



# Office of Inspector General County of Los Angeles

## **Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department**

January to March  
2021

## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MONITORING SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT’S OPERATIONS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Service Comment Reports.....	1
Handling of Comments Regarding the Sheriff’s Department Operations and Jails .....	4
Taser Use in Custody.....	5
Use-of-Force Incidents in Custody Division .....	6
The Sheriff’s Department’s Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems.....	7
Deputy-Involved Shootings .....	8
Comparison to Prior Years.....	13
District Attorney Review of Deputy-Involved Shootings .....	13
Homicide Bureau’s Investigation of Deputy-Involved Shootings .....	13
Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau.....	14
Internal Affairs Bureau .....	14
Civil Service Commission Dispositions .....	15
Deputies Covering Their Names at Protests .....	15
Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE).....	21
<b>CUSTODY DIVISION.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Handling of Prisoner Grievances .....	23
In-Custody Deaths .....	23
Other Deaths .....	25
In Custody Sexual Assault by a Custody Assistant .....	26
Office of Inspector General Site Visits .....	26
<b>CITIZENS’ COMMISSION ON JAIL VIOLENCE UPDATES .....</b>	<b>27</b>

## INTRODUCTION

This report describes a portion of the Office of Inspector General’s monitoring, auditing, and review of activities related to the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department that occurred from January 1, 2021, through March 31, 2021.<sup>1</sup>

## MONITORING SHERIFF’S DEPARTMENT’S OPERATIONS

### Service Comment Reports

In accordance with Sheriff’s Department policies, the Sheriff’s Department accepts and reviews all comments from members of the public about departmental service or employee performance.<sup>2</sup> The Sheriff’s Department categorizes these comments into three categories:

- External Commendation: an external communication of appreciation for and/or approval of service provided by LASD members;
- Service Complaint: an external communication of dissatisfaction with LASD service, procedure or practice, not involving employee misconduct; and
- Personnel Complaint: an external allegation of misconduct, either a violation of law or LASD policy, against any member of LASD.<sup>3</sup>

The Office of Inspector General continues to have concerns of possible inconsistencies in the handling of these service comments such as discrepancies in the documentation, investigation, and resolution of the service comments.

The following chart lists the number and types of comments reported for each station or unit.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The report will note if the data reflects something other than what was gathered between January 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> See [Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Manual of Policy and Procedures, 3-04/010.00, “Department Service Reviews.”](#)

<sup>3</sup> It is possible for an employee to get a Service Complaint and Personnel Complaint based on the same incident in question.

<sup>4</sup> This data was obtained from the Sheriff’s Department’s Performance Recording and Monitoring System on April 5, 2021 and reflects the data provided as of that date.

<b>INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY</b>	<b>COMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS</b>	<b>SERVICE COMPLAINTS</b>
ADM : CENTRAL PATROL ADM HQ	1	0	0
ADM : DETECTIVE DIV HQ	2	0	0
ADM : SOUTH PATROL ADM HQ	2	0	0
ALD : ALTADENA STN	5	4	0
AVA : AVALON STN	0	0	1
CEN : CENTURY STN	4	14	2
CER : CERRITOS STN	4	0	1
CMB : CIVIL MANAGEMENT BUREAU	8	6	6
CNT : COURT SERVICES CENTRAL	2	2	1
COM : COMPTON STN	0	3	3
CPB : COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BUREAU	1	1	0
CRD : CENTURY REG DETEN FAC	0	1	0
CRV : CRESCENTA VALLEY STN	5	7	0
CSB : COUNTY SERVICES BUREAU	2	0	0
CSN : CARSON STN	2	12	2
CSS : CUSTODY SUPPORT SERVICES	1	0	0
CST : COURT SERVICES TRANSPORTATION	0	0	1
ELA : EAST LA STN	9	8	4
EOB : EMERGENCY OPER BUREAU	0	1	0
EST : COURT SERVICES EAST	1	3	0
FCC : FRAUD & CYBER CRIMES BUREAU	3	0	0
FDS : CUSTODY FOOD SERV	0	1	0
HDQ : OH SECURITY HQ	1	0	0
HOM : HOMICIDE BUREAU	1	0	1
ICI : INTERNAL CRIME INV BUR	1	0	0
IND : INDUSTRY STN	3	8	0
IRC : INMATE RECEPTION CENTER	0	1	0
LCS : LANCASTER STN	13	19	1
LKD : LAKEWOOD STN	8	4	1
LMT : LOMITA STN	12	3	1
MAR : MARINA DEL REY STN	20	6	2

<b>INVESTIGATING BUREAU/STATION/FACILITY</b>	<b>COMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS</b>	<b>SERVICE COMPLAINTS</b>
MCJ : MEN'S CENTRAL JAIL	1	1	0
MLH : MALIBU/LOST HILLS STN	3	14	6
MSB : MEDICAL SERVICES BUREAU	0	1	0
MTL : METROLINK	1	1	0
NAR : NARCOTICS BUREAU	3	0	0
NCF : NORTH CO. CORRECTL FAC	2	0	0
NWK : NORWALK REGIONAL STN	7	7	6
OSS : OPERATION SAFE STREETS BUREAU	1	2	0
PER : PERSONNEL ADMIN	3	1	0
PKB : PARKS BUREAU	4	2	1
PLM : PALMDALE STN	18	23	3
PRV : PICO RIVERA STN	9	3	4
RIB : RECORDS & IDENTIFICATION	0	1	0
RMB : RISK MANAGEMENT BUREAU	1	0	0
SCV : SANTA CLARITA VALLEY STN	23	13	2
SDM : SAN DIMAS STN	12	6	0
SEB : SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT BUR	0	1	0
SIB : SHERIFF INFORMATION BUREAU	1	0	0
SLA : SOUTH LOS ANGELES STATION	8	5	2
SSB : SCIENTIFIC SERV BUREAU	3	0	0
SVB : SPECIAL VICTIMS BUREAU	1	0	0
TB : TRAINING BUREAU	1	1	0
TBS : TRANSIT BUREAU SOUTH	0	1	0
TEM : TEMPLE CITY STN	12	6	3
TSB : TRANSIT SERVICES BUREAU	1	7	1
TT : TWIN TOWERS	4	0	0
WAL : WALNUT/SAN DIMAS STN	12	2	2
WHD : WEST HOLLYWOOD STN	6	3	2
WST : COURT SERVICES WEST	0	3	1
<b>Total :</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>60</b>

## Handling of Comments Regarding the Sheriff's Department Operations and Jails

The Office of Inspector General received sixty-three new complaints in the first quarter of 2021 from members of the public, prisoners, prisoners' family members and friends, community organizations, and county agencies. Each complaint was reviewed by Office of Inspector General staff. Twenty-four of these complaints were related to conditions of confinement within the Sheriff's Department's custody facilities, as shown below:

Grievance/ Incident Classification	Totals
<b>Personnel Issue</b>	9
<b>Medical</b>	2
<b>Service</b>	
Food	1
Living Conditions	3
Mail	1
Property	7
<b>Other</b>	1
<b>Total</b>	24

Twenty-four complaints were related to civilian contacts with Sheriff's Department personnel by persons who were not in custody.

