



Written Public Comment

Provided for the July 16, 2026,

Los Angeles County Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission.

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What agenda item or topic will you comment on?	Provide your public comment below. Please do not share any sensitive personally identifiable information because this comment will be made public as part of the official meeting record.	What is your name?
General Public Comment	On Sunday evening July 5th following the FIFA game, there was a significant amount of police force presence along Whittier Blvd in East L.A. between Arizona Blvd and Goodrich (Commerce) all along Whittier Blvd. Many streets were blocked and freeway exits closed along with two significant staging areas. One area of staging was the intersection of Atlantic Blvd & Whittier Blvd with a multitude of Sheriffs in riot gear and prepared for such activity including drones, large vehicles, and plenty of equipped officers and CHP. Despite the heavy police presence that night, a shooting took place within 1-2 blocks of the officers staging area. 4 people were injured on Amalia and Whittier Blvd while the community made their way to Whittier Blvd after the game which is customary for significant games or cultural events on this historic boulevard. The point I would like to highlight or address is that if the Sheriffs patrolled the area and engaged with the community up and down Whittier Blvd, unlawful activity would be more likely be deterred. Instead, the Sheriffs and CHP sit and watch activity such as wreckless driving & igniting fireworks and block streets that people easily find their way around. It would be much more effective to have particular sections blocked perhaps such as hot zones BUT actively patrolling the boulevard in such vehicles present that day and officers on bikes and foot engaging with the civilians present may be a better strategy. The shooting that occurred that night was only a block or two from certain staging areas. The officers were only there to react instead of prevent. We need proactive measures that are effective and build positive relationships between the community and law enforcement. Law enforcement just stands and their assigned area and flash all their equipment and their multitude of officers present as an intimidation tactic. This practice is all to	Lorraine Quinones

familiar with the East L.A. community & the department must revisit their tactics and develop more appropriate and culturally relevant practices when reporting to the community activities that take place during unofficial cultural celebrations. It's time to rebuild and rethink how policing looks on Whittier Blvd especially since the street is a historic landmark to many whether officially recognized or not- gatherings on Whittier Blvd will never go away & there will always be the good, bad & the ugly BUT how do we all work together to make Whittier Blvd a safe space during these times (and all the time) and that do not waste resources that are provided for such times for real effective change long term? The answer is NOT just in "sitting and waiting" for something to happen and flex your muscle then shoot flash bangs and push the people out with vehicles. On the contrary, use all the officers and vehicles to patrol, walk, ride, & issue warnings and citations as necessary when actively patrolling the area. Educate and talk to the community & be present in a real way. On that July 5th night, the officers watched the cars doing doughnuts in the intersection of that shooting area. They could have easily pulled over and impounded those wreckless drivers or start the unlawful assembly there as they did on Whittier Blvd and Arizona at about 9:30pm. Instead, they sat and watched from their "headquarters" at Atlantic and Whittier Blvd & the swarm of officers and vehicles poured out close to the very intersection where the shooting took place (within one block) & yet and incident still occurred. We need active officers patrolling and making their presence known in that manner and engaging with the community building relationships not just sitting and waiting for "the call" or "the order" of when to declare unlawful assembly. Let's be proactive and ensure long term success . We are not your training ground for the same ol' archaic practices in 2026. It's time for real change on how Whittier Blvd is policed.

TO: Members of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Civilian Oversight Commission

FROM: Radio & Television News Association of Southern California (RTNA) – Media Access Committee

RE: Review of Media Relations Between the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Los Angeles Broadcast Media
The Radio & Television News Association of Southern California (RTNA) routinely evaluates the working relationship between the Los Angeles-area news media and regional law enforcement agencies. As part of this process, RTNA surveys its broadcast and digital news members and reviews the results with agency leadership to identify strengths, concerns, and opportunities for improvement.

Founded in 1949, the RTNA is a professional organization that advocates for broadcast and digital journalists throughout Southern California. In addition to supporting working journalists, RTNA mentors the next generation of media professionals through educational partnerships, training programs, and the annual Golden Mike Awards. RTNA's membership includes journalists and newsroom personnel serving communities from Central California to the California-Mexico border and east to the Arizona border.

As part of its most recent survey, RTNA's Media Access Committee requested feedback regarding journalists' interactions with law enforcement agencies, including specific concerns encountered while gathering news. This survey also included questions prompted by recent allegations from another journalism organization asserting that members of the media were being targeted by law enforcement during periods of civil unrest.

Survey Findings

Overall, respondents reported a positive working relationship with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. While a few operational concerns were identified, they were generally administrative in nature rather than indicative of broader issues affecting media access or transparency.

