



OFFICE OF
SHERIFF-CORONER
COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN

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French Camp, California 95231-9781

August 5, 2010

Steve Moore
Sheriff-Coroner
Public Administrator

*Honorable Robin Appel
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
222 E. Weber Avenue, Room 303
Stockton, California 95202*

RE: 2009-1010 GRAND JURY RESPONSE

Dear Judge Appel:

Following are the Sheriff's Office responses to recommendations made by the 2009-2010 Grand Jury.

Finding # 1: Radio communication "dead spots" exist within San Joaquin County. This compromises officer's response and safety.

Response to Finding # 1

The respondent (San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office) agrees with the finding.

Recommendation # 1: The Sheriff's Office improves the communication system within San Joaquin County to eliminate "dead spots".

Response to Recommendation # 1

The San Joaquin County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with the San Joaquin County Information Systems Department, is continuously seeking opportunities to improve our public safety radio system. We are constantly seeking grant-funding opportunities to allow us to implement additional improvements.

Recent accomplishments have included a completed engineering study, the securing of grant funding to modernize significant portions of the Sheriff's radio system, permission to place county radio equipment on an existing south county tower to address long standing radio problems in the Corral Hollow area, as well as funding to build/complete low level additional radio towers.

Additionally, via the countywide radio communications master plan, we strive to purchase radio equipment that provides the best performance in terms of radio transmission/reception capability, durability, and reliability to assure that the radio

communications will be maximally available for officers during critical and non-critical situations. This is in addition to our planned phased approach to meet the Federal Communications 2013 mandate of all digital communications and movement to low-level tower sites throughout the county instead of the use of two current mountain top sites.

Finding # 2: The Sheriff's Office implemented temporary Cook-Chill operations as a temporary fix to Honor Farm Kitchen Facility replacement.

Response to Finding # 2

The Respondent confirms the implementation of Cook-Chill operations.

Recommendation # 2: The Sheriff's Office makes arrangements to proceed with construction of a replacement kitchen at the County Jail.

Response to Recommendation # 2

In 2010, the Sheriff's Office entered into a multi-year (3) contract with ARAMARK not as a temporary fix but as a way of complying with all of the statutes the Sheriff's Office is required to meet in providing food service to inmates. This contract can be renewed with two one (1) year extensions. The Honor Farm kitchen that was built in 1948 is in desperate need of replacement.

Each year the Honor Farm kitchen is in jeopardy of being closed down by the Health Inspector, the Fire Marshall, and/or the Corrections Standard Authority because of its condition. Thus, the need to make arrangements through another food service process to have the food cooked elsewhere (ARAMARK) to prevent the potential for the closure of the current kitchen. The Honor Farm kitchen currently exists to store chilled food and to provide a place for the washing and drying of food trays. The funding mechanism for a replacement kitchen is unknown at this time, and the Sheriff's Office is investigating the possibility of using phase II AB900 monies to build a kitchen that will support all of our facilities and potentially that of the Juvenile Justice Center.

There have been previous discussions regarding a "Super Kitchen" for San Joaquin County to address all food-related issues for the County. Just this past week the food service consulting firm Comyn Fasano Group, Inc. has been gathering current information at the request of County Capitol Projects to further investigate future options for food service delivery in the county. This action puts a hold on further discussion about replacing the current kitchen at the Honor Farm.

Finding # 3: According to the 2007-2009 MOU between the Court and the County, building security access is the responsibility of the Court.

Response to Finding # 3

The Respondent agrees with the finding of the Grand Jury and its interpretation of the 2007-2009 MOU between the County and the Courts.

Recommendation # 3: The County limits access to the 'old mail room' door to persons who demonstrate a need for entry.

Response to Recommendation # 3

The Sheriff's Office is not responsible for the entrance and exit of anyone from any public access portion of this facility including the "old mail room" door. That responsibility falls to the County's Government Buildings and Facilities Management Departments.

Finding # 4: The process for implementation of previous video arraignment recommendations has not been addressed. All persons interviewed, regarding the video usage, concurred on the benefits of video conferencing.

Response to Finding # 4

The Respondent only agrees that video arraignment has benefits to the Sheriff's Office and Judiciary of the local courts. However, the Respondent disagrees with the Grand Jury finding that nothing has been done to address this issue. Nor does the Respondent agree with the inference that all involved parties see video arraignment as an implementable benefit.

Recommendation # 4: The District Attorney, Public Defender, Sheriff, Probation Department, San Joaquin County Bar Association (Lawyer Referral Services), and County Administrator, in furtherance of efforts to install a teleconferencing system:

- a. Prepare a preliminary cost estimate for acquisition and installation
- b. Prepare a cost benefit analysis
- c. Identify potential grant sources to implement the system

Response to Recommendation # 4

The Sheriff's Office is still supportive of this suggested recommendation and is making plans to wire (with video capability) the new jail addition that is being planned using AB900 funding. The new 1280 bed jail addition will be utilizing video visiting as the method for inmate contacts by family and friends. This wiring exists in the current housing units and the office is planning to make the new jail addition compatible with a video arraignment system.

The Sheriff's Office, however, is not the only department that will need to buy into the video arraignment concept. In the past, the Public Defender, Lawyer Referral Services, the County Bar Association, and the District Attorney have been in opposition.

The value of this technology has proven itself in agencies where it is currently being used. Safety is increased, escape attempts are reduced, and transportation and security costs are reduced.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has the responsibility for funding and operating video arraignment (not the Sheriff nor the County). At this time, the

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Sheriff's Office is not aware of any grants the AOC is pursuing. The Sheriff will diligently work with the courts in the implementation of this system should they desire to pursue and fund it.

The AOC is in the final stages of plans to build a new Stockton Courthouse facility (to be completed in 2012-2013), and the Sheriff's Office would hope that plans for video arraignment technology are included in those plans. Prior to implementation of this technology, there will continue to be a need to educate all parties, due to the perceived confidentiality issues (attorney/client privilege) and the reluctance to participate because of it. Defendants are allowed by law to choose or not to choose to participate in video arraignment. The Sheriff's Office and all of its partners are cognizant of lowering government costs and increasing efficiency for our community.

In closing, the Sheriff's Office appreciates the Grand Jury's analysis and the hard work and dedication to the investigation and preparation of the 2009-2010 Grand Jury Report. We wish to maintain a high standard of proficiency and professionalism in carrying out our responsibilities. In the area of agreement, you may be assured of our full cooperation. In the area of disagreement, we will continue to evaluate the need for change.

I wish to thank and recognize the Grand Jury members for all of their hard work during the past year. We appreciate their contribution to the citizens of San Joaquin County.

Sincerely,


STEVE MOORE
Sheriff-Coroner

c: Carlos Villapudua, Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Lois Sahyoun, Clerk of the Board
Manuel Lopez, County Administrator