

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

AUDIT AND ACCOUNTABILITY BUREAU



Part I of Public Complaints Audit

Assessment of Availability and Acceptance of Complaint Information
Antelope Valley Stations
Project No. 2024-56-A



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD or Department), and the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) entered into the Antelope Valley (AV) Settlement Agreement (Agreement) on April 28, 2015¹, with the goal of ensuring police services are provided to the AV community in a manner that fully complies with the Constitution and the laws of the United States. The Department is expected to implement the mandated stipulations of the Agreement to effectively ensure both public and deputy safety, while fostering a renewed public confidence in the LASD.

The Audit and Accountability Bureau (AAB) was authorized by the Sheriff of Los Angeles County, the DOJ, and the AV Monitoring Team (MT) to conduct audits of the Department's public complaints process. These limited scope audits, referred to by the AAB as "mini" audits, focused on a narrow set of audit objectives and specific audit populations. For Part I of the Public Complaints Audit, the auditors examined the acceptance of public complaints and provided Lancaster Station and Palmdale Station (AV Stations) with timely feedback, allowing for necessary operational improvements.

In addition, the AAB auditors simultaneously conducted additional Public Complaints Audits assessing other key paragraphs (as represented below) of the Agreement. This comprehensive approach ensured the AAB reviewed each required paragraph of the Agreement, leading to a thorough evaluation of operational effectiveness and accountability. The Public Complaints Audits were conducted in the following manner:

Part	Audit
I	Assessment of Availability and Acceptance of Complaint Information ²
II	Initiating and Classifying of Public Complaints ³
III	Investigation and Management Review & Oversight of Public Complaints ⁴

The table below lists the project numbers, published dates, and audit population time periods for two prior audits as well as this audit, which is discussed in further detail below:

Project No.	Published Date	Population Time Period
2024-2-A	April 18, 2024	February 9, 2024, through March 11, 2024
2024-23-A	October 10, 2024	July 1, 2024, through August 15, 2024
2024-56-A	–	October 31, 2024, through January 31, 2025

¹ [Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement, No. CV 15-03174, United States v. Los Angeles County et al. \(D.C. Cal. April 28, 2015\)](#)

² For future audits, Part I will be titled, "Availability and Acceptance of Complaint Information and Initiation and Classification of Complaints."

³ For future audits, Part II will be titled, "Investigation of Public Complaints."

⁴ Per discussion with the MT, for future audits, Part III will be titled, "Adjudication of Public Complaints."

After the completion of the two prior audits, the auditors prepared a thorough Comprehensive Review Report (review), Project No. 2024-41-A. The review outlined patterns, trends and observations identified in two prior audits. The review, published on February 11, 2025, focused on highlighting key areas of concern and provided actionable recommendations to address the issues identified throughout the auditing process.

Following the completion of the review, the AAB conducted this audit for a comparative analysis of the findings from the two prior audits. The main objective of this audit was to assess the effectiveness of the audit process and evaluate the extent to which the AV Stations have improved in meeting the established AV Agreement Compliance Metrics (compliance metrics).

The table below outlines the audit objectives along with their corresponding compliance and compliance metrics :

Summary of Compliance Metrics Findings

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	Lancaster %	Palmdale %	AV Total	Compliance Metrics %
1	AVAILABILITY OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
1(a)	<i>Specified Facilities</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
1(b)	<i>Community Groups</i>	NIN ⁵	NIN	NIN	100%
1(c)	<i>Department Website</i>			100%	100%
1(d)	<i>Station Websites</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2	ACCEPTING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS				
2(a)	<i>Mail-in Form</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2(b)	<i>Email Complaints</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2(c)	<i>Department 800 Number</i>			67%	100%
2(d)	<i>AV Station Phones</i>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Calls Transferred to Supervisor without Unnecessary Delay</i> 	75%	100%	86%	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Supervisor's Willingness to Accept Complaints</i> 	83%	88%	86%	100%

⁵ NIN refers to "No Incidents Noted."

The auditors noted five areas where the AV Stations and the Department met the established compliance metrics during the audit period.

Specifically:

- Specified Facilities
- Department Website
- Station Websites
- Mail-in Forms
- Email Complaints

The AAB will follow up on the implementation of any recommendations resulting from this audit that were not addressed in the review.

The table below outlines the audit objectives and their corresponding compliance metrics findings from the two previous audits, including the results from this audit. The auditors assessed the AV Stations individually for each objective and combined the results to evaluate the overall compliance.

Summary of Cumulative Compliance Metrics Findings

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
1	AVAILABILITY OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
1(a)	<i>Specified Facilities</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
1(b)	<i>Community Groups</i>	NIN	NIN	NIN	100%
1(c)	<i>Department Website</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
1(d)	<i>Station Website</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2	ACCEPTING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS				
2(a)	<i>Mail-in Form</i>	100%	67%	100%	100%
2(b)	<i>Email Complaints</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2(c)	<i>Department 800 Number</i>	100%	86%	67%	100%
2(d)	<i>AV Station Phones</i>				
	• <i>Calls Transferred to Supervisor without Unnecessary Delay</i>	88%	81%	86%	100%
	• <i>Supervisor's Willingness to Accept the Complaint</i>	64%	79%	86%	100%

The AAB will continue to conduct detailed audits to uphold transparency and accountability and provide recommendations for ongoing improvement at the AV Stations.

**Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Audit and Accountability Bureau**

**Part I of Public Complaints Audit:
Assessment of Availability and Acceptance of Complaint Information
Antelope Valley Stations
Project No. 2024-56-A**

AUDIT REPORT

PURPOSE

The Audit and Accountability Bureau (AAB) conducted the Public Complaints Audit under the authority of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD or the Department), pursuant to the United States Department of Justice¹ (DOJ) Antelope Valley (AV) Settlement Agreement (Agreement) Paragraph 140 of the Agreement states:

LASD shall conduct a semiannual, randomized audit of LASD-AV' s complaint intake, classification, and investigations. This audit will assess whether complaints are accepted and classified consistent with policy, investigations are complete, and complaint dispositions are consistent with a preponderance of the evidence.

Additionally, Paragraph 149 of the Agreement states:

The Monitor shall... determine whether LASD has implemented and continues to comply with the material requirements of this Agreement... Where appropriate, the monitor will make use of audits conducted by the [Audit and Accountability Bureau] taking into account the importance of internal auditing capacity and independent assessment of this agreement.

BACKGROUND

The County of Los Angeles, the Department, and the DOJ entered into the Agreement on April 28, 2015, with the goal of ensuring police services are provided to the AV community in a manner which fully complies with the Constitution and the laws of the United States. The Department is expected to implement the mandated stipulations of the Agreement to effectively ensure both public and deputy safety, while fostering a renewed public confidence in the LASD.

¹ [United States of America v. The County of Los Angeles and The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Case Number CV 15-03174, April 28, 2015.](#)

PART I OF PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AUDIT:
ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY AND ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION
ANTELOPE VALLEY STATIONS
PROJECT NO. 2024-56-A

The AAB was authorized by the Sheriff of Los Angeles County, the DOJ, and the AV Valley Monitoring Team (MT) to conduct audits of the Department’s public complaints process. These limited scope audits, referred to by the AAB as “mini” audits, focused on a narrow set of audit objectives and specific audit populations. The mini audits were intended to provide Lancaster Station and Palmdale Station (AV Stations) timely feedback, facilitate opportunities for operational improvements, and demonstrate an increasing commitment toward meeting the established AV Agreement Compliance Metrics (compliance metrics).

For Part I of the Public Complaints Audit, the auditors conducted two audits (2024-2-A and 2024-23-A) to examine the acceptance of public complaints at Lancaster Station and Palmdale Station (AV Stations).

Additionally, the auditors prepared a Comprehensive Review Report (review), Project No. 2024-41-A, outlining patterns, trends, and observations resulting from two prior audits for Part I – Assessment of Availability and Acceptance of Complaint Information. The review was conducted and published on February 11, 2025, with corresponding results which were relevant to this audit. The review highlighted key areas of concern and provided actionable recommendations to address the issues identified throughout the auditing process.

