



COC Initial Request

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
SHERIFF CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSION**

World Trade Center
350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 288, Los Angeles California 90071

Brian K. Williams
Executive Director

MEMBERS

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Chair

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Vice-Chair

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Commissioner

Casimiro Tolentino
Commissioner

Hernán Vera
Commissioner

August 20, 2019

The Honorable Alex Villanueva, Sheriff
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
211 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Sheriff Villanueva:

The Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC) has recently learned of the ongoing criminal investigation of the Office of Inspector General (OIG), by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD). To say the least, we are troubled by the mere existence of this probe. What is equally troubling to the COC is the fact that the LASD is investigating the very organization that serves as the sentinel for the people, the watchdog of the LASD itself, the OIG. As such, this investigation gives rise to the very real specter of a conflict of interest. While the COC is not privy to the facts that allegedly gave rise to these allegations, we are aware that any real or perceived conflict of interest must be immediately remedied. Merely recusing yourself and handing this matter over to the Undersheriff does not alleviate the very real conflict that exists. It is our belief that the LASD should not play any role in this probe.

The COC and OIG both perform vitally important functions: to promote transparency and accountability within the LASD. To effectively do so, the COC, OIG and LASD must all avoid any appearance of impropriety. We are not fighting against each other. Rather, we are fighting to realize the promise of what the LASD can and should be.

If the investigation into the OIG must continue, we strongly urge the LASD to recuse itself from the investigation and instead allow a third-party investigative agency assume control; the people of the County of Los Angeles, which we all serve, deserve an independent investigation free of the appearance of impropriety or bias.

The COC remains committed to working with the LASD to restore the confidence of the communities we serve concerning the Department.

Thank you in advance for your time. Please do not hesitate to call Brian Williams at ()
or via email message at () should you wish to discuss.

Sincerely,

Brian K. Williams
Executive Director, Civilian Oversight Commission

Patti Giggans, Chair
Civilian Oversight Commission

Department Response



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



September 12, 2019

Mr. Brian K. Williams
Executive Director
Civilian Oversight Commission
World Trade Center
350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 288
Los Angeles, California, 90012

Dear Mr. Williams:

**RESPONSE TO THE CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COMMISSIONS' CONCERNS
INVOLVING THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT'S
INTERNAL DATA BREACH INVESTIGATION**

Thank you for sharing your concerns related to the ongoing criminal investigation involving the Office of Inspector General (OIG). I too was deeply concerned to learn of possible data breach activity within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD). I take seriously the protection of the nearly 19,000 LASD employees, all of whom trust management to ensure their employment records are not mishandled through acts of carelessness or malice.

I share in your concern that this type of investigation harms all of us: The Civilian Oversight Commission (COC), the OIG, and the LASD. Public trust is paramount to LASD's efforts and has certainly been at the forefront of my thoughts since I began my law enforcement career over 40 years ago. Public confidence gained through enhanced communication and transparency of information is vital in building that trust. This concept must also be applied to the LASD employees asked to forge relationships within the communities they serve. Those representing the public's interest must be ever mindful to not violate the employment rights of LASD employees. If actions or practices are taken that erode confidence in the process of fair and proper disclosure of information to the public, then the public and LASD will never form a lasting bond of trust with one another. Our shared goals must be to maintain a positive relationship and mutual trust between all involved parties. To that end, I am committed to developing internal processes that reduce future misunderstandings or "trust" concerns.

211 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

A Tradition of Service
— Since 1850 —

As this investigation reaches a responsible point of "handoff" to an outside entity, I am committed to doing exactly that. I assure you that I have been in contact with the Los Angeles County District Attorney (LACDA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the State's Attorney General (AG). The public should have confidence that these investigative bodies are well briefed on this data breach and will become involved as appropriate.

I'd like to also address your comments about, "working with LASD to restore the confidence of the communities we serve" and your suggestion there is a lack of trust developing between the public and LASD. While I am committed to working tirelessly for the men and women that make up the LASD, I've also committed myself, as well as the entire Department, to the same within the communities served by LASD. Recent outreach efforts by this administration have been widely supported and revealed strong support of and trust in LASD, which will continue to be built upon in the future. While I am aware there is displeasure amongst some in our communities with narrow or political viewpoints, LASD remains focused on engaging with the entire community and working towards the betterment of all, rather than a few with personalized agendas. To that point, Part 1 Crimes (which includes homicides, aggravated assaults, burglary, etc.) have declined overall by 7.33 percent during the first six months of this year compared to last. This represents just a small measure of how LASD's recent commitment to enhanced communication and involvement within the communities are helping to reduce crime.

Leading LASD personnel and serving the public's interests can be balanced and effective if mutual respect and trust are the pillars by which all stakeholders abide. I ask for your help in moving this process forward and continuing to build the public's confidence that LASD is committed and proud to serve all of our communities.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me at (

Sincerely,

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF

TIMOTHY K. MURAKAMI
UNDERSHERIFF

Department Response



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF



September 12, 2019

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Civilian Oversight Commission
World Trade Center
350 South Figueroa Street, Suite 288
Los Angeles, California, 90012

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Sincerely,

ALEX VILLANUEVA, SHERIFF

TIMOTHY K. MURAKAMI
UNDERSHERIFF