

Response to Grand Jury Report Dated June 1, 2015
“San Diego Police Department Property & Evidence Room – Review of Operations”

Findings

01 Use of a temporary private facility is an inefficient use of taxpayer money.

SDPD’s Response: The San Diego Police Department disagrees with the finding. Additional space was needed immediately to comply with the requirements of the Fire Marshal.

02 The SDPD Headquarters facility property room does not appear to be in compliance with building codes.

SDPD’s Response: The San Diego Police Department disagrees with the finding.

03 The offices of the City Attorney and District Attorney usually do not take a proactive role in deciding when to dispose of evidence.

SDPD’s Response: The San Diego Police Department agrees with the finding.

04 The offices of the City Attorney and District Attorney are best qualified to determine if evidence will be needed in the future.

SDPD’s Response: The San Diego Police Department partially agrees with the finding. If a case has been referred to the City Attorney or District Attorney for prosecution, they would be best qualified to determine if evidence will be needed in the future. If an incident has not been referred for prosecution and/or is currently being investigated, the detective assigned to the matter would be best qualified to determine if the evidence is necessary.

05 Establishing procedures and protocol for reviewing files of property for disposal will make the process more effective and potentially save money used to lease additional storage facilities.

SDPD’s Response: The San Diego Police Department agrees with the finding.

06 A management review of security and evidence-handling procedures could insure the integrity of the evidence.

SDPD’s Response: The San Diego Police Department agrees with the finding.

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Recommendations

15-50 Perform a management review to identify deficiencies in the Property and Evidence Room operation and implement corrective action.

SDPD’s Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The Department has relatively new management over the Property and Evidence Room. Numerous improvements have been implemented, including but not limited to: adding an additional 8,000 square foot location for long term storage type of evidence (sex crimes and homicides), installing security cameras and identifying firearms that are eligible for return or destruction. The manager has completed the International Assoc. for Property & Evidence training for certification. The supervisory staff is enrolled in the IAPE training for certification. The use of entry logs has been implemented for the safes and the entry door. A schedule for audits has been created. The Operations Manual and written procedures have been thoroughly revised and implemented. Quality control inspections are being conducted on a quarterly basis. The disposition of evidence has more than doubled compared to two years ago. The manager has been working with representatives from the District Attorney’s Office and the City Attorney’s Office to ensure a timely disposition rate.

15-51 Establish written procedures and protocol for when SDPD will review files for disposal of evidence.

SDPD’s Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The Department has had written procedures and protocol for when detectives are to review files for disposal of evidence. With the automated system, detectives receive monthly computer generated e-mails of the specific barcodes for evidence that are eligible for review. There are direct links within the email to take detectives to the appropriate screen, in the evidence management system, to enter a hold request or authorization for disposal.

15-52 Initiate annual audits of the Property and Evidence Room operations as outlined in the Peace Officers Standards and Training publication: Law Enforcement Evidence & Property Management Guide.

SDPD’s Response: This recommendation has been implemented. An audit/inventory schedule is in place for complete annual audits. Specific areas will be audited each month so at the conclusion of each year, the result will be an inventory of all FileOnQ evidence.

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15-53 **Determine the amount of space needed for permanent Property and Evidence Room storage and work with the San Diego Mayor and City Council to build new facilities or relocate into existing city owned property.**

SDPD’s Response: This recommendation has been partially implemented. The amount of space needed and requirements for an efficient Property and Evidence Room have been identified. We are exploring opportunities to identify an appropriate location for the Property & Evidence Room.

15-54 **Perform a review of the Headquarters Property and Evidence Room facility addition to insure it meets building code standards.**

SDPD’s Response: This recommendation has been implemented. The Facilities Management Division has confirmed that the Headquarters Property Room passed the most recent inspection on 6-11-2014.