.

22 Not just policy because the biggest fear that I have
23 in my 33-and-a-half years is that you just change the policy.
24 If you change the policy, you drive bad practices underground
25 and that's something that we cannot afford in the sheriff's

1 department.

2 It has to be a much deeper look into it with the
3 policy being changed, culture being changed, and, quite
4 frankly, a look at employees that have participated in rogue
5 behavior and been terminated or prosecuted and -- and a look as
6 to what changed, what caused this type of behavior so we can
7 have a permanent end to the practice and then with a strong
8 leadership that doesn't allow for it 'cause you get what you --
9 what you allow for.

10 And one of the things I'm most proud of when I was a
11 captain of South Los Angeles, there's a tattoo associated with
12 the station, but there wasn't a single lawsuit or incident that
13 was problematic that came up during that time period because we
14 just didn't allow for bad behavior. But it -- it -- it can't
15 be dealt with at that level. It has to be dealt with at a much
16 higher level at the top of the organization in a collaborative
17 manner.

18 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you very much.

19 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Could I just add, though, with
20 respect to station tattoos as opposed to deputy gangs and
21 cliques and subgroups -- exclusionary subgroups but a station
22 tattoo, would -- would that exclude people -- deputies from
23 having that tattoo? I mean -- I mean, in other words, were
24 those exclusionary tattoos, or could you just get one because
25 you -- you were a deputy assigned to that station?

1 MR. VERA: The majority of the time it -- it -- they --
2 you have to be asked by those involved in that group if they
3 want to participate, or whatever --

4 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Why would that be, sir? I would
5 just want to -- I want to know why would that be that if I'm a
6 member of a certain station that's identified by a tattoo, I've
7 got to get permission from other line deputies to be able to --
8 to have a station tattoo? Why would that be?

9 MR. VERA: Yeah --

10 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Please explain it to me.

11 MR. VERA: Sure. That's because whoever is responsible
12 for those station tattoos as a group of individuals that have
13 received those tattoos who've created their own guidelines as
14 to why they believe that, you know, a particular deputy sheriff
15 should be allowed to be part of that group, and amongst
16 themselves, they determine who fits that criteria or does not
17 and then allows them, you know, to participate.

18 The majority -- I can tell you this. The majority --
19 you know, to qualify it. I worked Lynwood Station, I worked
20 Century Station, I worked Compton Station, I worked Lennox
21 Station, I worked South LA, and I worked SCB. I don't have a
22 tattoo on my body.

23 The majority of the people that work those stations
24 do not have tattoos but the -- the great majority. But there
25 is a group of people that -- that run those particular cliques

1 or subgroups, whatever the case is, and we have seen the
2 behavior of some of those groups become abusive and, at some
3 cases, criminal.

4 COMMISSIONER BONNER: But let's -- let's not call them
5 station tattoos then. We'll -- because they're not available
6 to everybody at the station. Let's call them deputy gang or
7 clique tattoos, but let's not call them station tattoos because
8 they are not that.

9 You know, what disturbs me a little bit too, I -- I
10 must say, Commander, is that -- is the temporizing view you
11 have of deputy cliques and gangs. Whatever you call these,
12 that you have these exclusionary subgroups and you're -- you're
13 excusing them by oh, well, it could be okay to have this where
14 there's a shot caller or a small group of deputies within a
15 station who controls who can be in and who's out, who gets
16 the -- the TOs, the training officer assignments, who gets the
17 plum assignments.

18 I mean, this is, to me, it's -- it's total anathema,
19 and it's a cancer on the sheriff's department that this
20 continues to exist. And it's going to take some really, really
21 strong leadership to change it, and I don't -- I don't hear
22 that from you, sir.

23 MR. VERA: I -- I think you misunderstood --

24 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: You did.

25 MR. VERA: -- my answer. You were asking me, sir, a

1 question as to how it operates. I wasn't telling you that I
2 stand with that. I actually --

3 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Okay.

4 MR. VERA: -- as a matter of fact, I was the person that
5 volunteered to take on this issue when the sheriff was elected
6 to put a permanent end to it.