Complaint/ Incident Classification	Totals
<b>Personnel Issue</b>	
Discourtesy	3
Dishonesty	1
Force	3
Harassment	3
Improper Detention, Search or Arrest	1
Off Duty Conduct	2
Other	3
<b>Service</b>	4
Policy Procedures	2
Response Time	1
Traffic Citation	1
<b>Total</b>	24

Fifteen complaints were not about the Sheriff's Department or departmental personnel and were referred to the appropriate agency or the complainant was directed to seek legal advice.

### Taser Use in Custody

The Office of Inspector General has compiled the number of times the Sheriff's Department has deployed a Taser in custodial settings from January 2018, through March 2021. The numbers below were gathered from the Sheriff's Department's *Monthly Force Synopsis*, which the Sheriff's Department produces and provides to the Office of Inspector General each month.<sup>5</sup>

<b><u>Month</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Taser Deployments</u></b>
January 2018	5
February 2018	2
March 2018	7
April 2018	7
May 2018	0
June 2018	4
July 2018	6
August 2018	7
September 2018	3
October 2018	5
November 2018	3
December 2018	1
January 2019	9
February 2019	9
March 2019	5
April 2019	4
May 2019	1
June 2019	2
July 2019	6
August 2019	9
September 2019	6
October 2019	3
November 2019	6
December 2019	5
January 2020	5
February 2020	3
March 2020	3
April 2020	4
May 2020	3

---

<sup>5</sup> The Office of Inspector General is not opining on whether the use of the Taser in each of these incidents was permissible under the Sheriff's Department's policies and/or if the Taser was deployed lawfully.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of Taser Deployments</b>
June 2020	5
July 2020	1
August 2020	3
September 2020	4
October 2020	3
November 2020	3
December 2020	6
January 2021	4
February 2021	8
March 2021	3

### **Use-of-Force Incidents in Custody Division**

The Office of Inspector General monitors the Sheriff's Department's staff-on-prisoner use of force incidents, prisoner-on-prisoner violence, and assaults by prisoners on Sheriff's Department personnel. The Sheriff's Department reports the following numbers for the uses of force within its Custody Division through March of this 2021. The Sheriff's Department is still verifying the accuracy of the reporting of incidents which occurred subsequent to October 2020.

#### **Prisoner-on-staff Assaults:**

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2018	144
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2018	173
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2018	131
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2018	115
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2019	122
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2019	132
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2019	164
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2019	136
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2020	131
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2020	91
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2020	111



Prisoner-on-prisoner Assaults:

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2018	871
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2018	905
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2018	988
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2018	881
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2019	769
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2019	794
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2019	858
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2019	709
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2020	717
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2020	496
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2020	560

Use-of-force Incidents:

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2018	546
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2018	592
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2018	530
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2018	452
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2019	501
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2019	478
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2019	525
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2019	431
1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2020	386
2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2020	274
3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2020	333

**The Sheriff's Department's Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems**

The Sheriff's Department reports that it deployed one of its Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) five times between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2021. The UAS was deployed on January 8, 2021, to assist Palmdale Station in responding to a call of an assault with a deadly weapon, with a suspect barricaded in a residence. The UAS was flown inside the location and utilized to clear the residence, which was inaccessible by other technology. With the assistance of the UAS, the Sheriff's Department was able to locate the suspect, who was deceased.

On January 22, 2021, the Sheriff's Department assisted Alhambra Police Department in a call of an assault with a deadly weapon, in which the suspect barricaded himself in the residence. The UAS was utilized to fly into and clear the

apartment, as it was not accessible with other technology. The suspect was found and taken into custody.

On January 23, 2021, the Sheriff's Department's bomb technicians responded to a location regarding a post-blast investigation. Video revealed that one of the fleeing suspects threw an object on the rooftop. The UAS was utilized to clear the rooftop of any secondary devices prior to a manual approach. The UAS showed the rooftop was clear of any dangerous objects and the investigators could proceed with the investigation.

On February 10, 2021, the UAS was deployed to assist Palmdale Station regarding an armed suspect who was holding a hostage and threatening to shoot the hostage with a rifle. Soon after the UAS team arrived at the location, the hostage was released; however, the suspect was still barricaded within the residence. The UAS searched the interior of the garage and a bedroom to try and locate the suspect. Once the suspect was located, chemical agents were sent into the home and the suspect surrendered and was taken into Sheriff's Department custody.

On March 9, 2021, the UAS was deployed to Walnut Station regarding an armed suspect who had barricaded himself in his vehicle. The suspect was eventually taken into custody.

### **Deputy-Involved Shootings**

The Office of Inspector General reports on all deputy-involved shootings in which a deputy intentionally fired a firearm at a human being or intentionally or unintentionally fired a firearm and a human being was injured or killed as a result. This quarter there were five incidents in which people were shot or shot at by Sheriff's Department personnel. Office of Inspector General staff responded to each of these deputy-involved shootings. Four people were struck by deputies' gunfire, two of them fatally. There was one unintentional discharge that injured a fellow deputy.

The information contained in the following summaries of shootings is based on information provided by the Sheriff's Department and is preliminary in nature. While the Office of Inspector General receives information at the walk-through at the scene of the shooting, preliminary memoranda with summaries, and by attending a Critical Incident Review, the statements of the deputies and witnesses are not provided. The Sheriff's Department does not permit the monitoring of its investigations of deputy-involved shootings and does not comply with lawful requests for documentation of these investigations.

**Altadena:** The Sheriff's Department reported that on January 10, 2021, at approximately 4:04 p.m., several citizens standing outside of a store flagged down a deputy. The citizens pointed to a male white who was shirtless and armed with a knife and reported that he had stabbed a person who was lying on the sidewalk east of the store.

After stopping his patrol car, the deputy radioed for emergency assistance. The male suspect ran up to the side of the patrol car and struck the passenger side window with the knife several times. Two deputies arrived to assist the deputy with taking the suspect into custody. As the suspect charged at the deputies with the knife raised, the deputies together fired a total of thirteen rounds, striking the suspect several times. The suspect was pronounced dead at the scene. A knife was recovered.

In accordance with the protocols of the Family Assistance Program, the Department of Mental Health was notified in order to provide services to the suspect's family. The shooting was captured on video by a civilian witness. At the time of this incident, body-worn cameras were not yet deployed at the Altadena station.

**Norwalk:** The Sheriff's Department reported that on February 12, 2021, at approximately 6:07 p.m., two deputies in their patrol car saw a male Hispanic driving erratically. The male Hispanic threw an object from his window that caught their attention. The deputies attempted to stop the vehicle, but the suspect refused to yield. A second deputy car joined to assist in the pursuit of the suspect. The pursuit lasted for about one mile before the suspect stopped his car and ran from the deputies. The three deputies gave chase. The suspect attempted to enter a security gate at a location. The lead deputy at that time shot the suspect. The Sheriff's Department is still conducting its investigation as to why the deputy shot the suspect. The suspect was struck twice in his lower torso. He was transported to the hospital and treated for his injuries.