The AAB conducted this audit (Project No. 2024-56-A) as part of its ongoing oversight of AV Stations, incorporating analysis and comparison of the findings from the two prior audits. The main objective of this audit was to assess the effectiveness of the audit process and evaluate the extent to which the AV Stations have improved in meeting the established compliance metrics.

The table below is a list of the project numbers, published dates, and audit population time periods of the two prior audits conducted as well as this audit:

Project No.	Published Date	Population Time Period
2024-2-A	April 18, 2024	February 9, 2024, through March 11, 2024
2024-23-A	October 10, 2024	July 1, 2024, through August 15, 2024
2024-56-A	–	October 31, 2024, through January 31, 2025

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Audit Scope and Criteria

The scope of this audit evaluated the aspects of the availability and acceptance of public complaints. Additionally, if any patterns of professional misconduct, or discourtesy were observed, the auditors identified and reported these issues to management.

An audit work plan was submitted to the MT and the DOJ for input prior to the start of the audit.

Audit Population and Sampling

The selected audit period for this audit was from October 31, 2024, through January 31, 2025. The population consisted of displayed complaint informational posters, brochures, and complaint forms at the nine required LASD and non-LASD locations.

In addition, mock public complaints in both English and Spanish were submitted by the auditors to evaluate the adequacy of the complaint acceptance process. The auditors:

- Electronically filed a total of four complaints via the Department's website, LASD.org.
- Sent a total of six mail-in complaints to the AV Stations and the Professional Standards Division (PSD).²
- Made a total of 16³ telephone complaints to the AV Stations and six to the Sheriff's Information Bureau (SIB).⁴

Audit Procedures

The auditors reviewed the compliance metrics related to public complaints, and examined the public complaint processes, materials, and documents which included logs, correspondence, and audio recordings. In addition, the auditors submitted mock complaints to best evaluate the process for the acceptance of public complaints.

² Per the Agreement, mail-in complaints can be submitted to PSD. If PSD Operations determines it is a complaint, the complaint will be submitted to the PSD's Internal Affairs Bureau for initiation and distribution to the AV Stations.

³ The population for this audit consisted of 16 telephone calls (samples) to the AV Stations. During testing, five of these calls were disconnected when desk personnel attempted to transfer them to the watch commander. To ensure completeness and accuracy, auditors redialed the same five (samples) calls. No additional calls were made, and the original population of 16 samples was maintained.

⁴ SIB is responsible for accepting telephone complaints on the Department's 800 Number.

The auditors conducted detailed test work using audit tools designed to assess the different audit objectives. The information was analyzed by the auditors and their findings were methodically recorded on audit work papers⁵ and subjected to additional levels of review.

Summary of Findings

The AV Stations were evaluated separately for each sub-objective. The results were combined to determine whether they met the established compliance metrics.

For sub-objective 1(a) – Specified Facilities, the auditors individually assessed compliance at both the AV Stations and the non-LASD locations according to the established criteria. However, the overall compliance percentage for the AV Stations also included the compliance results from the non-LASD locations for this objective.

Similarly, for sub-objective 2(a) – Mail-in Form, the auditors individually evaluated the compliance of the AV Stations, and the PSD based on the criteria. However, the overall compliance percentage for the AV Stations also incorporated the PSD's compliance for this objective.

⁵ Audit work papers are formally known as audit working papers and are created, gathered and compiled by the auditor throughout the audit process. These documents provide the supporting documentation for the audit findings and conclusions.

The table below outlines the audit objectives and their corresponding compliance metrics findings:

Summary of Compliance Metrics Findings

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	Lancaster %	Palmdale %	AV Total	Compliance Metrics %
1	AVAILABILITY OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
1(a)	<i>Specified Facilities</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
1(b)	<i>Community Groups</i>	NIN ⁶	NIN	NIN	100%
1(c)	<i>Department Website</i>			100%	100%
1(d)	<i>Station Websites</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2	ACCEPTING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS				
2(a)	<i>Mail-in Form</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2(b)	<i>Email Complaints</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2(c)	<i>Department 800 Number</i>			67%	100%
2(d)	<i>AV Station Phones</i>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Calls Transferred to Supervisor without Unnecessary Delay</i> 	75%	100%	86%	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Supervisor's Willingness to Accept Complaints</i> 	83%	88%	86%	100%

⁶ NIN refers to "No Incidents Noted."

The table below outlines the audit objectives and their corresponding compliance metrics findings from the two previous audits conducted as well as this audit. The auditors assessed the AV Stations individually for each objective and combined the results to evaluate the overall population.

Summary of Cumulative Compliance Metrics Findings

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
1	AVAILABILITY OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
1(a)	<i>Specified Facilities</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
1(b)	<i>Community Groups</i>	NIN	NIN	NIN	100%
1(c)	<i>Department Website</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
1(d)	<i>Station Website</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2	ACCEPTING PUBLIC COMPLAINTS				
2(a)	<i>Mail-in Form</i>	100%	67%	100%	100%
2(b)	<i>Email Complaints</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%
2(c)	<i>Department 800 Number</i>	100%	86%	67%	100%
2(d)	<i>AV Station Phones</i>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Calls Transferred to Supervisor without Unnecessary Delay</i> 	88%	81%	86%	100%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Supervisor's Willingness to Accept the Complaint</i> 	64%	79%	86%	100%

Detailed Findings

This report will provide detailed information on the findings noted during the audit for all sub-objectives.

Objective No. 1 – Availability of Complaint Information

This objective evaluated whether public complaint information was displayed and accessible to the public, as specified in the compliance metrics.

Objective No. 1(a) – Specified Facilities

Criteria

Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics, Personnel Complaints, Public Access to Complaint Information, Paragraph 124 and 125 (partial) (October 2019), Section 3A, 3B, and 3C states:

3. *LASD will be deemed in substantial outcomes compliance when it:*
 - A. *Displays approved informational materials, including LASD’s “Procedures for Public Complaints” brochures (includes a complaint form) in English and Spanish and posters, which inform the public about LASD’s process for filing public complaints.*
 - B. *Ensures that the below locations have informational materials “Procedures for Public Complaints” brochures readily available for the public when the location is operable.*
 1. *Lancaster Station Lobby*
 2. *Lake Los Angeles Library*
 3. *Lancaster Library*
 4. *Quartz Hill Library*
 5. *Michael Antonovich Antelope Valley Court House (at the Sheriff’s public counter)*
 6. *Antelope Valley Juvenile Court (at the Sheriff’s public counter)*
 7. *Palmdale Station Lobby*
 8. *Little Rock (County) Library*
 9. *Acton/Agua Dulce (County) Library*

- C. Upon inspection, no more than one of the operable locations listed above fails to have any of the requisite complaint materials available. The unavailability of complaint material at a non-LASD facility will not be considered a failure if LASD has documented they have made reasonable efforts within 30 days preceding the inspection(s) to ensure complaint material was readily available at the location.*

Procedures

The auditors visited the specified locations to verify whether the required informational materials, including LASD's "Procedures for Public Complaints" brochures, complaint forms, and informational posters, were displayed in both English and Spanish. The auditors took photographs of the complaint-related materials at each site to determine whether the information was clear and accessible to the public. If the required materials were not displayed at locations outside the Department's control, such as libraries and courts, the auditors confirmed whether LASD had documented a reasonable effort to display the materials within the past 30 days through the Watch Commander's Log in the Station/Bureau Administration Portal⁷ (SBAP).