7 My response to your question, it was simply, you
8 know, how does this operate. And that was my explanation, not
9 a condoning of it, and I haven't condoned it and I've been very
10 public in my position throughout. So I -- I believe you
11 misunderstood.

12 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Okay. By -- okay. By whatever
13 name, deputy cliques, gangs, exclusionary subgroups, do you
14 think that it would be a good thing if the sheriff's department
15 at long last got rid of them?

16 MR. VERA: Absolutely. I'm the only executive in the
17 sheriff's department has spoken to over 500 deputy sheriffs
18 personally in formalized training as -- before we even started
19 to address it -- on how we're going to put a -- an end. We
20 need to put an end to this practice because of the -- the --
21 the -- the -- the problem and the distrust that it's causing in
22 the community.

23 So my position has been very, very pointed, and I --
24 I don't know how you misunderstood.

25 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Okay. Well, I'm not -- I haven't

1 been following your campaign, sir, but -- but how would you end
2 it? So how would you end deputy cliques?

3 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: It's a campaign.

4 COMMISSIONER BONNER: How are you going to end it? Let's
5 say you're --

6 MR. VERA: How am I going to end it?

7 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Yeah.

8 MR. VERA: Very simple. And I -- I spoke just a little
9 bit earlier.

10 Number one, we're going to create a policy, day one,
11 that puts an end to the practice altogether. I have -- my
12 intentions would be to bring in representatives from the COC,
13 the inspector general, county counsel, and even the unions with
14 a very clear statement as to what the end game will be. The
15 end game will be we'll put an end to the practice.

16 Number two, we'll put an end to the culture, and the
17 culture will start from how we hire individuals, how we train
18 individuals, what -- what we -- what -- you know, the
19 explanation as to this is what this whole tattoo culture has
20 evolved to, what it's cost the organization. We don't stand
21 with it. It's a complete change of culture.

22 And then the deeper dive that I discussed earlier is
23 creating, whether it's a task force or a blue-ribbon committee
24 that, at the same time, does the deeper dive because what I
25 really want to get down to is that rogue behavior. So the

1 rogue behavior from deputies that are hired to have a -- a --
2 a -- you know, a background that they clear backgrounds,
3 clearly, now they end up becoming involved in either criminal
4 activity or in abusive activity that leads to high-level
5 discipline.

6 And if you can get an entity of stakeholders,
7 educators, things of that nature, to -- to do the deeper dive
8 into what has caused these issues, I think now you've attacked
9 the issue from multi -- different levels, and you can put a
10 permanent end to the process. But it's much greater than just
11 creating a policy.

12 COMMISSIONER BONNER: But you have a commission -- whether
13 it's a blue-ribbon one or not, but you have a commission that
14 is -- right now this commission is doing a deeper dive. We're
15 going to do that much.

16 But thank you. Thank you, Mr. Vera.

17 CHAIR KENNEDY: Okay.

18 We do need to take public comments. Are there any
19 other questions?

20 Yes, Patti.

21 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Mr. Vera, thanks for being here
22 today.

23 What -- in your over 30 years with the department,
24 have you ever heard of anyone -- any deputy who had a tattoo
25 change their mind or decided to have the tattoo removed? Has

1 there ever been any scenario like that?

2 MR. VERA: Yes.

3 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Once? Twice? What's -- what's
4 your sense?

5 MR. VERA: I have a sense that there has been a good
6 amount of older deputies who have looked back and realized
7 that that may not have been the best decision. Maybe, at the
8 time, things weren't the same as they were today, and some of
9 them have gotten them lasered off, some of them have covered
10 them over. Most of them are retired, quite frankly.

11 COMMISSIONER GIGGANS: Okay. Thank you.

12 CHAIR KENNEDY: Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER COOPER: Also, I want to say thank you for
14 being here.

15 You mentioned that you spoke with the sheriff --

16 MR. VERA: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER COOPER: -- about the misleading of the
18 information about the transfers being voluntary. But how did
19 he respond to you in that meeting? What did he say to you
20 about it?