A loaded firearm was recovered from the area where the deputies saw the suspect throw an object out of the window.

**Industry:** The Sheriff's Department reported that on February 16, 2021, at approximately 7:25 p.m., a deputy observed a vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed. The deputy attempted to catch up to the vehicle and discovered it had collided into a utility pole. The deputy exited his patrol vehicle and saw the driver, a male Hispanic, was still seated in the driver's seat. The deputy ordered the suspect to exit the vehicle; the suspect ignored the commands. The deputy drew his Taser and continued to order the suspect to comply, firing his taser once. When the

suspect produced a handgun, the deputy armed himself with his duty weapon and fired it at the suspect but did not hit him.

The suspect walked away from his vehicle and threw his handgun against the wall of a building. The deputy followed the suspect while attempting to detain him at gunpoint and was finally able to after the suspect tripped. A second deputy arrived on scene and was able to assist with handcuffing the suspect and taking him into custody. The suspect was treated for injuries caused by the vehicle collision. A weapon was recovered from the location where the suspect was seen tossing it.

A partial video of the incident was captured by a civilian and was shared on social media. The deputy involved in the shooting was equipped with a body-worn camera but did not activate it until after the shooting. The second deputy on scene activated his body-worn camera but did not arrive on scene until after the suspect was detained.

**Special Enforcement Bureau:** The Sheriff's Department reported that on March 4, 2021, a deputy unintentionally discharged a weapon while handcuffing a suspect during the service of a search warrant accidentally shooting a fellow deputy in the calf.

**East Los Angeles:** The Sheriff's Department reported that on March 14, 2021, at approximately 1:50 p.m., East Los Angeles Sheriff's Station received a call from a woman, stating her brother was suicidal and armed with a knife. Deputies were dispatched to the area and located a male Hispanic seated in a vehicle parked in front of his family's residence. The male exited the vehicle armed with a kitchen steak knife. A Mental Evaluation Team (MET) was requested and assigned to respond to the scene. As the deputies waited for MET, they repeatedly commanded the suspect to drop the knife, but their commands were ignored. As he paced on the sidewalk, the male repeatedly told deputies to shoot him. Deputies struck him with a stunbag shotgun after which the male began to advance towards the deputies while still armed with the knife. At that time, six deputies shot a total of sixteen rounds at the male.

The male was transported to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead. In accordance with the protocols of the Family Assistance Program, the Department of Mental Health was notified in order to provide services to the suspect's family.

According to information provided by the Sheriff's Department, all the involved deputies were equipped with body-worn cameras and the incident was recorded by each of the cameras.

**East Los Angeles:** The Sheriff's Department reported that on March 31, 2021, at approximately 8:50 p.m., deputies responded to a family disturbance call. The caller reported that their brother, a twenty-five-year-old male Hispanic, Isaias Cervantes, reportedly assaulted their mother and a crisis counselor who was assisting him with his mental health issues. Deputies entered the family home and contacted Mr. Cervantes in the family room of the location. Deputies attempted to handcuff Mr. Cervantes, who at the time was sitting on the couch and did not appear to be combative. As the deputies attempted to handcuff him, Mr. Cervantes turned toward one of the deputies. The deputies report that he gouged the deputy's eyes while attempting to remove the deputy's firearm from his holster. The deputy yelled to his partner deputy that Mr. Cervantes was attempting to remove his firearm from his holster, at which point his partner deputy shot Mr. Cervantes one time in the torso below his left armpit.

Mr. Cervantes was taken to the hospital, where he was listed in critical condition. The family reports that he may be paralyzed.<sup>6</sup> The two deputies were equipped with body-worn cameras; however, only part of the incident was captured on video as it appears the cameras became dislodged during the struggle just before the shooting. The Sheriff's Department released [video from the body-worn cameras on April 21, 2021](#).

Because the call was coded as a family disturbance call and not as a mental health related call, the Mental Evaluation Team (MET) was not summoned to the scene. The caller specifically mentioned that Mr. Cervantes was causing the disturbance because he was having a mental health crisis; the caller requested that he be taken to a hospital. Field Operations Directive 16-003<sup>7</sup> governs procedures for handling calls involving a person who may be mentally ill. Such procedures require that a field sergeant be assigned to and respond to the scene and that the MET be notified. The procedures for responding and contacting MET differ depending on the immediacy of the danger but the policy is clear that notification to both the field sergeant and the MET be made. In this incident, because the call was coded as a family disturbance, neither the MET nor a field sergeant were notified to respond to the scene. Had the proper notifications been made, a field sergeant would have been on scene to assist and MET would have responded and taken the lead on the handle. When deputies arrive on scene and await MET, the deputies are trained to establish a verbal containment by speaking with the mentally ill individual but not to physically intervene unless it becomes necessary. The Office of Inspector General has recommended that the Sheriff's Department revise Field Operations Directive

---

<sup>6</sup> Tchekmedyan, Alene, "Family of autistic man says deputies were warned of his disabilities before shooting," **Los Angeles Times**, April 7, 2021. <https://www.latimes.com/people/alene-tchekmedyan>. (Accessed April 30, 2021.)

<sup>7</sup> Los Angeles Sheriff's Department [Field Operations Directive 16-003](#)

16-003 to include considerations and accommodations for individuals with developmental disabilities, in addition to those with mental illness, and that all units receive additional training or briefings regarding appropriate dispatch codes for calls requiring MET responses. The Sheriff's Department has committed to working with the Office of Inspector General to ensure that any necessary policy revisions are made, and necessary supplemental training or briefings are conducted.

