Deputy is accused of assaulting two inmates

Fri 12-14-12 LA Times

[Jail, from AA1]
Towers jail in downtown L.A. on Christmas Day 2010 when Jackson shouted profanities at him because he did not drop to his knees fast enough during a routine search. Griscavage said he flashed his middle finger at the jailer, whom he described as a bulky, 6-foot deputy with a shaved head.

About 20 minutes later, the deputy ordered him to face a jail window and then kicked the insides of Griscavage's ankles hard with his boots, according to the declaration. Jackson, Griscavage said, handcuffed him and "savagely pushed my cuffed hands up so my arms resembled chicken wings, straining my shoulders and handling me with enough force that my face was pushed into the pod window."

Jackson then forced Griscavage to walk to an area of the jail where four or five deputies were waiting, and "everything went black," the declaration said.

Griscavage said he woke up in the hospital "with a stabbing pain in my head ... undoubtedly the worst headache I have ever felt." He said there was blood on his bare chest, and his eyes were "swimming with blood flowing out of the cuts on my face and head."

He said he suffered a broken nose, black eyes, a cut to his ear, a swollen head and a chipped tooth.

Inmates later told him that Jackson had punched him while he was handcuffed and then kneed and kicked his head and face, according to the declaration. Other inmates, he said, were ordered to mop up a pool of blood after the assault.

Griscavage said a sheriff's detective visited him about the incident but that her focus was not whether the deputy assaulted him but whether he attacked the deputy and caused a scratch to Jackson's hand.

He said the detective told him he needed to give a blood sample to ensure that the deputy had not been exposed to any infectious diseases but did not ask any other questions about the incident.

Griscavage alleged that another deputy snickered at him, saying, "I heard you got knocked out."

The incident was among dozens of abuse allegations the Sheriff's Department began reexamining last year amid public criticism of jail conditions.

Prosecutors charged Jackson, of Corona, with assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury, assault by a public officer and filing a false report in connection with two separate incidents. He is also accused of assaulting Cesar Campana, an inmate at the Compton courthouse lockup, in December 2009.

"The sheriff is taking this very seriously," Whitmore said. The incidents, he added, were isolated with no other employees involved.

Peter Eliasberg, legal director of the ACLU of Southern California, said he was pleased that the Sheriff's Department had taken action in response to his organization's complaints, but questioned why more hadn't been done when the incident first occurred.

"Why wasn't this arr made in 2011? The answer because very likely the fi investigation was curso sloppy and a whitewash," said.

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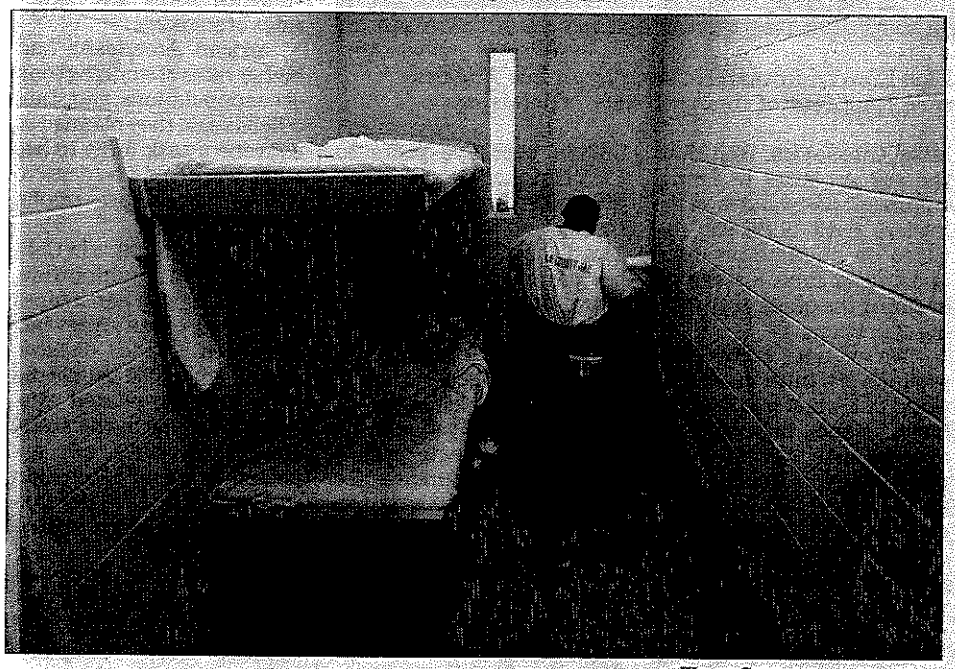

WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

AN INMATE eats in his cell at the Twin Towers jail in downtown Los Angeles. One of the beating incidents a sheriff's deputy is accused of took place at the jail.

Handling of informant probed

WED 12-18 LA Times

A federal grand jury investigates whether Sheriff's Department hindered FBI inquiry into abuse by jailers.

By Jack Leonard and Robert Faturechi

When Los Angeles County jail officials learned last year that one of their inmates was a secret FBI informant, they launched a plan.

