

STANISLAUS COUNTY
2023-2024 CIVIL GRAND JURY
FINAL REPORT
JUNE 2024





Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury

Post Office Box 3387 • Modesto, California 95353 • (209) 525-4252 • Fax (209) 558-8170

The Honorable Carrie M. Stephens
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of California
800 11th Street
Modesto, CA 95354

The Honorable Judge Stephens,

This term's Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury (CGJ) has been exceptionally busy and productive. With the much-appreciated cooperation of the County Chief Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller, and the Court, we successfully made beneficial adjustments to juror compensation and the CGJ's budget. We also extend our gratitude to the District Attorney's office for providing legal advice to the CGJ.

Additionally, the County acquired dedicated laptops for all jurors. For the first time in Stanislaus County, beginning with the incoming CGJ of 2024-2025, all jurors will have laptops exclusively for their work. Previously, jurors were required to use their own laptops and computers while maintaining confidentiality as required by law. These laptops will not only facilitate maintaining confidentiality but also make it easier for jurors to access their calendars, investigative documents, agendas, and draft reports. We extend a special thanks to the Court's Information Technology Central Department for finding the time and staff to oversee the acquisition of the hardware and software for the laptops, administering the system, and developing a training session for incoming jurors.

Throughout the term, the CGJ Procedures Manual was amended, with many non-substantive changes made towards the end, resulting in a substantial improvement in the manual. Additionally, the CGJ observed the March elections, ensuring a fair and transparent process.

Although this published report may appear thin in content, this CGJ worked diligently throughout its term. CGJs have wide discretion regarding the matters they choose to investigate. Even after completing an investigation, a CGJ may decide that more work is needed before a report beneficial to the public and the agency in question is worthy of publication. CGJs are permitted to pass along evidence acquired during their investigation to the next term's CGJ.

Lastly, the unwavering support of our CGJ Administrative Assistant and the Assistant Court Executive Officer did not go unnoticed throughout the term. Their guidance and support were invaluable whenever challenges arose.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Olson
Foreperson
2023-24 Civil Grand Jury

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GRAND JURY PANEL 2023-2024

Janice Bridgeford	Modesto	Debee Loyd	Modesto
Joan Clendenin	Modesto	Blanca Marin Candelario	Modesto
Bob Fields	Patterson	Shirley Martin	Modesto
Jerry Fouts	Oakdale	Tim Moran	Modesto
Nancy Grant	Modesto	Jeffrey Olson	Riverbank
Scott Hicks	Oakdale	Robert Schuler	Modesto
Carl Hill	Oakdale	Steve Webb	Oakdale
Mickey Johnson	Modesto		
Melissa Kelly	Modesto		
Mike Loeffler	Modesto		

Foreperson.....Jeffrey Olson

Foreperson Pro Tem.....Scott Hicks

Recording Secretary.....Shirley Martin

**2023 – 2024 Stanislaus County Civil Grand
Jury Detention Facilities Report**

2023-2024 STANISLAUS COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY DETENTION FACILITIES REPORT

SUMMARY

Pursuant to California Penal Code (CPC) sec. 919(b): “The grand jury shall inquire into the conditions and management of the prisons within the county.”

BACKGROUND

The Criminal Justice Committee of the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury conducted onsite inspections of the following facilities:

Stanislaus County Safety Center, October 17, 2023

Stanislaus County REACT Facility, October 17, 2023

In addition to the above noted facilities, the committee also toured:

Stanislaus County Coroner Facility, October 3, 2023

Stanislaus County Juvenile Detention Facility, November 14, 2023

The Civil Grand Jury would like to thank Stanislaus County Sheriff Jeff Dirkse and his staff for facilitating the above tours.

**SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSES TO THE
2022-2023 STANISLAUS COUNTY CIVIL GRAND
JURY**

City of Oakdale Police Department
Patrol Officers Out of Compliance with Mandated Training
Case # 23-10C

Reason for Investigation

Prompted by a citizen complaint, the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury reviewed the training records of the Oakdale Police Department to verify if the department was in compliance with mandated training.