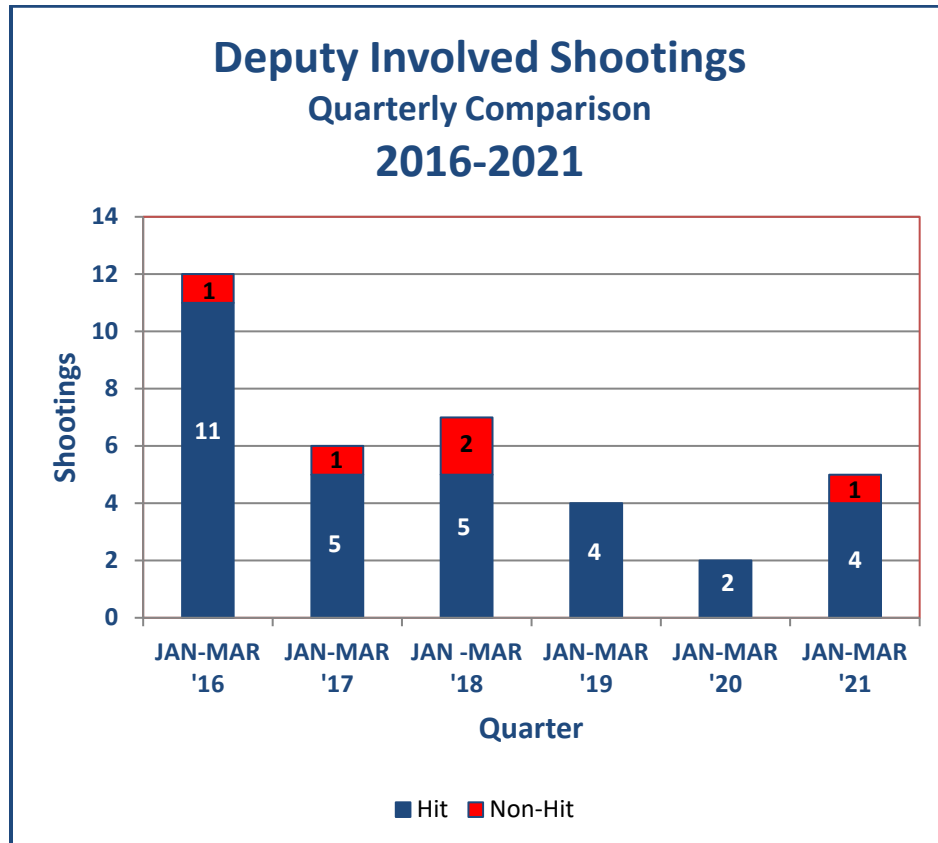
Another concern arising from this incident, are the treatment of the family following the shooting and continuing thereafter. In the video of the incident released by the Sheriff's Department, a family member can be heard trying to calm Mr. Cervantes and by doing so assist the deputies. Yet when the family member asks that her mother be able to attend to her other son who has cerebral palsy, the deputies refuse them access, yell at the woman to get out of the house, and you can hear her saying, "you don't have to put your hands on me."<sup>8</sup>

At the Civilian Oversight Commission meeting on April 22, 2021, the President of Disability Voices United, Judy Mark, mentioned that the Cervantes family told her that the deputies placed his mother in the back of a patrol car following the incident, would not let her go to the hospital and instead took her to the police station, and that the family was not permitted to visit Mr. Cervantes in the ICU; according to Ms. Mark, it was only after obtaining a lawyer that the Sheriff's Department allowed the family to visit him. Ms. Mark reported that the family feels harassed and intimidated by the Sheriff's Department since the time of the shooting, telling her that deputies have repeatedly pulled their vehicles into the driveway of their home and stayed seated in their patrol vehicle while parked there.

---

<sup>8</sup> [Critical Incident Briefing - Deputy Involved Shooting - East Los Angeles Station 03/31/21 - YouTube](#) starting at minute 15:40.

## Comparison to Prior Years<sup>9</sup>



## District Attorney Review of Deputy-Involved Shootings

The Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau investigates all deputy-involved shootings in which a person is injured. The Homicide Bureau submits the completed investigation of each deputy-involved shooting in which a person has been injured and which occurred in the County of Los Angeles, to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office (LADA) for review and possible filing of criminal charges.

Between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2021, the LADA did not issue any findings on deputy-involved shooting cases involving the Sheriff's Department's employees.

## Homicide Bureau's Investigation of Deputy-Involved Shootings

<sup>9</sup> Unintentional discharges are not included in this chart.

The Homicide Bureau is responsible for conducting the investigation of all deputy-involved shootings, regardless of category, in which a person is injured or killed. After completing its investigation, the Homicide Bureau submits its investigation to the LADA for consideration of filing criminal charges. If the LADA declines to file the case, the Sheriff's Department's Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) completes a force review to determine whether Sheriff's Department personnel violated any policies during the incident.

For the present quarter, the Homicide Bureau reports 17 shooting cases involving the Sheriff's Department personnel are currently open and under investigation. The oldest case the Homicide Bureau is still actively investigating is the March 5, 2020 shooting that occurred in Palmdale. For further information as to that shooting, please refer to the Office of Inspector General's *Reform and Oversight Effort: Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, January to March 2020* report.<sup>10</sup> The oldest case that the Bureau has open is a 2016 shooting in Compton, which has been sent to the LADA's office and awaiting a filing decision.

This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reports it has sent 8 cases involving deputy-involved shootings to the LADA for filing consideration.

### **Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau**

The Sheriff's Department's Internal Criminal Investigations Bureau (ICIB) reports directly to Division Chief and Commander of Professional Standards Division

As of March 31, 2021, the Sheriff's Department reports ICIB has 73 active cases. This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reports sending ten cases to the LADA for filing consideration. In addition to the ten cases referred to LADA this quarter, the LADA is still reviewing fifteen other cases for a total of 25 cases currently under review. Eighteen cases are in the arraignment, pre-trial, or trial stage. The remaining thirty cases are still actively under investigation by ICIB. The oldest open case that ICIB has submitted to the LADA for filing consideration is a 2017 case, which was presented to LADA in 2018 and is still being reviewed.

### **Internal Affairs Bureau**

The Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) is responsible for conducting administrative investigations of policy violations by Sheriff's Department members. It is also responsible for responding to and investigating deputy-involved shootings and significant use-of-force cases. Administrative investigations are also conducted at

---

<sup>10</sup> [https://oig.lacounty.gov/Portals/OIG/Reports/2020-1st%20QTR%20Reform%20and%20Oversight\\_200601.pdf?ver=2020-06-09-105124-783](https://oig.lacounty.gov/Portals/OIG/Reports/2020-1st%20QTR%20Reform%20and%20Oversight_200601.pdf?ver=2020-06-09-105124-783)



the unit level. The subject's unit and IAB determine whether an investigation is investigated by IAB or remains a unit-level investigation.

This quarter, the Sheriff's Department reports opening 116 new administrative investigations. Of these 116 cases, 40 were assigned to IAB, 53 were designated as unit-level investigations, and 23 were entered as criminal monitors. In the same period, IAB reports that 85 cases were closed by IAB or at the unit level. There are 377 pending administrative investigations. Of those 377 investigations, 241 are assigned to IAB and the remaining 136 are pending unit-level investigations.

### **Civil Service Commission Dispositions**

There were three final decisions issued by the Civil Service Commission this quarter. Of those three, two reduced the Sheriff's Department's discipline and one upheld the discipline.

### **Deputies Covering Their Names at Protests**

Around November 26, 2020, allegations surfaced in social and news media that Sheriff's Department deputies were covering the cloth name tags on their uniforms or covering their employee numbers during some interactions with the public.<sup>11</sup> It is a requirement that uniformed peace officers wear a badge, nameplate, or other device that identifies the officer by name or identification number. The covering of a deputy's name without wearing a badge or other device that identifies the deputy is a violation of law. Based on the information provided by the Sheriff's Department, the deputies who covered their name tags at a November 26<sup>th</sup> protest at the Twin Towers Correctional Facility (TTCF) violated the law and Sheriff's Department policy.