21 MR. VERA: So if -- if you know -- I've been around him
22 long enough. His -- his responses are -- are -- are kind of
23 unique. There's not a whole lot of back and forth. There's a
24 lot of hand wringing, there's a whole lot of shaking back and
25 forth, and a whole lot of "uh-huh, uh-hmm," that kind of thing,

1 and no real response.

2 So when I actually -- I was forceful with him on
3 very -- on quite a few issues right from the onset that -- that
4 I found problematic. And you -- you never got a consistent
5 answer from him. It was more of -- of just him kind of
6 grinding his teeth and listening to what you have to say, and
7 then we would hear about it later through an undersheriff or an
8 assistant sheriff. But you didn't get a whole lot out of him.

9 COMMISSIONER COOPER: Okay. Thank you.

10 MR. VERA: And I told him point blank "That's not true.
11 It's a false statement."

12 CHAIR KENNEDY: Okay. Seeing no other questions, I think
13 we'll move over to public comments.

14 Thank you very much.

15 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Mr. Chair, without objection, may
16 the two letters I referred to be made part of the record of
17 hearing?

18 CHAIR KENNEDY: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER BONNER: They'll be Exhibits 24, 25, next in
20 order.

21 CHAIR KENNEDY: So, normally, we would take commissioner
22 comments before public comment, but our investigation is
23 ongoing, and since we are continuing this investigation, I
24 think we'll move directly to public comment. Many members of
25 the public have requested comment.

1 I am so sorry to do this, but because we have this
2 room until 1:00 o'clock, I will need to limit public comment to
3 one minute. I promise you next time I will allot for more time
4 so that I do not cut you off, but this time I have to.

5 So -- and if we could begin with one-minute intervals
6 of public comment.

7 MS. P. PERELLO: When your name is called, please go to
8 the middle of the room. I will be calling the names three at a
9 time.

10 Our first speaker will be Riley Paris followed by
11 Carlos Montez followed by Leticia Vasquez.

12 Is Riley Paris here with us still? Is Riley Paris
13 here?

14 MR. C. MONTES: My name is Carlos Montes. I'm with the
15 Check the Sheriff Coalition and Centro CSO in Boyle Heights,
16 East LA.

17 I grew up in East LA getting harassed, arrested, and
18 brutalized by the East LA Sheriff Station. I know many people
19 in East LA. I graduated from Garfield High School. I have
20 friends, acquaintances that have members of the LA Sheriff's
21 Department at East LA.

22 I have information from two separate instances -- two
23 separate conversations that Villanueva joined the Banditos when
24 he was at the East LA Sheriff's Station.

25 These are folks that have friends, relatives within

1 the East LA Sheriff's Station that have given me this
2 information. They're afraid to come forward. They're afraid,
3 obviously, to publicly testify to that because of the terror of
4 East LA Banditos.

5 I'm here to, first of all, thank you for last week,
6 passing motion asking the Board of Supervisors to put a charter
7 amendment to strengthen oversight over the LA Sheriff's
8 Department.

9 I'm here to say, "Adios, Villanueva. Puto Bandito."

10 We got to get rid of this sheriff; right? He's a
11 Bandito, but we need systemic change to the system.

12 Thank you very much.

13 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

14 MS. P. PERELLO: Leticia Vasquez followed by
15 Christina E. Vasquez followed by Jacqueline Ventures.

16 MS. L. VAZQUEZ: I'm (inaudible) mom. It's good to be
17 here in presence, not just a phone call.

18 Unfortunately, under the current sheriff, officers
19 are protected and shielded from the process of wrongful
20 misconduct and accountability. The -- the actual -- it's
21 actually rare during the current regime.

22 You can't continue killing our people and always
23 claiming that you fear for your life. You can't generalize it,
24 and you can't say that all are suspects. You can't and you
25 should not be okay with a sheriff dismissing and mocking their

1 victims and think a badge gives you the license to be corrupt.

2 Enough is enough when no improvement is -- I'm sorry,
3 I'm nervous -- is seen, a change is needed in the -- in the
4 leadership. A charter amendment will give the people the power
5 and the strength to be able to change that.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER BONNER: Thank you.