The Lancaster locations are:

- Lancaster Station Lobby
- Lake Los Angeles Library
- Lancaster Library
- Quartz Hill Library
- Michael Antonovich Antelope Valley Court House
- Antelope Valley Juvenile Court

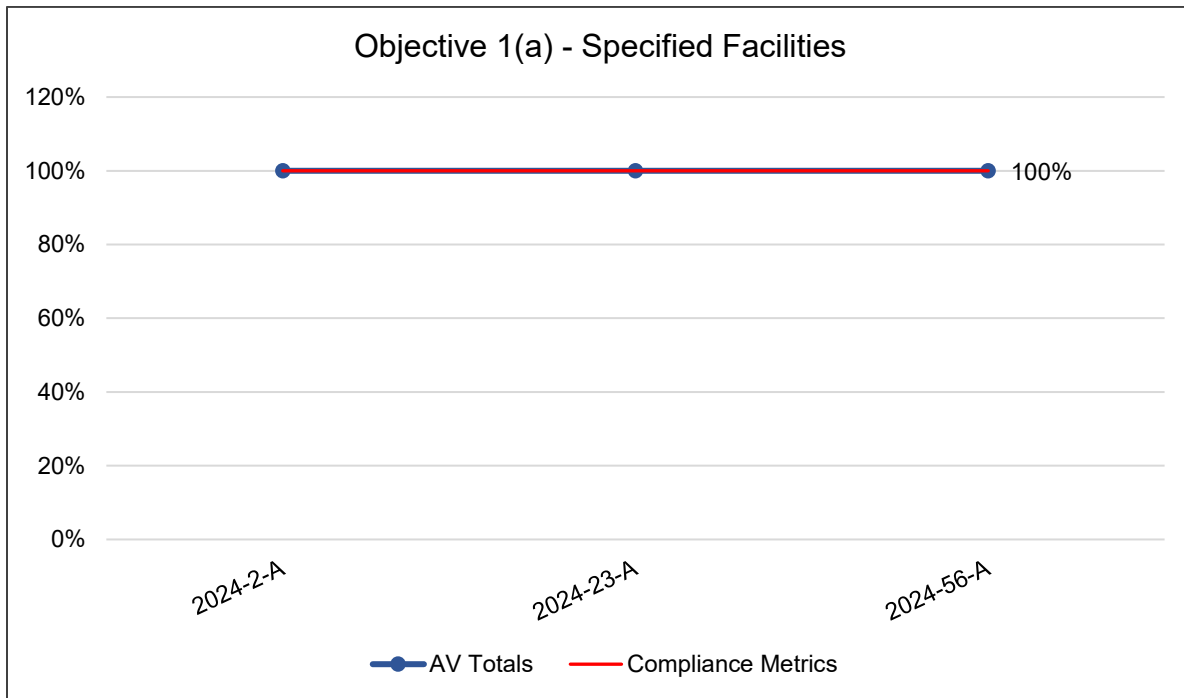
The Palmdale locations are:

- Palmdale Station Lobby
- Littlerock Library
- Acton/Agua Dulce Library

⁷ The Station/Bureau Administration Portal (SBAP) is a data entry system designed to collect and track data related to risk management incidents, which are primarily used at a station level. The system includes data on Uses of Force, Traffic Collisions, Public Comments, Pursuits, Administrative Investigations, Shots Fired, Employee Injuries, and Lawsuits & Civil Claims.

The line graph below demonstrates the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics for Objective 1(a) in all three audits.

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
1	ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY				
1(a)	<i>Specified Facilities</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%



Findings

For the AV Stations combined, all nine locations (100%) met the criteria for this objective, as each location had the required informational materials, including LASD’s “Procedure for Public Complaints” brochures, complaint forms, and informational posters, displayed in both English and Spanish.

For Lancaster, all six locations (100%) had the necessary informational materials including LASD’s “Procedure for Public Complaints” brochures, complaint forms, and informational posters, displayed in both English and Spanish.

Similarly, for Palmdale, all three locations (100%) had the required informational materials, including LASD’s “Procedure for Public Complaints” brochures, complaint forms, and informational posters, displayed in both English and Spanish.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations because the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics.

Objective No. 1(b) – Community Groups

Criteria

Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics, Personnel Complaints, Public Access to Complaint Information, Paragraph 124 and 125 (partial) (October 2019), Section 3E states:

E. Informational materials are made available to community groups on request.

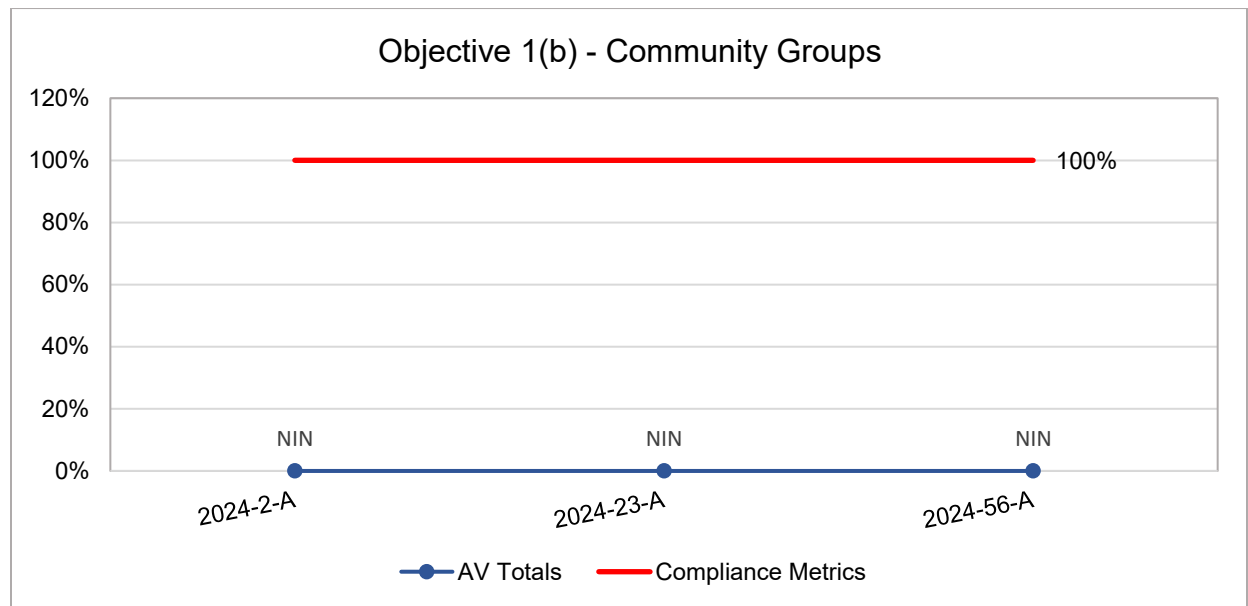
Procedures

The auditors reviewed the AV Stations' Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting agenda and minutes for the audit period. In addition, the auditors reviewed social media posts from the CAC's webpage and contacted the AV Stations' liaison to determine whether community groups requested informational materials and whether those requests were fulfilled.

Furthermore, the auditors inquired with members of each AV Stations' CAC to determine whether complaint materials were made available to the CAC or community groups upon request.

The line graph below demonstrates there were no incidents noted pertaining to the criteria for Objective 1(b).

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
1	ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY				
1(b)	<i>Community Groups</i>	NIN	NIN	NIN	100%



Findings

The AV Stations did not request complaint materials and did not receive any complaints about unavailability from any community group or member. Therefore, the compliance rate is “NIN”, as no incidents pertained to the criteria.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations because the compliance rate is “NIN”, as no incidents pertained to the criteria.

Objective No. 1(c) – Department Website

Criteria

Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics, Personnel Complaints, Public Access to Complaint Information, Paragraph 124 and 125 (partial) (October 2019), Section 3D states:

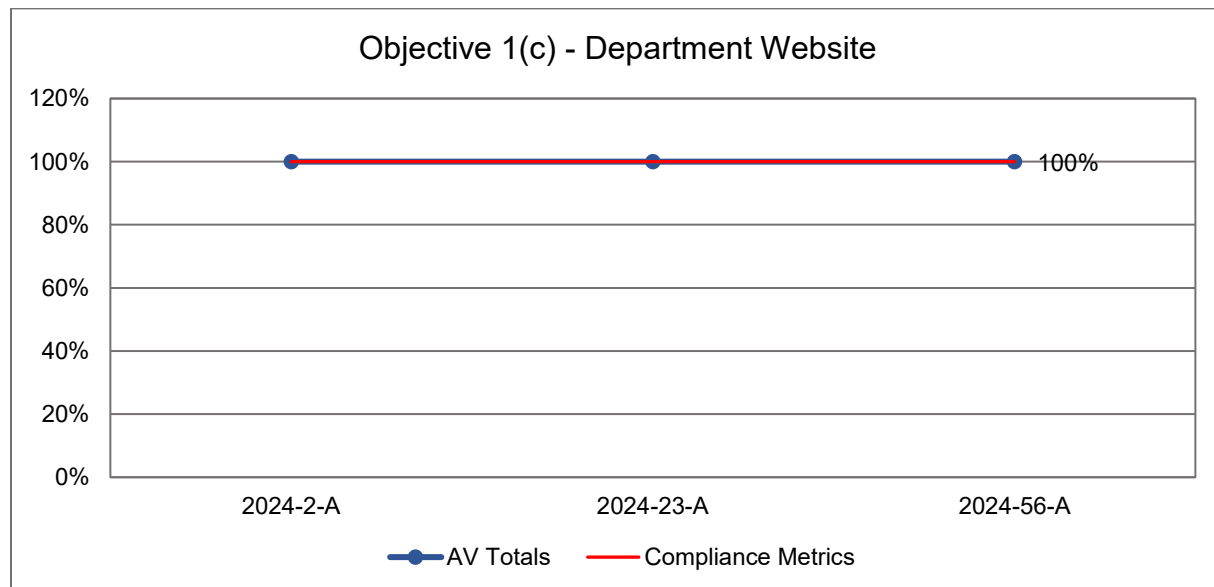
D. At all times, complaint material is available on LASD-AV station websites.

