



A TRADITION OF
SERVICE, HONOR
& VALUES

BENEFITS OF CONTRACT LAW ENFORCEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Orange County Sheriff's Department began providing contract law enforcement services in 1961, when the City of San Juan Capistrano determined contract law enforcement would be both cost effective and service oriented. The following year, the City of Villa Park came to the same conclusion and established a contract with Orange County Sheriff's Department. Now over 45 years later, both cities remain as contract partners with the Orange County Sheriff's Department. Since that time, ten additional cities and three county agencies have adopted the Orange County law enforcement contract model. Through the years, contract law enforcement has proven to be a responsive, economical and flexible alternative to establishing and maintaining a police force.

Each year, as part of an on-going commitment to excellence, an evaluation is conducted by the Orange County Sheriff's Department. The purpose of the study is to measure those items that concern community leaders and residents most—the rate of crime and cost effectiveness of law enforcement service. This year, the study went beyond studying crime and costs in Sheriff patrolled areas and also compared the crime rate and cost effectiveness of services provided by other cities in the county. Included in this study was a review of each contract city, as well as analysis of their respective budgets and the cost per capita. These costs were compared to the per capita costs of police services of seven selected Orange County cities. The study shows that areas patrolled by the Sheriff's Department experienced nearly half the crime rate as other areas of the county and that the average costs for a Sheriff's contract was half the cost for operating a city police department—on average, lower crime at a lower cost.



CRIME STATISTICS

The incidence and direction of crime trends are of great importance to many in the community. Without accurate, comparable crime statistics, efforts to determine the extent of the crime problem are hobbled. To be sure, crime ranking information must be considered carefully. However, rankings tell an interesting story regarding the incidence of crime in a community. Annual rankings not only allow for comparisons among cities, but also enable leaders to track their community's crime trends and crime reduction efforts from one year to the next. Such rankings are the first step in understanding the true magnitude of community problems and are an important benchmark in the fight against crime.

When compared to surrounding counties, Orange County experienced a significantly lower crime rate. In



2008, Orange County reported only 22.4 Part I crimes per thousand residents. This crime rate was among the lowest of any metropolitan area in the country. In several studies, a high percentage of residents stated they felt safe in their homes and communities. These crime statistics are simply an affirmation of the general well-being expressed by many of the residents who live in this county.

Crime in Orange County was not

equally distributed throughout the county; some areas are disproportionately affected. In an effort to gauge the effectiveness of Sheriff's patrol efforts, an analysis of crime rates in the county was completed. Areas patrolled by the Sheriff's Department were compared to the rest of the county. In 2008, Part I crimes in Orange County averaged 22.4 crimes per thousand residents. If areas patrolled by the Sheriff's Department are removed from the aggregate, the crime rate for the remaining county area increases to 25.0 Part I crimes per thousand residents. The number of Part I crimes for areas patrolled by the Sheriff's Department is 13.7, nearly half the crime rate experienced by the rest of the county. While the Sheriff's Department services roughly 22.5% of the population, crimes in Sheriff's territory account for only 13.6% of the reported crime.

Part 1 Crimes Adjoining Counties (Per 1000 Residents)



CRIME STATISTICS



Part 1 crimes are made up of seven separate offenses- homicide, rape, murder, aggravated assault, burglary, grand theft, and auto theft.

Violent Crime Statistics

While property crimes are an important quality of life issue, crimes of violence change the nature of entire communities. These crimes have life altering effects on the victims and

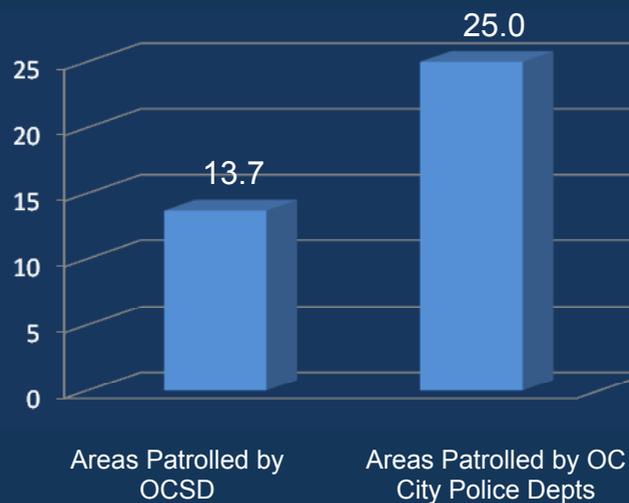
cause irreparable damage to families and neighborhoods. Reduction of these types of crimes should be the priority for all law enforcement agencies.