9 CHAIR KENNEDY: Next.

10 MS. P. PERELLO: Christina Vazquez followed by
11 Jacqueline Ventures followed by Julie Martinez.

12 MS. C. VAZQUEZ: I am one of the many impacted families
13 represented here this morning.

14 We are and we have been, month after month, here to
15 demand change, to challenge a flawed system, to push for a
16 charter amendment so that the sheriff in office will be held
17 accountable.

18 I am here to be the voice of my husband whose life
19 was brutally taken by negligent and incompetent officers on
20 October 6th of 2019 on our driveway. I am here to remind you
21 of the blood on their hands.

22 The sheriff in office sets the tone for the entire
23 department. If the person in office acts above the law, is it
24 any surprise that officers act the same? Is it shocking the
25 deputy-involved shootings continue to increase? Is it shocking

1 that corruption has leaked into this department?

2 But, I mean, this isn't something that is new. This
3 has been going on for generations. It's only being brought to
4 life because people continue to talk about it despite
5 retaliation and harassment so many of us as impacted families
6 have had to endure.

7 How many more lives need to be taken to bring change?

8 MS. P. PERELLO: Jacqueline Venters followed by
9 Julie Martinez followed by Tamera.

10 MS. J. VENTERS: Good morning. I want to thank Wald- --
11 Lieutenant Waldie and Commander Vera for coming here brave
12 enough to share. I -- you guys know my son was shot five times
13 in the back by Deputy Gonzalez who's -- and a gun planted. So
14 many things. That was April 4th, 2011.

15 We got this far to the Department of Justice, Gascòn,
16 District Attorney, Federal Bureau of Investigation. But our
17 Department of Justice has dropped the ball. They have -- he
18 called me -- Investigator Steve Phan called me and told me a
19 lie. I don't know why, but we got to take it further. And
20 this just don't start with the sheriff's department. We have
21 people in other departments that's not doing their job.

22 He told me that they couldn't investigate this deputy
23 anymore because they didn't have enough evidence saying that he
24 planted a gun. My son was shot five times in the back. I got
25 a wagon back there that I brought with all the evidence that

1 got us this far with his case showing that this deputy is
2 corrupt. He's a Jump Out Boy from the Century Station.

3 The Asbury and --

4 MS. P. PERELLO: Julie Martinez --

5 MS. J. VENTERS: -- and Mr. -- what's-his-name left, and
6 they gave me their minutes before they left. So I'll come back
7 and finish.

8 MS. P. PERELLO: Followed by Tamera followed by
9 Larry Stewart.

10 MS. J. MARTINEZ: I don't know how I'm going to do this in
11 a minute; I'll try.

12 In February 2020, I read a personal letter to the
13 family from Villanueva in which he claimed that the sheriff's
14 department does not compile any data on deputy gangs in 2020.

15 Within 12 hours of my grandson Paul Rea's shooting
16 and murder by a deputy in East LA, several community members
17 approached me at an impromptu memorial and told me that
18 Deputy Saavedra was a member of the Bandito gang. I was
19 incredulous; had no proof. Since then, several news agencies,
20 national and international, have exposed Deputy Saavedra as a
21 member of the Banditos.

22 Our communities -- our kids are black, brown,
23 indigenous, Asian youth -- are simply fodder for deputy gangs
24 to earn their position in these deputy gangs.

25 At what point will the COC and Board of Supervisors

1 hold Villanueva accountable? We need the part -- the charter
2 amendment.

3 It is painful and disheartening to learn that my
4 grandson's death was simply an activity, an activity
5 orchestrated for this deputy to earn a Ban- -- his Bandito
6 badge and -- and tattoo.

7 Thank you.

8 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

9 Really want to have everyone to be able to have time
10 to comment. So if we could not applaud, if we can just keep
11 going.

12 MS. TAMERA: I yield my time to Ms. Martinez.

13 MS. J. MARTINEZ: Thank you.

14 Since then we've learned that Deputy Saavedra has a
15 name, "Listos." For those of you who don't speak Spanish,
16 "Listos" means "ready." It means ready to shoot.

