

## **Illegal Immigration and the Detention System Sheriff's Department Response**

### ***Finding 1***

*Immigration holds at the County Main Jail are not always regularly or completely reviewed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and such inaction likely results in the release of some immigrants illegally in the county.*

#### **Response-**

The Sheriff's Department partially agrees with this finding. Early in 2007, ICE officials met with Custody Staff to increase the presence of ICE officers. Currently they are in the Santa Barbara County Jail on the average of 2-3 times per week with multiple officers.

### ***Recommendation 1***

*County officials should request the permanent assignment of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer to the County Main Jail and seek intervention by Congressional representatives if ICE is not responsive to the request.*

#### **Response- The Sheriff's Department will not implement this recommendation.**

. As referenced in the Response to Finding 1, ICE officials have increased their presence in the jail, which has increased the number of immigration holds. Rather than have a permanent ICE officer assigned to the Santa Barbara County Jail, the weekly presence is monitored along with the percentage of immigration holds, to ensure adequate ICE response. Should problems arise; Custody Command Staff can contact regional ICE officials to remedy any problems.

### ***Finding 2***

*The population of immigrants illegally in Santa Barbara County contributes to inmate overcrowding and incarceration costs in county detention facilities.*

#### **Response-**

The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding. Illegal immigrants account for 10-15% of the jail population. All illegal immigrants in the jail are additionally charged with state criminal offenses.

### ***Recommendation 2***

*County officials should take a proactive role in making our state and national representatives more accountable for costs to the detention system associated with inaction on the problem of illegal immigration.*

**Response- This recommendation has been implemented**

The County's Board of Supervisors adopted its federal legislative platform on November 21, 2006, which included the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). Specifically, the Board endorsed a legislative strategy seek assistance from the County's representatives to reauthorize the funding of SCAAP and increase its reimbursement rates for local governments. As such, the County has communicated the importance of funding SCAAP to its representatives through letters and in-person briefings with staff. The Sheriff's Department also communicates with state and federal representatives both personally and through organizations such as the California State Sheriff's Association.