Areas Identified for Improvement

Presentation on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Motion dated August 12, 2025:
Honoring the 55th Anniversary of the Chicano Moratorium:
Confronting Ongoing Injustices and ICE Raids in Los Angeles County

STEVE GREGORY

Respondents noted several issues that warrant continued attention:

- Journalists with department-issued press credentials are occasionally denied entry through the Hall of Justice front entrance.
- The removal of two designated parking spaces for live broadcast vehicles in front of the Hall of Justice has created logistical challenges.
- The Department's online media inquiry process can, at times, be cumbersome and inefficient.

During a recent meeting between RTNA representatives, the Sheriff, members of the executive leadership team, and the Sheriff's Information Bureau (SIB), these operational concerns were discussed. Department leadership acknowledged the issues and advised that they are being addressed.

Civil Unrest

When specifically asked whether journalists felt they had been targeted by Sheriff's Department personnel during incidents of civil unrest, respondents overwhelmingly answered no.

Several journalists further indicated that department personnel made deliberate efforts to facilitate media access and accommodate broadcast newsgathering activities during those events.

Ongoing Professional Relationship

RTNA's relationship with the Sheriff's Department has continued to evolve since the September 2020 arrest of a KPCC reporter during civil unrest.

Following that incident, RTNA submitted a formal letter expressing concern not only regarding the arrest itself, but also the apparent lack of coordination between field deputies and the Sheriff's Information Bureau. RTNA noted that SIB personnel were in close proximity to the incident but no effort was made to verify the reporter's identity or assignment before the arrest occurred.

The letter also included recommendations designed to improve communication between field personnel and working journalists during critical incidents.

As a result, RTNA was invited to participate in media relations instruction at the

Sheriff's Training Academy.

Since 2020, RTNA has partnered with representatives from the Sheriff's Information Bureau to provide academy instruction on effective media relations from the perspective of working journalists.

The curriculum focuses on practical interaction between deputies and the media during rapidly evolving incidents in the field and emphasizes communication strategies that improve both public information and officer effectiveness.

The Sheriff's Department has also partnered with RTNA to coordinate media pool coverage during major events, including memorial services and funerals.

RTNA's media pool system, originally developed during the 1995 O.J. Simpson murder trial, has since become a widely adopted model for managing media access during high-profile public safety and court proceedings throughout the United States.

Communications During Critical Incidents
Survey respondents observed significant improvements in the Department's communications during major incidents.

Historically, media representatives sometimes waited hours before receiving any official acknowledgment that an incident had occurred. Through updated media relations training, first-line supervisors are now encouraged to provide timely initial holding statements that confirm known facts while preserving the integrity of ongoing investigations.

This approach allows the Department to acknowledge significant events promptly while providing sufficient time for designated spokespersons or command staff to conduct more comprehensive briefings.

Several respondents specifically cited the Department's communications following the July 2025 explosion that claimed the lives of three Sheriff's bomb squad members. Although the incident was tragic, respondents noted that Department leadership and the Sheriff's Information Bureau provided timely and consistent information, enabling accurate public reporting as events unfolded.

Accessibility

Respondents consistently reported that the current leadership of the Sheriff's Information Bureau has prioritized accessibility and responsiveness. Journalists indicated they have direct access to command staff and public information officers when necessary, allowing questions to be addressed quickly and helping news organizations meet demanding deadlines.

RTNA has likewise found that addressing concerns directly with SIB leadership has been an effective method for resolving issues before they escalate into larger disputes. This ongoing communication has contributed to a productive professional relationship between the Department and the news media.

Transparency

Respondents also noted increased efforts by the Department to provide greater transparency through media demonstrations and educational opportunities.

One recent example involved an invitation for journalists to observe demonstrations of less-lethal equipment and crowd management tactics, followed by an extended question-and-answer session with the Sheriff.

RTNA encourages the Department to continue offering these opportunities, as they improve public understanding of law enforcement operations while fostering informed and accurate reporting.

Conclusion

Based on RTNA's most recent survey and ongoing interactions with the Department, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has made measurable progress in its relationship with the broadcast media. Respondents consistently reported improved communication, increased accessibility, greater professionalism, and a more collaborative approach by the Sheriff's Information Bureau and Department leadership. While a few operational issues remain, they are limited in scope and are reportedly being addressed.

Importantly, RTNA's survey did not identify widespread concerns regarding media

access, nor did respondents report patterns of journalists being targeted during civil unrest. Instead, the prevailing view among respondents was that the Department has demonstrated a clear commitment to improving communication, transparency, and cooperation with the media. RTNA will continue to monitor interactions between the news media and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and will provide future assessments as appropriate.