

## 11-002 Policing Public Events and Threats Against Elected Officials

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Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

### FIELD OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE

Field Operations Support Services

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### POLICING PUBLIC EVENTS AND THREATS AGAINST ELECTED OFFICIALS

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Field Operations Directive is to establish uniform policy and procedures related to providing general police services for public events involving elected officials.

#### **BACKGROUND**

On January 8, 2011, in Tucson, Arizona, a gunman opened fire at a public event featuring a member of the United States Congress. The shooting resulted in the death of six people, and several others were wounded, including the member of Congress. In addition, there are increasing reports of persons assaulting speakers and elected officials at public events using firearms, knives, or physical force. The vast majority of such assaults reportedly had been perpetrated by lone assailants and did not involve any previously announced specific threat against the victims.

#### **POLICY**

It is the policy of this Department that unit commanders will assign a highly visible, uniformed deputy presence to public events featuring elected officials upon request of the elected officials or their staff. If deemed necessary by the Unit Commander, this may also be done without such a request. The Emergency Operations Bureau shall be notified whenever a uniformed deputy presence is deployed to public events.

This directive does not modify Department policy related to threats against elected officials or employees of the County of Los Angeles. Policy for handling such threats is found in section 4-23/013.00 of the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedure.

This policy does not address providing police services within private events. Security of private events is generally the responsibility of the person or entity hosting the event.

The Department will continue to appropriately assist Federal and State agencies having dignitary protection responsibilities.

#### **PROCEDURES**

Responsibility for implementing this directive is distributed among the following units:

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- Station and unit commanders are responsible for providing appropriate policing services at public events within their jurisdiction and for notifying the Emergency Operations Bureau, Tactical Planning Unit.
- Sheriff's Headquarters Bureau (SHB) is responsible for the public awareness portion of this directive.
- Emergency Operations Bureau (EOB) is responsible for the intelligence portion of this directive through its participation in the Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) and for ensuring overall compliance with this directive. In addition, EOB is responsible for tracking planned events and notifying the respective Sheriff's Station.
- The Mental Evaluation Team (MET), Homeland Security Division, is responsible to provide assistance as needed in the identification of and proper law enforcement response to persons who may pose a danger to elected and public officials as a result of mental disorder, as well as liaison with the Department of Mental Health related to providing assistance in identifying persons who might pose a potential assault threat at a public event.
- Detective Division, Major Crimes Bureau; Court Services Division, Judicial Services Unit; and the Office of Security Management (L.A. County Chief Executive's Office and Office of the Undersheriff) continue to be responsible to handle and investigate threats against elected and designated county officials, as well as any protective responsibilities, in accordance with existing policy. These units shall advise the unit commander having jurisdiction over the site of a public event involving elected or designated officials of any known threats against the person or the event as well as whether any security plans are already in place.

In addition, these units shall immediately advise the JRIC of any threats against an elected or public official so that JRIC will be able to fulfill its intelligence responsibilities required by this directive.

**NOTE:** The general public safety provisions of this directive are secondary and subordinate to needs or requests of any agency actively investigating a threat against an elected official or responsible for providing dignitary or other protective services to the elected official.

### **Station/Unit Commander Responsibilities**

Members of the Los Angeles County's Federal and State legislative delegations and the offices of California's United States Senators have been advised to contact the involved sheriff's station/unit commander where a public event will feature the member to request a uniformed deputy presence on site for the event. County and local elected officials may initiate similar requests. They have been advised to contact the station/unit commander directly or, in the captain's absence, to contact the watch commander.

The station/unit commander shall determine the number of personnel required and ensure they are present for the event. This directive addresses relatively small and likely peaceful public gatherings that may be adequately serviced by one or two deputies. For larger or likely contentious events, the station/unit commander may need to prepare a Tactical Alert and/or a formal Operations Plan based upon the totality of the situation (refer to Emergency Operations Procedure 2-5, Tactical Alerts).

Prior to the event, the deputy assigned to handle the event shall contact the elected official or his/her staff to determine whether they are aware of any threats against the official or the event and whether any other agency or persons will be providing on-site security or protection. The deputy shall ask whether any armed security or persons with concealed weapons permits will be present. The deputy assigned to handle the event shall also

contact the Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) to obtain any intelligence regarding a threat to the elected official or event and the Los Angeles County Regional Criminal Information Clearinghouse (LACLEAR) to have the event posted for deconfliction. The deputy assigned to handle the event shall also contact the Emergency Operations Bureau, Tactical Planning Unit.

When a member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors or other County Executive requests a uniform presence at a public event, the deputy assigned to handle the event shall also notify the County's Office of Security Management at [REDACTED TEXT].

