

MORALE SURVEY

PPOA Recommendations and LASD Responses

1 Sheriff McDonnell needs to make changes to his senior executive-level leadership immediately. Low morale can be directly attributed to those he has allowed to remain in high-level positions who have failed to move this Department in the right direction (even before Jim McDonnell was elected as Sheriff). In order to effect necessary changes, McDonnell needs new leaders with fresh ideas willing to change the status quo to improve the Department. If necessary, he should look outside the Sheriff's Department to ensure he has leaders with strong management skills, ethics and integrity, and compassion for the employees. These characteristics are too often lacking in his current command.

LASD response: The Sheriff agrees with the need to make changes and has recently announced his new management team. It has been the opinion of Sheriff McDonnell that there are many good-quality leaders within the LASD and there is no need to go outside of the Department, except to fill non-sworn positions that require special skills (e.g., CFO). It is his goal to identify those inside the LASD who possess strong leadership skills, ethics and integrity, and support his vision for the Department.

2 The Sheriff's Department has failed to project its hiring needs for many years. As a result, the Department is suffering from an unacceptably high vacancy level. This vacancy level is resulting in extreme working conditions and excessive hours worked by employees. Hiring will be increasingly difficult as fewer and fewer people are interested in becoming police officers today and other police departments compete for a smaller pool of potential applicants. The Sheriff's Department must develop a realistic hiring plan immediately, or it will continue to fail to reach proper staffing levels.

- We recommend the Sheriff form a recruitment task force, including employees with previous experience in recruitment, backgrounds and training as well as representatives from PPOA, ALADS and the Board of Supervisors. The task force should develop strategies to meet the hiring needs of the Department within a two-year period.
- LASD response: The Sheriff recognizes how difficult recruitment can be and also the impact on current employees when hiring needs are not met. The Sheriff will implement this recommendation and form this task force as requested.**

- The Department needs to increase staffing for recruitment, backgrounds and academy. At its current staffing levels for these units, the Department has admitted it will be unable to hire enough employees to meet basic safe staffing levels. The Board of Supervisors should authorize a two-year special funding allotment specifically to allow the Sheriff's Department to temporarily increase resources toward



Visit www.ppoa.com to view President Moriguchi's video interview with Sheriff McDonnell regarding Department morale.

its recruitment effort. This special funding should be closely monitored by the Board of Supervisors to ensure it is properly used for hiring and staffing issues only.

LASD response: The Sheriff agrees there is a need for an increase in staffing for recruitment and hiring. As a result, the Department has asked the Board of Supervisors for additional funding.

- The Sheriff's Department needs to stop taking on additional responsibilities and/or creating new units that require additional staffing until the Department has enough employees to fill its current positions. Filling them with overtime places an undue burden on the current employees, especially when the Department is unable to fulfill its current staffing responsibilities and forces employees to work excessive amounts of overtime.

LASD response: The Sheriff recognizes the impact excessive overtime has on employees and the impact the shortage of personnel has on morale. New units will not be created without funding and personnel. Overtime and/or loans will not be used, unless an emergency arises.

- CARPing or any version of it should end immediately. This temporary solution to a staffing shortage has been abused by the Sheriff's Department for more than a decade to cover up its deficiencies in proper staffing and recruitment planning. In addition, CARPing decreases the amount of time employees have to spend completing their responsibilities, resulting in administrative work being delayed and criminal investigations taking longer to complete. CARPing is not the solution to a staffing shortage. Hiring more people is the solution.

LASD response: CARPing has been stopped intra-divisionally, but not within individual units. CARPing cannot end as long as we have a public safety mandate to maintain staffing at a level that is appropriate and safe for Sheriff's personnel. Until vacancies are reduced to a level that meets the above mandate, CARPing will unfortunately be necessary. It is the goal of the Department

to increase staffing levels so CARPing will become unnecessary except under emergency situations. We look forward to working with the unions on viable alternatives.

3 Relieved of Duty status should be used in accordance with Department policy and only when there is substantial evidence of misconduct or an employee is arrested. It should be used for the most egregious violations that are likely to result in demotion or termination.

