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August 15, 2006

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SAN DIEGO  
COUNTY GRAND JURY

Jim Vlassis, Foreman  
Grand Jury – County of San Diego  
Hall of Justice  
330 W. Broadway, Suite 477  
San Diego, CA 92101-3830

Re: Grand Jury Report: “Felony Warrants – The Unsolved Problem”

Dear Mr. Vlassis:

On June 1, 2006, a Grand Jury Report entitled “Felony Warrants – The Unsolved Problem” was released to the public by the San Diego County Grand Jury. Pursuant to California Penal Code §933.05(c), the City of Escondido provides this comment within 90-days of the date of the Grand Jury Report.

Recommendations 06-70 through 06-74 are directed to all Mayors and Law Enforcement Agencies in San Diego City, County and the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. Recommendations 06-75 through 06-76 are directed to all Mayors, City Councils and the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. The listed responses are reflective of input received from the Lieutenant and Sergeant levels of the department.

**06-70: Consider the significant benefits of joining the San Diego Regional (Fugitive) Task Force. This includes outstanding Felony Warrant apprehension already established under the auspices of the San Diego office of the United States Marshal.**

**RESPONSE:** Though there may be benefits derived from working within the San Diego Regional Fugitive Task Force for the apprehension of felony warrant suspects, the cost-benefit relationship should be carefully considered. The Grand Jury’s report indicated Escondido accounts for 674 of a total of 18,254 outstanding felony warrants. This represents 3.69% of the total. Based on this statistic, it appears a more prudent response may be to develop internal organized guidelines and procedures managed by our own agency. We will discuss this further with the U.S. Marshal. Therefore at this time, further analysis would be appropriate.

**06-71: One officer, from each law enforcement agency, should be assigned full time to this task force.**

RESPONSE: Supervising Task Force Coordinator Greg Doss was interviewed regarding the reports statement that “grant monies” are available to participating agencies. Mr. Doss stated that although there were no “grant monies” available to the agency, the task force, through High Intensity Drug Traffic Area (HIDTA) funds, would pay all associated overtime costs. Mr. Doss also indicated that all regular hours would be the responsibility of the participating agency. Additionally, Mr. Doss indicated the task force could provide a vehicle and a cell phone, if needed, to the participating agency representative.

Again, based on the above noted response to recommendation 06-70 and the mentioned cost-benefit concern, the Escondido component of this problem could be effectively managed and addressed at the local level managed by our own agency. Prudent enforcement efforts should include both multi-agency and multi-division focused operations. Therefore at this time, further analysis would be appropriate.

**06-72: Create a data base to search all applications presented for any governmental assistance, benefit or privilege. This would include, but not be limited to all applicants for driver’s licenses, veteran’s benefits, worker’s compensation, unemployment benefits, professional licenses, all vehicle registrations and other applicable sources.**

RESPONSE: The benefits of such a database would be invaluable to law enforcement in the location and apprehension of suspects with outstanding felony warrants. Unfortunately, the creation of such a database is not in the control of local government or agencies. A plan of this magnitude would need to be implemented with the combined efforts of federal, state and local agencies. Therefore at this time, further analysis would be appropriate.

**06-73: Fund San Diego law enforcement agencies programs of “Wanted” billboards.**

RESPONSE: Once again the cost – benefit relationship of such a program needs to be carefully considered. Countywide standards and costs must be developed. We are supportive of participation in such a program. It should also be noted, that the majority, if not all, of the law enforcement agencies in San Diego County have web sites that can be accessed by the general public. Such sites are ideal for the publication and instant updating of agency generated “Most Wanted” links. These sites could be easily created, reflective of their individual community and managed by their respective agency. Accordingly, a master regional “Most Wanted” list would be reflective of not only regional felons but would offer a one-stop-shopping location for quick community access. Therefore at this time, further analysis would be appropriate.

**06-74: Install the E-Warrant computer program in Patrol Vehicles of all community Law Enforcement Agencies in San Diego County and San Diego City.**

RESPONSE: Based on published information regarding E-Warrant (SDLaw), there appears to be a very real and beneficial aspect of having this software system installed patrol vehicles. Technology of this type is becoming a standard that all agencies should be moving towards.

A move towards E-Warrant (SDLaw) installation and implementation in all patrol vehicles could be considered as the "next step" in getting information to officers in the field. Our current marked patrol vehicle fleet consists of approximately 140 marked units that would require outfitting. Therefore at this time, further analysis would be appropriate.

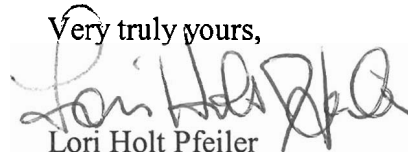
**06-75: Sponsor legislation that will provide law enforcement agencies with additional tools to apprehend felons through integration of information from DMV, Social Security, Vetern's pensions and other state and federal agencies.**

RESPONSE: We are willing to support legislative efforts that would provide law enforcement agencies with additional tools necessary to apprehend felons via enhanced information integration. Therefore at this time, further analysis would be appropriate.

**06-76: Give apprehension of outstanding Felony Warrant offenders a greater priority than currently appears to be the norm.**

RESPONSE: Implemented. We agree with this recommendation and have made organizational changes to insure higher priority response to Outstanding Felony Warrants.

We hope this information is helpful.

Very truly yours,  
  
Lori Holt Pfeiler  
Mayor