

# 2009-2010 GRAND JURY REPORT

## Riverside County Sheriff's Department General Orders Policy and Procedures

### Background

The Riverside County Sheriff's Department follows a common police agency quasi-military structure and chain of command. The usage of a number of publications helps to communicate various policies and directives.

A general order is a written order, issued by the Sheriff, describing a policy, procedure, rule or regulation regarding a matter that affects the entire department or a portion thereof. General orders are permanent directives and remain in effect until amended or cancelled by the Sheriff.

Policy and procedures describe how to carry out the orders and operational directives and are subordinate to the department's general orders.

### Findings

1. The general orders fail to specifically mention the use of tasers. There is no direct reference in the general orders paragraph 1011.02, which states: "The Sheriff may authorize the use of alternative types of weapon systems that include, but are not limited to, chemical agents, tear gas guns, grenade launch devices and other special weapon systems, such as fully automatic weapons."
2. The general orders section 700.00 Coroner's Office and section 800.00 Public Administrator's Office has been left blank.
3. Attachment (b) of the general orders, (County of Riverside Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure), states:

"An employee or job applicant who believes he or she has been harassed has a responsibility to immediately make a complaint orally or in writing with any of the following:

  - Immediate Supervisor.
  - Any supervisor or management employee/officer within the department, including the department head.
  - The Human Resources Director for the County of Riverside.

The employee or job applicant also has the right to file a complaint with the State Department of Fair Employment and Housing or the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Any supervisor or management employee, or County Officer who receives a harassment complaint shall immediately notify the County's Human Resources Director."

Six former employees of the Lake Elsinore Sheriff's Station complained on numerous occasions to department personnel, including a supervision office assistant, sergeants, lieutenants, a captain and a chief deputy. The complaints included: allegations of sexual harassment, felonious battery, false imprisonment, perjury, malicious prosecution, hostile work environment, rude and discourteous conduct and age discrimination. When human resources were contacted they found no record of any complaints filed during the period of 2007-2009 from Lake Elsinore Sheriff's Station; however, there were records of complaints from other sheriff stations.

## **Recommendations**

### **Riverside County Board of Supervisors Riverside County Sheriff's Department**

1. Update the general orders paragraph 1011.02 to include the taser.
2. Update the general order section 700.00 Coroner's Office and 800.00, Public Administrator's Office, to include at a minimum a reference to the appropriate operations manual and/or policy and procedures manual.
3. Ensure all supervisors and managers are properly trained and complying with harassment policy and complaint procedure.