

DETENTION FACILITIES INSPECTIONS

SUMMARY

This report summarizes inspections of law enforcement facilities within Santa Barbara County which are used to detain individuals who violate state, county or municipal laws. Under California Penal Code, Section 919(b), the Grand Jury is mandated to inquire into the conditions and management of the public prisons within the county.

INTRODUCTION

Members of the 2006-2007 Grand Jury made at least one inspection of each Municipal Police Department and the County Sheriff's Department. Some facilities were visited multiple times. Staff at all assignment levels on duty at the time of our visits were interviewed. There were two or more members of the jury present during all visits. Observations, findings and recommendations are the result of those site visits, review of documents and conversations with staff.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Municipal Police Departments

Members of the Grand Jury inspected the police departments in the following cities:

- Buellton
- Carpinteria
- Goleta
- Guadalupe
- Lompoc
- Santa Barbara
- Santa Maria
- Solvang

The overall impression of the Grand Jury is that each of these municipal departments conducts its police service responsibilities in an exemplary manner. There were no deficiencies worthy of note in any of these operations. These departments all wish they had more resources to carry out their civic responsibilities; however, none have failed to meet standards with currently available resources. In order to augment

resources, some officers have taken initiative. In Buellton, for example, they obtained a grant to purchase a motorcycle, fund a new motorcycle officer and secure a new office-style trailer for administrative support. This Grand Jury has no negative observations concerning the manner in which these agencies conduct their affairs.

County Probation Department

The Probation Department maintains four juvenile detention facilities within the county:

- Juvenile Hall, Goleta
- Los Prietos Boys Camp
- Juvenile Hall, Santa Maria
- Los Prietos Boys Academy

Juveniles who come through the courts into custody of the Probation Department are placed into one of these facilities for varying periods of time. They are classified as “wards” of the court. Members of the Grand Jury visited these facilities, spoke with many of these wards, interviewed staff and reviewed many documents which prescribe how these facilities should function. As an overall assessment, the Grand Jury found no defects or faults in the management and operations of these facilities with regard to regulations.

County Sheriff’s Department

The Sheriff’s Department provides the major detention capability within the county. It does so through its Main Jail (located just outside the City of Santa Barbara) and a small jail holding facility in Santa Maria. Members of the Grand Jury inspected the jail facilities and also visited each of the Sheriff’s substations. The substation locations are spread across the county:

- Santa Ynez Valley
- Cuyama Valley
- Isla Vista
- Santa Maria
- Burton Mesa Road (near Lompoc)

On more than one occasion, staff and officials referred to the benefits to be derived from implementing a video arraignment system from the jails. The current system of transporting detainees to the various Superior Courts is expensive, labor intensive, time consuming and fraught with security hazards.

The Jury recognizes the professional and dutiful manner in which staff function within the jail environment.

FINDINGS

Finding 1

In all inspections of detention facilities throughout Santa Barbara County, none were found to be sub-standard with respect to regulations.

Finding 2

Inspections revealed no major flaws or shortfalls in staff performance.

Finding 3

Staff have used initiative and ingenuity to achieve positive results during periods of reduced resources.

Finding 4

The Sheriff's Department currently has to move detainees for arraignment to Santa Maria, Lompoc and Santa Barbara Superior Court locations on a daily basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Supervisory staff should continue to encourage personnel to use initiative to have a positive impact on the work environment.

Recommendation 2

The Sheriff should pursue a course of action aimed at implementing video arraignment procedures in the jail system.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSE

In accordance with Section 933(c) of the California Penal Code, each agency and government body affected by or named in this report is requested to respond in writing to the findings and recommendations in a timely manner. The following are the affected agencies for this report, with the mandated response period for each:

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department – 60 days

Findings	All
Recommendations	All

Buellton Police Department – 90 days

Carpinteria Police Department – 90 days

Goleta Police Department – 90 days

Guadalupe Police Department – 90 days

Lompoc Police Department – 90 days

Santa Barbara Police Department – 90 days

Santa Maria Police Department – 90 days

Solvang Police Department – 90 days

Findings	1, 2, 3
Recommendation	1

Santa Barbara County Probation Department – 90 days

Findings	1, 2, 3
Recommendation	1