Procedures

The auditors reviewed the Department’s website, LASD.org, to access the “File a Complaint” tab under the “Contact Us” drop-down menu. The auditors verified whether the public complaint information was accessible in both English and Spanish. To view the information in Spanish, the auditors used the drop-down language menu or clicked the Spanish link provided on the webpage.

The line graph below demonstrates the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics for Objective 1(c).

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
1	ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY				
1(c)	<i>Department Website</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%



Findings

The Department (100%) met the criteria for this objective because complaint information was available in both English and Spanish on the Department's website.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations because the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics.

Objective No. 1(d) – Station Websites

Criteria

Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics, Personnel Complaints, Public Access to Complaint Information, Paragraph 124 and 125 (partial) (October 2019), Section 3D states:

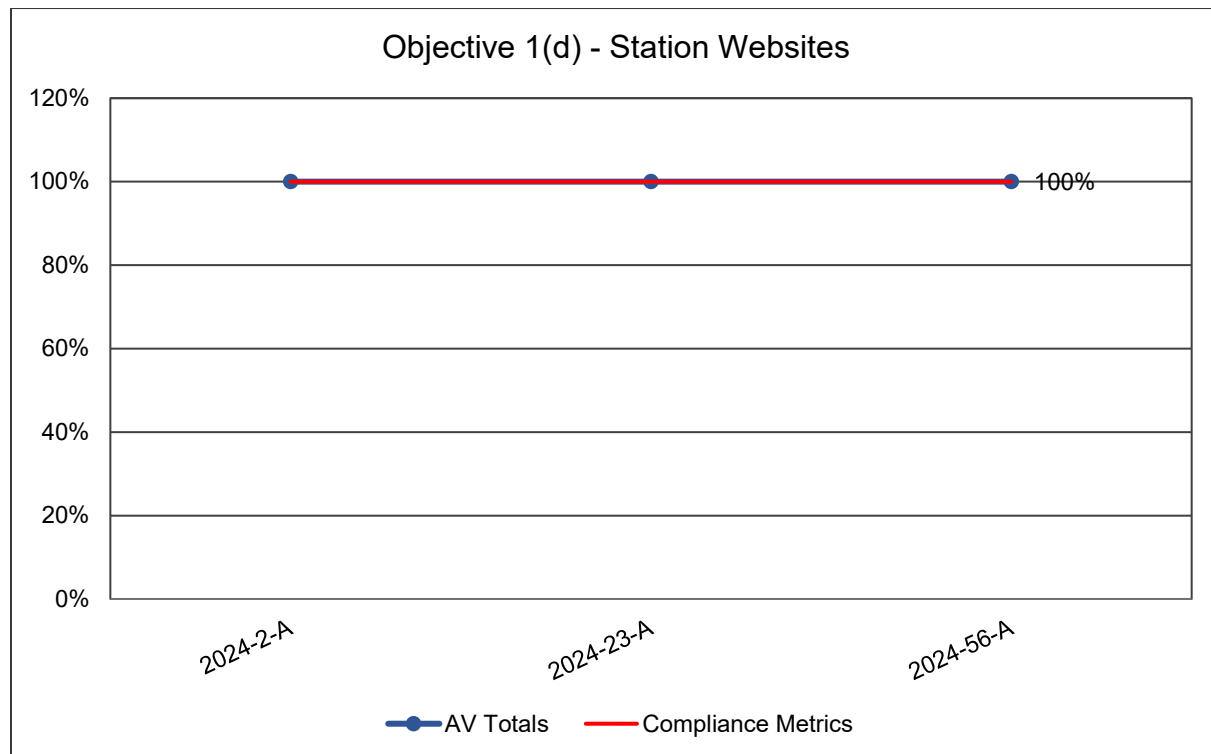
D. At all times, complaint material is available on LASD-AV station websites.

Procedures

The auditors reviewed the Department's website, LASD.org and navigated to the "Your LASD" tab to find the drop-down menu for Lancaster Station and Palmdale Station. The auditors accessed the "Contact Us" tab and clicked on the "File a Complaint" tab to verify whether this information was available in both English and Spanish. To view the information in Spanish, the auditors used the drop-down language menu or clicked on the Spanish link provided on the webpage.

The line graph below demonstrates the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics for Objective 1(d).

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
1	ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABILITY				
1(c)	<i>Station Websites</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%



Findings

For the AV Stations combined, all (100%) met the criteria for this objective, as public complaint information was available in both English and Spanish on the AV Stations' websites (LASD.org/Lancaster and LASD.org/Palmdale).

For Lancaster Station, 100% met the criteria for this objective because public complaint information was available in both English and Spanish.

For Palmdale Station, 100% met the criteria for this objective because public complaint information was available in both English and Spanish.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations because the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics.

Objective No. 2 – Accepting Public Complaints

This objective evaluated the acceptance of public complaints as specified in the compliance metrics.

Objective No. 2(a) – Mail-in Form

Criteria

There are no applicable compliance metrics for this sub-objective. However, Paragraph 125 of the Agreement states, *“LASD will continue to accept all personnel complaints, including anonymous and third-party complaints, for review and investigation. Complaints may be made in writing or verbally, in person or by mail, telephone (or TDD), facsimile, or electronic mail, as well as in the field.”* In addition, Paragraph 126 of the Agreement states, *“The refusal to accept a personnel complaint, discouraging the filing of a complaint, or providing false or misleading information about filing a complaint, shall be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.”*

According to the proposed draft of the Service Comment Report Handbook⁸ (August 2022), within five business days of receiving a complaint, the unit’s Operations staff shall mail an acknowledgment letter to the reporting party. This letter acknowledges the complaint was received by the unit. The letter shall be sent regardless of whether the complaint was made in person, by telephone, electronically, or by mail.

The Department’s mail-in form can be completed and mailed to any Sheriff’s station or to:

LASD Professional Standards Division
211 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

⁸ Proposed draft SCR Handbook, revised 08/01/2022.

Procedures

To effectively assess the process in which mail-in complaints are accepted, the auditors submitted a total of six mock⁹ complaints in both English and Spanish to the AV Stations and the PSD to verify whether the mail-in complaint forms were received and whether the Department initiated contact with the complainant within five business days of receipt. Each AV Station and the PSD received one mail-in complaint form in Spanish and one in English, for a total of six mail-in complaint forms. These forms included the complainant's contact information, the location or general area of the incident, a vague description of the involved employee, and a summary of the complaint.

In the prior Public Complaints Audits (2024-2-A and 2024-23-A), the auditors sent the mail-in complaint forms through the United States Postal Services (USPS) certified mail and were tracked using the tracking number on the receipt. The mail-in complaint forms, for this audit, were sent via USPS first class mail. The auditors obtained the mailing addresses for the AV Stations and PSD from the Department's website; LASD.org. The auditors sent the mail-in complaint forms through USPS, retaining copies of the complaints.