17 These deputy gangs operate as street gangs, and yet,
18 they're not criminalized. These deputy gangs wear badges.
19 They're paid by my taxpayer dollars, which is really, really
20 unfortunate.

21 The COC, as I said earlier, and the Board of
22 Supervisors need to push for the charter amendment as it
23 stands. Villanueva, as an elected official, there is no
24 accountability. Only through a charter amendment, in which
25 the -- the Board of Supervisors will be granted a form of

1 impeachment power will dep- -- will any sheriff, including
2 Villanueva, any future sheriff be held accountable for criminal
3 gang activity.

4 Let's talk about this criminal gang activity who wear
5 badges and who are paid by the taxpayers of the county.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

8 MS. P. PERELLO: Larry Steward followed by
9 Cynthia Anderson-Barker followed by Latice Serjanko.

10 MR. L. STEWARD: My name is Larry Steward.

11 I just got out of prison for doing 20 years, and I
12 thank God that I'm here today to speak my truth.

13 I got two officers out of Compton Court lied and said
14 I threw a weapon, when a weapon was found 500 yards away from
15 me by the helicopter.

16 And I'm just going to say to y'all up here sitting
17 here, y'all could look, but I'm a different breed. When I say
18 I'm a different breed, if change don't come, fire is going to
19 blaze here in these states 'cause people was tired. I'm not
20 going to put my life on the line. They lying on me, and they
21 won't give me a dea- -- they forced me to take a deal.

22 So I'm telling y'all to y'all face -- I'm looking at
23 y'all -- I just got out from doing 20 years, and I've been
24 doing good. If this don't change -- the fire is already set.
25 Y'all better change it 'cause ain't nothing going to be at

1 peace. It's real out here. They're trying to wipe me out with
2 three strikes for something I didn't do.

3 I'm done.

4 MS. C. ANDERSON-BARKER: My name is Cynthia Anderson-
5 Barker. I'm an attorney with the National Lawyers Guild, but
6 also part of this coalition called Check the Sheriff.

7 And to hear the families here today, after hearing
8 the testimony about the sheriff's conduct and the deputy gangs,
9 and here are the victims. They're right here in this room. So
10 my concern is, number one, my colleagues have sued the
11 sheriff's department, as was mentioned earlier, \$50 million
12 involved in deputy gang-related settlements.

13 So what are we going to do? And I love the fact that
14 you're asking "All right. What is the solution?"

15 Well, the solution isn't any more blue-ribbon
16 commissions. The solution is the discipline and firing and
17 taking out that authority from the sheriff's department to a
18 separate entity and also, of course, impeaching and the
19 authority to impeach and recall for cause.

20 So before we start anymore blue-ribbon commissions
21 and five more years pass and more people die, let's take action
22 now.

23 Thank you very much.

24 MS. P. PERELLO: Ricci Sergienko followed by
25 Raquel Durfee followed by Hal Steinberg.

1 MR. RICCI SERGIENKO: How's it going, Commission?

2 So I'm Ricci Sergienko. I'm an organizer with the
3 People City Council and also a member of the Check the Sheriff
4 Coalition.

5 I've been at the Vargas family house when the
6 deputies have gone -- come over and harassed and assaulted
7 family members. That's a daily occurrence for the Vargas
8 family, much like the (inaudible) family, and -- and Marco
9 (inaudible) family. He had people in this room, and I know
10 commissioners yourself, and -- and I know Max Huntsman has been
11 subjected to harassment and retaliation from LASD.

12 Myself -- Alex Villanueva is running a Facebook
13 campaign ad against me, and I'm a private citizen. I'm not
14 running for office, and he's mad because of (inaudible)
15 families and the Check the Sheriff Coalition is daring to
16 expose LASD.

17 I'm here to recommend the charter amendment but LASD
18 won't stop killing black and brown people until they are
19 abolished. Dismantle and disband LASD.