At least one social media post included video of deputies with their name tags covered with tape during the response to the November 26, 2020, protest over the arrest of Emanuel Padilla at the Twin Towers Correctional Facility.

A few days after this video appeared, Sheriff Alex Villanueva addressed instances during which some deputies covered their name tags, condoning such practices citing dangers to law enforcement personnel by people who were posting deputies'

---

<sup>11</sup> City News Service, "L.A. County Sheriff's deputies accused of covering badges at protest," The Antelope Valley Times, November 29, 2020. <https://theavtimes.com/2020/11/29/l-a-county-sheriffs-deputies-accused-of-covering-badges-at-protest/> (Accessed March 9, 2021); and Queally, James, Twitter Post, November 26, 2020, 4:06 p.m. [James Queally on Twitter: "Dear @LASDHQ: Explain, please? -- The guy working the Thanksgiving night shift at the L.A. Times. https://t.co/YD65FnT9cW" / Twitter](https://t.co/YD65FnT9cW)

personal identifying information on social media.<sup>12</sup> The Sheriff's Department released an official statement shortly after, echoing Sheriff Villanueva's statements as follows: "[s]ome activists have engaged in doxing LASD employees, publishing their addresses and harassing sworn members in an unlawful attempt to intimidate them. The Department is working on an identification code that complies with state law while ensuring the safety of our first responders."<sup>13</sup>

"Doxing," which is "a derivation of the phrase 'document tracing,' is the act of scouring the Internet [sic] for an individual's personal data, usually for a malicious purpose....doxing has become more akin to social protest, using publicly available information to identify individuals with the goal of publicly sharing or exposing their personal details."<sup>14</sup> Protesting government officials at their homes is technically not doxing. While it is understandable that the Sheriff's Department wants to protect its employees, it must do so while still obeying the law.

California Penal Code section 830.10 governs what identification law enforcement must display. Section 830.10 states, "[a]ny uniformed peace officer shall wear a badge, nameplate, or other device which bears clearly on its face the identification number or name of the officer." The Sheriff's Department MPP codified this law into departmental policy in section 3-03/070.95, which states:

When any special clothing item is worn by a sworn member while on-duty, whether or not the item is listed in this chapter, and the item has a permanent marking identifying the wearer as a Deputy Sheriff, Penal Code section 830.10 requires the wearer to clearly display his name or badge number.

The Sheriff's Department conducted an internal inquiry into the November 26<sup>th</sup> protest and the Office of Inspector General requested that the Sheriff's Department provide all information related to that inquiry, including all reports generated and any video relating to the protest and the Sheriff's Department response to the protest. The Sheriff's Department provided a nineteen-page summary (Summary) of its internal inquiry. No video or reports were provided.

---

<sup>12</sup> Tcekmedyan, Alene and Queally, James, "L.A. County sheriff says deputies can conceal their names during protest," Los Angeles Times, December 2, 2020. <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-12-02/la-sheriff-says-deputies-can-conceal-names-protests>. (Accessed March 9, 2021).

<sup>13</sup> CNS, "LA County Sheriff's Deputies Accused of Covering Badges at Protest," NBC Los Angeles, November 29, 2020. <https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/la-county-sheriffs-deputies-accused-of-covering-badges-at-protest/2472823/> (Accessed March 9, 2020).

<sup>14</sup> Goodrich, Ryan, "What is Doxing," TechNews Daily, April 2, 2013. <https://web.archive.org/web/20141029095609/http://www.technewsdaily.com/17590-what-is-doxing.html>. (Accessed March 9, 2021).

According to the Summary, on November 25, 2020, at 10:05 p.m., a Sheriff's Department crime analyst emailed the jails' operation staff of a planned "Free Eman Thanksgiving Potluck" event which was to take place on November 26, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. The protest, as publicized, was to take place "across the street from the TTCF emergency/delivery vehicles entrance and Metro driveway on Vignes." In the email, the analyst stated the event was being shared on social media "by several fellow protesters of Emanuel Padilla #6054640, who was arrested at Sheriff Villanueva's home on 11/18. We [the Sheriff's Department] have not found any online chatter advocating for rioting or other illegal activity at this time." The analyst's email was forwarded to the Custody Emergency Operations Center.

On December 3, 2020, the commander in charge of conducting the inquiry into this incident (Inquiry Commander), spoke to a TTCF lieutenant, who was acting as the watch commander on November 26, 2020. The position of watch commander is usually staffed by a lieutenant. In addition to other duties, the watch commander is in charge and supervises the unit/station when the captain is unavailable or off.<sup>15</sup> In the Summary, the Inquiry Commander does not state whether or not he spoke to the captains of any of the custodial facilities in regards to this inquiry.<sup>16</sup> The TTCF watch commander stated that on November 26<sup>th</sup>, he was unaware of any planned protest near to the jail facilities. The TTCF watch commander stated he spoke to fellow watch commanders at the Inmate Reception Center (IRC) and Men's Central Jail (MCJ), who also had not been notified of any planned civil protest close to the jail grounds. The Emergency Operations Center, which usually coordinates and updates facilities of such matters in real time, was not providing any information as to the group of protesters congregating near the custodial facilities. Since the watch commanders had not heard anything from the Emergency Operations Center, they did not feel the protest required a law enforcement response.

The watch commanders' opinions changed when the group of protesters moved to the courtyard in front of TTCF. Due to the group's proximity to the jails, the MCJ watch commander decided the protest required a response. In their interviews, both the MCJ watch commander and the TTCF watch commander noted recent vandalism of jail property, but it is unclear from the Summary if that is what prompted the MCJ watch commander to respond to the group of protesters or if something else the group did caused him concern.<sup>17</sup> The MCJ watch commander

---

<sup>15</sup> "Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Volunteer Manual," p. 3.

<https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/all/k-m/LASDVolunteerManual.pdf> (Accessed March 10, 2021).

<sup>16</sup> The Summary does not include any statements made by any captains of the facilities. No reason is provided as to why the watch commanders were spoken to instead of the captain.

<sup>17</sup> On February 17, 2020, the Office of Inspector General asked the Sheriff's Department for the police reports identified in the Summary documenting the vandalism that had occurred on jail property. The Sheriff's Department

stated his “goal was to maintain public safety while allowing protesters to legally demonstrate peacefully.” When the group moved locations, the MCJ Watch Commander ordered a lock down of MCJ and initiated MCJ’s Emergency Response Team (ERT). The Summary does not note why the proximity of the group demanded such a response. No personnel interviewed made any mention of the protesters exhibiting any violent or criminal behavior.