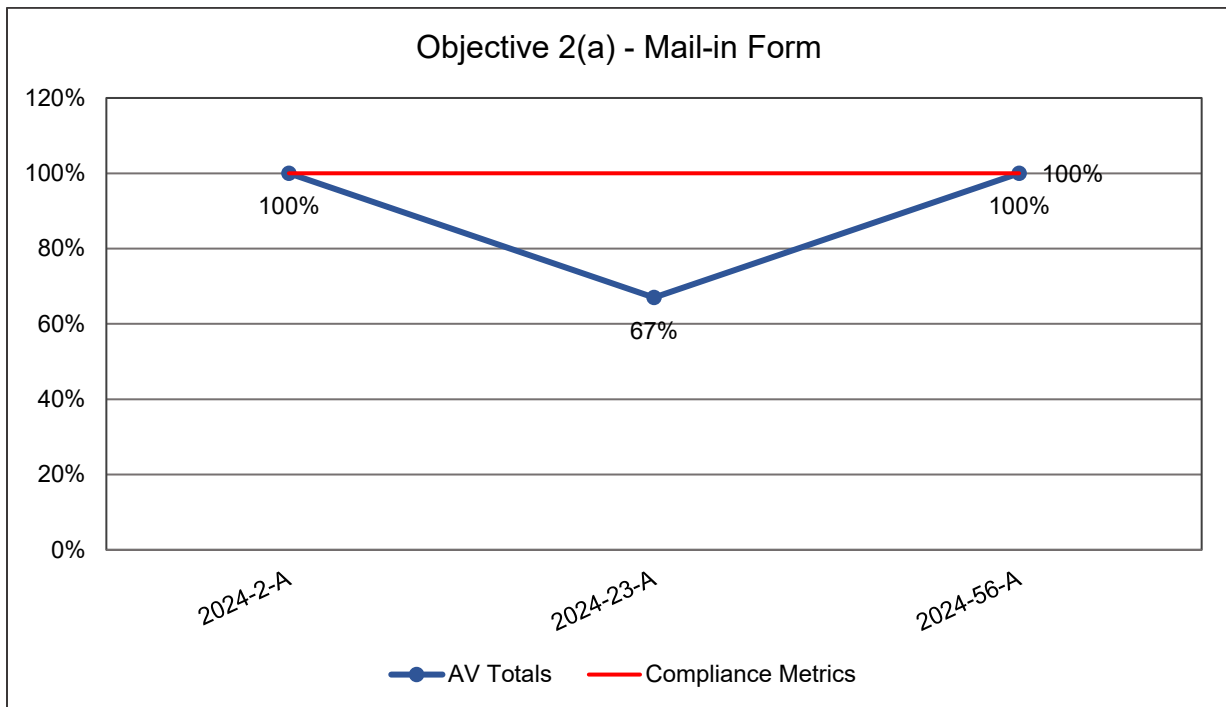
If no response was received, the auditors reviewed the Performance Recording and Monitoring System¹⁰ (PRMS) to check whether a Watch Commander Service Comment Report (WCSCR) had been initiated for the mail-in complaints and reviewed the Watch Commander's Log for any entries regarding the status of the complaint.

⁹ A mock complaint refers to simulated or test complaints submitted by the auditors during the audit to assess the complaint intake, handling, and resolution process.

¹⁰ The PRMS is a web-based application that systematically records data relevant to incidents involving Uses of Force, Shootings, and Commendations/Complaints regarding Sheriff's Department personnel. In addition, PRMS tracks the progress of Administrative Investigations, Civil Claims & Lawsuits, Discovery Motions, Employee Commendations, Preventable Traffic Collisions, Custody Complaints, and Special Conditions that the Department handles.

The line graph below demonstrates a decline in compliance from the first to the second audit for Objective No. 2(a). However, compliance improved in the third audit, meeting the established compliance metrics.

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
2	ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
2(a)	<i>Mail-in Form</i>	100%	67%	100%	100%



Findings

For the AV Stations and PSD combined, all (100%) of the six mail-in complaints met the criteria for this objective because the mail-in form was received, and contact was initiated within five business days of receipt.

For Lancaster Station, two (100%) met the criteria for this objective because the mail-in complaint forms were received, and contact was initiated within five business days of receipt in the complainant's preferred language.

For Palmdale Station, two (100%) met the criteria for this objective because the mail-in complaint forms were received, and contact was initiated within five business days of receipt in the complainant's preferred language.

For the Professional Standards Division, two (100%) met the criteria for this objective because the mail-in complaint forms were received, and contact was initiated within five business days of receipt in the complainant's preferred language.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations because the AV Stations and the Professional Standards Division met the established compliance metrics.

Objective No. 2(b) – Email Complaints

Criteria

Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics, Personnel Complaint Intake, Paragraphs 125 and 126 (October 2019), Section 3A states:

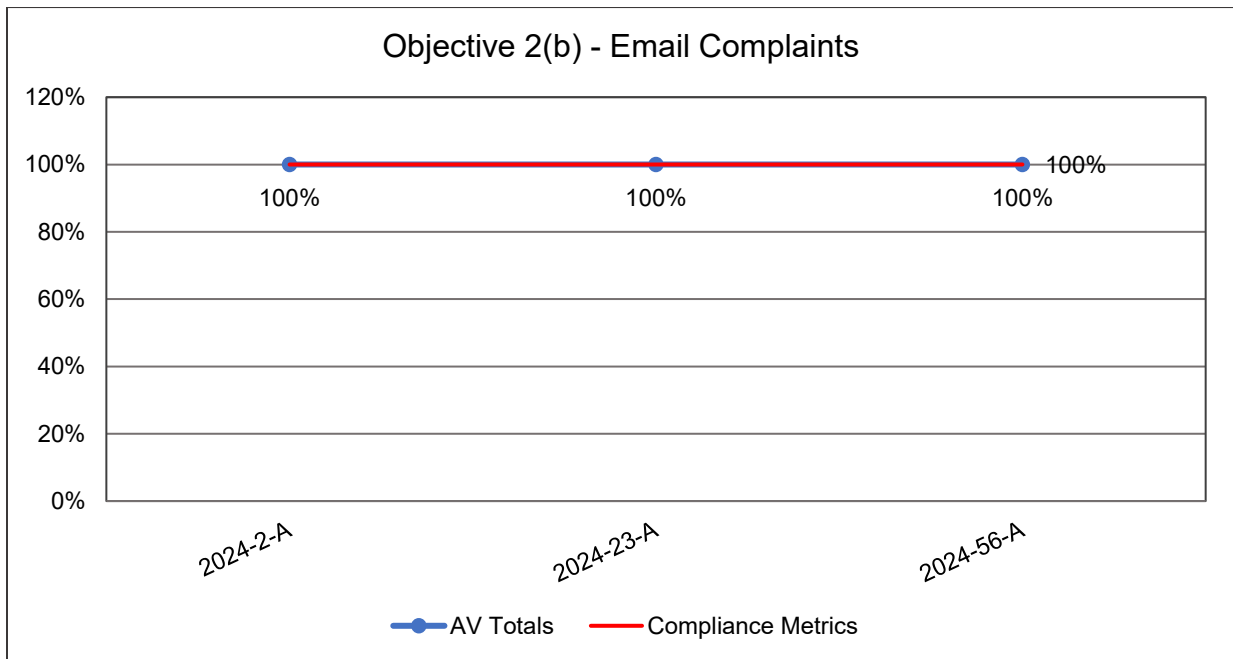
- A. ***At all times, LASD's telephone and internet systems allow for acceptance of personnel complaints via telephone, fax, and email.***

Procedures

To effectively evaluate the process by which email complaints are accepted, the auditors electronically filed a total of four complaints in both English and Spanish to the AV Stations via the Department's email web portal on LASD.org to assess whether the complaints were accepted and whether the AV Stations initiated contact with the complainant. The complaints included the complainants' contact information, the location or general area of the incident, a description of the involved employee, and a brief summary of the complaint. The auditors documented the date the complaint was submitted, as well as when the AV Stations received and responded to the email.

The line graph below demonstrates the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics for Objective 2(b).

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
2	ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
2(b)	<i>Email Complaints</i>	100%	100%	100%	100%



Findings

For the AV Stations combined, all (100%) emails met the criteria for this objective, as the complaint was accepted, and the Department initiated contact with the complainant in their preferred language.

