

# AD HOC COMMITTEES



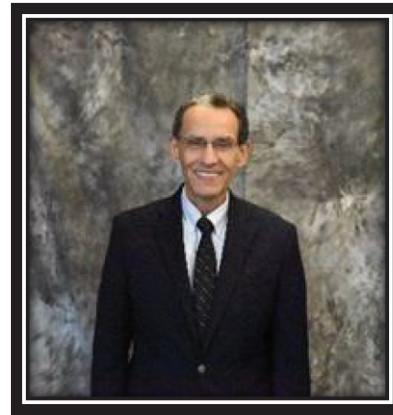
Jerry Troxel  
Foreperson



Dwayne Ardis  
Pro Tem



Rose M.T. Mankoff



Enrique Vicuna  
Parliamentarian

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Ad Hoc Committee(s) address matters that do not come within the scope of the standing committees or which cannot be adequately handled by one of the standing committees. An Ad Hoc Committee is not activated until a specific need arises.

# AD HOC COMMITTEES

## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

### **Reports Written and Published:**

- Kern County Sheriff's Office
- Public Works Solid Waste Transfer Stations (under review)

# **KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

## *I Have a Warrant for Your Arrest*

### **SUMMARY:**

The 2019-2020 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) received a citizen complaint (Complaint) regarding the Kern County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) handling and assignment of arrest warrants (warrant(s)). The Grand Jury initiated an investigation into the claims to determine if policies and procedures were adequate and followed. Unannounced visits to various KCSO substations and personnel interviews were conducted to determine if there was any basis to the Complaint. The Grand Jury found that some warrants were not processed in a timely manner.

### **PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:**

An Ad-Hoc Committee (Committee) was formed to investigate the allegations against the KCSO and to make recommendations pursuant to California Penal Code section 925a.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

The Committee met with several KCSO Supervisors and Sheriff Support Technicians (SST) to learn how warrants make their way from the issuing judge to the target listed on the warrant. The Committee conducted field interviews and made unannounced visits to several Sheriff's Office substations.

### **DISCUSSION OF FACTS:**

In the course of performing their duties, law enforcement investigators may request the issuance of a warrant. The investigators will contact the District Attorney's Office or a Superior Court Judge to obtain a warrant. Warrants may also be issued by a judge as related to a trial. Regardless of who initiates the request for a warrant, a Kern County Superior Court Clerk (Clerk) enters information into a computer system called Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) and will route the warrant to the appropriate law enforcement agency for service.

For the KCSO, a designated Metro SST at the KCSO Metro Station enters the warrant into the California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System (CLETS) or National Crime Information Center (NCIC), depending on the charges. The Metro SST assigns the warrant to a KCSO substation SST to serve the warrant. The substation SST enters a secondary verification into the service history, to satisfy Department of Justice (DOJ) requirements verifying the warrant was entered into CLETS or NCIC properly. The substation SST then assigns the warrant to a substation deputy.

For the Bakersfield Police and other community police departments, warrants are routed to their designated clerk who distributes the warrants to local police officers.

The Grand Jury noted the following:

- A. KCSO substation SSTs often work alone and do not have a direct supervisor with proper access to complete the secondary verification, as required by the DOJ. Therefore, the SST enters the verification by themselves.
- B. KCSO substation supervisors are not trained to enter warrants into CJIS or CLETS. If the SST is absent, warrants are not processed.
- C. New SSTs receive no formal training. The normal practice is to learn procedures from the outgoing SST. There are no regular peer meetings where SSTs can meet to discuss problems and solutions.
- D. Warrants that have not been assigned to KCSO Deputies for service can only be found in CJIS.
- E. Law enforcement agencies that do not use CJIS may not be alerted to the existence of an outstanding felony or misdemeanor warrant.
- F. Some KCSO substations do not assign warrants on a regular or timely basis.
- G. Due to staffing levels, if an SST is absent from work for an extended period of time, warrants may go unassigned for weeks or longer.
- H. Once a warrant has been assigned to a KCSO Deputy, there is no system in place to track the warrants to ensure they have been served.

## **FINDINGS:**

- F1. Lack of trained supervision can result in warrants not being served for weeks or months, along with violations of DOJ secondary verification requirements.
- F2. The current SST training method results in poor habits being passed on and a lack of consistency. Substation supervisors do not receive CLETS or NCIC training to enter information into the database.
- F3. There is no urgency to issue warrants in a timely manner. Without timely entry into CLETS and NCIC, other law enforcement agencies may not know an individual has an outstanding felony or misdemeanor warrant.

