

# A Brief Overview of The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department



## Senate Transportation Committee

02/24/2011

EXHIBIT C Senate Committee on Transportation

Date: 2/24/2011 page 1 of 4

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department was formed in 1973 with the consolidation of the Las Vegas City Police Department and the Clark County Sheriff's Office. Since that time we have grown to become the largest law enforcement agency in the state of Nevada and the fifteenth largest police department in the country. The Current sheriff of Clark County is Sheriff Doug Gillespie.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's jurisdiction covers over seven thousand five hundred square miles of Clark County. We service a population of approximately one million four hundred thousand residents and an average tourist population of over thirty million people a year. On average we respond to approximately half a million calls for service a year and receive close to one million 9-1-1 calls per year. Our agency employs two thousand nine hundred and eighty one police officers and one thousand five hundred and eleven civilians. In addition, we employ eight hundred and twenty eight corrections officers and three hundred and twenty civilians at the Clark County Detention Center.

The traffic section of The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department consists of one hundred and forty eight traffic officers, seven fatal investigators, and four hit and run detectives whose primary responsibilities are to enforce traffic laws, investigate traffic accidents, and ensure the safety of our roadways. On average our agency issues over four hundred thousand traffic citations a year and investigates over twenty four thousand traffic accidents. We also conduct directed traffic enforcement based on citizen complaints at locations where high numbers of accidents occur.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department has five main goals. These goals are:

- 1) To prevent, reduce and disrupt crime and terrorism.
- 2) To recruit, train and develop our people.
- 3) To initiate timely and open communication.
- 4) To develop and implement solutions to improve traffic safety.
- 5) To effectively use innovation and technology.

The following strategies have been used to improve traffic safety in our jurisdiction:

- 1) In an effort to reduce congestion caused by traffic accidents, it has become our policy to move minor non injury accidents to a safe location off of the roadway. This also reduces the risk of secondary accidents caused by motorists who are looking at the first accident and not paying attention to the roadway.
- 2) Our agency has launched an effort to educate the public about pedestrian and vehicle accidents. This has been accomplished through local media releases, public service announcements, literature distribution, and monthly First Tuesday events at our area commands.
- 3) The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department has increased DUI enforcement in an effort to reduce fatal traffic accidents. This enforcement includes monthly DUI checkpoints, and increased communications with the District Attorney's Office to address repeat offenders. Our officers also participate in the Every Fifteen Minutes Program which is aimed at educating high school students about the consequences of driving under the influence.
- 4) All officers on our agency have been directed to enforce traffic laws. With detectives, patrol officers, community policing officers, and traffic officers enforcing violations together our roads can become safer to travel.
- 5) Our agency is constantly researching new technology, engaging in intelligence led policing, and looking for new ways to better use our resources in these hard economic times. One example of how we are using our resources more efficiently can be seen in our Joining Forces program. Officers from Nevada Highway Patrol, North Las Vegas Police Department, School District Police, City Marshals, and Henderson Police Department work together with Metro in areas where our jurisdictions overlap.
- 6) Finally, we strive to be partners with the community. Our crossing guard program helps ensure the safety of our children as they make their way to and from school, and our Metro volunteers assists with handicap parking enforcement and neighborhood outreach programs.

In 2005, Clark County Voters approved a sales tax increase to hire more police officers. The More Cops sales tax was implemented in 2007, and as a result our agency has hired over five hundred and eighty police officers. Eighty percent of these officers work in a uniformed capacity on our streets. Additional police officers allow for proactive policing, more thorough investigations, and faster response time to calls. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department currently has an average response time of four minutes.

The ability to put more police officers on our streets has been a contributing factor to the reduction of crime in Clark County. Since 2007, violent crime has dropped over twenty seven percent. Property crime is down over thirty five

percent. Traffic fatalities are down almost five percent, but there is still a lot of work to be done. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department continues to look for ways to improve. We are determined to make Las Vegas the safest city in America.