For Lancaster Station, two (100%) emails met the criteria for this objective, as the complaints were accepted, and contact was initiated with the complainant in their preferred language.

For Palmdale Station, two (100%) emails met the criteria for this objective, as the complaints were accepted, and the Department initiated contact with the complainant in their preferred language.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations because the AV Stations met the established compliance metrics.

Objective No. 2(c) – Department 800 Number

Criteria

Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics, Personnel Complaint Intake, Paragraphs 125 and 126 (October 2019), Section 3A states:

- A. ***At all times, LASD’s telephone and internet systems allow for acceptance of personnel complaints via telephone, fax, and email.***

Procedures

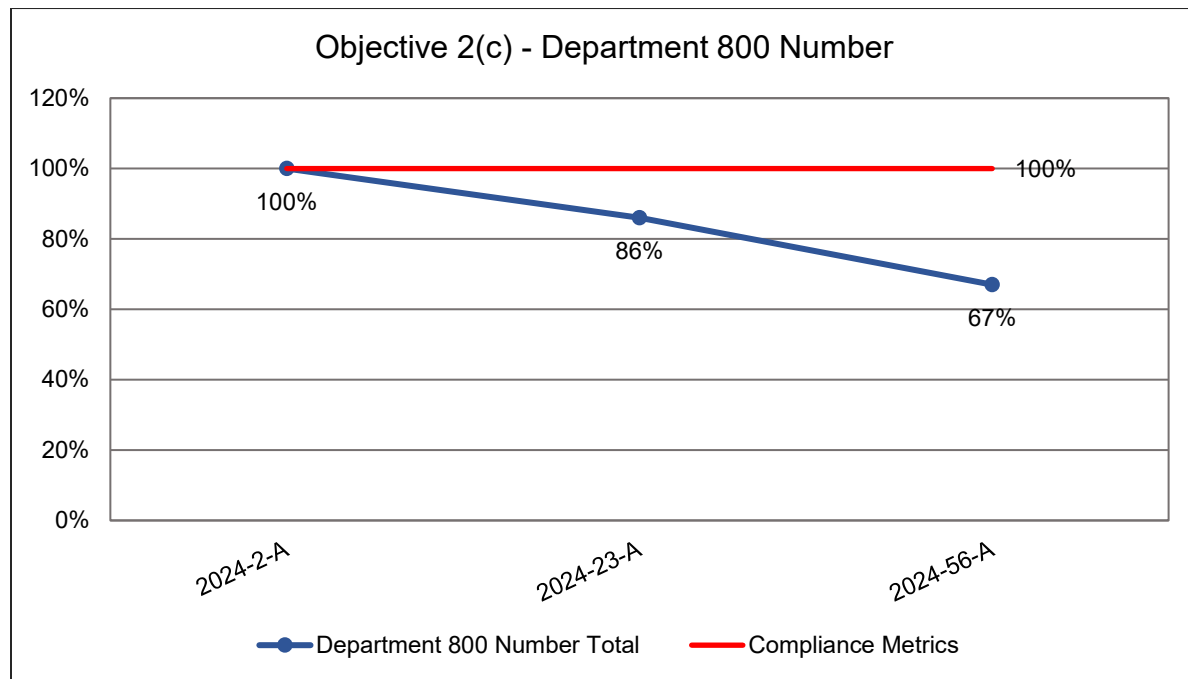
To effectively evaluate the process of handling complaints through the Department’s 800 telephone number (800-698-TALK), the auditors made a total of six calls in both English and Spanish. During these telephone calls, the auditors did not identify themselves or provide any information that could affect the validity of the test. The telephone calls were randomly made over several days, including weekdays and weekends, and during all three shifts (AM, PM, and EM). For the Spanish-language telephone calls, the auditors also noted whether translation services were offered if the call-taker did not speak the same language as the caller, to help facilitate the complaint intake process.

The auditors reviewed the telephone recordings on the Department’s NICE Inform¹¹ database to verify whether the complaints were accepted. If a complaint was not accepted or there were delays, the auditors checked the NICE Inform database for other telephone calls, such as 9-1-1 telephone calls, that might have impacted the AV Stations’ ability to respond to the auditor’s complaint telephone calls.

¹¹ The NICE Inform is an online audio storage system used to archive incoming and outgoing telephone calls (with additional capabilities).

The line graph below demonstrates a decline in compliance from the first to the third audit for Objective 2(c).

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
2	ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
2(c)	<i>Department 800 Number</i>	100%	86%	67%	100%



Findings

Of the six complaints made to the Department’s 800 Number, four (67%) met the criteria for this objective, as the call-taker accepted the complaint. The remaining two telephone calls (33%) did not meet the criteria for this objective because the call-taker did not facilitate the acceptance of the complaint.

Specifically:

SIB-2: The auditors made a telephone call in Spanish to the Department’s 800 Number during the AM Shift (0600-1400 hours), requesting to speak with someone who could accept a complaint. The desk personnel provided the caller with Palmdale Stations’ telephone number and advised the caller to ask for the watch commander. The call-taker should have taken the complaint.

SIB-6: The auditors made a telephone call in Spanish to the Department's 800 Number during the EM Shift (1400-2200 hours), requesting to speak with someone who could accept a complaint. The sergeant asked what city the incident took place and advised the caller to contact the station directly. The sergeant should have taken the complaint.

Recommendations

Since contacting the SIB by telephone is a way for the community to make a complaint, it is recommended the SIB establish a Unit Order outlining procedures for handling telephone complaints. This order should include guidelines for personnel, ensuring all calls are properly accepted, documented, and directed to the appropriate location. Additionally, it is recommended the SIB conduct a weekly internal audit of the telephone call logs to identify and verify whether complaints were properly accepted and processed. The results of these audits should be documented and reviewed by the Unit Commander for approval.

Objective No. 2(d) – AV Station Phones

Criteria

Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics, Personnel Complaint Intake, Paragraphs 125 and 126 (October 2019), Sections 3A and 3B states:

- A. ***At all times***, LASD's telephone and internet systems allow for acceptance of personnel complaints via telephone, fax, and email.
- B. *Requests to make a personnel complaint are referred to a supervisor without unnecessary delay.*

Procedures

To effectively evaluate the process of accepting complaints via telephone, the auditors made a total of 16 calls to the telephone number listed on each AV Station's website. During these calls, the auditors did not identify themselves or provide any information that could compromise the validity of the test. The calls were randomly made, in both English and Spanish, over several days, including weekdays and weekends, during all three shifts (AM, PM, and EM).

The auditors contacted the front desk, requested to make a personnel complaint, and waited for the transfer to a supervisor without unnecessary delay. If successfully connected to a supervisor, the auditors (callers) asked for the supervisor's name, stated they wanted to file a complaint against a Department member, and inquired whether the supervisor could assist them. If the supervisor was willing to assist with the complaint over the telephone, the auditor would then cite an excuse to end the telephone call.