Assigned personnel are to provide a highly visible, uniformed, public safety presence at the event. They are not to assist in running the event or take any action related to persons exercising their Constitutional or legal rights such as the freedoms of assembly and speech.

Upon arrival, deputies should personally contact the event organizer and any other security personnel at the site to facilitate mutual identification in the event of an emergency and to coordinate their work. During this meeting, the site should be evaluated for emergency ingress and egress for participants and the public and identification of any other safety hazards.

Experience indicates that violence at public events, such as occurred on January 8, 2011, generally occurs near the front of the event where the featured speakers are located. Assigned personnel shall seek to station themselves in a position that affords the opportunity to continually scan the crowd and quickly intervene in such an attack. Standing at the rear of a room or crowd typically does not serve this purpose. The deputy's primary focus should be on persons near the front of the crowd and their behaviors.

The Department does not provide this type of uniformed presence at private events. Public safety deployments may be done outside a private event if the unit commander deems it to be necessary.

Unit commanders shall ensure that, in addition to the notifications required by the Manual of Policy and Procedures, any information related to a threat against an elected or public official is referred to the JRIC by sending a "lead" notification to the JRIC (contact information appears at the end of this directive). In the event of a serious threat, the electronic notification shall be followed up by a telephonic notification.

Additional reporting procedures and JRIC contact information is found in MPP Section 5-09/490.10.

### **Emergency Operations Bureau Responsibilities**

Emergency Operations Bureau shall ensure that the Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) effectively serves as the Department's intelligence resource related to threats and potential threats against elected and public officials. EOB also manages open source intelligence functions in the bureau's Open Source Intelligence Team. These duties specifically include the following:

- Maintain ongoing access or connectivity to threat data compiled by federal agencies, the California Highway Patrol, Office of Security Management, as well as LASD's and other local agency's investigative units.
- Rapid response to requests for information from station/unit commanders.
- Seek expansion of JRIC's threat intelligence capabilities throughout JRIC's area of responsibility.

- Disseminate actionable intelligence related to policing public events involving elected officials to the Department's station/unit commanders.

In addition, EOB is responsible to ensure that the requirements of this directive assigned to other Departmental units are coordinated and accomplished. This will be a component of EOB's annual command inspection, which will be coordinated between EOB's Tactical Planning Unit and EOB's Open Source Intelligence Team.

### **Mental Evaluation Team Responsibilities**

The Mental Evaluation Team (MET) assists patrol deputies with contacts involving the mentally ill, suicide attempts, and gravely disabled persons. They are also able to assist stations and units when available by providing liaison with the Department of Mental Health related to person(s) who may be a threat to others in an event setting. In addition, MET will develop appropriate training materials and post them to the Department's intranet site to assist stations/units in identifying persons who exhibit behaviors that may indicate potential for violence against others.

MET deputies shall notify JRIC whenever they become aware of a threat against an elected or public official by sending a "lead" notification to the JRIC (contact information appears at the end of this directive). In the event of a serious threat, the electronic notification shall be followed up by a telephonic notification. MET is prohibited by Federal law from maintaining medical files of persons with mental illnesses. Upon meeting legal thresholds, information about an individual's mental health may be obtained from the Department of Mental Health or other medical service provider.

### **Sheriff's Information Bureau Responsibilities**

Sheriff's Information Bureau (SIB) is responsible for developing and implementing a public education and information program. This effort will seek cooperation from the public in identifying persons who have made threats against elected and public officials (and others). This public education effort will be based on the national "See Something, Say Something" campaign related to preventing acts of terrorism.

SIB is responsible for developing and releasing public education and information products required by this directive on a periodic basis, at a minimum of twice yearly, in order to periodically remind the public of the importance of, and how to make these notifications.

### **Threats Against Designated Federal or State, County, and Local Elected Officials**

Department personnel who become aware of a threat against an elected official shall take all reasonable safety precautions and immediately notify the investigative unit or agency responsible for investigating such threats. In addition, they shall send a "lead" notification to the JRIC (contact information appears at the end of this directive). In the event of a serious threat, the electronic notification shall be followed up by a telephonic notification.

The listings below provide contact information for units and agencies having the responsibility to investigate threats against various public officials. Department policy for handling threats is found in Section 4-23/013.00 of the Manual of Policy and Procedures, including procedures for handling threats against other officials and government employees.

**AFFECTED DIRECTIVES/PUBLICATIONS**

None

**CITES/REFERENCES**

Emergency Operating Procedures (EOP) 2-5, Tactical Alerts

Manual of Policy and Procedures section 4-23/013.00, Threats

Manual of Policy and Procedures section 5-09/490.10, Notification Process for Potential Homeland Security Activity

Field Operations Directive (FOD) 02-01, Assisting LASD Detective Units or other Law Enforcement Agencies in Tactical and Non-Tactical Operations

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