20 MS. P. PERELLO: Raquel Durfler followed by
21 Hal Steinberg followed by Michelle Enfante.

22 MS. R. DURFLER: Good afternoon. My name is
23 Raquel Durfler, and I'm here today on behalf of Cancel the
24 Contract AV.

25 The existence of deputy gangs coupled with the fact

1 that the Palmdale and Lancaster sheriff stations have been
2 under a consent decree with the Department of Justice since
3 2015 has led to untold suffering for our brown and black
4 communities. Villanueva and LSA -- the sheriff's department,
5 which includes the two deputy gangs, the Cowboys and the
6 Rattlesnakes, are the single greatest threat to the civil
7 liberties, lives, and safety to the communities of color in the
8 Antelope Valley.

9 I'm here today to ask that this body meets with
10 Cancel the Contract to discuss really how do we make sure that
11 the sheriff comes into compliance with that consent decree.

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

14 MS. P. PERELLO: Hal Steinberg followed by
15 Michelle Infante.

16 MR. H. STEINBERG: Hi, my name is Hal Steinberg. I'm also
17 with Cancel the Contract in the Antelope Valley.

18 You know, I think our community in the Antelope
19 Valley is often forgotten about also, and the county is one of
20 the most difficult places in -- in the area.

21 So there are three deputies who I know of who are on
22 the streets right now who have issues.

23 One is deputy who did not respond to a life-and-death
24 issue and let -- let one of our members die. Another deputy
25 who has also a civil rights lawsuit against him, currently on

1 the streets. And a third deputy who body slammed the student
2 at Lancaster High School that we all know about.

3 This is a problem of impunity that goes beyond just
4 the hiring and firing of deputy gangs. It goes to the roots of
5 this department. And it's been said before, commissions,
6 investigations, longstanding things that have been known for 50
7 years, as the inspector general himself stated, go far beyond
8 any of those things. So actions need to be taken, and due
9 process blocks the process constantly of these people on our
10 streets. They need to be taken off of our streets immediately.

11 MS. P. PERELLO: Michelle Infante followed by Ron Dahl
12 followed by Isaac Asbury.

13 MS. INFANTE: Good afternoon, Commissioners. My name is
14 Michelle Infante. I'm with Dignity and Power Now. I've been
15 working for eight years directly with directly impacted
16 families.

17 It's not just that we have someone who has deputy
18 gangs here, and that's what they are, they're deputy gangs;
19 they're not subgroups. What we have here is someone who -- who
20 lies on -- on an investigation report, and then that lie is
21 perpetuated by the Coroner's Office and then it continues down
22 the line.

23 And every family that's here deserves millions of
24 dollars, millions, not two, not three, not five, millions of
25 dollars.

1 This lady over here, she's trying to fight for her
2 son. What she has on paper is probably all false accusations,
3 character assassination, and she has to take that to a court of
4 law and try to explain the lies that are on here. This is
5 crazy nonsense.

6 Our organization is saving money and trying to fund
7 to help these families with mental health services.

8 The least you can do is take the charter amendment
9 and push it through with the County Board of Supervisors at the
10 very least.

11 MS. P. PERELLO: Ron Dahl followed by Isaac Asbury
12 followed by Andres Kwon.

13 MS. J. VENTERS: Okay. Ron Dahl and Isaac Asbury gave me
14 their time.

15 But Mr. Bonner and Mr. Huntsman, thank you, guys.

16 Mr. Bonner, I remember when you first submitted the
17 resolution for the recall, a resignation of the sheriff, and
18 you got the ball rolling.

19 We are here now, but it's not stopping right here
20 because I'm here with the Department of Justice, and this
21 investigator just did something that's illegal. He lied to me.
22 He lied to me and told me that these deputies had to have --
23 tell on their fellow deputies saying that they seen him with a
24 gun, or they had to have a witness.

25 I've been in court from the beginning -- April 4th

1 to -- I'm standing here right now. I never stop fighting for
2 my son. But what he did was untrue, and he didn't know the
3 next day I met with Gascòn, and he said that wasn't true
4 either.

5 I requested the letter and told him that he wanted me
6 to -- he wanted the letter that they sent. They have failed to
7 send me anything stating that they have to tell on somebody.

