

DATE ISSUED: June 18, 2003

REPORT NO. 03-134

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
Agenda of June 25, 2003

SUBJECT: Volunteer Contributions to the San Diego Police Department

REFERENCE: N/A

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CITY COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND

The San Diego Police Department initiated the Volunteers In Policing (VIP) program in 1989. The initial VIP program was administered by the Public Affairs Unit with no operating budget or permanently assigned personnel. Nevertheless, VIP gained a foothold in the Department, and in February 1992, the Office of Volunteer Services, the first unit wholly dedicated to the development and administration of Department volunteer programs, was established. The Department's volunteer program has since grown exponentially and has served as a model for law enforcement agencies throughout the world.

DISCUSSION

The Department currently has 905 volunteers participating in five programs. The following shows the number of volunteers in each program and the hours they contributed in 2002:

Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol	499	135,674 hours
Volunteers In Policing	225	36,892 hours
Crisis Intervention	90	7,549 hours
Interpreters Program	68	955 hours
Reserves	23	8,861 hours

In 2002, volunteers donated a total of 189,931 hours of service to the Department, directly benefiting the San Diego community. According to the Independent Sector, a national forum that brings together foundations, corporate giving programs, and nonprofit organizations to strengthen the nonprofit sector, the average value of volunteer service is \$16.54 per hour. Based on that figure, the total dollar value of volunteer services provided to the Department and San Diego communities last year was \$3.1 million.

The following provides information about each volunteer program:

Crisis Intervention

Crisis Intervention volunteers receive specialized training in crisis response techniques. At the request of officers and detectives, interventionists respond to scenes to assist citizens who have been traumatized by a crime or other critical incident. Interventionists provide immediate emotional support, referrals for longer-term needs, and resources for housing, food, legal and other practical assistance. This support allows officers to focus on providing law enforcement services. In 2002, Crisis Interventionists donated 7,549 hours of service.

Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP)

The Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol is comprised of volunteers age 50 and older who patrol and observe neighborhood activity, check homes of vacationing residents, visit homebound and isolated persons, conduct safety talks, and fingerprint and conduct DNA swabs of school children for their parents' records. RSVP members have vehicles and police radios to enhance patrol abilities and provide communication with Department personnel in the event police intervention is required. Last year, Western Division RSVP officers Monroe Deane and Jack Palmer were credited with saving the life of a critically ill 89-year-old man during a routine visit. In 2002, RSVPs donated 135,674 hours of service.

Volunteers In Policing (VIP)

VIPs staff every Department unit. Volunteers perform clerical, administrative, technical, and professional tasks. VIPs assist by taking "cold" crime reports, fingerprinting, staffing storefronts, developing operations manuals, and conducting computer research. In 2002, VIPs donated 36,892 hours of service.

Volunteer Police Interpreters Program

To meet the unique challenge of communicating effectively in the dozens of languages spoken in San Diego's communities, the Department created the Volunteer Police Interpreters Program. This Program uses the skills of volunteers who speak at least one language in addition to English. These volunteers are trained under a variety of circumstances and role-play situations, and always work directly with police personnel. Volunteers are on-call to provide their valuable services when the opportunity arises. In 2002, interpreters donated 955 hours of service.

Police Reserve Program

Reserve officers are sworn police officers with the same training, duties, and abilities of full-time police officers, when on duty or performing an authorized assignment. Reserve officers assigned

to patrol divisions work a variety of uniformed and plainclothes assignments, depending on the division's needs. In 2002, reserve officers donated 8,862 hours of service.

In 2000, Reserve Officer Quinton Kawahara saved the life of his partner, Officer Mitch Vitug, by administering immediate first aid after a suspect shot Officer Vitug in a downtown hotel. The same suspect shot Reserve Officer Kawahara. For his actions, Reserve Officer Kawahara was awarded the Department's Medal for Valor, Lifesaving Medal, and Purple Heart.

Persons interested in volunteering for the Department may contact Sgt. Bill Snyder at (619) 533-5729.

Respectfully submitted,

John Welter
Interim Chief of Police

Approved: P. Lamont Ewell
Assistant City Manager