Agency Asked to Respond

- ❖ Oakdale City Council: **F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7.**

Individual Invited to Respond

- ❖ The City of Oakdale Chief of Police: **F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6, F7, F8, F9, R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6, R7.**

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*
Responding Agency: Oakdale City Council								

F1. In the latter part of 2021, half of OPD patrol officers were out of compliance with mandated DV training pursuant to state law.	X			R1. OPD peace officers be fully compliant with mandated training by December 31, 2024.	X			
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<p>F2. As of January 1, 2023, a minimum of four out of fourteen OPD patrol officers were out of compliance with mandated training (CPT, PSP, DV) pursuant to state law and POST regulations.</p>	X		<p>R2. OPD peace officers attend the forty-hour STOP course.</p>	X			
<p>F3. OPD did not maintain a detailed record of the reason(s) for non-compliance with POST regulatory mandates due to Covid-19 concerns, as recommended by POST Bulletin No. 2020-14.</p>	X		<p>R3. OPD should encourage a representative of OPD to attend a POST Training Managers Course by December 31, 2023.</p>		X		
<p>F4. OPD's continued failure to require its patrol officers to complete continuing professional training courses (CPT, PSP), as mandated by state law and POST regulations, could jeopardize OPD's good standing with POST.</p>		X	<p>R4. OPD should encourage a representative of OPD to attend POST Training Managers Workshops when available in Stanislaus County.</p>		X		
<p>F5. The failure to keep OPD patrol officers in compliance with training as mandated by state law and POST regulations makes it possible that the citizens of Oakdale may, on occasion, suffer from less effective policing.</p>		X	<p>R5. OPD should review and revise its Training Policy No. 203 to be consistent with the department's stated goals and mandates of section 203.9 no later than December 31, 2023.</p>				X
<p>F6. OPD lacks internal enforcement by management of its Training Policy No. 203.</p>			<p>R6. OPD should review and revise its Master Training Plan no later than December 31, 2023.</p>	X			
<p>F7. OPD does not follow its Training Policy No. 203, as its Training Committee does not meet on a regular basis.</p>			<p>R7. OPD should revise its Master Training Plan to include domestic violence mandated training where</p>	X			

			appropriate by December 31, 2023.				
F8. OPD's Training Policy No. 203, which includes a list of excused absences from mandatory training, is missing Family Leave Act of 1993 and military leave.	X						
F9. OPD's Master Training Plan does not include domestic violence mandated training in its "Police Officer, Field Services" classification.	X						

Conclusion

The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury has concluded that the Oakdale City Council has responded in a thorough and timely fashion

AUG 24 2023



Office of the City Council

BY: _____

280 North Third Avenue • Oakdale, CA 95361 • Ph: (209) 845-3571 • Fax: (209) 847-6834

Finance Department

280 N. Third Ave.
Oakdale, CA 95361
(209) 845-3571
(209) 847-6834 Fax

**Facility Rentals &
Recreation Division**

(209) 845-3591
(209) 847-6834 Fax

**PUBLIC SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

455 S. 5th Ave.
Oakdale, CA 95361
(209) 848-4344 Fax

**Administration,
Engineering &
Maintenance
Divisions**

(209) 845-3600

**Building & Planning
Division**

(209) 845-3625

POLICE DEPARTMENT

250 N. Third Ave.
Oakdale, CA 95361
(209) 847-2231
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FIRE DEPARTMENT

SCFPD Headquarters:
3318 Topeka Street
Riverbank
(209) 869-7470
(209) 869-7475 Fax
Station No. 5:
325 East "G" St.
(209) 322-3809
(209) 322-3723 Fax
Station No. 4:
450 S. Willowood Dr.
Oakdale, CA 95361
(209) 847-5904
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**CITY OF OAKDALE
WEBSITE**
www.oakdalegov.com

E-MAIL
info@ci.oakdale.ca.us

VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL

August 22, 2023

Honorable Carrie M. Stephens
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, County of Stanislaus
P.O. Box 3488
Modesto, CA 95353

Re: Grand Jury Report "City of Oakdale Police Department Patrol Officers Out of Compliance with Mandated Training"

Dear Judge Stephens:

The City of Oakdale appreciates the efforts of the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ) and the service they have provided to our community. We highly value their input and dedication to reviewing our training practices. The City has reviewed the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury's report titled "City of Oakdale Police Department Patrol Officers Out of Compliance with Mandated Training" and is providing this letter as the City's official response.