8 All these deputies got up there and testified that
9 they never seen a gun. One of them even say he don't even know
10 why this deputy shoot -- shot.

11 These things have to stop because we, as civilians,
12 we seen what he did to Mr. Huntsman over here. Disrespected
13 the subpoenas.

14 Mr. Huntsman, you sent three letters over to the
15 sheriff's department for my son for investigation. They have
16 failed to do anything.

17 One of the sergeants over there told me he wasn't
18 giving me nothing, they wasn't investigating anything, to go to
19 the Department of Justice.

20 Look what the Department of Justice just did. This
21 is a lie. This is not true.

22 We have seen people go to jail for no weapons been
23 found. But my son was shot five times in the back.

24 You guys -- I don't know if y'all got that video, but
25 I got a video that LA Times and KPCC sued the -- the sheriff

1 department in court because --

2 I have Mr. Isaac's time. Yeah. I -- I have their
3 time.

4 They sued in court --

5 MS. P. PERELLO: You were given two minutes.

6 CHAIR KENNEDY: I'm sorry.

7 MS. J. VENTERS: I have another minute --

8 MS. P. PERELLO: Yes. You were given both -- both of the
9 minutes, ma'am.

10 MS. J. VENTERS: Are they up?

11 CHAIR KENNEDY: We gave you two for your -- for your
12 absent friends.

13 MS. P. PERELLO: Andres Kwon followed by Valerie Vargas
14 followed by Stephanie Luna.

15 MR. A. KWON: Andres Kwon, ACLU, Check the Sheriff.

16 Today, more information kept in the dark by the
17 sheriff and county counsel came to light. We heard about
18 exclusion, retaliation, shot callers, beatings, shootings,
19 rampant civil rights violations, 9-9-8, inking parties, work
20 slowdowns, abuse of power, coverups and secrecy, impunity.

21 To sum it up, as the lieutenant said, the sheriff has
22 sacrificed public safety for power. And here's the thing:
23 We've known of all this.

24 How many more investigations with blue-ribbon
25 commissions before the powers that be do something about it?

1 No. It's past time for us to radically overhaul the
2 department, as the LA Times editorial board put it. And I'm
3 not talking about just policy banning deputy gangs, which will
4 be meaningless when it has to be implemented by a sheriff who
5 gaslights the public and issue and minimizes it.

6 We thank the commission for just voting to support
7 our community recommendation for a charter amendment to finally
8 establish meaningful checks and balances, and we urge the
9 supervisor to take this important step.

10 Our community, especially families devastated by
11 sheriff violence, are here. Can you please stand?

12 Please stand.

13 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you, Andres.

14 MR. KWON: This is just a glance. All the families and
15 communities, all the types of shared violence.

16 MS. P. PERELLO: Valerie Vargas followed by Stephanie Luna
17 followed by our last speaker, Janay Rea.

18 MS. V. VARGAS: Good morning, y'all.

19 Waited a long time to be here in person, about two
20 years.

21 Going to take a lot to process what we heard today
22 in -- during the testimonies, but like this gentleman had said
23 over here, I think he had just came out of prison from 20
24 years, where he has said that the fire has been lit. The
25 fire's been lit for about the past four years, and it just

1 seems like every -- every year I get angrier and angrier.

2 So I wanted to say thank you for moving -- getting
3 the ball rolling on the charter amendment, but we really do
4 need it to be pushed to the Board of Supervisors.

5 I really don't want to be here. I waste my time by
6 calling in from work and complaining to you guys about what the
7 LASD does. And it's not just LASD, but it's the sheriff
8 himself who keeps antagonizing my family.

9 The only thing I can think of is right now is just,
10 you know, implementing the charter amendment and somehow
11 finding some way to protect the families because you have
12 whistleblowers here who are protected by the law. We are
13 civilians, and there's no protection for us.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. P. PERELLO: Stephanie Luna followed by Janay Rea.

