



Chief's Message



We expect officers to enforce the law and we have to be able to control and correct the cops who step over the line – in matters

large and small. But our disciplinary system – which treated every small matter as a federal case – has been self-defeating. The Department has tied itself in knots trying to enforce the letter of its own laws. Cases have taken forever to investigate and adjudicate, and officers have spent months with their cases pending. **The system has been seen as an elaborate game of “Gotcha!”** that holds police careers hostage to pending and unsubstantiated complaints, some of which are completely without merit.

On February 25, 2003, the Police Commission approved reforms to the disciplinary system, **an important step toward bringing the game of “Gotcha!” to an end.** I would like to thank Commissioner Rose Ochi, her fellow commissioners, and Mayor James Hahn for initiating this critically needed reform.

There’s an old adage that “justice delayed is justice denied.” I think it applies doubly to police officers, most

Continued on page 2

New Police Administrative Building closer to reality



Some buildings age like fine wine and become classics or historical monuments. Some become deteriorated old hulks. Parker Center, originally designed as a state-of-the-art facility, is now considered a hulk.

Completed in the mid-1950s, its design is no longer suitable or efficient for modern-day police administration. Added to that, the physical structure has had no refurbishment or consistent preventive maintenance during its lifetime.

In the mid-1990s Kosmont and Associates undertook an analysis of existing police facilities. In summary, its conclusions were that Parker Center was a 40-year old facility which should be considered for demolition and replacement.

After years of delay and failed bond measures, it now seems all but certain

that a new Parker Center will be a reality. The City Council will soon approve the use of Municipal Investment Corporation of Los Angeles (MICLA) financing to complete construction. Preliminarily, it is estimated that the new Parker Center will cost between \$215 to

Continued on page 4

<i>INSIDE</i>	<i>Page</i>
Police Commission Actions	3
KMEX/Univision Campaign	3
Cops and Kids Program	5
Police Month Activities	6
Joe Gunn Retires	6
Commendations	7

Chief's Message

Continued from page 1

of whom would rather be disciplined swiftly when they are in the wrong, than be left hanging while the process grinds on and on.

The new system makes the essential distinction between disciplinary and non-disciplinary complaints, and calls on the Area Captain to channel complaints accordingly. Of the approximately 6,000 complaints the Department receives each year, at least 2,000 – even if valid – would result in no disciplinary action at all. Under the new system these complaints are adjudicated by the Captain and closed out at the Bureau level without additional review by Internal Affairs.

The Bureaus can only overrule the Captains for clear and articulated reasons. We think this policy will do a lot to cut down on the endless paper chase that has typified the disciplinary system in the past. Internal Affairs is already handling the true disciplinary cases three times faster than they were a few years ago, dispensing with the frivolous cases more rapidly and focusing in on the few real offenders in our midst.

The new policy also introduces the option of Alternative Conflict Resolution. Minor discipline cases can now be resolved in mediation sessions with the officer and complainant, with the emphasis being problem-solving, not fault finding. The mediation process often results in a more reasonable and measured outcome than an adversarial proceeding.

Lastly, the new policy and the TEAMS system will not reflect any unfounded and non-sustained

dispositions. Only sustained and guilty findings will appear on TEAMS reports for promotions, pay grade increases, transfers, and performance reviews. The Consent Decree requires the Department to maintain records of all non-sustained complaints, but it does not require that these records be used against you. And they won't. This is my promise to the men and women of the LAPD.

I have made it clear that we won't tolerate corruption, brutality, or serious misconduct. If you are guilty of those offenses, we'll throw the book at you. We cannot let the corrupt actions of a few ruin the reputation of more than 9,000 honest, hard-working cops. But let me make it equally clear that the game of "Gotcha!" in this Department is coming to an end. If you are in the right, we will back you up – the benefit of the doubt goes to you. If you are wrong, we will retrain you. If you are corrupt, we will jail you.

Don't let the past history of a flawed disciplinary system keep you from doing the job you signed up to do. I know you can do it – legally, professionally and safely with a common-sense set of tactical guidelines and reviews. The next step is a full examination of the review boards to make certain we are supporting and standing behind good cops trying their best to do their jobs, while still upholding the constitution and laws of our state and nation.

It's a new ball game in the LAPD. The rules and reviews are getting straightened out. It's a game we can all win – you the police officers, our whole Department, and the people of Los Angeles.



William J. Bratton
Chief of Police

Mary E. Grady
Public Information Director
Commanding Officer
Office of Public Information

Steven E. Reifel
Managing Editor

L.V. Sturges
Writer/Editor/Designer

Pedro M. Muñiz
Editorial Support

Tanya Thomas
Graphic Design Assistance

Jim Ungari
Technical Support

The monthly news publication serving sworn and civilian employees, and those interested in the activities of the Los Angeles Police Department, is published by the Office of Public Information, Public Communications Section, Public Relations Unit. The Los Angeles Police Department does not endorse or warrant any products, services or companies mentioned within these pages.

*The BEAT deadline for material submission is the **4th of each month** for the following month's publication.*

Submit your materials to:
Los Angeles Police Department
150 N. Los Angeles Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Room 731
Mail Stop 400
Phone (213) 485-3281
Fax (213) 485-1952

This publication is available on line at www.LAPDOnline.org.

Copyright © 2003 by Los Angeles Police Department