In its report, the Grand Jury found that some officers were out of compliance with mandated Domestic Violence training during the latter half of 2021. The review also found that on January 1, 2023, some officers were out of compliance with Continuing Professional Training and Perishable Skills Training.

The OPD Management Team and Training Unit agree that officers enrolled in ongoing training are better equipped with prevailing practices and skills, enabling them to respond to the job's challenges and perform their duties proficiently. OPD is committed to adhering to Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) training requirements, and state-mandated training to ensure the safety and well-being of our community and our officers. We work tirelessly to improve our policies and procedures to better serve the needs of our community.

The SCCGJ asserted that OPD lacks effort to schedule mandated training. OPD respectfully disagrees with this assertion. There were significant challenges in delivering a usual standard of training to smaller departments due to unprecedented events brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. OPD and other agencies within the state and nation were faced with the necessity to transition from traditional training practices to something that we were not familiar with, all while maintaining a primary focus on the safety of our community and the health of our personnel. We recognize and regret that these changes, compelled by the pandemic, impeded some aspects of our training, which included POST-

mandated training and Domestic Violence training. We aim to consider these hurdles as learning experiences in our ongoing quest to improve our training system.

Furthermore, we would like to highlight that the appointment of the new Chief of Police on October 25, 2021, brought a renewed focus on training and professional development within our organization. Under his leadership, we have implemented improvements to our training programs, aiming to enhance their effectiveness and address identified shortcomings. Chief Ramar placed a focus on getting all officers into compliance with POST-mandated training. Due to the renewed focus, OPD personnel attended over 2500 hours of POST training in 2022. This is double the POST training hours of 2021, which was approximately 1100 hours. Chief Ramar also implemented the LEFTA Training System, which is a software program that tracks all of the OPD officers' training through internal documents and POST EDI (refer to attached LEFTA overview). The system is a web-based software program that combines all training records in a single comprehensive application. This system was implemented to assist the STC and management in keeping officers compliant with POST-mandated and State-mandated training. This project was initiated in August 2022 and commissioned in January 2023. It has proven to be a valuable asset in managing their personnel. LEFTA includes a ninety-day warning system that notifies STC, management, and the officer when their POST-mandated and state-mandated training is going to expire.

As stated in the SCCGJ report finding 2, Oakdale Police Department Training Coordinator and management recognized that starting January 1, 2023, there would be four officers out of compliance with this training. OPD proactively addressed it in 2022 to ensure the officers would receive the training in early 2023. The four officers completed the training on or before June 5, 2023, and before the release of the SCCGJ Report. Oakdale Police Management takes training seriously and is enforcing its own training policy. Every police officer that is capable of attending training has already attended the POST-mandated training or is scheduled to attend the training prior to December 31, 2024.

In the SCCGJ report, the SCCGJ compared the training record of OPD to the two largest law enforcement agencies in the county. OPD is a significantly smaller agency that must rely on larger agencies for various training, as do most smaller police agencies. This is due to staff size and budget. Modesto PD and Stanislaus County Sheriff have large training units. They are nearly self-sustaining at obtaining their training, making it easier and more efficient for them to obtain training during difficult times. It is worth mentioning that comparing an agency that has twenty-three officers to an agency that is allotted 210 positions and 208 positions is not a valid or fair comparison. These agencies are approximately nine times larger than OPD. Comparing to like-sized agencies with similar training abilities would give a better picture of OPD's status. If compared objectively with like-sized agencies, one can see that OPD is consistent with other departments in the area. Other departments experienced the same difficulties in obtaining training that OPD experienced. We would suggest that these were difficulties, not failures to train.