16 MS. S. LUNA: Yeah, hello. Following what my sister said,
17 we're the family of Anthony Vargas. I mean, you guys already
18 know the story that happened with my nephew. He was killed by
19 two Bandito prospects.

20 You know, just sitting here listening to the
21 testimony of the officer and hearing how he said that he feared
22 for the life of him and his family, I can tell you that that's
23 something that we deal with on a daily basis. And that's
24 because we face harassment and intimidation from not just the
25 sheriff's department, not just the sheriffs involved in my

1 nephew's murder, but from Alex Villanueva himself.

2 You know, it's a big deal being here today having an
3 entire discussion on deputy gangs because a few years ago,
4 nobody wanted to talk about this. This was something that
5 everybody stood away from. So thank you to the commission for,
6 you know, being so willing and so ready and so able to
7 challenge Alex because, let me tell you, he doesn't like to be
8 challenged, and we're here for it.

9 The fact that my nephew's not here no more means that
10 we're going to be here for the rest of our life fighting not
11 just Villanueva himself but the sheriff's department. And
12 that's why it's important to get the charter amendment on the
13 ballot because we know that this isn't just about Villanueva.
14 It's going to be about anyone that comes in after his
15 leadership.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. JANAE REA: Hello. I'm the sister of Paul Rea. He
18 was 18 years old when he was murdered in 2019 by an active
19 deputy gang member, Hector Saavedra, (inaudible) East Los
20 Angeles Sheriff's Station. They are still on duty.

21 I want to take a moment and say how big the deputy
22 gangs take part in the officer-involved killings within the Los
23 Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Alex Villanueva is the
24 head of it all. One moment, there's no gangs, and then the
25 next, he's removing them from the stations. There's Banditos,

1 Compton Executors, Jump Out Boys, 3000 Boys, Grim Reapers,
2 Regulators, and plenty more deputy gangs that are only out to
3 kill and harass our (inaudible). Other than protecting --
4 sorry.

5 If we take part and try to fight for our loved ones
6 against these deputy gangs, but it feels as if we get no
7 progress with Alex Villanueva being sheriff and making it
8 worse, not helping, rather to harass families in different
9 aspects and making us more of a target than we already are.

10 These deputies get tattoos as -- as an
11 accomplishment, other than getting any discipline. There's
12 proof and facts. Alex can hide it all he wants, but the whole
13 LASD are active deputy gang members.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIR KENNEDY: Okay. I really appreciate the impacted
16 families making statements, and I want to thank you for your
17 patience. I'll make sure there's plenty of time to speak next
18 special hearing.

19 This concludes the COC's first special hearings on
20 alleged deputy gangs.

21 This presentation, Mr. Deixler, gives everybody in
22 this room, and I hope the sheriff's department, a lot to think
23 about.

24 I want to thank Loyola Law School for donating this
25 venue and substantial tech assistance to make this hearing

1 happen. And I also want to thank our executive director and
2 our great COC staff for attending to every detail. You can't
3 imagine how much went into this hearing to make sure this
4 actually happened.

5 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you.

6 CHAIR KENNEDY: After we consult with Mr. Deixler,
7 the COC will release additional information about the next
8 special hearing on deputy gangs. So look for it on our
9 website.

10 COMMISSIONER RUBIN: Thank you.

11 CHAIR KENNEDY: Thank you.

12 (The hearing was concluded.)

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1 STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
2) ss.
3 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES)
4

5 I, ANN BONNETTE, California CSR No. 6108, Louisiana Court
6 Reporter No. 85135, Registered Professional Reporter, Certified
7 Manager of Reporting Services, AAERT CERT D-368, do hereby
8 certify:

9 That said digitally recorded audio of the Civilian
10 Oversight Commission Hearing, May 24, 2022, was transcribed
11 into computer-generated text under my direction and
12 supervision, and I hereby certify the foregoing transcript to
13 the best of my ability.

14 I further certify that I am neither counsel for nor
15 related to any party to said action nor in any way interested
16 in the outcome thereof.

17 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name
18 this 12th day July, 2022.

19
20 

21 ANN BONNETTE, CSR 6108

22 AAERT CERT D-368

23

24

25

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