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## **Economy & Efficiency Commission Presentation**

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*Editorial Note: Although every effort has been made to insure the accuracy of the material in this presentation, the scope of the material covered and the discussions undertaken lends itself to the possibility of minor transcription misinterpretations.*

**PRESENTATION BY  
William Stonich  
Assistant Sheriff, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department  
Topic: Future Direction of the Sheriff's Department  
February 4, 1999**

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Chairman Abel introduced Assistant Sheriff William Stonich, one of two Assistant Sheriffs with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD). Assistant Sheriff Stonich explained that he is filling in for Sheriff Lee Baca, who sends his regrets for having a scheduling conflict.

Assistant Sheriff Stonich explained that an important priority for the Sheriff is a new crime lab, referred to as the California Regional Forensics Science Laboratory (CRFSL). He said that on February 2, 1999, Sheriff Baca flew to Sacramento and was joined by California Highway Patrol (CHP) Commissioner Ed Gomez. They met with the California Attorney General Bill Lockyear and a number of assembly persons regarding the proposal to build a CRFSL on a site that has already been designated at California State University, Los Angeles. The cost of constructing a 347 thousand-square-foot, multi-story building is expected to be between \$130 million and \$150 million. The facility would serve as a regional crime lab for the City of Los Angeles, the LASD, and other independent cities that depend upon the LASD for crime lab support. In addition, any independent agencies that might need access to that kind of facility will be provided service. This new facility would also serve the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) and the CHP. The concept of creating a CRFSL seems to have been well received in Sacramento.

Commissioner Philibosian inquired as to whom would be funding the CRFSL. Assistant Sheriff Stonich responded that there is currently a LASD crime lab, an LAPD crime lab, as well as DOJ and CHP crime labs throughout the State. A CRFSL would put a number of crime labs under one roof. In terms of funding, he assumes that it would come from legislative appropriations from the State, allowing the facility to be built. The LAPD sees an immediate sharing of some of that technology. Commissioner Philibosian commented that the sharing of operations and technology makes sense, but in terms of funding, he is concerned about potential inter-departmental accountability rivalries. Assistant Sheriff Stonich mentioned that the LASD has already had sessions with the LAPD, and they have indicated that they would like to have the control over their own operations. CHP and DOJ are willing, at this point, to enter into an agreement that may provide what Commissioner Philibosian is advocating.

Assistant Sheriff Stonich discussed how Sheriff Baca has made it his objective to visit every site/command (55 total) within LASD. During the course of Sheriff Baca's visits he determined that he also needed to visit some sub-commands, which brings the total site visits to more than 70. Sheriff Baca visits each site

accompanied by a team consisting either of Assistant Sheriff Waldie or Assistant Sheriff Stonich, as well as Lieutenants, Sergeants, Deputies, and civilian personnel. This group contacts as many persons as can reasonably be brought into the facility. These individuals are interviewed for about 60 to 90 minutes, while Sheriff Baca meets with the unit commander. The purpose of these meetings is to determine the needs of that unit. After these meetings, the Sheriff's team meets in a common room to share interview responses. Often there will be differences of opinion, but not to a great degree. The intention of the Sheriff from the very beginning was to bring the needs assessment of the LASD to the attention of the Board of Supervisors. Assistant Sheriff Stonich explained that needs assessment within the LASD is still in a preliminary phase, although Sheriff Baca has already indicated that to resolve these needs may require funds in excess of \$100 million.

Commissioner Lucente wondered, from a private-sector perspective, if there has been any offsetting (cost-saving) assessment to try to determine if these needs can be met through cost savings. Assistant Sheriff Stonich responded that an offsetting procedure has been looked into. One example, as Sheriff Baca has indicated in the past, is the determination of a need for supervision and management to be adjusted within the LASD from a "non-line" to a "line" position. "Line position" refers to the operations side of the organization. Improving the LASD by moving a number of Lieutenants and Sergeants from non-line to line positions is what is being referred to. The line positions are not going to be newly created; they will fill in vacancies. These personnel efficiency adjustments will be made in-house.

Commissioner Buerk stated his understanding of the two basic law-enforcement responsibilities of the LASD: 1) to provide law-enforcement services for the unincorporated portion of the County, and 2) to provide law-enforcement services to incorporated cities that desire to contract with the LASD. He asked if there is any separation within the LASD administrative structure that reflects those two responsibilities. Commissioner Buerk also asked what percentage of the \$1.4 billion budget is allocated to each of those two basic responsibilities. Assistant Sheriff Stonich answered that that budget for contract cities (40) is about \$130 million. The cost offset for those services comes directly from payment under a contractual agreement with those cities.

The LASD is organized into nine divisions. Assistant Sheriff Waldie has responsibility for custody operations, technical services operations, and court services. Assistant Sheriff Stonich has the three field operations (patrol divisions) and the detective division. Within each of the three field operations, 18 stations operate under his command. Each of those 18 stations has the responsibility for contract cities (depending upon the geographic location). For example, the Captain of the Industry station has the responsibility for 3 contract cities -La Habra Heights, La Puente, and the City of Industry in addition to unincorporated areas. Chairman Abel added that an infrastructure is not really in place to separate out and account by function the unincorporated area services and the contract city services. Assistant Sheriff Stonich explained that the unincorporated area is allocated whatever portion of the budget that is not purchased by a contract city.

Commissioner Philibosian clarified the point that the purchase of services by a city that is very poor may have a lower level of service than a County standard for unincorporated areas. On the other hand, a city that wishes to spend a lot of money can have a much higher level of service. Trying to compare services to unincorporated areas with services to contract cities is like comparing apples to oranges. Chairman Abel commented that it would be useful to citizens within the unincorporated area to have an accounting for the level of service that they are receiving.

Commissioner Padilla asked if there was an example of the change in LASD culture that has occurred since the election of Sheriff Baca. Assistant Sheriff Stonich responded by acknowledging the tremendous accomplishments that the late Sheriff Sherman Block brought to LASD. In terms of a cultural change, there are symbolic things, such as the aforementioned meetings with unit commanders. Sheriff Baca wears his uniform, which even though symbolic, is a positive trait to a law enforcement officer. Sheriff Baca has also stated that he intends to operate within the rank and file deputies, and plans to make an arrest in each command district. His purpose is to convey the importance of the Deputy Sheriff within the organization.

Chairman Abel asked what the role of management should be in developing sensitivity to the concerns of

the community at large, and to the law enforcement community in particular. Assistant Sheriff Stonich responded that they are not in conflict. The Personnel Performance Index (PPI) system has been an element of contention within the rank and file Deputies. The PPI is a computerized system that logs every incident involving a Deputy Sheriff that can be captured relative to traffic collisions, uses of force, civil actions, et cetera. Some of the deputies believe that this system is impacting their career in a negative fashion (in terms of assignments) because exoneration from complaints and wrongdoing are not clearly indicated. Sheriff Baca requested that the LASD remove from the file those incidents in which the individual has been exonerated. Founded incidents and unresolved incidents are to remain. There has been an adjustment in that regard. Assistant Sheriff Stonich assured the Commission that the adjustments being proposed are minor relative to the value that this type of system has to management.

Chairman Abel thanked Assistant Sheriff Stonich for his presentation. The Commission wanted to assure Sheriff Baca and his management team that it is ready and able to assist in any way possible to the further development of the Sheriff's Department.

[Return to Top of Presentation](#)

[Return to Agenda](#)



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