Chief Ramar contacted several local agencies regarding their POST compliance. An agency in the area shared that their police department's allotted full-time positions are approximately the same as Oakdale. That department also had a minimum of four police officers out of compliance starting January 1, 2023. That department's statistics with compliance are nearly identical to OPD statistics that the SCCGJ published. Another agency in the area, which is approximately double the department size of our department, shared that on January 1, 2023, they had nine officers out of compliance. The out-of-compliance ratio for this department on January 1, 2023, is nearly identical

to OPD. Another police department in the area which is approximately three times larger than Oakdale, shared that on January 1, 2023, had thirteen officers out of compliance. Again, the out-of-compliance ratio on January 1, 2023, is very similar to OPD. It appears that OPD was not the only agency that experienced challenges obtaining training during and post COVID-19.

Training compliance of nearby agencies of similar size:

Oakdale PD	23 Full-time officers	4 Out of compliance	17.4%
Agency A	25 Full-time officers	4 Out of compliance	16%
Agency B	52 Full-time officers	9 Out of compliance	17.3%
Agency C	83 Full-time officers	13 Out of compliance	15.7%

These agencies willingly cooperated with the Oakdale Police Department by sharing their data, but requested that their agency names be withheld. Out of cooperation and respect, we agreed not to share the agency names.

POST regulation 1005(d)(2)(A)2 reads as follows:

2. First-Time Appointments A grace period with no CPT requirements, is granted when an individual is appointed for the first time to one of the subsection 1005(d)(1) positions. This grace period is the time period between the individual's appointment date and the first occurrence of the CPT Anniversary Date. It is granted to allow completion of entry-level requirements that do not count towards CPT.

POST regulation 1005(d)(2)(A)3 reads as follows:

3. Reappointments/Lateral Transfers A grace period, with no CPT requirement, is granted for an individual rehired into one of the subsection 1005(d)(1) positions with the same department or who transfers to a different department. This grace period is the time between the date reappointed and the next cycle CPT Anniversary Date.

These regulations indicate that POST grants a grace period for first-time appointed officers and lateral police officers. When analyzing the compliance report for those officers out of compliance as of January 1, 2023, two officer fall within those grace periods and would not be required to complete the CPT until the following training cycle, which is 2023 – 2024. When taking this into consideration, then the minimum out-of-compliance would be two, not four, and the percentage would change from 17.4% to 8.7%.

Oakdale Police Department personnel recognize that in today’s complex training environment of law enforcement officers, one crucial aspect is ensuring that they remain in good standing with POST. Maintaining good standing with POST is paramount for the organization to operate with confidence and retain or earn the trust of stakeholders and the community. OPD Training Coordinator and Management worked closely with their POST Auditor, have throughout the years, and more so during their annual audits. The most recent annual audit of training and hiring practices was completed on December 2, 2022 (see attachment below). The POST auditor did not and has not recently indicated that OPD was in jeopardy of losing its good standing with POST.

The SCCGJ asserted that OPD does not follow its training policy No. 203 as its training committee does not meet on a regular basis. We believe that when this assertion was made, there was a misunderstanding by the SCCGJ of the purpose and scope of a training committee. The training committee, as described in the policy, is not a permanent or required committee. The training

committee is only formed on a temporary or as-needed basis, according to policy. OPD policy 203.6 states the following:

The Training Manager may establish a Training Committee, on a temporary or as-needed basis, which will serve to assist with identifying training needs for the Department.

The Training Committee shall be comprised of at least three members, with the senior ranking member of the committee acting as the chairperson. Members should be selected based on their abilities at post-incident evaluation and at assessing related training needs. The Training Manager may remove or replace members of the committee at his/her discretion.

The Training Committee should review certain incidents to determine whether training would likely improve future outcomes or reduce or prevent the recurrence of the undesirable issues related to the incident. Specific incidents the Training Committee should review include, but are not limited to:

- a. Any incident involving the death or serious injury of an employee.
- b. Incidents involving a high risk of death, serious injury or civil liability.
- c. Incidents identified by a supervisor as appropriate to review to identify possible training needs.

When the training committee is active, the Training Committee should convene on a regular basis as determined by the Training Manager to review the identified incidents. The committee shall determine by consensus whether a training need exists and then submit written recommendations of its findings to the Training Manager. The recommendation should not identify specific facts of any incidents, such as identities of employees involved or the date, time and location of the incident, but should focus on the type of training being recommended.