Sheriff's officials moved the inmate from the downtown lockup, where he was surreptitiously collecting information on allegedly abusive and corrupt deputies, to a cell in a patrol station in San Dimas. Jailers kept him under constant watch, sources said, and listed the informant, a convicted bank robber, under a series of aliases — including Robin Banks.

Now, a federal grand jury is investigating whether sheriff's officials moved the informant to hinder an FBI investigation into alleged jail abuses.

Several sheriff's employees have testified at recent grand jury hearings about the handling of the informant, sources said. At least one witness testified that moving the inmate and changing his name was an attempt to hide him from federal agents, and that top officials, including the department's second in command, Undersheriff Paul Tanaka, played a role in the plan, according to a source familiar with the testimony.

Sheriff's officials insist that they were not hiding the informant, Anthony Brown, from the FBI but protecting him from other deputies.

Department spokesman Steve Whitmore said Brown wrote a letter after his identity was discovered, complaining that he feared for his life and felt abandoned by the FBI.

"He was frightened not of inmates but of deputies because he was snitching on deputies," Whitmore said. "We were moving him around to protect him from any kind of retaliation."

The grand jury investigation underscores the rift that developed last year be-

[See Informant, A17]

DEPUTY CHARGED WITH BEATING INMATES

Fri 12-14-12
LA Times

The arrest comes more than a year after county jail abuses were first alleged.

By Jack Leonard and Robert Faturechi

A Los Angeles County sheriff's jailer was charged Thursday with assaulting two inmates and falsifying police reports afterward, the first prosecution since abuses in the jails were first alleged more than a year ago.

Jermaine Jackson, a five-year veteran of the department, is accused of assaulting two inmates using "a deadly weapon" — his feet. At least one of the incidents was caught on tape, a sheriff's spokesman said.

The deputy was being booked Thursday into the jail system he once policed and was ordered held on $100,000 bail. Sheriff's spokesman Steve Whitmore said Jackson was on leave without pay pending the outcome of the case. He has not entered a plea.

The arrest comes more than a year after the FBI began an investigation into deputy misconduct within the L.A. County jail system, the largest in the nation. This arrest, however, resulted from an internal sheriff's investigation.

One of the alleged assaults that Jackson, 35, was charged with was described in a declaration filed last year by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California.

In a sworn statement, inmate Derek Griscavage said he was housed in the Twin

[See Jail, AA5]

Baca targets summer for jail reforms

By Christina Villacorte Staff Writer

Dozens of reforms intended to prevent deputies from beating inmates at Los Angeles County jails will be implemented by next summer, though a few will not be completed until 2015, Sheriff Lee Baca vowed Tuesday.

"I think we can beat some of those projections — that's our desire — but (we) don't want to rush implementation and find that (we) left something significant out of whatever policy change that might be," Baca told the county Board of Supervisors.

The blue-ribbon Commission on Jail Violence in September recommended 63 reforms after a nine-month investigation into excessive use of force at county jails.

These include creating an Office of Inspector General that would provide independent oversight of the Sheriff's Department, hiring an assistant sheriff who would focus solely on the county jails, enhancing the training of rank-and-file deputies and giving them more supervision.

Richard Drooyan, who had been the commission's general counsel but is now the board's independent monitor for the reforms, said he expects the department to meet the timetable.

"I have received the complete cooperation, in my judgment, of the sheriff and of the department," he told the board. "I expect substantial progress within 90 days and most of the recommendations being implemented by July 1, 2013."

Drooyan said the new assistant sheriff and additional supervisors should be hired by that summer. A new internal affairs division should also be in place by then, though funding has yet to be granted.

The reform that will take longest to implement is the creation of a data-tracking system that can detect any patterns of violent behavior among deputies.

Also Tuesday, county counsel John Krattli urged that the inspector general serve as special counsel and have an attorney-client relationship with both the board and the sheriff.

"We believe that this status would help promote the inspector general's access to police officer personnel and disciplinary information without jeopardizing the legally mandated confidentiality of such information," he said.

