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

LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

December 16, 2013

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

Dear Supervisors:

This letter is in response to the Board of Supervisors' (BOS) request for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) to report back regarding the hiring process for the former employees of the Office of Public Safety (OPS). We were specifically asked whether the Department made exceptions to the hiring standards and if so, who made those decisions and how will they be held accountable.

The Department's Personnel Administration Bureau (Personnel) conducted complete and comprehensive background investigations into 395 permanent sworn members of OPS. Each candidate was evaluated according to the established hiring standards for deputy sheriff and custody assistant and no exceptions were made relative to the final recommendation to hire or not hire a particular candidate. The Undersheriff at the time had delegated authority from me to make the final hiring decisions. My direction was unequivocal that we were to only hire qualified candidates.

The completed background file for each candidate was forwarded to the Undersheriff with a clear recommendation for hire or not hire from Personnel. The Undersheriff then made the decision to hire or not hire and, in regards to the former, whether the former OPS officer should be hired as a deputy sheriff or custody assistant. A total of 290 were approved for hire. Fifty-five former OPS officers who were not approved for employment with the Department were subsequently hired by other County departments.

A comprehensive audit revealed that the Undersheriff at the time made the decision to hire several former OPS officers who did not meet the prevailing hiring standards for the Department. No administrative action can be taken as he has since retired from County service.

A comprehensive audit of the matter is ongoing and we expect the outcome to include several policy revisions to strengthen accountability and consistency relative to the Department's hiring processes.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Assistant Sheriff Todd S. Rogers at (323) 526-5115.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF