

# Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Audit and Accountability Bureau



## Desk Operations Audit

Patrol Operations –

East Patrol Division

Audit No. 2018-13-A

June 10, 2019



Alex Villanueva, Sheriff

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT  
Audit and Accountability Bureau**

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT  
EAST PATROL DIVISION  
Project No. 2018-13-A  
AUDIT REPORT**

**PURPOSE**

The Audit and Accountability Bureau (AAB) conducted the Desk Operations Audit – East Patrol Division under the authority of the Sheriff of Los Angeles County. The audit was performed to determine how the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department), East Patrol Division (EPD) complied with the Desk Operations policies and procedures as outlined in the Manual of Policy and Procedures, Field Operations Directives, and Desk Operations Manual.

The AAB conducted this audit under the guidance of Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards.<sup>1</sup> The AAB determined the evidence obtained was sufficient and appropriate to provide reasonable assurance based on the audit results.

**BACKGROUND**

In September 2018, the Chairman of the Department's Executive Force Review Committee (EFRC) requested an audit regarding the Department's EPD Station Desk Operations. According to the Chairman, cases reviewed by the EFRC contained an element related to the actions taken by Desk Operations personnel. The issues ranged from erroneous call transfers to failing to acquire critical information from 9-1-1 callers. The Chairman expressed concerns that errors at the Department's Desk Operations could result in negative outcomes in the field.

As a pivotal point for station operations, Desk Operations personnel are responsible for facilitating and coordinating operational activities as well as receiving and evaluating the public's requests for service. Personnel help the Department achieve its major responsibilities of providing officer safety, public safety, and the effective delivery of police services. As it is often the first point of contact for members of the public requiring police services, it is critical that accurate and timely information is disseminated in order to effectively provide police and emergency services.

The Department's Desk Operations are governed by the Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP), Field Operations Directives (FOD), and the Desk Operations Manual. The policies outline requirements on training, supervisory responsibilities, and call operator responsibilities. Although the MPP does address areas of courtesy and

---

<sup>1</sup> United States Government Accountability Office, Government Auditing Standards, December 2011.

## **DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**

### **Project No. 2018-13-A**

telephone demeanor, the majority of the policies and procedures related to Desk Operations are found in the FODs and the Desk Operations Manual.

The Department's Desk Operations responsibilities are primarily shared among three positions: Complaint Position personnel, Dispatchers, and Watch Deputy personnel. According to the Desk Operations Manual, personnel assigned to the Complaint Position are responsible for receiving the incoming business line and 9-1-1 calls, evaluating the need for service, responding to inquiries, accepting messages, and serving as an aide to the Dispatcher and Watch Deputy.

The Dispatcher is responsible for evaluating calls for service, monitoring field situations, and judiciously dispatching appropriate Department resources to those incidents.

The Watch Deputy's primary task is to oversee and ensure a concerted team effort among desk, jail, and field personnel to achieve maximum effectiveness in the fulfillment of Desk Operations responsibilities.

Because of the critical nature of the responsibilities of the Desk Operations staff, the Department must ensure that it is adhering to a robust training program in conjunction with effective supervisory oversight. A procedural breakdown at any level of the Desk Operations may result in litigation, injury, or death to a member of the public or the Department.

### **PRIOR AUDITS**

This is the first Desk Operations Audit conducted by the AAB.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Scope**

Auditors selected the EPD for review, which is comprised of the Altadena, Crescenta Valley, Industry, San Dimas, Temple, and Walnut/Diamond Bar Sheriff's stations.

This audit encompassed three objectives:

- Objective No. 1 – Station Desk Operator Responsibilities – To determine if Desk Operations personnel handled calls with the appropriate courtesy, actions, and transferred medical emergency calls as required.

## **DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**

### **Project No. 2018-13-A**

- Objective No. 2 – Training – To determine if Desk Operations personnel had received the required training, and that proper record keeping was maintained.
- Objective No. 3 – Supervisorial Responsibilities – To determine if the Watch Commanders and the Watch Sergeants completed and recorded the required daily and weekly telephone service audits.

The audit included an examination of audio records from the VPI Empower system (VPI) and Incident History Report records from the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system for Objective No.1.<sup>2</sup> An examination of all pertinent training records from the Desk Operations staff's training files, Training Record System (TRS) data, and Learning Management System (LMS) records for Objective No. 2. For Objective No. 3, the audit examined records from the Station Bureau Administration Portal (SBAP).

The applicable MPP, FOD, and Desk Operations Manual sections were used in evaluating the objectives.

#### **Audit Time Period**

The audit period was the month of September 2018.

#### **Audit Population**

Auditors identified varying populations in order to examine the different aspects of the three objectives, which are described in the details and results section of this report.

*This space left intentionally blank.*

---

<sup>2</sup> The VPI is the online audio storage system used to archive the calls placed and received by the station desk operators. The CAD system is a multi-faceted computer system used by the Department to enter information which logs and documents patrol-related incidents including calls for service and deputy-initiated observations. The dispatch function maintains a permanent electronic record of patrol activity.

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**AUDIT DETAILS AND RESULTS**

**Objective No. 1 – Station Desk Operator Responsibilities**

**Objective No. 1(a) – Station Desk Operator Courtesy and Helpfulness**

Criteria

Field Operations Directive No. 04-03 (October 2004), Station Desk and Front Counter Operations, states,

*The public’s perception of our organization is influenced by our demeanor and thoroughness during daily telephone contacts. All personnel shall use the basics of effective telephone communication:*

- *Greet the caller with a pleasant tone*
- *Listen closely*
- *Be helpful*
- *Empathize*
- *Avoid Department/police jargon*
- *End the call by asking the caller, “Is there anything else I can help you with?”*

The Desk Operations Manual (June 2004), Calls for Service section, states,

*Desk Personnel shall enter calls-for-service into the CAD system immediately upon receipt or as soon as possible.*

Procedures

For Objective No. 1, auditors selected the calls taken by Desk Operations personnel on September 2, 2018. A total of 1,980 calls were identified. For Objective No. 1(a), a sample of 411 calls was selected. The VPI system’s current capabilities do not allow personnel to identify whether a call was received via the business line or the emergency 9-1-1 line. The system is also unable to tell users whether a call was dispatched as a Routine, Priority, or Emergency Incident.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Routine Incidents are of a nonpriority nature that do not require a priority response from the field units. Priority Incidents are those that require an immediate response, but not a code three response. Emergency incidents are anything requiring a code three response. According to MPP §5-09/200.15, a code three response consists of operating an authorized vehicle with red light and sounding a siren, as may be reasonably necessary, and operating that vehicle with due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway.

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

Auditors obtained and listened to each call in the selected sample to determine if the station desk operator used the basics of effective telephone communication in addition to entering calls-for-service into the CAD system when required. Both business line and 9-1-1 calls were evaluated in this objective.

Results

Four-hundred-six of the 411 calls (99%) met the criteria. The station desk operator did not enter a call for service in four calls, and exhibited discourteousness in one call.

Auditors found an incident where a call operator, during an on-going emergent situation regarding a missing child, did not pass on information. The call operator received a call from a member of the public with relevant critical information and did not enter the information into the CAD system or voice it over the air. As a result, Department resources were not properly deployed. The call operator was working as a Watch Deputy on an overtime shift and was not permanently assigned to Desk Operations.

**Table No. 1 – Detailed Findings for Objective No. 1(a)**

Sheriff Station	Calls for Service	Met the Criteria
Altadena	54/55	98%
Crescenta Valley	61/61	100%
Industry	79/81	98%
San Dimas	71/72	99%
Temple	83/84	99%
Walnut/Diamond Bar	58/58	100%

**Objective No. 1(b) – 9-1-1 Transfers**

Criteria

Manual of Policy and Procedure §3-07/090.15 (December 2013), the 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone Number System, states,

*Station complaint desk personnel answering 9-1-1 lines shall...*

- *Immediately transfer calls reporting incidents of smoke/fire to Fire Dispatch. Do not interrogate the caller. All calls reporting the same smoke/fire incident shall be transferred, not terminated;*
- *Immediately transfer calls reporting injury traffic accidents to Fire Dispatch, regardless of jurisdiction. Calls reporting injury traffic accidents within Station*

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

*jurisdiction, including contract cities, may be placed in conference with Fire Dispatch to obtain all necessary information;*

- *Remain on the line until transfer is complete...*

Procedures

Of the 411 calls selected in Objective No. 1(a), auditors identified 24 calls requiring the station desk operator to transfer the call to the Fire Department. All 24 calls were examined for Objective No. 1(b). Auditors obtained and listened to the calls in the selected sample to determine if they were appropriately transferred as required.

Results

All 24 calls (100%) were appropriately transferred.

*This space left intentionally blank.*

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**Objective No. 2 – Desk Operations Training**

**Objective No. 2(a) – Assigned Personnel Training**

Criteria

Field Operations Directive No. 04-03, Station Desk and Front Counter Operations (October 2004), states,

*All employees assigned to a desk position shall attend Desk Operations Training given by the Mobile Digital Communication (MDCS) staff as soon as possible.*

Procedures

Auditors identified and examined all 150 training records for the East Patrol Division Desk Operations personnel. The population consisted of 92 sworn and 58 civilian employees. Auditors obtained copies of all the signed in-service reports for the month of September for each of the six EPD stations. Auditors identified each employee assigned to the desk. The population for Objective No. 2(a) consisted of the 90 assigned Desk Operations personnel.

Auditors obtained records from the TRS and the LMS to determine if the employee attended the required training.<sup>4</sup> According to the MDCS staff, Desk Operations staff are required to have attended either of the Complaint Operations course, the CAD Operations for Dispatcher and Watch Deputies course, or the Desk Operations course.

Results

Sixty-three of the 90 (70%) employees examined met the criteria. There was no record of completed MDCS Desk Operations training for 27 of the assigned Desk Operations personnel.

**Table No. 2 – Detailed Findings for Objective No. 2(a)**

<b>Sheriff Station</b>	<b>Employee Attended Training</b>	<b>Met the Standard</b>
Altadena	11/19	58%
Crescenta Valley	7/9	78%
Industry	12/15	80%
San Dimas	10/15	67%
Temple	13/18	72%
Walnut/Diamond Bar	10/14	71%

<sup>4</sup> Training records prior to 2013 are found in the TRS, while records from 2013 forward are maintained in the LMS. Auditors obtained records from both systems in order to obtain a complete training record for each employee.



**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**Objective No. 2(b) – Desk Operations Manual Tests**

Criteria

Field Operations Directive No. 04-03, Station Desk and Front Counter Operations (October 2004), states,

*The Employee will also be required to read the Desk Operations Manual, as well as take and pass the associated test... The completed test will then be placed into the employee's training file.*

Procedures

Auditors identified and examined all 150 training records for the East Patrol Division Desk Operations personnel. The population consisted of 92 sworn and 58 civilian employees. Auditors obtained copies of all the signed in-service reports for the month of September for each of the six EPD stations. Auditors identified each employee who worked on the desk. The population for Objective No. 2(b) consisted of the 90 assigned Desk Operations personnel.

Auditors examined each assigned employees' training file to determine if they completed and passed the associated test, which is signed and approved by a supervisor.

Results

Thirty of the 90 (33%) employees examined met the criteria. Sixty of the assigned Desk Operations personnel did not have a completed exam in their training file.

**Table No. 3 – Detailed Findings for Objective No. 2(b)**

Sheriff Station	Employee Completed Test	Met the Standard
Altadena	8/19	42%
Crescenta Valley	6/9	67%
Industry	0/15	0%
San Dimas	9/15	60%
Temple	4/18	22%
Walnut/Diamond Bar	3/14	21%

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**Objective No. 2(c) – Training Checklists**

Criteria

The Desk Operations Manual §III (June 2004), Desk Training Program, states,

*The Watch Deputy’s supervision responsibilities are to:*

- *Complete a training checklist...*

The Desk Operations Manual, Training Checklist Section, states,

*Once checklist is complete, retain in Employee’s training file.*

Procedures

Auditors identified and examined all 150 training records for the East Patrol Division Desk Operations personnel. The population consisted of 92 sworn and 58 civilian employees. Auditors obtained copies of all the signed in-service reports for the month of September for each of the six EPD stations. Auditors identified each employee who worked on the desk. The population for Objective No. 2(c) consisted of the 90 assigned Desk Operations personnel.

Auditors examined each training file belonging to employees assigned to the Desk Operations to determine if a training checklist was on file, completed, and signed off by a supervisor.

Results

Twenty of the 90 (22%) employees’ training files examined met the criteria. Seventy assigned desk personnel did not have a completed training checklist in their training file.

**Table No. 4 – Detailed Findings for Objective No. 2(c)**

<b>Sheriff Station</b>	<b>Employee Training Checklist Completed</b>	<b>Met the Standard</b>
Altadena	4/19	21%
Crescenta Valley	5/9	56%
Industry	0/15	0%
San Dimas	4/15	27%
Temple	4/18	22%
Walnut/Diamond Bar	3/14	21%

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**Objective No. 2(d) – Temporary Desk Employees**

Criteria

Field Operations Directive No. 04-03 (October 2004), Station Desk and Front Counter Operations, states,

*Any employee scheduled to work a desk position on a temporary or relief basis shall meet with the watch commander prior to the employee’s first shift to be briefed on the expected performance while assigned to the desk. The employee is required to read the Desk Operations Handout and sign a receipt acknowledging that they have received the handout prior to their assignment to the desk. The receipt will then be placed into the employee’s training file.*

Procedures

Auditors identified 150 Desk Operations personnel for the EPD. The population for Objective No. 2(d) consisted of the 60 temporary and relief personnel.<sup>5</sup> Auditors examined each temporary or relief employees’ training file to determine if they signed the acknowledgement receipt. Auditors also looked for completed training, tests, and training checklists as required in Objective Nos. 2(a) through (c). Employees meeting either of those requirements were deemed to have met the criteria of this objective as the stricter standards of Objective Nos. 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c) supersede the requirements of Objective No. 2(d).

Results

Twenty-one of the 60 (35%) employees examined met the criteria. Thirty-nine temporary/relief Desk Operations personnel did not have a signed acknowledgement placed in their training file.

**Table No. 5 – Detailed Findings for Objective No. 2(d)**

<b>Sheriff Station</b>	<b>Acknowledgement or Other Training</b>	<b>Met the Standard</b>
Altadena	2/3	67%
Crescenta Valley	4/10	40%
Industry	3/17	18%
San Dimas	1/4	25%
Temple	6/19	32%
Walnut/Diamond Bar	5/7	71%

<sup>5</sup> Temporary and relief personnel include employees who are assigned to Desk Operations intermittently for reasons such as, but not limited to, filling a vacancy, light duty due to an injury, driving restrictions, etc.

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**Objective No. 3 – Supervisorial Responsibilities**

**Objective No. 3(a) – Daily Telephone Service Audits, Watch Commander**

Criteria

Field Operations Directive No. 04-03 (October 2004), Station Desk and Front Counter Operations, states,

*Audits of the desk and front counter shall be done on a daily basis. The watch commander and the watch sergeant shall each listen to two phone calls per shift.*

Procedures

For Objective No. 3(a), auditors identified a total of 540 shifts completed among the six stations for the month of September 2018. Auditors obtained a sample of 14 daily telephone service audits for each of the six stations for a total of 84 service audits.<sup>6</sup> Each shift requires the completion of two telephone service audits by both the Watch Commander and the Watch Sergeant. The daily telephone service audits are documented within the Watch Commander module of the SBAP by time and call taker. Auditors examined the Watch Commander Logs from the SBAP to determine if the Watch Commander completed the two required daily telephone service audits.

Results

Fifty-three of the 84 shifts (63%) that required Watch Commander daily telephone service audits met the criteria. Thirty-one shifts requiring daily telephone service audits were not completed.

**Table No. 6 – Detailed Findings for Objective No. 3(a)**

<b>Sheriff Station</b>	<b>Watch Commander Completed Two Daily Telephone Audits</b>	<b>Met the Standard</b>
Altadena	0/14	0%
Crescenta Valley	10/14	71%
Industry	13/14	93%
San Dimas	10/14	71%
Temple	14/14	100%
Walnut/Diamond Bar	6/14	43%

<sup>6</sup> Altadena Station's Watch Commander responsibilities are managed by the Crescenta Valley Station.

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**Objective No. 3(b) – Daily Telephone Service Audits, Watch Sergeant**

Criteria

Field Operations Directive No. 04-03 (October 2004), Station Desk and Front Counter Operations, states,

*Audits of the desk and front counter shall be done on a daily basis. The watch commander and the watch sergeant shall each listen to two phone calls per shift.*

Procedures

For Objective No. 3(b), auditors identified 540 shifts during the month of September. Auditors selected a sample of 14 shifts for five stations and a sample of two shifts for one station. Several stations were unable to fill the Watch Sergeant position for each shift during the month; therefore, auditors did not test those shifts. For example, of the 90 shifts in September 2018, Altadena filled the Watch Sergeant position on two occasions. A total of 72 shifts were examined for this objective. Auditors examined the Watch Commander Logs from the SBAP to determine if the Watch Sergeant completed the appropriate number of daily telephone service audits.

Results

Sixty-one of the 72 (85%) required Watch Sergeant daily telephone service audits met the criteria. Eleven required daily telephone service audits were not completed.

**Table No. 7 – Detailed Findings for Objective No. 3(b)**

<b>Sheriff Station</b>	<b>Watch Sergeant Completed Two Daily Telephone Audits</b>	<b>Met the Standard</b>
Altadena	1/2	50%
Crescenta Valley	11/14	79%
Industry	13/14	93%
San Dimas	12/14	86%
Temple	12/14	86%
Walnut/Diamond Bar	12/14	86%

*This space left intentionally blank.*

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**Objective No. 3(c) – Weekly Telephone Service Audits**

Criteria

Field Operations Directive No. 04-03 (October 2004), Station Desk and Front Counter Operations states,

*Additionally the watch commander must contact one caller per week. Both types of audits shall be documented on the attached forms...*

Procedures

For Objective No. 3(c), auditors identified a total of 72 required weekly telephone service audits. Each weekly telephone service audit requires a Watch Commander to contact one caller per week. Auditors examined all 72 required weekly telephone service audits.

Auditors requested copies of the weekly telephone service audits, which are completed on the Telephone Service Audit Form – Part II.

Results

None of the 72 (0%) required weekly telephone service audits were completed. Auditors noted that several Watch Commanders were not aware of this policy requirement.

*This space left intentionally blank.*

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

The audit yielded the following results:

**Table No. 8 - Summary of Audit Results**

<b>Objective No.</b>	<b>Audit Objectives</b>	<b>Met the Criteria</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>STATION DESK OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
1(a)	<b>STATION DESK OPERATOR COURTESY AND HELPFULNESS</b>	
	<i>Determine if the call operators handled the incoming call-for-service in a courteous and helpful manner.</i>	<b>99%</b>
1(b)	<b>9-1-1 TRANSFERS</b>	
	<i>Determine if the call operators appropriately transferred 9-1-1 calls as applicable.</i>	<b>100%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>TRAINING</b>	
2(a)	<b>ASSIGNED PERSONNEL TRAINING</b>	
	<i>Determine if personnel assigned to Desk Operations successfully completed the required training.</i>	<b>70%</b>
2(b)	<b>DESK OPERATIONS MANUAL TESTS</b>	
	<i>Determine if personnel assigned to Desk Operations successfully passed the associated Desk Operations tests.</i>	<b>33%</b>
2(c)	<b>TRAINING CHECKLISTS</b>	
	<i>Determine if the Watch Deputy completed a training checklist for each employee assigned to Desk Operations.</i>	<b>22%</b>
2(d)	<b>TEMPORARY DESK EMPLOYEES</b>	
	<i>Determine if personnel assigned to the desk on a temporary/relief basis signed the Desk Operations Manual acknowledgement form.</i>	<b>35%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>SUPERVISORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	
3(a)	<b>DAILY TELEPHONE SERVICE AUDITS – WATCH COMMANDER</b>	
	<i>Determine if the Watch Commander completed and recorded the required daily telephone service audit.</i>	<b>63%</b>
3(b)	<b>DAILY TELEPHONE SERVICE AUDITS – WATCH SERGEANT</b>	
	<i>Determine if the Watch Sergeant completed and recorded the required daily telephone service audit.</i>	<b>85%</b>
3(c)	<b>WEEKLY TELEPHONE SERVICE AUDITS</b>	
	<i>Determine if the Watch Commander completed and recorded the required weekly telephone service audit.</i>	<b>0%</b>

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

**OTHER RELATED MATTERS**

Other related matters are pertinent issues discovered during the audit, but were not objectives which were measurable against Department policies and procedures.

The areas related to training are specifically important because personnel assigned to Desk Operations are often responsible for being the first point of contact in receiving and evaluating the public's request for service. Furthermore, Desk Operations often present high-risk dynamic situations. Proper training is critical in order to fulfill its major responsibilities of providing officer safety, public safety, and the effective delivery of police services.

*Sworn Personnel Training*

Over 60% of sworn personnel who worked Desk Operations had not received formal Desk Operations training prior to their assignment. Department sworn personnel often work Desk Operations assignments for various reasons other than permanent assignment. The reasons can vary from a temporary placement due to a light duty assignment preventing the Deputy from working in the field to an overtime shift.

*Training Availability*

According to the MDCS training staff, during 2018 the CAD Operations for Dispatcher and Watch Deputies course was offered 10 times and is limited to 12 students Department-wide. The MDCS trained 46 students out of 120 available spaces. During 2018, the CAD Complaint course was offered 9 times and is limited to 21 students Department-wide. The MDCS trained a total of 110 students out of 189 available spaces.

*Watch Deputy Training*

The Department does not have training specifically covering the duties of the Watch Deputy position. The Watch Deputy position requires knowledge and proficiency in several key areas of station operations. Several Training Sergeants expressed concerns over a lack of training opportunities for the current or potential Watch Deputies. They stated that the complexity of the position requires personnel with adequate experience and training. Limited training opportunities may be a contributing factor to a lack of available Watch Deputies.



## **DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**

### **Project No. 2018-13-A**

#### *Training Files*

Auditors noted that the contents and organization of the training files varied among the stations visited during the audit. Variation among the stations included the type of documentation in addition to the quantity of training records retained.

#### *Scenario-Based Training*

Auditors noted that neither the CAD Complaint Course nor the Dispatcher and Watch Deputies course offer a component where Desk Operations staff are required to practice their operator skills in various simulated scenarios. According to personnel from the Civilian Training Unit, a common complaint among the Law Enforcement Technicians who are assigned to Desk Operations is that there is no training on how to answer calls-for-service in a simulated environment. While on-the-job trainings are an effective method for instruction, the Department has, in other areas, used scenario-based trainings to bolster learning.

#### *Training Tests Policy Conflict*

A policy conflict exists related to the written tests administered for assigned Desk Operations personnel. According to the FOD #04-03, the tests are required to be administered within the first 30 days of the assignment; however, according to the Desk Operations Manual, the tests are supposed to be administered after a six month training program has been completed.

#### *Up-to-Date Policies and Procedures*

Auditors noted that several of the Desk Operations policies and procedures have not been updated for several years. The authoritative sources were last updated as follows:

- MPP §3-07/090.15 – December 12, 2013
- FOD No. 04-03 – October 13, 2004
- Desk Operations Manual – June 10, 2004

Because of the evolving nature of the Desk Operations environment which includes technological advances and updated best practices, it is important the associated policies and procedures reflect those developments. For example, Objective No. 2 examined the extent to which training requirements are being met. However, the Departmental policies governing training do not reflect other available courses that should be required or that may help meet the Department's needs.

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

*Telephone Service Audits*

The daily telephone service audit forms do not require the Watch Commander or Watch Sergeant to comment on the call operator's ability to gather and disseminate critical information. Currently, the primary areas of concern of the telephone service audits are the courtesy and helpfulness exhibited by the call operator. Because a significant amount of Desk Operations training is conducted in an on-the-job setting, it is incumbent that the service audits address the areas of how the call operators contribute to officer safety, public safety, and the effective delivery of police services.

*Weekly Watch Commander Phone Audits*

Objective No. 2(c) found that the weekly telephone service audits are not being conducted. Auditors noted that there are other audits performed, such as the Service Audit Program for Patrol, that ascertain the same information as the weekly telephone service audits. These redundancies may lead to confusion as to which audits are required.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the audit objectives, there are areas in need of improvement including, but not limited to, ensuring that personnel assigned to Desk Operations have received appropriate training, that training and acknowledgement records are maintained as required, and that all the required telephone service audits are completed.

Additionally, other areas in need of improvement identified in the Other Related Matters section of this report require specific development in order to align the current processes with best practices.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

When Departmental policies and procedures are not adhered to, it may result in an increased risk to the Department. Department management should disseminate the results of this audit to its personnel. Additionally, as best practice, Department management is encouraged to conduct recurring and ongoing briefing of policies and procedures. The AAB considers the results of this audit to be a helpful management tool and therefore, makes the following recommendations:

1. In order to bolster the effectiveness of both the Watch Commander and Watch Sergeant daily telephone service audits, it is recommended that the audit require a comment on

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

the overall performance of the station desk operator as it pertains to officer safety, public safety, and the effective delivery of police services. (Objective No. 3)

2. Some stations do not fill the position of Watch Sergeant on every shift. Policy should clearly dictate the responsibility of completing the telephone service audits in this common situation. (Objective No.3)
3. The Watch Commander weekly telephone service audits are not being conducted. It is recommended that management consider the usefulness of the weekly telephone service audits. (Objective No. 3)
4. The Desk Operations FOD sections and the Desk Operations Manual have not been updated since 2004. It is recommended these be updated in order to reflect the current processes and best practices. (Other Related Matters)
5. It is recommended that a formalized training component regarding Desk Operations be required of sworn personnel at some point, either before a field assignment or during the Field Training Program. A record of this training should also be maintained in the training file. (Other Related Matters)
6. It is recommended that the Department create a training course specifically for the duties of the Watch Deputy position. The Watch Deputy position serves to supervise Desk Operations and oversee daily station functions to ensure the safety of the public. The responsibilities include interacting with the public and responding to emergencies, problems, and complaints. (Other Related Matters)
7. It is recommended that, as a part of the required Desk Operations training, station desk operators receive scenario-based training exercises. (Other Related Matters)
8. It is recommended that the training program include a more robust examination process in order to further demonstrate competency and readiness for the various challenges often presented during the course of Desk Operations. (Other Related Matters)

**View of Responsible Officials**

On May 31, 2019, the East Patrol Division submitted a formal response to AAB concurring with the audit results.

**DESK OPERATIONS AUDIT – EAST PATROL DIVISION**  
**Project No. 2018-13-A**

This audit was submitted on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of June 2019, by the Audit and Accountability Bureau.

*Original signature on file at AAB*

---

KENNETH DIAZ  
Project Manager  
Law Enforcement Auditor  
Audit and Accountability Bureau  
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

*Original signature on file at AAB*

---

JOSEPH DOMINGUEZ  
Assistant Project Manager  
Sergeant  
Audit and Accountability Bureau  
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

*Original signature on file at AAB*

---

M. ROWENA NELSON  
Head Compliance Officer  
Audit and Accountability Bureau  
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

*Original signature on file at AAB*

---

ERIC I. STRONG  
Acting Captain  
Audit and Accountability Bureau  
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department