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

LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

June 3, 2010

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

Dear Supervisors:

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**
**UTILIZATION OF E-SCARS REPORT**

This correspondence is in response to your Board's April 20, 2010, request for a report on the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) utilization of the Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report System (E-SCARS) and its protocol for all child abuse investigations. E-SCARS was implemented on April 13, 2009, at all sheriff's stations.

When the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) cross reports a Suspected Child Abuse Report (SCAR) incident to our Department, the cross report is received as a call for service directly to the Computer Aided Dispatch system of the respective station where the incident occurred. This ensures a timely response and investigation of all child abuse calls.

The watch deputy at each sheriff's station has the responsibility of ensuring that each SCAR received is appropriately handled as a call for service or returned to DCFS if the SCAR was sent to the station in error. A patrol deputy is dispatched to each call for service. The responding deputy thoroughly investigates all alleged child abuse or neglect calls received via E-SCARS.

The responding deputy will conduct a face-to-face interview with the victim or informant if the child is unable to communicate. If the deputy is at the child's residence, the deputy will examine the living conditions. If the child is in school at the time of the call, recent case law now requires the deputy to obtain permission from the parent or legal guardian before talking to the child.

Upon suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected, the deputy will complete a comprehensive Incident Report, collect evidence, and speak to the alleged suspect when applicable. If it is determined that the abuse or neglect occurred in another jurisdiction, a courtesy report will be taken. If it is determined that no child abuse or neglect has occurred, the deputy will detail the findings with a log entry.

The Department's Special Victims Bureau has oversight of E-SCARS and personnel are available 24-hours a day to assist patrol deputies with all child abuse matters, which include SCARs. A monthly Clearance Status Report of the number of SCARs each sheriff's station receives is forwarded to the station captains for their review and disposition.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Sergeant Daniel Scott, Special Victims Bureau, at (562) 946-7901.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF