



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: January 24, 2007 REPORT NO. 07-024

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
Agenda of January 31, 2007

SUBJECT: Informational Report from the San Diego Police Department
regarding Overview of the 2006 Crime Briefing Report

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 City of San Diego remains one of the safest large cities in the country. With one of the smallest ratios of police officers to citizens, approximately 1.65 for every 1,000 citizens, overall crime decreased 2.3% in 2006 with a crime rate of 39.4 crimes per 1,000 people. Also, San Diegans were nearly 50% less likely to be the victim of a property crime in 2006 than in 1992. This decrease can be mostly attributed to the hard work and dedication of the men and women of the San Diego Police Department who continue to deliver world-class law enforcement and emergency services to the community, despite a steady decrease in staffing.

Violent crime, which has been a significant focus of the Department, fell 3.2% compared to 2005. In fact, violent crimes reported were at their lowest level since 1985. According to 2005 FBI data, San Diego has the lowest homicide rate of the ten largest cities in the country. The Department is committed to combating the recent increase in homicides, which were up by 33% last year, while continuing to investigate, capture and incarcerate other violent criminals.

Gang violence continues to be a major public concern and focus of this Department. In San Diego, there are currently over 4,000 people identified and documented as gang members under the California Attorney General's Guidelines for Street Gangs. This group of individuals is responsible for some of the most serious crimes in San Diego. In 2006, overall gang violence saw an increase of 2.8%, but drive by shootings, which terrorize communities, were down a notable 31% over last year. The San Diego Police Department remains absolutely committed to controlling gang activity and bringing those

who break the law to justice. Concerted efforts by members of the Gang Unit and Patrol Divisions continue to make a measurable impact on gang violence.

Responding to emergency calls for service is one of the most important functions of any police department. In critical incidents, a few minutes can literally be the difference between life and death. Reducing the amount of time it takes to respond to these types of calls remains one of this department's highest priorities and challenges. Response times to Emergency and Priority 1 calls rose 1.4% from 2005 to 2006 while response times to non-emergency calls decreased.

Accountability is a key ingredient to public confidence and trust. The San Diego Police Department is committed to investigating citizen's complaints in order to ensure that the public continues to receive professional, competent and courteous service. Continuing training, in the field supervision and individual efforts has decreased the amount of complaints last year. According to the Internal Affairs Unit, Category I Complaints, which include uses of force, were down by 33.9% and Category II complaints, which include courtesy and procedural issues, were down by 36.1% from the previous year.

The San Diego Police Department looks forward to serving the community in this new year with the same dedication, resilience and commitment to excellence that has made this one of America's Leading Police Departments.

Attached to this report is the complete City of San Diego 2006 Crime Index Report covering the time period from January to December of 2006.

William M. Lansdowne
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