

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

April 15, 2024
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TO: The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL (CITY COUNCIL FILE NO. 22-0156-S1)

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. It is recommended that the Board of Police Commissioners REVIEW and APPROVE the Los Angeles Police Department's (Department) response to the City Council.
2. That the Board TRANSMIT to the City Council this response.

DISCUSSION

In response to Council File No. 22-0156-S1, the Department submitted a Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) report dated September 26, 2023, to the Los Angeles City Council relative to enforcement strategies that are underway and/or in consideration in support of the City's effort to fortify the street lighting network. On January 24, 2024, the Public Works Committee considered the BOPC report and, after public comment, the Committee made additional recommendations. On February 7, 2024, the City Council adopted the additional recommendations in the Public Works Committee report, which instructed the Department to report on the following:

- In collaboration with the Bureau of Street Lighting (BSL), the findings on a Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) at BSL sites and yards, including recommendations to improve security at BSL yards;
- The feasibility and/or recommendations for the creation of an internal task force on crimes against City infrastructure which will handle the intake of crime reporting from City agencies and manage prevention and enforcement strategies for crimes that damage and vandalize critical City infrastructure, including recommendations for resources needed and potential funding sources to implement the Citywide task force; and,
- An update of recycler records inspections Citywide.

A response was prepared by the Office of Operations.

The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

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If you have any questions, please contact Commander Bryan D. Lium, Assistant to the Director, Office of Operations, at (213) 486-0100.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Choi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

DOMINIC H. CHOI

Chief of Police

Attachment

FACT SHEET
Task Force – Crimes Against City Infrastructure
April 15, 2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Fact Sheet is to describe the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD or Department) efforts to coordinate with various City entities to fortify the street lighting network.

BACKGROUND

In response to Council File No. 22-0156-S1, the Department submitted a Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) report dated September 26, 2023, to the Los Angeles City Council relative to enforcement strategies that are underway and/or in consideration in support of the City's effort to fortify the street lighting network. On January 24, 2024, the Public Works Committee considered the BOPC report and, after public comment, the Committee made additional recommendations.

The LAPD was instructed to report on the following:

- In collaboration with the Bureau of Street Lighting (BSL), the findings on a Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) at BSL sites and yards, including recommendations to improve security at BSL yards;
- The feasibility and/or recommendations for the creation of an internal task force on crimes against City infrastructure which will handle the intake of crime reporting from City agencies and manage prevention and enforcement strategies for crimes that damage and vandalize critical City infrastructure, including recommendations for resources needed and potential funding sources to implement the Citywide task force; and,
- An update of recycler records inspections Citywide.

According to the BSL, approximately 6,000 reportable theft incidents occurred Citywide within the fiscal year 22-23, however, only 70 reports were filed with the LAPD. The BSL added they had experienced delays in reporting incidents caused by long waits at LAPD community police stations and were not aware of other alternatives.

FINDINGS

Security Vulnerability Assessments

The LAPD Security Services Division (SECSD) completed the SVAs at the three separate BSL yards by March 20, 2024. On March 26, 2024, BSL Superintendent Silvia Torres received the hard copies of the three reports. Due to the sensitive nature of these assessment reports, the findings will remain confidential and safeguarded in accordance with the provisions of the Critical Infrastructure Information Act (6 U.S.C. §§ 131 et seq.), which exempts these reports from release under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) and similar state and local disclosure laws.

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Task Force

On February 14, 2024, the City Council adopted a motion (Council File No. 24-0079) instructing the LAPD, with the assistance of the BSL, to create a Copper Wire Task Force within Council District (CD) 14. The motion allocated \$200,000 from the CD 14 portion of the “Neighborhood Service Enhancements” line item in the General City Purpose Fund to be transferred or appropriated to the Police Fund for Sworn Overtime to cover the costs of the task force. Operations-Central Bureau (OCB) formed a special enforcement task force comprised of Central, Newton, and Hollenbeck Areas which will operate as a pilot program for three months. Three investigators (one from each Area) have been assigned to follow up on any incident involving copper wire theft and vandalism of City-owned electric utility boxes within CD 14. All other field enforcement or special operations for the task force will be staffed on an overtime basis by the involved Areas.

On February 22, 2024, the LAPD launched two links to the Community Online Reporting Service (CORS) explicitly created for the BSL to report theft and vandalism of City property under their responsibility. While the CORS limits reporting of losses from theft and/or vandalism to \$5,000.00 per report, the CORS links created specifically for BSL each bypass that monetary limit. Upon launch, the LAPD CORS Coordinator trained specified BSL personnel on the completion of CORS reports through the links. As of March 5, 2024, the BSL has reported via CORS eight incidents of theft of City property and 35 incidents of vandalism.

The OCB task force will utilize Area Crime and Community Intelligence Center data analytics, which includes incidents reported on CORS by BSL, to handle the intake of crime reporting for investigative follow up. Prosecutors specifically assigned from the Los Angeles District Attorney’s and City Attorney’s Offices will be presented these cases for filing considerations.

Recycler Records

In June 2011, the LAPD Commercial Crimes Division (CCD) Metal Theft Detail began implementation of California Assembly Bill No. 841. This bill required that all metal yards that purchase non-ferrous metals (e.g. copper, aluminum, brass, bronze, stainless steel, etc.) obtain the customer’s personal information which is then stored on their computer for a period of two years. Working with Information Technology Division, CCD developed the Automated Metal Property System (AMPS) to store daily reports received via email from the various metal yards within the City. This information is automatically sent through a Department email address (LAPDMetalReports@lapd.online) to assigned Department personnel who review the AMPS. The information includes names, dates of birth, driver's license numbers, vehicle license plates, residential or business addresses, as well as capturing the quantity, type of material sold and number of transactions in each recycling yard by that customer.

In May 2019, the CCD Metal Theft Detail was disbanded. The AMPS remains an active database which receives automated updates on registered recycling centers which are not in compliance with statutory regulations as well as a list of previously arrested sellers, however, the Department does not currently have any personnel specifically assigned to review the AMPS.

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The OCB task force will conduct inspections of recycling centers which accept various metals as part of their prevention and enforcement strategies for their operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The LAPD provided the findings and recommendations to BSL Superintendent Silvia Torres, which will remain confidential and safeguarded under the Critical Infrastructure Information Act.

Upon completion of the OCB Copper Wire Task Force in CD 14, it is recommended the LAPD and BSL assess the task force's effectiveness on the prevention of crime to the concerned City infrastructure and facilities. If the assessment reveals this model to be effective, it is recommended that other Council Districts adopt this strategy and allocate funding to create similar task forces to address theft and vandalism to City infrastructure and facilities within their communities. With funding and support from an individual Council District, crime data provided by BSL, and coordination with the Los Angeles District Attorney's and City Attorney's Offices, the affected LAPD Bureau(s) could staff an investigator per involved geographic Area and staff field operations with personnel on an overtime basis rather than remove police officers from needed field duties. This model could better address the crime at BSL sites despite limited LAPD resources.

CONCLUSION

With fewer resources available over time to the LAPD and limited data on crime reports regarding theft and vandalism to City property, addressing crimes which affect the City infrastructure and facilities have required coordination between multiple City departments. The completion of the OCB Copper Wire Task Force and its effectiveness will determine if such a focused approach with assistance from Council Districts will serve as a model to be utilized Citywide.