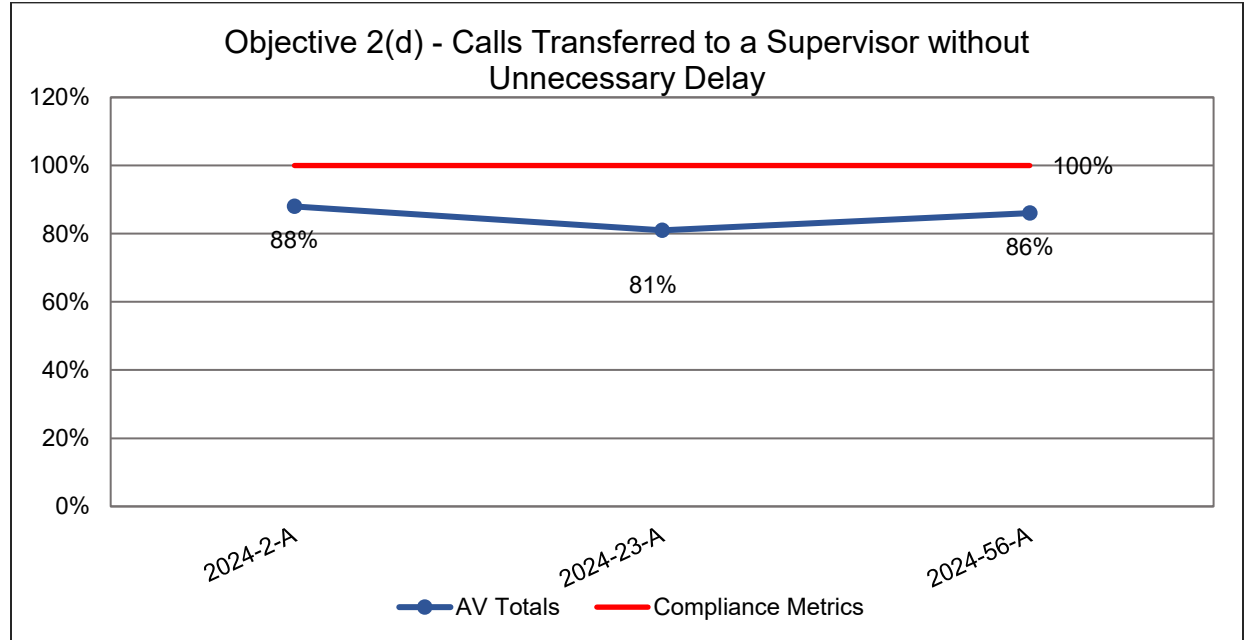
For the telephone calls made in Spanish, the auditors also noted whether they were offered translation services to facilitate the complaint intake process.

The auditors reviewed the telephone recordings on the Department’s NICE Inform database to evaluate whether the AV Stations referred the complaint to a supervisor without unnecessary delay. If a complaint call was not accepted or there were delays, the auditors checked the NICE Inform database for other telephone calls, such as 9-1-1 telephone calls, that might have impacted the AV Stations’ ability to respond to the auditors’ complaint telephone calls.

Calls Transferred to Supervisor without Unnecessary Delay

The line graph below demonstrates a decline from the first to the second audit. However, there was a slight improvement in the third audit for Objective 2(d) – Calls Transferred to a Supervisor without Unnecessary Delay.

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
2	ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
2(d)	<i>AV Station Phones</i>	88%	81%	86%	100%



Findings

For the AV Stations combined, 14 (86%) met the criteria for this objective, as the telephone calls were transferred to a supervisor without unnecessary delay. The remaining two (14%) did not meet the criteria for this objective.

For Lancaster Station, six (75%) out of the eight telephone calls met the criteria for this objective because the telephone calls were transferred to a supervisor without unnecessary delay. The remaining two telephone calls (25%) did not meet the criteria for this objective because the telephone calls were not transferred to a supervisor without unnecessary delay.

For Palmdale Station, eight (100%) telephone calls met the criteria for this objective because the telephone calls were transferred to a supervisor without unnecessary delay.

Specifically:

L-3¹²: The auditors called Lancaster Station during a weekend on the AM Shift (0600-1400 hours), speaking in Spanish and requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The desk personnel used a translation service for the telephone call. However, the caller was informed the desk would need to disconnect with the interpreter in order to transfer the call. After being placed on hold, the telephone call was dropped or disconnected before the caller could speak with the watch commander. Thirty-five days later, the auditors called Lancaster Station again requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The desk personnel used a translation service for the telephone call. However, the caller was once again informed the desk would need to disconnect with the interpreter in order for the telephone call to be transferred. The telephone call was then transferred and redirected back to the desk, where personnel advised the caller, they did not speak Spanish. After being placed on hold again, the telephone call was dropped or disconnected before the caller could speak with the watch commander.

L-9: The auditors called Lancaster Station during the EM Shift (2200-0600 hours), speaking in Spanish and requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The desk personnel used translation services for the telephone call. However, the line rang twice, went to voicemail and then the call dropped or disconnected. The auditors called back 23 days later to Lancaster Station and the desk personnel advised the caller the watch commander did not speak Spanish, and the caller could come to the Station or file a complaint online.

¹² L refers to Lancaster Station. The number represents the sample being referred to of those reviewed by Lancaster Station.

The auditors also noted during the calls to the AV Stations, there were several instances in which the telephone calls dropped or were disconnected. To ensure completeness and accuracy, the auditors redialed the dropped or disconnected telephone calls, thereby maintaining the intended population.

Below is a detailed breakdown of the redialed calls to the AV Stations:

L-5: The auditors called Lancaster Station during the PM Shift (1400-2200 hours), speaking in English and requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The desk personnel transferred the call. The line rang twice, went to voicemail and then the call dropped or was disconnected. The auditors called back 36 days later, and the call was transferred to the watch commander without unnecessary delay.

P-2: The auditors called Palmdale Station during the AM Shift (0600-1400 hours), speaking in Spanish and requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The Station operator transferred the call to the desk personnel. The caller waited approximately four minutes, before the telephone call dropped or was disconnected. The auditors called back 29 days later, and the call was transferred to the watch commander without unnecessary delay.

P-6: The auditors called Palmdale Station during the PM Shift (1400-2200 hours), speaking in Spanish and requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The operator transferred the call to the desk personnel, and the call was then transferred to the watch commander. However, the call was dropped or disconnected before the caller could speak with the watch commander. The auditors called back 9 days later, and the call was transferred the call without unnecessary delay.

Recommendations

Community members frequently contact the AV Stations via telephone to voice concerns. When these calls are not returned or addressed appropriately, it can create the perception that the Department is unwilling to engage with the community. The auditors identified ongoing challenges at the AV Stations in transferring complainants to a supervisor without unnecessary delay.

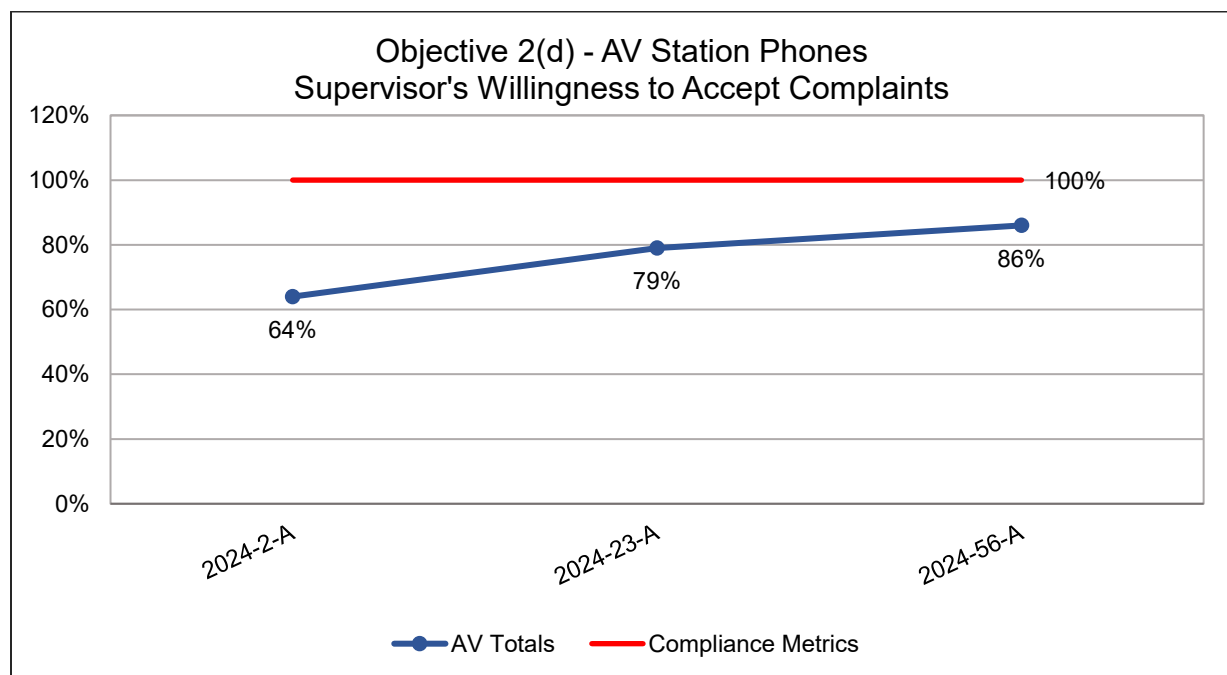
To improve this process, it is recommended the watch commander review recordings of complaint-related calls using the NICE Inform system to verify whether calls were properly transferred and handled by desk personnel. This review will help ensure compliance with transfer protocols, identify any communication breakdowns, and assess whether translation services were correctly utilized when applicable.