An analysis of the distribution of violent crimes in the county was completed. Of the total 70,415 Part I crimes reported in 2008, 7,621 (10.8%) were crimes of violence. Of the 7,621 violent crimes reported in Orange County, only 11.7%

(889) were reported in areas patrolled by the Sheriff's Department. The remaining 88.3% (6,732) were reported in areas outside of the Sheriff's jurisdiction.

While the Sheriff's Department performed favorably in all Part I crime categories, it appears the Department was particularly effective in the areas that matter most.

Part I Crimes Per Thousand Residents



*2009 UCR

COST PER CAPITA FINDINGS



One of the basic functions of government is providing for the safety and security of the residents. In all cities, the cost for police services accounts for a significant portion of the budget. Studies have shown that “public safety” accounts for 30%-70% of a city’s budget. Given the high cost of providing these benefits, city leaders should be aware of all options available when choosing the manner in which to provide police services.

In a recently completed survey, the cost for police services in all Orange County Sheriff’s contract cities was compared to the cost for law enforcement in seven selected Orange County cities. The cities were chosen to represent small and midsized departments within the county. The significant findings of the survey are:

- There are substantial cost differences between city police departments.
- On average, cities that contract with the Sheriff’s Department spend about half as much for police services than cities with their own police departments.

For cities in the survey, the per capita costs for police services ranged from a high of \$519 to a low of \$227 (FY08/09). The average per capita cost for the seven city police departments was \$329. For cities that contract with the Sheriff’s Department, the per capita cost was significantly lower. The cost for police services in the 12 contract cities ranged from \$70 to \$231 per resident. In FY 08/09, the average cost for a Sheriff’s contract

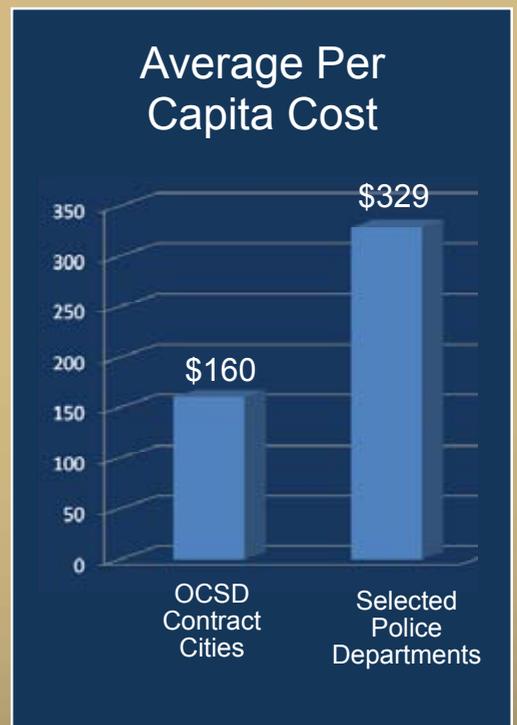
city was \$147. The results showed that cities that contract for law enforcement services experience a much lower per capita cost than cities that have their own police department (\$160 vs. \$329). For cities that contract for police services, less of the city’s budget is dedicated for public safety. Lower costs for police services translates into more money available to fund other worthwhile community projects, enhancing the quality of life enjoyed by all residents.

Case Study

The higher cost for small to mid-sized police departments appears to be driven by the increased number of personnel required to staff the city police department. Some cities, such as Seal Beach, Cypress and Los Alamitos, have recognized the positive attributes of sharing services and cut costs by combining their dispatch services. These measures are a welcome first step and reflect the beneficial economies of scale enjoyed by contract cities.

For example, the contract City of Lake Forest is roughly 17 square miles and has approximately 78,000 residents. The City of Lake Forest

contracts for 46.5 officers and seven support staff. In FY 08/09, the contract cost for law enforcement services was approximately \$11.8 million. By contrast, a similar sized city in Orange County has chosen to maintain its own police department. These two cities have roughly the same residential, commercial and demographic mix. The city police department consists of twice the number of sworn officers and nine times the number of support staff. The budget for this city in FY 08/09 was \$24.0 million, nearly twice the cost for the contract city. This city has twice as many officers and pays nearly twice the amount for police service as does Lake Forest. Unfortunately, these additional officers have not resulted in a lower crime rate. The number of Part 1 crimes reported in this city was 70% higher than those reported in the City of Lake Forest in 2008 (22.2 vs. 13.1).



