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June 22, 2012

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **REVIEW OF THE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT'S BOATING AND WATERWAYS (MARITIME) OPERATIONS AND SHERIFF'S REQUEST TO PURCHASE A SONAR-EQUIPPED VESSEL (Board Agenda Items 2 and 34, April 3, 2012)**

On April 3, 2012, your Board instructed the Auditor-Controller to review the Sheriff's Department (Sheriff's) maritime operations, including the Sheriff's request to purchase a $265,000 sonar-equipped vessel. We are continuing to evaluate the Sheriff's maritime operations, and expect to complete our review by August 17, 2012.

This memo addresses the sonar-equipped vessel that the Sheriff's has proposed to purchase by using a State Homeland Security Grant Program grant, from the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA). The grant expires on September 30, 2012, and the Sheriff's plans to order the vessel after the Board's approval, and take delivery before the grant expires.

The Sheriff's will be requesting your Board's approval to proceed with the purchase before we complete our review of the Department's maritime operations. To assist your Board in evaluating the Sheriff's request, we are providing the following summary of our review of the proposed sonar-equipped vessel.

The Sheriff's Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) plans to use the vessel to search high-risk coastal and inland waterways (e.g., ports, dams, aqueducts, reservoirs, etc.) for improvised explosive devices and other hazardous materials, and for specialized search

and rescue operations. SEB indicated that the requested vessel, with integrated, high-resolution sonar equipment, will increase efficiency, reduce the number of divers required for search operations, and improve diver safety. SEB expects to use the boat once a month, with annual maintenance costs of approximately $1,200, excluding fuel. SEB has indicated that the vessel will be crewed with existing staff, and will not result in increased personnel costs.

We support the Sheriff's request for the purchase based on the following:

1. The sonar-equipped vessel requested does not duplicate the capabilities of any of the Department's current vessels;

2. CalEMA evaluated the Department's justification for the vessel and has decided to approve the grant; and

3. Given SEB's mission, the purchase of the sonar-equipped vessel does not appear to be unreasonable.

Please call me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Robert Campbell at (213) 253-0101.

WLW:JLS:RGC:YK

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Leroy D. Baca, Sheriff
Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Audit Committee
Justice Deputies
Public Information Office