County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169

LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

September 19, 2005

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

Dear Supervisors:

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT PLAN TO FILL CRITICAL PERSONNEL SHORTAGES

In response to your Board's motion of June 20, 2005, I have implemented a restoration plan that includes multi-year staffing projections for custody, unincorporated area patrol, community policing, and detective services. The factors cited in your Board motion — calls for service, response times, population growth, and crime statistics — were raised in my May 9, 2005 letter to your Board and again considered in the preparation of the restoration plan.

Much like other local law enforcement agencies, we have always faced challenges of recruiting, hiring, and training a sufficient number of qualified applicants. The threat of budget cuts at the end of Fiscal Year 2003-04 forced us to maintain an usually large number of deputy vacancies. When your Board spared us from the 2004-05 cuts, and then restored a number of previously cut positions to our 2005-06 budget, our Department intensified its search for new hires.

Our recruitment, hiring, and training efforts are beginning to pay off; since January 1, 2005, we have hired 475 deputy sheriff trainees. We currently have three academy classes in session, including a 45 person class at our College of the Canyons site. Our staffing plan anticipates a new, 100-plus recruit class every six weeks.

While we are making significant progress on the recruitment front, our latest challenges have been attrition and retention. We continue to lose more than 400 deputies a year to retirement and resignation. A trend during the past few years has been for less

seasoned deputy personnel to seek employment with other law enforcement agencies. While some of the cause has been blamed on the lengthy initial custodial assignment, compensation, and retirement benefits, a great many of those leaving cite the cost of housing, the long daily commute, and the robust growth of the Inland Empire as primary reasons for their departure.

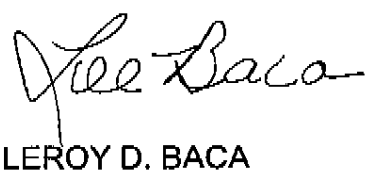
In response, we have embarked on an aggressive internal campaign to retain our personnel. Our custody and correctional services command staff frequently visit the various jail facilities, seeking to boost morale and engender positive, long-term commitments. Seasoned patrol deputies, deputies from specialized units, and detectives are brought in to promote camaraderie and provide much-desired training to the newer custody deputies. The feedback from these visits, and the impact it is having on retention and morale, has been encouraging. We are closely monitoring the actual effects on our Department's complement.

In our staffing restoration plan, priority is given to filling our jail personnel vacancies. As I have consistently advocated maintaining sufficient numbers in patrol and detective services, the plan also points to a reduction in our current vacancy levels in those areas over the next two years. It is my intention to restore previously cut unincorporated area patrol and detective positions beginning in July 2007. In addition, we anticipate the community policing services program to be fully staffed by the end of this fiscal year.

Please bear in mind that the restoration plan serves as a guide and that the deployment of personnel, as always, will ultimately be based on need. To this end, I welcome your Board's continued input.

The Chief Administrative Officer concurs with the general content of our restoration plan. Should you have any further questions, please feel free to call me, or Assistant Sheriff Paul Tanaka, at (323) 526-5065.

Sincerely,



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