The Training Manager will consider the recommendations of the committee and determine what training should be addressed, taking into consideration the mission of the Department and available resources.

The training committee is not regularly formed because it is not mandatory based on policy. Since the new Chief of Police has been assigned, none of the aforementioned certain incidents have occurred, and therefore, the committee was not formed, and there were no regularly scheduled meetings.

However, I can assure you that the Standards and Training Coordinator (STC) has been actively meeting on a regular basis with the management staff. The STC operates with a strong sense of responsibility and dedication to ensure compliance with training. Furthermore, the Police Department Administrative Staff regularly holds staff meetings where recent training and upcoming training are discussed in an effort to keep all personnel informed. During these meetings, the staff is encouraged to have input and make recommendations regarding training and various other topics affecting the performance of the police department.

In closing, OPD values transparency and will actively address any issues that may arise to ensure that we maintain the trust and confidence of our community.

Below are the City's responses to the SCCGJ findings and recommendations.
Findings:

F1. In the latter part of 2021, half of OPD patrol officers were out of compliance with mandated DV training pursuant to state law.

F1. City Response: The City agrees with this finding.

F2. As of January 1, 2023, a minimum of four out of fourteen OPD patrol officers were out of compliance with mandated training (CPT, PSP, DV) pursuant to state law and POST regulations.

F2. City Response: The City agrees with this finding. There was a minimum of four OPD patrol officers out of compliance with POST-mandated training. There were two officers out of compliance with state-mandated DV training. These officers that were out of compliance have received the POST-mandated training.

F3. OPD did not maintain a detailed record of the reason(s) for non-compliance with POST regulatory mandates due to Covid-19 concerns, as recommended by POST Bulletin No. 2020-14.

F3. City Response: The City agrees with this finding.

F4. OPD's continued failure to require its patrol officers to complete continuing professional training courses (CPT, PSP), as mandated by state law and POST regulations, could jeopardize OPD's good standing with POST.

F4. City Response: The City agrees that if continued failure to train occurs, then OPD's good standing with POST could be jeopardized, but the City disagrees that there was a continued failure to train. This is evidenced by the recent POST training hours completed in 2022, being double the amount of POST training hours completed in 2021, and the proactive approach used to get the four officers that were out of compliance on January 1, 2023, the mandated training in early 2023.

F5. The failure to keep OPD patrol officers in compliance with training as mandated by state law and POST regulations makes it possible that the citizens of Oakdale may, on occasion, suffer from less effective policing.

F5. City Response: The City agrees that if OPD was failing to meet POST mandates and state mandates that the citizens of Oakdale, on occasion, could suffer from less effective policing; however, we disagree that OPD was failing to keep patrol officers in compliance with training as mandated by state law and POST regulations. This is evidenced by the recent substantial increase in POST training hours from approximately 1100 hours in 2021 to over 2500 hours in 2022. These substantial training hours serve as empirical proof that our agency is diligently working to meet or exceed industry standards. We feel that by fulfilling the mandates, we have demonstrated our commitment to our community and our commitment to effective policing.

F6. OPD lacks internal enforcement by management of its Training Policy No. 203.

F6. City Response: The City disagrees with this finding. The Standards and Training Coordinator made significant progress in having officers attend the POST-mandated

training or scheduled for the POST-mandated training to get them in compliance. This occurred prior to the SCCGJ investigation and report.

- F7 OPD does not follow its Training Policy No. 203, as its Training Committee does not meet on a regular basis.

F7. City Response: The City disagrees with this finding. The training policy calls for a training committee when there are specific incidents that occur and should be addressed through training. None of those specific incidents have happened in recent times. The specific incidents are as follows:

- a. Any incident involving the death or serious injury of an employee.
- b. Incidents involving a high risk of death, serious injury or civil liability.
- c. Incidents identified by a supervisor as appropriate to review to identify possible training needs.

- F8. OPD's Training Policy No. 203, which includes a list of excused absences from mandatory training, is missing Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 and military leave.

F8. City Response: The City agrees with this finding and has added those leave excuses to their policy.

- F9. OPD's Master Training Plan does not include domestic violence mandated training in its "Police Officer, Field Services" classification.