LASD response: The Sheriff recognizes the impact Relieved of Duty has on employees and does not want it used arbitrarily. Sheriff's personnel are relieved of duty when their alleged violation could result in termination or demotion in accordance with Department policy. All pertinent information at the time of the incident is used to make this decision. The purpose of relieving an employee of duty is to protect the Department and the employee from liability. All ROD personnel are reviewed monthly with the Sheriff to determine if their status should change or remain the same.

4 The Constitutional Policing Advisors should be removed from the disciplinary process and focus on constitutional policing issues. They should review uses of force in patrol and in the jails for constitutional issues; review Department policies related to constitutional issues such as over-detention, force and discrimination; review training protocols and practices; and make recommendations to the Sheriff that would minimize constitutional violations by Sheriff's personnel.

LASD response: The Constitutional Policing Advisors serve a critical role in the discipline process. They are another layer of review to ensure the employee's case is being thoroughly and fairly investigated, and minimize further liability to the Department. The Sheriff does not believe the CPAs should be removed from the disciplinary process. However, the Sheriff believes their role is advisory and their purpose is to assist Division Chiefs to ensure consistency in the administrative investigation process throughout the Department. The CPAs are not the decision makers. That responsibility still rests with Department executives.

5 Department executives at the rank of chief and above, along with the captains from IAB and ICIB, should meet monthly to review all disciplinary cases to ensure Department-wide consistency in the application of discipline. They should review all Relieved of Duties to ensure that they are within policy and still necessary. Relieved of Duty personnel should be returned to work as soon as possible.

LASD response: This is open for discussion. Division Chiefs already review and sign all discipline for their division. To have all discipline be subject to a larger review process in addition to what is already done through Case Review and the Assistant Sheriff's monthly case management meetings will be burdensome. ICIB only handles criminal investigations and is not part of the discipline process.

6 Administrative investigations are unable to be completed in a timely manner due to extreme shortage of investigators in the Internal Affairs Bureau. This results in shoddy investigations, violations of POBRA time requirements and an increase in challenges by the employee organizations. For comparison, the Los Angeles Police Department has over four times the number of administrative investigators. The Department needs to increase the number of administrative investigators to an adequate staffing level for a department of this size.

LASD response: The Department strongly agrees with this recommendation and realizes the importance of completing administrative investigations in a timely manner. The Department has requested additional funding from the Board of Supervisors.

7 Sheriff McDonnell needs to hold his executives to the same standards (or higher) as line-level employees. Morale is deeply impacted when employees believe an executive is treated more favorably than others who commit the same violation of policy. We strongly believe McDonnell should demand higher standards from his executives, as they are the leaders and should lead by example.

LASD response: The Sheriff agrees with holding his executives to the highest standards. To this end, the Sheriff will express this position at EPC with his command staff and ensure this message reaches all of his managers. If PPOA discovers disparate treatment between executives and line-level employees, the Sheriff will personally meet with PPOA leadership to address individual cases.

8 We recommend the Sheriff incorporate leadership training for all his executives that include leadership skills, motivation, morale, fair and equitable treatment of subordinates, POBRA and Meyers-Milias-Brown Act requirements.

LASD response: The Sheriff strongly agrees with the need for all managers to receive regular training. Recommendations have already been discussed at the Executive Planning Council level.

9 Sheriff McDonnell should hire a chief of staff who is committed to ensuring that all senior executives perform to the highest standards. The chief of staff must prevent senior executives from withholding information from the Sheriff, commonly done prior to EPC meetings. There should be no information withheld from the Sheriff.

LASD response: The Sheriff recently filled this position. The chief of staff will be, among other things, responsible for ensuring all executives perform at the highest standards. The Sheriff has made it clear to all of his executives that withholding information from him is unacceptable and inconsistent with his vision of a management team. He expects regular briefings and to be kept informed of all major issues.

10 Sheriff McDonnell should hire a chief of staff who participates in all executive-level discussions, including discipline and promotions, to ensure subordinate executives are acting as directed by the Sheriff and in the best interest of the Department.

LASD response: The new chief of staff is currently tasked with these responsibilities and involved in executive-level discussions.