Per the TTCF watch commander, after MCJ deployed its ERT, he followed suit and deployed TTCF’s ERT. The Summary does not include a statement from the IRC watch commander but notes that IRC activated its ERT as well. The Summary does not state how many ERT members responded to the incident. MCJ and TTCF watch commanders stated they did not order personnel to cover their names. Both watch commanders did report that since at least September or October of 2020 they were aware of personnel covering their names on their uniforms with tape. One of the watch commanders noted he had duct tape in his office for that very reason, but stated he never directed personnel to cover their names. Both watch commanders cited recent “doxing” incidents as the motivation behind why they believed deputies covered the names on their uniforms. One of the watch commanders opined that deputies implemented this practice after hearing of similar practices by the Sheriff’s Response Teams (SRT). The Summary does not state if either watch commander saw deputies place duct tape on their badges prior to the deputies responding to the protesters at the November 26, 2020 protest.

Per MPP Section 5-06/150.00, SRT “respond to pre-planned and spontaneous events...to restore public order by the use of highly skilled and disciplined personnel comprised of a broad base of Sheriff’s personnel.” Sheriff’s Department personnel told the Office of Inspector General, that each unit within the Sheriff’s Department is required to have at least one SRT representative housed within it. SRT responds to a myriad of scenarios, notably including crowd and riot control, and as “[a]ugmentation of jail emergency response teams in the event of a significant jail riot or disturbance.”<sup>18</sup> The Inquiry Commander spoke to a sergeant who worked as TTCF’s SRT representative and was also part of TTCF’s ERT who responded to this incident. The sergeant stated SRT began covering badges due to an incident involving a member of the SRT who had his personal information posted on social media, shortly after which his home was vandalized. This is the only specific “doxing” incident referenced in the Summary.

---

has not responded to the Office of Inspector General’s request. Per the Summary, the vandalism occurred on June 12, 2020. The Summary states the Sheriff’s Department personnel found “F#%k (edited for decorum) the Cops” spray painted on the front doors of IRC and “187 ON A COP” spray painted on the MCJ employee parking lot wall. No other incidents of vandalism were referenced in the Summary.

<sup>18</sup> See MPP Section 5-06/150.10, “Sheriff’s Response Team Functions and Missions.”

In the Summary, several of the interviewed personnel pointed to “doxing” as the motivation for the deputies covering their names; yet none of the deputies pointed to any policies addressing under what circumstances badges or name tags, or other identifying information could be covered. Nor did any deputy discuss whether doxing was pervasive, or a significant problem. The Office of Inspector General has repeatedly asked the Sheriff’s Department for specific information on all deputies who the Sheriff’s Department knows have been subjected to such “doxing” incidents. As of writing this report, the Sheriff’s Department has only disclosed the name of the above-mentioned employee whose home was vandalized in October 2020. The Sheriff’s Department has not provided any police reports as to this particular “doxing” incident. In addition to the above mentioned requests, on February 17, 2021, the Office of Inspector General asked the Sheriff’s Department for any complaints it has fielded in regards to personnel covering their names or badge numbers, unit orders and/or policies regarding doxing, and when the Sheriff’s Department first became aware of a “doxing” incident. The Sheriff’s Department has not provided this information.

On November 27, 2020, the day after the protest, a chief of custody sent an email to all custody command staff. In his email, the chief stated he understood personnel’s concern of doxing, but reminded his staff that per California Penal Code section 830.10, Sheriff’s Department personnel must at least have their badge numbers visible when they opt to cover their names. The chief also forwarded the command staff an email from the Assistant Sheriff of Patrol. In the forwarded email (which has no date on it), the Assistant Sheriff states the “Top 5” management<sup>19</sup> were made aware of several doxing incidents, including a situation where the Sheriff was subjected to “doxing.” The Assistant Sheriff wrote:

Previously, the TOP 5 was made aware of "DOXING" concerns from deputies assigned to MFF [Mobile Field Force] and SRT duties. A significant threat was identified where protestors were in search of the personal identification information of deputies performing their duties at civil unrest events. Once deputies were identified their personal information was targeted by radicals.

He goes on to write:

This modification concerning the wear [sic] of a badge and name plate for patrol personnel is only a temporary modification to our protocols and not to be used in routine field activities.

---

<sup>19</sup> It is unclear from the e-mail and the Summary who make up the “Top 5” management members that Assistant Sheriff Gross refers to in his e-mail.

Based on such incidents, the “Top 5” management authorized MFF and SRT deputies to cover their names, but badge numbers had to still be visible to comply with the law. It is unclear how this order went from MFF and SRT, to other deputies in the field, who engaged in similar behavior. Nor does it state the time period for this temporary modification or what constitutes non-routine field activities where deputies are permitted to block out their names. Neither the email nor the Summary provides information as to how Sheriff’s Department management came to the conclusion “protestors were in search of the personal identification information of deputies performing their duties at civil unrest events.” From the items provided to the Office of Inspector General, there only seems to be one prior instance of a possible “doxing” occurring.<sup>20</sup>

At the conclusion of the inquiry into the response to the November 26<sup>th</sup> TTCF protest, the Incident Commander reported that he believed the personnel who responded to the incident were attempting to protect themselves from possible “doxing” incidents when they covered their names. Additionally, some of those interviewed stated that some deputies did mark an alternative identifying number on their helmets and that there was a record of the assignment of those numbers. While this does not satisfy Penal Code section 830.10, it was an attempt to record the actions of the deputies in such a way that they could be identified. Because the motivation for covering their names was to avoid being doxed, the Incident Commander found that none of the parties broke any laws or violated Sheriff’s Department policy when they covered their names. This is not true. While the Sheriff’s Department appears to have tacitly permitted the covering of names, the law and departmental policy clearly require that a name, badge number, or other identifying information be displayed on the deputy’s person. Despite finding that there was no violation of law or policy, the Incident Commander sent an email to all custody commanders to ensure future compliance with California Penal Code section 830.10 and the MPP, requiring deputies to write their badge numbers on the tape if they cover their names. The Inquiry Commander also noted the November 26, 2020 incident suffered from a lack of central command. He recommended the Emergency Operations Center take control and designate an incident commander to coordinate responses during future protests.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> The Sheriff has made claims, as is re-iterated in the Assistant Sheriff’s e-mail, that he has been the subject of “doxing,” too, since protesters had congregated and protested in front of his home.

<sup>21</sup> An Assistant Sheriff discussed with Office of Inspector General staff that the handling of protests by the public is not something commonly handled by custody command staff. The lack of leadership on Thanksgiving Day may partly be explained by this. Unit Order 3-16-022, which was distributed on March 22, 2021, designates an incident commander for outside facility responses in an effort to coordinate future responses to protests at custody facilities. The incident commander rotates based on the shift and facility. For the AM shift the incident commander is the watch commander at IRC, for the PM shift the watch commander at MCJ, and for the EM (early morning) shift it is the watch commander at TTCF.

As a result of the investigation into this incident, on March 22, 2021, the Sheriff's Department Custody Services Division issued Unit Order 3-16-022. This unit order authorizes the use of unique identifying numbers in lieu of names in certain situations. This unit order complies with Penal Code section 830.10. The unit order states in part:

This alternative method of identification, substituting badge numbers instead of name tags, is only to be used during emergencies or unusual occurrences, including but not limited to, civil unrest, protests, major disasters, and large-scale criminal activity (i.e. "flash mob").