F9. City Response: The City agrees with this finding. Domestic Violence training has been added to the master training plan.

Recommendations:

- R1. OPD peace officers be fully compliant with mandated training by December 31, 2024.

R1. City Response: This recommendation has been implemented and was implemented prior to receiving the SCCGJ report on June 15, 2023.

The SCCGJ reported that four officers were out of compliance starting January 1, 2023. Those four officers have since received the POST-mandated training. Currently, there are seventeen officers that are required to take CPT, PSP POST-mandated training. Out of the seventeen, twelve have already completed their training or are scheduled to attend training in 2023. Five are scheduled to attend CPT, PSP POST-mandated training in 2024. This schedule will keep all officers in compliance with POST-mandated training until the next POST training cycle, 2024 through 2025.

- R2. OPD peace officers attend the forty-hour STOP course.

R2. City Response: This recommendation has been implemented, and all OPD peace officers have attended the STOP training or are scheduled to attend the STOP training prior to receiving the SCCGJ report on June 15, 2023. However, OPD should not limit their ability to obtain training and should also consider using other agencies for training in the event they are not able to get all of their personnel scheduled for the Stanislaus County STOP course to keep them compliant.

R3. OPD should encourage a representative of OPD to attend a POST Training Managers Course by December 31, 2023.

R3. City Response: The current OPD Training Coordinator has previously attended a POST Training Managers course. However, OPD recognizes the always-changing and evolving trends in Law Enforcement, so the Training Coordinator is scheduled to attend another Training Managers course in November 2023.

R4. OPD should encourage a representative of OPD to attend POST Training Managers Workshops when available in Stanislaus County.

R4. City Response: The POST Training Managers Workshops are at various times/dates throughout the year. The OPD Training Coordinator last attended the Training Managers Workshop at the Stanislaus Sheriff's Regional Training Center in 2022. The OPD Training Coordinator will be attending the next meeting on August 30, 2023. Additionally, STC Castro attended the training managers' workshop on February 1, 2023.

R5. OPD should review and revise its Training Policy No. 203 to be consistent with the department's stated goals and mandates of section 203.9 no later than December 31, 2023.

R5. City Response: The City believes that the department's training policy 203 is consistent with its stated goals and mandates.

R6. OPD should review and revise its Master Training Plan no later than December 31, 2023.

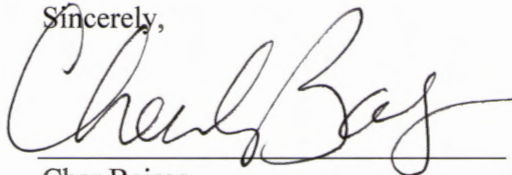
R6. City Response: This recommendation has already been implemented. We have included the previous training plan and the updated training plan.

R7. OPD should revise its Master Training Plan to include domestic violence mandated training where appropriate by December 31, 2023.

R7. City Response: This recommendation has already been implemented. We have included the previous training plan and the updated training plan.

The City of Oakdale appreciates the great work that the SCCGJ has provided to the residents of the City of Oakdale and Stanislaus County.

Sincerely,



Cher Bairos
Mayor
City of Oakdale

COMMISSION ON
PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

ROB BONTA
ATTORNEY GENERAL

December 27, 2022

Jerry J. Ramar, Chief
Oakdale Police Department
245 N. Second Avenue
Oakdale, CA 95361

Dear Chief Ramar:

This correspondence reports the findings of the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) compliance inspection of your agency's adherence to minimum selection and training standards conducted on December 2, 2022.

AGENCY ROSTER

A roster of personnel in the POST Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) System was compared with your agency roster. All personnel have been appropriately documented in EDI.

SELECTION STANDARDS

I reviewed the files of eleven Peace Officers/Reserve Officers and/or Public Safety Dispatchers hired by your agency since your agency's last audit on December 3, 2021. Overall, the files were professionally assembled and well written. However, there were files in need of improvement. For more details, please see the Compliance Inspection Checklist.

I discussed the results of the files and the attached compliance list with your staff. Items marked "Missing from the file" need to be addressed. Please notify me via email or letter within 30 days of this letter when the corrections have been completed.

