

CITY OF OAKLAND

Memorandum

TO: Identification Division
ATTN: Frank I. Alliger
FROM: Property & Evidence Unit
DATE: 31 January 2008

RE: Property and Evidence Unit, Annual Report 2007

Staffing

The Property & Evidence Unit is responsible for receiving, processing, maintaining, releasing and the disposing of property/evidence, monies, hazardous materials and all types of weapons taken pursuant to criminal investigations and that are being held for court exhibits. Reasonable effort will be made to return found/ safekeeping property and evidence that have been authorized for release, to the rightful owner. Police Property Specialists will protect and safeguard all evidence under their control. The Property & Evidence Unit shall apply provisions of City Ordinances, State and Federal Codes, as they relate to the '*Chain of Custody*' of such evidence.

Property and Evidence Unit Staff provide the following services:

- Retrieve and release evidence/property to law enforcement and/or to the courts for investigative purposes, presentation and/or for lab analysis.
- Release evidence/property to their prospective owners according to established procedures.
- Testify in legal proceedings regarding the '*Chain of Custody*' and the preservation of the evidence.
- Prepare, and display physical evidence to the assigned court personnel, (DA, DA Investigators and Defense Attorneys) during the discovery process.
- Assign lockers and related equipment.
- Distribute police equipment to officers preparing for and returning from duty.

The Unit operates under the Department's Bureau of Investigations Commander Deputy Chief Howard Jordan. The Identification Division Manager is Frank Alliger and the Unit is under the direct supervision of Police Property Supervisor, Rachelle Vinson.

This is a professional non-sworn classification within the Police Department. Duties are performed within the confines of the Property & Evidence Unit, located in the basement of the Police Administration Building. The Property & Evidence Unit operates 365 days per year from 0630 hours until 2230 hours.

One person was hired and started on 29 Jan 07 and the second person started working on 9 Apr 07. This brought our manning up top six.

Authorize Staffing	Authorized Number	Actual Staffing	Comments
Police Property Supervisor	One	One	
Police Property Specialists	Six	Six	
Sworn	None	None	

Retirements:

Promotions

There were no promotions in the Property and Evidence Unit for the year 2007.

Long Term Injury/Illness Absences

One person was on light duty from 02 January to 27 April due to medical issues due to her pregnancy and on maternity leave from 30 April to 17 September. On person was on FLMA from 10 September to 29 November 2007.

Fiscal Management Report

Category	Appropriations	Annual Expenditures	Difference
O & M	427,770.98	82,297.32	338,560.41
Civilian Personnel	612,144.00	522,750.66	89,393.34
Over Time	10,040.00	54,987.66	<44,947.66>
Grants	0	0	0
Sworn Personnel	0	0	0

Narrative Explanation for Negative Balances

Negative balances have occurred because the Unit is under funded:

- The Unit also provides police equipment and supplies to the entire department. Several of these items supplied are mandated by CAL OSHA. *Examples:* Protective latex gloves, needle & syringe safety tubes and sani-wipes (Germicidal disposable wipes containing a preventive solution for contagious disease). These items are expensive.
- Additional items are purchased and dispensed, but not used by the Unit. These include, but are not limited to: Moving citations, parking citations, narcotics envelopes, crime scene tape, batteries and first aid supplies.

The Unit is staffed 365 days per year so the following accounts fall into negative balance due to the lack of funding:

- Shift pay is a negotiated agreement with the City and Locals 21 and 790. Shift pay also needs to be funded as three permanent employees work shifts other than second watch.
- Holiday Worked: Comp. and Pay
- Meal allowance
- Backfill for vacations, sickness and unforeseen events, such as family deaths.
- Acting supervisory pay also needs to be included in the budget

Training Received – 2007

Assigned Police Property Specialists and the Police Property Supervisor have been trained and are in compliance with the required Negotiated Settlement Agreement.

Training Received	# Persons Trained	# Hours Trained
California Association of Property & Evidence Training Conference	1	32
C.A.P.E. Chapter Training	3	88
City of Oakland – City Wide Training		
➤ You and your retirement	2	6
➤ Deferred Compensation Seminars	2	3
2007DOJ Firearms Law Update Training	3	16
PEU training	5	40

Significant Accomplishments

The Unit’s personnel should be commended on their ability to handle the increase in responsibilities:

Examples of increased duties:

- The implantation of the NSA Task 27 from SO 8221 to DGO C-8.
- Revised OC computerized database.
- Due to the continued IBIS and the Cold Hit Programs, Crime Lab requests have increased. An additional impact has been the changes in the ‘*Statute of Limitations*’ laws for Sexual Assault offenses. Evidence has to be retained for a longer duration and additional freezer storage solutions have been a challenge, especially with the lack of increased funding, but additional freezer boxes were purchased, loaded and delivered to the offsite storage facility.