The MCJ Training Units shall be responsible for ensuring white adhesive numbers are used for the purposes of displaying employees' badge numbers on the front and back of their Department-issued duty helmets in a clearly visible manner. All personnel who respond outside the facility shall be responsible for affixing numbers to their helmets prior to the deployments. The numbers shall be one inch tall and bright white in color.

Only disposable, black, adhesive rectangular strips shall be used for the purpose of covering name tags on outerwear.... If Class A uniform is being worn, name plates should be removed.

This unit order applies only to the Custody Services Division and not to the SRT or any other division.

### **Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE)**

There has been a national movement to adopt policies and programs that train officers in how and when to intervene when a fellow officer uses improper force or violates policy. Analyses of the data from departments which have adopted peer intervention policies and training indicate that it reduces unnecessary harm to both officers and civilians, reduces risks of lawsuits, improves community relations, and also improves the morale, health and well-being, and job satisfaction of the law enforcement officers.

Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE) is a national peer intervention training program developed by a group affiliated with the Georgetown Law School based upon the principles and practices implemented at the New Orleans Police Department. ABLE teaches law enforcement agencies strategies and tactics and

provides practical steps to ensure all employees know how to effectively engage in peer intervention. This program emphasizes changing the culture of a law enforcement agency from the top down. Before an agency can enroll officers in such a program, it is a mandatory requirement that the leader of the organization – whether it be the appointed Chief or an elected Sheriff, or any other departmental leader – buy into the program. Once the program gets the buy-in from the leader of the organization, ABLE will work with the organization to ensure that all law enforcement personnel are trained on peer intervention.

In New Orleans the ABLE peer intervention training was deployed and implemented under the name, “Ethical Policing is Courageous,” or EPIC. EPIC educates, empowers, and supports the officers on the streets to play a meaningful role in “policing” one another. EPIC is not a “tell on your partner” program. EPIC is a program which teaches officers how to intervene to stop a wrongful action before it occurs. It imparts to officers tools so that they can speak up and say to their partners, colleagues, and even their managers, “what you are about to do is wrong; it will hurt someone and it will hurt you, your family, and your career.”<sup>22</sup> By training officers in such a fashion, officers are better prepared and able to intervene in situations before something dire happens.

In October 2020, the Office of Inspector General recommended to a member of the Sheriff’s Department command staff that the Sheriff’s Department enroll in the ABLE training program. An email detailing the ABLE program’s philosophy and enrollment requirements was sent to that department member. While initially there was an expressed interest in the program, there have been no further discussions about ABLE between the Office of Inspector General and the Sheriff’s Department. Since the time the Office of Inspector General suggested the training, California state legislators have considered making peer intervention, and specifically ABLE a Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) requirement. On February 17, 2021, California State Assembly Member, Carlos Villapudua, introduced a bill to amend Penal Code section 13519.10<sup>23</sup>, which relates to the training of peace officers. The proposed assembly bill specifically identifies and names the ABLE training as a model that all peace officers should incorporate into their training. Communities are asking law enforcement agencies to avail themselves and train their personnel in peer intervention programs. The Sheriff’s Department should not wait for a law or an act directing them to enroll in ABLE. Data shows peer intervention can save lives

---

<sup>22</sup> Subject to Debate, A Newsletter of the Police Executive Research Forum, Vol. 30, No. 2, July to September 2016. [https://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Subject\\_to\\_Debate/Debate2016/debate\\_2016\\_julsep.pdf](https://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Subject_to_Debate/Debate2016/debate_2016_julsep.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> 2021-2022 California Legislature Regular Session, “An Act to Amend Section 13519.10 of the Penal Code, relating to peace officer training,” Assembly Bill No. 931, introduced by Assembly Member Villapudua on February 17, 2021, [Bill Text - AB-931 Peace officer training: duty to intercede. \(ca.gov\)](https://leginfo.ca.gov/pub/21_01_bill_00901_0100_bill_00931_bill_00931_bill_text.html).



and help communities; it is incumbent upon the Sheriff's Department to incorporate such training for all deputies.

## **CUSTODY DIVISION**

### **Handling of Prisoner Grievances**

The Sheriff's Department is still in the process of working on installing tablets in all jail facilities to capture information related to prisoner requests and, eventually, prisoner grievances. There is a total of 165 installed iPads. There are 31 iPads at Century Regional Detention Facility (CRDF), 49 iPads at Men's Central Jail (MCJ), and 85 iPads at Twin Towers Correctional Facility (TTCF). The Sheriff's Department is reporting that all iPads in MCJ are currently down and there is insufficient staffing to complete planned upgrades. There are currently 17 devices down for repair or replacement at CRDF. The Sheriff's Department reports that moving to Windows based tablets is under consideration in order to rectify compatibility issues and ease other connectivity concerns. The Sheriff's Department reports that prisoners have accessed the iPads to obtain information on 234,846 occasions between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2021.

As reported in the Office of Inspector General's January 2018 *Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department* report, the Sheriff's Department implemented a policy restricting the filing of duplicate and excessive prisoner grievances.<sup>24</sup> The Sheriff's Department reports that between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2021, seven prisoners were restricted from filing 32 grievances under this policy.

### **In-Custody Deaths**

Between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2021, 15 individuals died while under the care and custody of the Sheriff's Department. Of these 15 decedents, two died at TTCF, three died at MCJ, one died at North County Correctional Facility (NCCF), one died at a station jail, and eight died in the hospitals to which the decedents had been transported.

Office of Inspector General staff attended the Custody Services Division Administrative Death Reviews for each of the 15 in-custody deaths.

---

<sup>24</sup> [See Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Custody Division Manual, 8-04/050.00, Duplicate or Excessive Filings of Grievances and Appeals, and Restrictions of Filing Privileges.](#)

The following summaries, arranged in chronological order, provide brief descriptions of each in-custody death:

On January 4, 2021, an individual at TTCF was reportedly discovered unresponsive during a Title-15 safety check. Emergency aid was rendered, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On January 5, 2021, an individual at TTCF's Correctional Treatment Center was reportedly discovered unresponsive during a Title-15 safety check. Emergency aid was rendered, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On January 8, 2021, deputies were alerted to an individual at MCJ in need of medical attention. While escorting the individual to the clinic, the individual suffered a medical emergency. Deputies and medical personnel rendered emergency aid, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On January 10, 2021, an individual died at (Los Angeles County Medical Center) LCMC after being transported from TTCF on January 2, 2021, for a higher level of care.

On January 10, 2021, an individual died at LCMC after being transported from TTCF on December 20, 2020, for a higher level of care.

On January 12, 2021, an individual died at LCMC after being transported from MCJ on December 18, 2020, for a higher level of care.

On January 22, 2021, an individual died at LCMC after being transported from TTCF on January 7, 2021, for a higher level of care.