In addition, it is recommended that the AV Stations implement weekly internal evaluations to assess desk personnel’s ability to effectively transfer telephone calls to the watch commanders’ line. These spot checks will help reinforce proper protocols and minimize the risk of dropped calls or miscommunication. The watch commander who fails to properly facilitate a complaint should result in documented corrective action, subject to review and approval by the Station’s Unit Commander.

Supervisor’s Willingness to Accept Telephone Complaints

The line graph below demonstrates gradual improvement from the first to the third audit for Objective No. 2(d) – Supervisor’s Willingness to Accept Complaints. However, the AV Stations did not meet the established compliance for this objective.

Obj. No.	Audit Objectives	2024-2-A	2024-23-A	2024-56-A	Compliance Metrics %
2	ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINT INFORMATION				
2(d)	<i>AV Station Phones</i>	64%	79%	86%	100%



For the AV Stations combined, 12 (86%) met the criteria for this objective, as the telephone calls were transferred to a supervisor without unnecessary delay. The remaining two (14%) did not meet the criteria for this objective.

For Lancaster Station, five (83%) out of the six telephone calls met the criteria for this objective because the supervisor was willing to accept the complaint. The remaining telephone call (17%) did not meet the criteria for this objective, as the supervisor was unwilling to accept the complaint.

For Palmdale Station, seven (88%) out of the eight telephone calls met the criteria for this objective because the supervisor was willing to accept the complaint. The remaining one telephone call (12%) did not meet the criteria for this objective because the supervisor did not complete the complaint acceptance process.

Specifically:

L-2: The auditors called Lancaster Station during the AM Shift (0600-1400 hours), speaking in Spanish and requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The desk personnel used translation services for the telephone call but informed the caller the interpreter would need to disconnect in order to transfer the telephone call. The watch commander answered and informed the caller they did not speak Spanish, then transferred the telephone call back to the desk without utilizing translation services to facilitate the complaint.

P-3¹³: The auditors called Palmdale Station during the AM Shift (0600-1400 hours), speaking Spanish and requesting to speak with a supervisor who could take a complaint. The desk personnel advised the caller that the watch commander was unavailable and requested the caller's contact information. During the return telephone call, the watch commander contacted a Spanish interpreter to inquire about making a three-way telephone call. The watch commander was informed by the interpreter that the interpreter could call the caller to initiate contact. However, when the telephone call went to the complainant's voicemail, the interpreter ended the telephone call. The watch commander stated they would try to contact the caller at a later time, but no follow-up telephone call was made. The auditors reviewed the telephone call log from the telephone used to make the complaint, in addition to reviewing additional NICE Inform recordings throughout the shift to verify whether a return telephone call was made. However, no return telephone call was made after the initial attempt.

Recommendations

It is recommended the Department reinforce existing policies with the watch commanders to ensure they accept public complaints and are making concerted efforts to return telephone calls to complainants. Watch commanders should also document all phone complaints and returned telephone calls in the Watch Commander's Log for accountability and any necessary follow-up.

¹³ P refers to Palmdale Station. The number represents the sample being referred to of those reviewed by Palmdale Station.

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It is also recommended the AV Stations establish a protocol to conduct a weekly internal audit of the Watch Commander's Logs to identify phone complaints and determine whether they were accepted and processed. Any complaints found not to have been accepted should result in documented corrective action. The documentation of the weekly internal audit should be reviewed and approved by the Station's Unit Commander. Failure to properly accept a complaint should result in documented corrective action, subject to review and approval by the Station's Unit Commander.

CONCLUSION

The auditors evaluated areas where there was improvement, such as initiating and processing mail-in forms and email complaints. As a result, the AV Stations have met the established compliance metrics for Objective 2(a) – Mail-in Form and Objective 2(b) – Email Complaints. The auditors also identified areas where improvement is needed such as the acceptance and initiation of telephone complaints.

Although Department members generally understand the complaint acceptance process, there continues to be a lack of effectiveness. By identifying and addressing these inconsistencies within the existing framework, the Department can enhance its overall approach to managing public complaints and improve its responsiveness and efficiency.

The evidence collected during this audit suggests the AV Station personnel and the Department must be mindful of areas of improvement in compliance with the stipulations set forth in the Agreement, compliance metrics, and Department policies. AAB believes addressing the findings will help ensure prompt corrective actions for all sub-objectives which are out of compliance. When Department policies and procedures are not adhered to, it may result in an increased risk or an inability to be compliant.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this section is to provide a concise reference for all recommendations aimed at improving compliance with the Agreement and Department policies and procedures. The recommendations listed below are the same as those detailed in the above report.

Objective No. 2 – Accepting Public Complaints

c) **Department 800 Number:** Since contacting the SIB by telephone is a way for the community to make a complaint, it is recommended the SIB establish a Unit Order outlining procedures for handling telephone complaints. This order should include guidelines for personnel, ensuring all calls are properly accepted, documented, and directed to the appropriate location. Additionally, it is recommended the SIB conduct a weekly internal audit of the telephone call logs to identify and verify whether complaints were properly accepted and processed. The results of these audits should be documented and reviewed by the Unit Commander for approval.

d) **AV Station Phones:**

- **Calls Transferred to Supervisor without Unnecessary Delay:** Community members frequently contact the AV Stations via telephone to voice concerns. When these calls are not returned or addressed appropriately, it can create the perception that the Department is unwilling to engage with the community. The auditors identified ongoing challenges at the AV Stations in transferring complainants to a supervisor without unnecessary delay.

To improve this process, it is recommended the watch commander review recordings of complaint-related calls using the NICE Inform system to verify whether calls were properly transferred and handled by desk personnel. This review will help ensure compliance with transfer protocols, identify any communication breakdowns, and assess whether translation services were correctly utilized when applicable.

In addition, it is recommended that the AV Stations implement weekly internal evaluations to assess desk personnel's ability to effectively transfer telephone calls to the watch commanders' line. These spot checks will help reinforce proper protocols and minimize the risk of dropped calls or miscommunication. The watch commander who fails to properly facilitate a complaint should result in documented corrective action, subject to review and approval by the Station's Unit Commander.

- **Supervisor's Willingness to Accept the Complaint:** It is recommended the Department reinforce existing policies with the watch commanders to ensure they accept public complaints and are making concerted efforts to return telephone calls to complainants. Watch commanders should also document all phone complaints and returned telephone calls in the Watch Commander's Log for accountability and any necessary follow-up.

It is also recommended the AV Stations establish a protocol to conduct a weekly internal audit of the Watch Commander's Logs to identify phone complaints and determine whether they were accepted and processed. Any complaints found not to have been accepted should result in documented corrective action. The documentation of the weekly internal audit should be reviewed and approved by the Station's Unit Commander. Failure to properly accept a complaint should result in documented corrective action, subject to review and approval by the Station's Unit Commander.

DEPARTMENT APPLICATIONS


- Performance Recording and Monitoring System (PRMS), Service Comment Module
- Station/Bureau Administration Portal (SBAP) Risk Management Tracker
- NICE Inform
- Scheduling Management System (SMS)

REFERENCES

- United States Department of Justice – Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement, Case Number CV 15-03174 (April 2015)
- Antelope Valley Settlement Agreement Compliance Metrics (October 2019)
- Antelope Valley Monitoring Team Monitor’s Second Audit of Community Complaints (December 2020)
- Manual of Policy and Procedures Section:
 - 3-04/010.25, Personnel Complaints (October 2014)
- Proposed Draft Service Comment Report Handbook (August 2022)

Views of Responsible Officials

On February 27, 2025, Palmdale Station command staff submitted a response concurring with some of the findings. On February 28, 2025, Lancaster Station command staff submitted a response concurring with the findings. The Sheriff's Information Bureau also concurred with the findings. The AAB presented the final audit report to the Division Director, Office of Constitutional Policing.

 12/19/2025

MARIA G. KUEHL DATE
Acting Captain
Audit and Accountability Bureau
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department