11 A complaint process should be developed that allows employees to file complaints against supervisors and managers who retaliate or discriminate, or to report other abuses by management and/or peers. This complaint process should be managed through an outside entity such as the Office of Inspector General. OIG would decide who should handle the investigation (e.g., IAB, ICIB, District Attorney, Attorney General, FBI). This will enhance accountability and transparency throughout the Department.

LASD response: The Sheriff will review this recommendation further. It is a concern that our internal processes may not be sufficient or may not be effective if employees do not feel comfortable making complaints internally. The Sheriff will also discuss this recommendation with OIG.

12 The promotional exam process for sergeants and lieutenants should be changed to promote in numerical order based on the scores of the candidates. This will eliminate favoritism, allegations of discrimination and morale problems resulting when a person with a lower score is selected over a person with a higher score.

LASD response: The promotional process has been changed considerably to eliminate abuses such as favoritism and discrimination. The Sheriff will discuss this recommendation with the Department exam experts at Personnel.

13 Promotions for captains and above need to be at the prerogative of the Sheriff. However, to prevent favoritism and bias by senior executives, the Sheriff should demand his executives make recommendations based on merit. To ensure this is done, we recommend convening a joint committee with Department executives and PPOA to periodically review all applicants and their qualifications. The committee would then forward a list of the top qualified applicants to the Sheriff for selection. The list should include the qualifications as well as concerns or issues for each candidate so the Sheriff can select based on full information about each candidate. This will place checks and balances in the process while still providing the Sheriff with the ultimate decision on who occupies the executive ranks.

LASD response: Promotions for executive levels include input from superior executives. For captain promotions, all division chiefs provide input and should be receiving input from their commanders and captains. As discussed with PPOA, the Sheriff agrees that the application process should contain more information about accomplishments, examples of leadership and community involvement, and other pertinent information so merit selections are more complete and thorough.

14 Training is almost nonexistent due to the staffing shortage. Lack of training will eventually lead to poor decisions, mistakes and officer safety issues that will result in higher litigation costs. The Department must resume training, starting with those employees in the highest-risk assignments (i.e. patrol and custody).

LASD response: This will always be a priority for the Sheriff. Unfortunately, vacancies affect the Department's ability to provide training at the levels desired. That is why the Department will make hiring a top priority.

15 A professional chief financial officer is needed to oversee the Department budget. Though well-intentioned, police officers are not qualified to make financial decisions for a department with almost a \$3 billion budget. The Department needs a professional CFO to audit its current budget and expenditures, and ensure the Department is maximizing and prioritizing how it spends money.

LASD response: The Sheriff agrees with this recommendation and is in the process of filling this position.

16 With the recent assaults on police officers across the country, our deputies are woefully unprepared for such attacks from heavily armed suspects. We recommend an immediate increase in AR-15 deployment and training. We also recommend that AR-15s be issued to individuals who have been trained in the weapon so they are familiar with that specific weapon. Currently, deputies retrieve any AR-15 from the armory and take it out in the field, even though they have no idea how that particular weapon is sighted or how it shoots. By issuing the weapon to a specific individual, they will be cared for and be familiar with all aspects of that particular weapon.

LASD response: The Sheriff agrees with this recommendation. The increase in deployment and training for AR-15s is currently underway.

17 The jail staffing model should be re-examined. The custody assistant classification should include a career path, and their duties should be clearly defined from the duties of a custody deputy. Morale is severely impacted when a deputy and custody assistant do the same job but the custody assistant is paid much less than a deputy. This problem was amplified by the Dual-Track system created a few years ago. PPOA made recommendations several years ago on methods to improve custody operations following the implementation of Dual Track. You can go to www.ppoa.com to read this report.

LASD response: The Sheriff recognizes the concerns by personnel in custody facilities, both sworn and non-sworn. He is willing to make changes that would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our jails. Sheriff McDonnell is willing to review PPOA's recommendations.

18 Since custody assistant responsibilities have been expanded, they no longer "assist." They serve as correctional officers and should be appropriately named. We recommend "correctional officer," which is the title on their POST certificate from the State of California and is more aligned to their current duties. Custody assistants should have a career path. We recommend bonus positions for those who have greater responsibilities, such as training officer for newly hired custody assistants.