BENEFITS OF CONTRACT LAW ENFORCEMENT

Contract Law Enforcement-A model of policing

Since 1988, the County of Orange has incorporated eight cities: Aliso Viejo, Dana Point, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo and Rancho Santa Margarita. All eight cities have chosen to contract with the Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services. During this same time period, two additional cities, Stanton and San Clemente, converted from a city police department to a Sheriff's law enforcement contract.

Several studies have been conducted concerning the benefits of contracting for law enforcement services. A sampling of these studies is listed below. Throughout these studies, a common theme concerning contract law enforcement is often repeated:

1. Cities that contract experience significantly lower costs for police service than cities that have their own police department.
2. Contract law enforcement is a cost efficient, responsive and flexible option for police services.
3. There is no reduction in service or loss of local control when contracting for law enforcement



services.

4. The benefits of contracting are not limited to per-capita costs savings—other benefits to the city include: Reduction in liability, relief from California's Peace Officer's Standards and Training (P.O.S.T) requirements, elimination of collective bargaining, internal affairs, recruiting, training and other personnel issues.

The California Commission on P.O.S.T. published a research study entitled, "Year 2000-California City Police Departments: A Dying Tradition...?" As part of the study, city managers were interviewed as to the benefits of contract law enforcement. The conclusion of the report is that, "without exception, the city managers interviewed felt their contract law enforcement program

was a cost effective, responsive and viable form of policing." When city managers that subscribed to the contract law enforcement model were asked about the loss of control issue, they responded, "Not only did they have the same level of control as when they had a chief of police, but there were several more indirect benefits associated with a contract law enforcement program." These benefits include, but are not limited to: not having to recruit, train or discipline officers, nor negotiate pay and benefit contracts.

In May 2000, the California Contract Cities Association prepared a document entitled "The Contract City Model: Right for California". This document provides information which shows that the contract city model is a cost effective, efficient and successful form of municipal government:

"It has long been a maxim in local government that contracting for law enforcement or fire service from the county provides a more cost effective method of meeting the needs of the public. In many cases, this also provides a higher level of service. For this reason, almost every new city created in the State of California in the past 50 years has been a contract city, taking advantage of the vast and huge resources of a county Sheriff's Department... and tailoring those resources to meet the needs of each individual city or community."



QUALITY SERVICES PROVIDED



Uniform Patrol • Community Programs

Specialized Investigations • Human Resources

Bomb Squad • Juvenile Service Bureau

S.W.A.T Teams • Dispatch Services

Canines • Air Support

Recruiting • Parking Enforcement

Training • Mounted Units

Internal Affairs • Risk Management

Reserves • Resource Officers

Payroll • Bike Patrols

Purchasing • Crime Prevention Specialists

Motorcycles • Emergency Management

Records Management • Forensic Science Services

Explorers • Traffic Enforcement



CONCLUSION

Contracting for law enforcement services is a cost effective alternative to maintaining a city police department. At least for Orange County, cities that contract for law enforcement services with the Orange County Sheriff's Department, on average, experienced half the crime rate than cities with their own police departments. Cities that contract with the Sheriff's Department, on average, also spent significantly less for law enforcement services. These services were provided without a reduction of service or loss of control. These findings are consistent with similar studies concerning the cost of law enforcement throughout California.

Studies have shown the following:

1. There is no correlation between amounts spent on policing and the crime rate.
2. Cities contracting with the Sheriff's Department generally spend less for police services than similar sized cities that have their own police departments.
3. Perception of law enforcement services received by the residents and city managers in contract cities is extremely favorable.
4. Contract law enforcement provides a quality, responsive and cost effective alternative to a city police department.

Governments are formed for the protection of the citizenry. Cities have the responsibility to provide a base level of service to their residents. However, cities have options when choosing public safety. The Sheriff's Department provides a cost-effective alternative to staffing and maintaining a police department. The Sheriff's Department provides a wider range of quality services at a cost that is significantly less than a traditional police department.

