



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: June 8, 2006

REPORT NO. 06-070

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
Agenda of June 14, 2006

SUBJECT: Informational report from the San Diego Police Department
regarding Summer Enforcement Strategies

SUMMARY

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

BACKGROUND

Summer traditionally brings large crowds to the beaches and bays of San Diego. The Police Department's staffing and enforcement strategies are constantly reviewed and adjusted to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with reoccurring problems during this busy season. This report contains the Police Department's summer strategies related to gang enforcement, summer beach enforcement and the Fourth of July celebration.

DISCUSSION

I. GANG ENFORCEMENT

The primary mission of the San Diego Police Department's Gang Unit is to reduce gang violence and crime. Operating year round, this unit contains both investigative and uniformed personnel who focus exclusively on gang issues and their impact on the community.

In anticipation of heightened gang activity during the summer months, the Gang Unit will continue seeking a gang injunction on members of the West Coast Crips in Southeastern Division; proactively conduct probation and parole sweeps as needed to deter gang activity; and will monitor the beaches in Western and Northern Divisions that generally experience increased gang activity during the summer.

II. SUMMER BEACH ENFORCEMENT

Northern and Western Divisions have prepared comprehensive staffing and action plans to address their respective beach areas and will ensure adequate staffing, traffic control and law enforcement for the special needs of the upcoming summer months.

Northern Division (Mission Beach, Pacific Beach, Belmont Park) will deploy fulltime beach teams whose duties and responsibilities include enforcement of misdemeanor offenses including open container, minor in possession of alcohol, illegal lodging, vandalism and lewd acts. Their enforcement posture is pro-active with an emphasis on preventing crime through high visibility.

Northern's Harbor unit will provide seven day coverage in the waterways and parkland areas in and around Mission Bay Park during 1st and 2nd watch hours. They investigate crimes on the water (driving under the influence, speed, theft, vandalism) and enforce felony and misdemeanor violations on land.

Traffic Motor division will work in conjunction with the daytime Beach Team to address all traffic related matters and to assist with misdemeanor enforcement and responding to calls for service. Special Event Traffic Controllers (SETC) has been assigned to provide traffic control from Belmont Park to the South Mission Beach jetty every Sunday throughout the summer from 1:30 pm – 5:30 pm.

Park Rangers will be assigned to the Mission Bay Park area during the daytime hours each day throughout the summer. They are responsible for responding to quality of life concerns (illegal lodging, litter, illegal parking) and assisting the police as witnesses to crime.

Western Division (Ocean Beach) will increase the Walking Patrol Teams on the beach boardwalk to enforce alcohol regulations and Patrol Officers will continue to conduct bar checks to reduce violent crime. Officers will also be assigned to walking patrols on Newport Avenue to increase police presence during evening hours.

A Traffic Grant will be used to fund two days of overtime dedicated exclusively for beach area traffic enforcement. Ongoing training of additional officers to operate the 4x4 and "quad" wheeled vehicles will increase the Police Department's ability to respond to calls for service on the sand.

Both Divisions will continue attendance at community meetings and forums to identify issues requiring police action.

III. 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION

The Fourth of July Holiday traditionally brings overwhelming crowds to the Beach and Bay areas. In previous years, problems such as fights, alcohol and glass violations, illegal camping, illegal fireworks, traffic congestion, fire hazards and intoxicated

celebrants have occurred. This year the 4th of July falls on a Tuesday increasing the event to a four-day affair.

Last year's three day 4th of July weekend attracted crowds in excess of 1, 140,000 people. Although the event was a success and crime was down compared to the 2004 holiday, there were approximately 28 felony arrests, 84 misdemeanor arrests, 1418 misdemeanor citations, and 98 persons transported to Detox for public drunkenness.

Using lessons learned from previous events, the Operational Support Unit in cooperation with the beach commands, Northern and Western Divisions, have prepared a comprehensive action plan for managing the anticipated crowds during the holiday celebration. Our enforcement focus is to curb violence, reduce thefts and remove severely intoxicated individuals.

Respectfully submitted,

William M. Lansdowne
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