- F4. Warrants may be issued at any time, however, the SST may search for CJIS notifications at random times throughout the day. If a warrant is issued late in the day, it may wait until the next day or longer to be assigned.
- F5. There is no coverage for sick or vacationing SSTs. This could result in warrants going days or weeks without being assigned to a deputy.
- F6. There are no *checks and balances* in place to ensure warrants are served. The SST and the substation supervisor assume once a warrant is assigned to a deputy, it will be served.

## COMMENTS:

The Kern County Grand Jury would like to thank the Kern County Sheriff's Office personnel for their assistance and cooperation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following recommendations should be completed by end of Fiscal Year 2020:

- R1. The KCSO should improve direct supervision at substations to ensure the timely service of warrants. KCSO substation supervisors should also receive training regarding CJIS and CLETS. (Finding 1)
- R2. The KCSO should provide formal training courses where tasks and goals are clearly outlined for SST and substation supervisors. (Finding 2)
- R3. KCSO SSTs should meet quarterly to receive updated training, and discuss problems and their solutions. (Finding 2)
- R4. KCSO SSTs should adjust their work schedule to ensure last minute warrants are processed for service. (Findings 3 and 4)
- R5. The KCSO should have a backup SST to act as a *floater* to cover absent SSTs and ensure timely warrant processing. (Finding 5)
- R6. The KCSO should set up a tracking system or oversight procedure to ensure warrants are served in a timely manner. (Finding 6)

## NOTES:

- The Kern County Sheriff's Office should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review
- Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at: [kerncounty.com/grandjury](http://kerncounty.com/grandjury)

- Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed on the Kern County Grand Jury website: [kerncounty.com/grandjury](http://kerncounty.com/grandjury)

## **REQUIRED RESPONSES WITHIN 60 DAYS TO:**

- **PRESIDING JUDGE  
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT  
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212  
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**
- **FOREPERSON  
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY  
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600  
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code section 929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

## **GLOSSARY:**

CLETS: California Law Enforcement Telecommunication System is a high-speed message switching system, which became operational in 1970. CLETS provides law enforcement and criminal justice agencies access to various databases and the ability to transmit and receive point-to-point administrative messages to other agencies within California or via the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) to other states and Canada.

NCIC: The National Crime Information Center is the United States' central database for tracking crime-related information. The NCIC has been an information-sharing tool since 1967. It is maintained by the Criminal Justice Information Services Division (CJIS) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and is interlinked with federal, tribal, state, and local agencies and offices.





1350 Norris Road  
Bakersfield, California 93308-2231

June 23, 2020

The Honorable Judith Dulcich, Presiding Judge  
Kern County Superior Court  
1415 Truxtun Avenue, Suite 212  
Bakersfield, CA, 93301

The 2019-2020 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) received a citizen complaint regarding the Kern County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) handling and assignment of arrest warrants. The Grand Jury formed an Ad-Hoc Committee and initiated an investigation into the claims to determine if policies and procedures were adequate and followed. Based on their findings, the Grand Jury published a report that was made public on May 21, 2020. Below is the Sheriff's Office response to the 2019-2020 Grand Jury Report titled, "I Have a Warrant for Your Arrest."

I would like to express my appreciation to the Grand Jury Ad-Hoc Committee for its efforts investigating the citizen complaint and reviewing the Kern County Sheriff's Office procedures regarding the processing of arrest warrants. The objective review provided by the Grand Jury helps to strengthen the foundation of trust between the community and the Sheriff's Office. As always, the Sheriff's Office appreciates the valuable insight the Grand Jury has provided.

**GRAND JURY FINDINGS:**

- F1. *Lack of trained supervision can result in warrants not being served for weeks or months, along with violations of DOJ secondary verification requirements.*
- F2. *The current SST training method results in poor habits being passed on and a lack of consistency. Substation supervisors do not receive CLETS or NCIC training to enter information into the database.*
- F3. *There is no urgency to issue warrants in a timely manner. Without timely entry into CLETS and NCIC, other law enforcement agencies may not know an individual has an outstanding felony or misdemeanor warrant.*
- F4. *Warrants may be issued at any time; however, the SST may search for CJIS notifications at random times throughout the day. If a warrant is issued late in the day, it may wait until the next day or longer to be assigned.*
- F5. *There is no coverage for sick or vacationing SST's. This could result in warrants going days or weeks without being assigned to a deputy.*

- F6. *There are no checks and balances in place to ensure warrants are served. The SST and the substation supervisor assume once a warrant is assigned to a deputy, it will be served.*

**KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE RESPONSE TO FINDINGS:**

The Kern County Sheriff's Office concurs with the Grand Jury's findings.

**GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- R1. *The KCSO should improve direct supervision at the substations to ensure the timely service of warrants. KCSO substation supervisors should also receive training regarding CJIS and CLETS. (Finding 1)*
- R2. *The KCSO should provide formal training courses where tasks and goals are clearly outlined for SST and substation supervisors. (Finding 2)*
- R3. *KCSO SST's should meet quarterly to receive updated training and discuss problems and their solutions. (Finding 2)*
- R4. *KCSO SST's should adjust their work schedule to ensure last minute warrants are processed for service. (Finding 3 and 4)*
- R5. *The KCSO should have a backup SST to act as a floater to cover absent SST's and ensure timely warrant processing. (Finding 5)*
- R6. *The KCSO should set up a tracking system or oversight procedure to ensure warrants are served in a timely manner. (Finding 6)*

**KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Kern County Sheriff's Office concurs with the recommendations provided by the Grand Jury.

- R1. The Sheriff's Office is improving the oversight and supervision at the substations to ensure timely service of warrants through an auditing program being developed by our Technology Services Section (Explained in R6 below). All supervisors (sergeants) at the substations have training in CJIS and CLETS. (Finding 1)
- R2. The Sheriff's Office is in the process of preparing a formalized training course for SST's regarding their tasks and goals. The supervisors from each substation have also been directed to distribute their expectations to their SST's that specifically outline critical clerical duties and the timeframe in which they will be accomplished. (Finding 2)
- R3. The Sheriff's Office will begin quarterly meetings with all substation SST's to keep staff current with training and other information regarding their duties. (Finding 2)
- R4. The Sheriff's Office is in the process of re-evaluating the duties of entering and assigning arrest warrants to include our Records Section. This section works a 24-hour, 7 day a week schedule. This section would be able to enter "last minute" warrants as they appear into CLETS. (Findings 3 and 4)
- R5. The Sheriff's Office typically has an additional SST assigned to each substation section. We have been and are actively recruiting to fill vacant SST positions across the county to ensure a full compliment of support staff. When the positions are filled, it provides for a "floater" SST to cover other substations in the section when sick leave or vacations occur. (Finding 5)



R6. As mentioned above in R1, The Sheriff's Office Technology Services Section is currently developing an auditing/tracking program that will allow supervisors to access up to date information regarding the assignment of warrants. This system will help supervisors track warrants assigned to staff to ensure the timely service of warrants. (Finding 6)

The Kern County Sheriff's Office sincerely thanks the Grand Jury Ad-Hoc Committee for taking the time to investigate the citizen complaint and providing their valuable insight and recommendations. I hope this information will assist the Grand Jury in its service to the citizens of Kern County.

Sincerely,



Sheriff Donny Youngblood  
County of Kern

cc: Undersheriff Doug Jauch  
Chief Deputy Larry McCurtain  
Chief Deputy Damian Nord  
Chief Deputy James Morrison  
Acting Chief Deputy Avery Simpson  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
Kern County Grand Jury Foreman  
County Administrative Office-Katrina Balbuena

Kern County Board of Supervisors  
Response to Grand Jury Final Report  
Kern County Sheriff's Office

Response to Findings:

The Board of Supervisors notes that the Grand Jury's findings are substantially correct.

Response to Recommendations:

*R1: The Kern County Sheriff's Office should improve direct supervision at substations to ensure the timely service of warrants. Kern County Sheriff's Office substation supervisors should also receive training regarding CJIS and CLETS.*

We concur with the Sheriff's response that they are improving substation supervision to ensure timely warrant service and that supervisors have CJIS and CLETS training.

*R2: The Kern County Sheriff's Office should provide formal training courses where tasks and goals are clearly outlined for SST and substation supervisors.*

We concur with the Sheriff's response they will distribute their expectations, outline critical duties and timeframe, and formalize training courses.

*R3: The Kern County Sheriff's Office SST should meet quarterly to receive updated training, and discuss problems and their solutions.*

We concur with the Sheriff's response that they will begin quarterly meetings with all substation SSTs to keep them informed and current with training.

*R4: The Kern County Sheriff's Office SSTs should adjust their work schedule to ensure last minute warrants are processed for service.*

We concur with the Sheriff's response that they are re-evaluating duties to include the Records Section which works 24-hours, 7 day a week, to enter "last minute" warrants.

*R5: The Kern County Sheriff's Office should have a backup SST to act as a floater to cover absent SSTs and ensure timely warrant processing.*

We concur with the Sheriff's response that they typically recruit vacant positions to keep an additional SST assigned to each substation, and once positions are filled a "floater" SST to cover other substations.

*R6: The Kern County Sheriff's Office should set up a tracking system or oversight procedure to ensure warrants are served in a timely manner.*

We concur with the Sheriff's response that they are currently developing a tracking program for supervisors to access up to date warrant assignment information to help ensure timely service.