LASD response: The Sheriff is cognizant of the concern over the name "custody assistant" and is open to suggestions to align the job title to duties. Sheriff McDonnell is willing to review PPOA's recommendations.

19 Current employees should be given priority for career advancement over new hires. Specifically, non-sworn personnel (e.g., custody assistants, security officers) should be given priority to enter the background process to become deputy sheriffs.

LASD response: Sheriff McDonnell is having Sheriff's Personnel Administration review current processes to better streamline the security officer/custody assistant transition to the rank of deputy sheriff.

20 Morale at the unit should be a core component for every captain and above for their annual performance evaluations. Part of their evaluation should include a review of the morale of their subordinates as well as a review by the unions.

LASD response: It is important to the Sheriff that Unit Commanders promote positive morale within their unit, and he is committed to working on this together. The Sheriff knows this is a very tough time for law enforcement nationally and here at home. Low morale has a negative impact on the effectiveness of the Department. The Department will monitor all executives on their leadership skills, including the morale of subordinates. However, making it part of an annual performance evaluation may not be the most effective way to ensure management is performing their jobs effectively. We are open to further discussion on this topic. Morale is very important to the Sheriff and communication is key. He is very proud of his sworn and professional personnel, and is very aware of the unique and diverse challenges facing them every day. He wants all of his executives to include morale as an important factor in decision-making.

21 When discipline is necessary, it should be administered with consistency and tinged with compassion and mercy. Unjust or inconsistent discipline is harmful to morale and stifles work performance through fear of discipline. Discipline should not be influenced by political pressure, special interest groups, media hype or other factors unrelated to the actual conduct of the employee.

LASD response: This is a tenet of Sheriff McDonnell's administration. The Sheriff agrees with the conclusion raised by this survey question.

He expects his executives to make compassionate decisions based on the facts and not outside influences.

22 Sheriff McDonnell should immediately rescind Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/030.14, Management Decisions. This policy is the “Code of Silence for Managers” policy, which prohibits managers from expressing opinions contrary to official Department positions/decisions when testifying. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Department executives who disagree with decisions made by the Department do not express their opinion even when ordered to testify truthfully in court, civil service hearings or legal proceedings. A better way to get Department executives “on board” with management decisions is to simply make the right decisions in the first place. Then, if an executive disagrees with the decision, he/she can openly disagree and the Department should be able to defend its position. By creating a policy that prohibits managers from speaking freely, the Department is intentionally silencing opinions, and that is a recipe for bad management. In fact, the opposite should be encouraged. The Sheriff should encourage his executives to be ethical leaders and to speak out when they see something they believe is wrong.

LASD response: The purpose of this policy was to ensure all executives have the opportunity to provide input into the decision-making process, but once a “lawful” decision is made, Department executives will support that decision. If this policy is not accomplishing its purpose or it is having unintended consequences, the Sheriff is open to discussion on ways to modify the policy to meet its intended purpose.

23 Along the lines of the previous recommendation, we also recommend the Office of Inspector General be tasked with investigating misconduct by County Counsel and third-party lawyers representing the County who have reportedly encouraged Department members to falsely testify under oath. OIG should interview every LASD executive and other employees who testified on behalf of the County over the past two years. It is believed that these attorneys have encouraged Sheriff’s Department employees to give false testimony in support of the County’s defense and specifically advised employees to state they do not recall when faced with a question harmful to the County. Such “coaching” is not only unethical, it is illegal. This practice must stop immediately. The Sheriff should ask the Board of Supervisors to initiate an investigation, and the Sheriff should advise his employees to cooperate fully with the investigation.

LASD response: This will be reviewed with County Counsel and the Office of Inspector General.

In order to truly reform the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, there needs to be a complete culture change that encourages honesty, ethics and integrity. That message starts from the top, and Department executives must be held to the highest standards. The Sheriff needs to place morale and the treatment of employees higher on his list of priorities. If morale continues to fall, the Department will never be successful at restoring pride in the organization and will never gain the trust of employees or the public. PPOA is a strong proponent of collaborating to address and fix problems with the Department and its operation. We encourage the Sheriff to work with us, not against us, in trying to improve the overall effectiveness of the Department, and to make fairness and accountability a priority at all levels. PPOA

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