The following accomplishments occurred within the Unit:

- 386 items were retrieved, processed, tagged and sent to the auction
- 500 firearms were destroyed
- Money processed in: \$1,141,045.57
- Money processed out: \$495,425.66
- The safe was inventoried and reconciled
- Firearms cage was inventoried and reconciled

Computerized databases were maintained and upgraded for the following:

- Firearms received, released and destroyed
- Liquid vials of blood stored in the Refrigerator
- Evidence items that are stored at the off site Auxiliary Freezer Storage Facility were inventoried and reconciled and the database was revised to include more information

Individual or Unit Achievements & Awards

One employees attended the 17th Annual Training Seminar from the California Association of Property and Evidence received certificates of Completion.

Productivity Performance Data

This Unit meets no criteria listed in G.O.A-7 III 5-6, under the categories of citations issued, vehicles towed, arrests made and community meeting attended as these categories are not job functions within the Property and Evidence Unit. However, the following applies for performance data as reflected in the ‘Statistics’ portion, as follows:

Evidence Processed

Property Records	IN	13807
Property Records	OUT	4704

Items	IN	32512
Items	OUT	9389

Released		1516
Auctioned		386
Destroyed		6848

Firearms Processed

Hand Guns Received		904
Long Guns Received		415

Hand Guns Released		115
Long Guns Released		24

Hand Guns Destroyed		346
Long Guns Destroyed		154

Money Processed

Total Money Received	\$1,141,045.57
Money Released as Evidence	\$415401.24
Money Released to the City Treasury	0.0
Money Released to Asset Forfeiture	0.0
Money Released to Adult Probation	\$80,024.42
Total Money Released	\$495,425.66

Lost/Found Processed

Lost Property Reports	1124
Found Property Reports	1174

OC Issued

Small OC Canisters	165
Large OC Canisters	73

Other Performance Data

There has been no need for corrective action (UOF, discharge of firearm, personnel complaints, vehicle pursuits or preventable collisions).

There were no problems requiring corrective action.

No employee assigned to the unit received any citizen and/or Internal Affairs complaints.

State of the Unit

The physical space within the unit is at maximum capacity. We are taking in more items they we are purging. Needed backlogs are barely being addressed and the unit has run out of available storage space for incoming evidence. Currently the unit pays \$1,571.50 per month for off-site biological freezer storage for evidence. This expense will substantially increase in the 2008 budget cycle, as additional storage boxes are needed. There is also very little available space in the gun cage for the storage of firearms. Currently there is no available space in the warehouse for incoming dry storage evidence.

Low authorized staffing of the unit couple with the additional responsibilities of property issuance (radios, shotguns... etc) allows little time for purging of items. Our authorized staffing is so low that most absences require overtime just to maintain operations. This is further aggravated by the fact Property Releases are not being received from investigators to dispose of property.

In 2007 an audit of the unit was conducted by Evidence Control Systems. The audit stated, "That like the understaffed units in other police departments, the Oakland Property and Evidence Unit staff has minimal time to purge and dispose of the inventory." The audit went on to state that, "The purging process will necessitate a substantial budgetary and personnel commitment; however it must be accomplished as the task will not go away." The audit found our staffing woefully inadequate and recommended that the authorized staffing be increased by 5 additional Property Specialists, 1 additional Property Supervisor and upgrade the current supervisor's position to Manager. The audit also pointed out deficiencies in process and procedures, workplace environmental and safety issues, and a lack of a computer tracking system.

Plans and Goals for 2008

In 2008 we are going to start implementing the changes recommended by the audit with the following items being of priority:

- Increase authorized staff, and hire and train new personnel so we can resume 24hr operation
- Pass on additional duties not related to handling of evidence to BFO.
- Install new security system to include coverage of newly annexed space in the jail.
- Configure/install shelving in new jail space
- Move long term storage items to new jail space freeing space in the warehouse to work on reconfiguring space for to be better used.
- Reconfigure guns storage areas to increase capacity within existing space.
- Complete Packaging Manual for distribution.
- Finalize SOP Manual for PEU for publication.
- Identify and purchase a computerized evidence management system.
- Design a purging procedure and begin an inventory purge.

Purchase a dual deck cassette/CD/DVD recorder so that the Investigators can duplicate audio, CD's and video tapes within the unit, thus not removing the originals, insuring that the originals remain in evidence until needed for court exhibits.

Vision for the Unit

The vision for the unit is to recreate the unit so it is open 24/7 and whose sole responsibility is the management of property and evidence; to establish uniform evidence packaging procedures so that existing space can be used more efficiently; to establish policy and procedures to ensure all incoming property is properly processed and stored; and to computerize our management system so that all functions of unit operated more efficiently.

We must also begin an extensive inventory and purge to relieve our storage problem. This means that additional positions will need to be created and funded along with additional funds allotted to complete the task. The additional positions will allow us to return to return to 24/7 operation which will enhance the quality control and also allow production work to be completed during

the slower hours of the night. It will also reduce the amount of errors being made by the officers when evidence is deposited. Face to face contact during the depositing of evidence ensures the *Chain-of Custody* and that errors would be immediately corrected during the submission process.

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Approved and Forwarded,

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