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WED 12-18-12 Daily Breeze

Handling of FBI informant probed

ıformant, from A1]
ɜen the Sheriff's Depart-
ɪnt and federal authorities
er deputies discovered
ɪt the FBI had cultivated
inmate informant as part
a wide-ranging inquiry
o the department's jails.
After news broke about
ɜ incident, Sheriff Lee Ba-
publicly accused an FBI
ɜnt of possibly commit-
g a crime by smuggling a
one to the informant. He
ɪpatched investigators to
ɜ agent's home before de-
mining that the case was
ɔt worthy of pursuing."
The grand jury hearings
ggest that the federal in-
stigation extends beyond
eged jailhouse abuses by
puties to include the ac-
ns of high-ranking mem-
rs of the department. So
; the U.S. attorney's office
s brought charges against
ly one deputy, who plead-
guilty to bribery for tak-
g money to smuggle the
lphone to the informant.
Laurie Levenson, a pro-
ɪsor at Loyola Law School
d a former federal prose-
tor, said obstruction-of-
stice cases typically in-
lve intimidation or vio-
ıce against potential wit-
sses. But she said pros-
ıtors could build a
minal case against sher-
s officials if they can prove
ɜ department's goal in
ɔving Brown was to hinder
ɜ FBI's investigation of the
ls.
"The biggest challenge is
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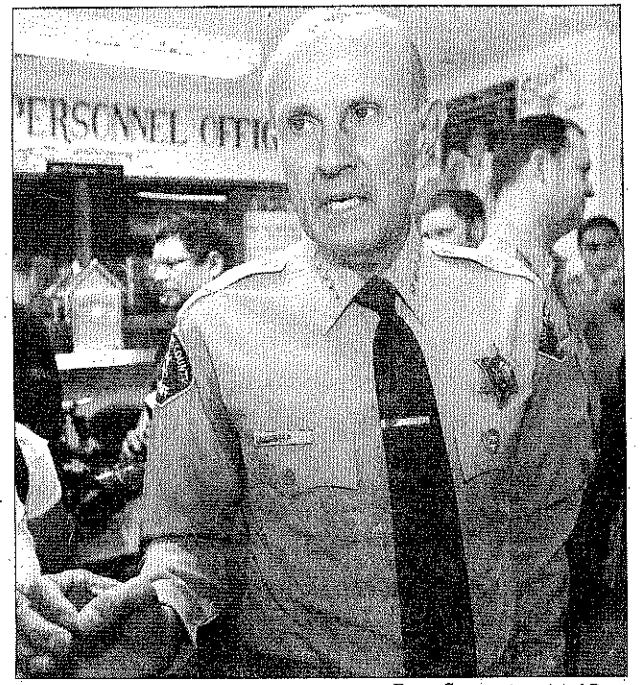
se of that was to interfere
th the investigation as op-
sed to other legitimate
rposes," she said. "If they
n show that there was a



REED SAXON Associated Press

SHERIFF LEE BACA accused an FBI agent of possibly committing a crime by smuggling a phone to the informant, then said it was "not worthy of pursuing."

'The biggest challenge is probably to show... the purpose of that was to interfere with the investigation as opposed to other legitimate purposes.'

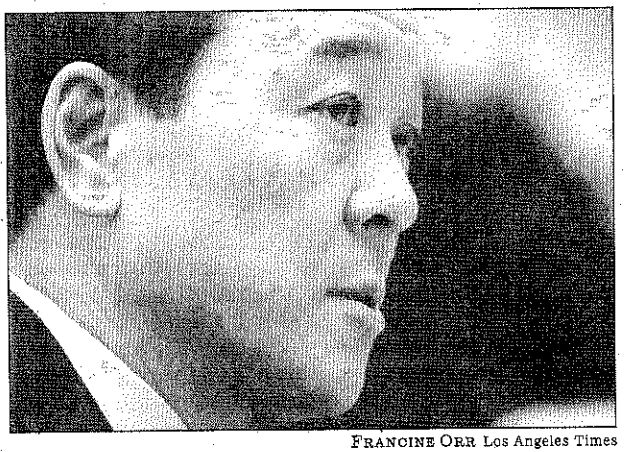
— LAURIE LEVENSON,

at jail, where he supplied them with the names of corrupt and abusive deputies.

Brown said FBI agents rushed into the jail to visit him soon after they learned his cover had been blown. But as the meeting began, Brown said, a sheriff's investigator came in and ended it. "This...visit is over," the official said, according to Brown.

Brown said sheriff's officials moved him, changed his name several times and grilled him about what he knew and whether he would testify in the federal investigation.

"I didn't know it then, but


FRANCINE ORR Los Angeles Times

UNDERSHERIFF PAUL TANAKA played a role in a plan to hide the informant, a source said, but a sheriff's spokesman called the allegation "absurd."

Brown and would have been given access to the inmate had they requested it.

Sources who were briefed on the department's handling of the informant said the decision to move Brown was made at a meeting attended by Tanaka.

One sheriff's employee testified that supervisors made it clear after the meeting that the intent of moving Brown was to hide him from the FBI, according to a source.

Whitmore said Tanaka played no role in Brown's move.

"That is an absurd allegation," he said. "Were the higher-ups briefed about this? Absolutely. But he had nothing to do with this decision other than the fact that he was aware of it."

In the year since the jail abuse scandal erupted, Tanaka has come under heavy criticism.

A county commission created to examine the jails accused Tanaka of exacerbating problems in the lockups by encouraging deputies to push legal boundaries and discouraging supervisors from disciplining deputies involved in misconduct.

The undersheriff admitted some fault, but denied that he turned a blind eye to abuse. In testimony before the commission, he accused his detractors of having personal agendas and trying to discredit him by misinterpreting his actions.

At least one witness has told the grand jury that another top sheriff's official — Lt. Greg Thompson, formerly in charge of the jailhouse intelligence team — was also involved in hiding Brown, according to the source.

Representatives for the FBI and the U.S. attorney's office declined to comment. Whitmore said that Tanaka and Thompson also declined to comment.

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