On January 23, 2021, an individual was reportedly discovered by deputies in a cell at MCJ during what was described as a suicide attempt. Deputies and medical personnel rendered emergency aid, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On February 16, 2021, an individual at the Palmdale Station Jail was reportedly discovered during what was described as a suicide attempt. Emergency aid was rendered, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On February 18, 2021, an individual died at LCMC after being transported from TTCF's Correctional Treatment Center on February 12, 2021, for a higher level of care.

On March 12, 2021, an individual was reportedly discovered by deputies in a cell at MCJ during what was described as a suicide attempt. Deputies and medical personnel rendered emergency aid, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On March 14, 2021, deputies were alerted to an individual at NCCF having a medical emergency. Deputies and medical personnel rendered emergency aid, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On February 27, 2021, an individual was reportedly discovered by deputies in a cell at MCJ during what was described as a suicide attempt. Deputies and medical personnel rendered emergency aid until paramedics arrived and transported the individual to LCMC. The individual died on March 20, 2021.

On March 25, 2021, an individual died at LCMC after being transported from MCJ on March 21, 2021, for a higher level of care after experiencing a medical emergency.

On March 31, 2021, an individual died at LCMC after being transported from MCJ on March 17, 2021, for a higher level of care.

## **Other Deaths**

Between January 1, 2021, and March 31, 2021, two individuals died under circumstances which do not fit within the current categorical definition of in-custody deaths but were under the care and custody of LASD when the condition which resulted in their deaths first became apparent.

Office of Inspector General staff attended the Critical Incident Review for each of these deaths.

The following summaries provide a brief description of the circumstances surrounding these deaths:

On February 12, 2021, deputies from Temple Station responded to a call for service and subsequently arrested an individual at the location following a use of force. The individual began to experience a medical emergency while inside the jail booking area. Deputies rendered emergency aid, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

On March 21, 2021, deputies from Walnut Station responded to a call for service and subsequently arrested an individual at the location following a use of force. The individual began to experience a medical emergency. Deputies rendered emergency aid, paramedics were called, but the individual was pronounced dead at the scene.

### **In Custody Sexual Assault by a Custody Assistant**

A custody assistant has been criminally charged with three felony offenses for sexually assaulting a female being held at a station jail following her arrest. At the time of the assault, several of the cameras at the facility were inoperable resulting in there being no working camera facing the cell where the female was being held. There was no Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) signage posted in the station jail area, nor was there an assigned PREA Compliance Sergeant to conduct jail station audits. According to the Sheriff's Department, since the time of the assault, a new camera system has been installed at the facility that allows for better monitoring by supervisors. The Sheriff's Department reports that PREA signage is now posted at the station in both English and Spanish and that personnel at the station were briefed on the standards and regulations of PREA, with an emphasis on the importance of prevention, detection, and the ability to report any sexual misconduct. The Sheriff's Department indicates that it has a list of qualified applicants for the PREA Compliance Sergeant but to the Office of Inspector General's knowledge, that position has not been filled.

### **Office of Inspector General Site Visits**

The Office of Inspector General normally conducts site visits and inspections at The Sheriff's Department's' custodial facilities to identify matters requiring attention. Since the Los Angeles County Safer at Home Order issued on March 19, 2020, the Office of Inspector General has limited site visits. In the first quarter of 2021, Office of Inspector General personnel completed 15 site visits inside LASD's NCCF, MCJ, TTCF, and CRDF. Office of Inspector General staff have been closely monitoring LASD's and Correctional Health Services' (CHS's) response to the COVID-19 pandemic and following up on concerns raised by the public. As part of the Office of Inspector General's jail monitoring, Office of Inspector General staff attended 75 Custody Services Division executive and administrative meetings and met with division executives for 81 monitoring hours related to COVID-19 as well as general conditions.

## **CITIZENS' COMMISSION ON JAIL VIOLENCE UPDATES**

### *CCJV Recommendation 3.12: The Department should purchase additional body scanners*

The Sheriff's Department continues to operate body scanners at MCJ, CRDF, Pitchess Detention Center (PDC) North, PDC South, NCCF, and Inmate Reception Center (IRC).

According to the Sheriff's Department's records, from January 1, 2021, to March 31, 2021, 201 prisoners refused to go through the body scanners across all applicable facilities. As previously reported, the Sheriff's Department reported that it no longer records the reasons for such refusals because the data did not contribute significant feedback towards the goal of reducing strip searches since the primary reason for refusals is jail politics.



# OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



May 21, 2021

Ms. Dara Williams  
Acting Chief Deputy  
Los Angeles County Office of Inspector General  
312 South Hill Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, California 90013

Dear Ms. Williams:

**RESPONSE TO THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR  
GENERAL'S REPORT ON REFORM AND OVERSIGHT EFFORTS:  
FIRST QUARTER 2021 REPORT**

Attached herein is the updated Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's (Department) response to the Los Angeles County Office of Inspector General's (OIG) validation draft on the "Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department – First Quarter 2021 Report." Thank you for providing the opportunity to validate the report and correcting some of the inaccuracies we noted in the original draft. I have reviewed the report and appreciate your input. The attachment contains the remaining inaccuracies identified in our original response to you.

Thank you and your staff for your efforts in reviewing the various functions and responsibilities within the Department's purview. The dedication made by members of the OIG to execute this report is greatly appreciated by the Department. I am committed to balancing community safety with public trust and appreciate the recommendations you make to assist us in this endeavor.

The Audit and Accountability Bureau (AAB) has the responsibility to monitor and document the Department's response related to this review.

211 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

*A Tradition of Service*  
— Since 1850 —

Ms. Williams

-2-

May 21, 2021

Should you have any questions regarding the Department's response, please contact Captain Rodney K. Moore at (323) 307-8302.

Sincerely,

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy K. Murakami". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

TIMOTHY K. MURAKAMI  
UNDERSHERIFF

VALIDATION - LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT

SUBJECT: Reform and Oversight Efforts: Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department –  
January to March 2021

**Response from Homicide Bureau**

Deputy-Involved Shootings

**Page 8** – *“The information contained in the following summaries of shootings is based on information provided by the Sheriff's Department and is preliminary in nature. While the Office of Inspector General receives information at the walk-through at the scene of the shooting, preliminary memoranda with summaries, and by attending a Critical Incident Review, the statements of the deputies and witnesses are not provided. **The Sheriff's Department does not permit the monitoring of its investigations of deputy-involved shootings and does not comply with lawful requests for documentation of these investigations.**”*

**This paragraph was not in the previous Quarterly Report. The Sheriff's Department is in compliance with the law and provides a copy of the investigations upon their completion.**

**Page 9 – Norwalk**

*“The male Hispanic threw an **object** from his window that caught their attention.”*

**This statement should read:**

*“The male Hispanic threw an object, **later identified as a loaded handgun**, from his window that caught their attention.”*

**Page 11 – East Los Angeles**

*“Mr. Cervantes turned toward one of the deputies.”*

**The statement should read:**

*“Mr. Cervantes **suddenly** turned **assaultive** toward one of the deputies.”*