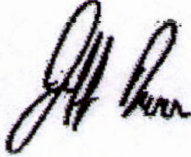
TRAINING STANDARDS

The current training cycle ends on December 31, 2022. A Compliance Analysis Report can be found in EDI under the Reports tab.

I appreciate your willingness and desire to partner with POST for the overall betterment of the Oakdale Police Department.

If I can answer any questions or assist in any other manner, please contact me by telephone at (916) 227-4873 or via email at jeff.dunn@post.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Dunn", written in a cursive style.

Jeffrey Dunn
Law Enforcement Consultant
Region 4 Consultant

Enclosure

JD/tp

LEFTA TRAINING SYSTEMS

U.S. cities paid more than \$300 million in lawsuit settlements involving police use of force incidents and false arrests in 2019 alone, according to ABC News. Across the country, more than 400 agencies and over 80,000 law enforcement officers at local, state, and federal levels are using our software to better monitor incidents, identify early warning signs and improve trust and transparency in their communities.

The (MET R) Managing Employee Training Records System

- Create classes, certificates, and training plans; track sign-in sheets and course syllabus
- Create employee evaluations,
- Document firearms qualifications
- Track how your agency spends its training budget
- Assign and monitor the viewing of training videos, policy reviews, and circulate training materials
- Sends automated reminders as training and certifications are due to expire

METR OVERVIEW:

- Managing Employee Training Records (METR), is a web-based software program that allows agencies to create, store, and access their sworn and civilian employee training records in one single, comprehensive application. Highly user-friendly, METR enables Training Managers to complete a myriad of activities, including training class and test design, assignment of class attendees, open enrollment registrations, customization of exams and comprehensives with an automatic grading feature, attendance checks, training records audits, file attachments to employee profiles and certification renewal reminders. Additionally, METR communicates directly with LEFTA Systems' Field Training application (LEFTA), and combined, these programs enable an agency to track an employee's training documents from FTO training until retirement or separation.

- Employees and managers receive class registration notification emails, as well as alerts when required training, videos, or bulletins are past due or when a mandated class is about to expire. Employees are also able to submit training requests via the chain of command, removing the need to submit or store paper requests. Additionally, at the discretion of the agency, employees can access and view their personal profiles. This capability enables individuals to register for classes, print certificates of attendance, and track cumulative CEUs and salary incentive hours without having to submit requests to their training department.
- Some of the categories METR tracks include in-service, state-mandated, remedial and roll call training, firearms qualifications, training videos and bulletins, civilian employee continuing education units, salary incentive hours, training compliance, and a built-in issued equipment list with a search feature that helps ensure found property is returned to the correct individual. Modules in development include Equipment Inventory Tracking, Employee Disciplinary Actions, Employee Training Plans (i.e., SWAT, supervisor promotion, etc.), and Electronic Employee Evaluations.

OAKDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT
MASTER TRAINING PLAN

Police Officer
Field Services

<u>I. Mandatory Training</u>	<u>Hours/Frequency</u>
1. POST Basic Academy	18-22 Weeks
2. CPR Refresher	4-6/2 Years
3. First Aid	4-6/3 Years
4. In-Service Training	24/Annually
5. Perishable Skills	24/Annually
6. OPD Field Training Program	
Lateral	10 Weeks
Entry Level	12-16 Weeks
7. Less/Full Access (CLETS)	In House
8. Defensive Driving EVOG	24/3 Years
 <u>II. Essential Training</u>	
1. Traffic Accident Investigation	40
2. Sexual Assault Investigation	40
3. 11550 H&S	24
4. Interviews and Interrogations	40
5. Basic Computer skills-Microsoft Word/Word Perfect	8
6. Officer Survival and Tactics	24/5 Years
7. Report Writing	40
8. Tactical Rifle	32
9. Radar Operation	24
 <u>III. Professional Enhancement</u>	
1. Gang Awareness (Juvenile, Adult, Prison)	16
2. Basic Criminal Investigation	40
3. Drug Recognition Expert	
 <u>IV. Conferences/Professional Associations</u>	
1. California Police Officers Association (C.P.O.A.)	



OAKDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT MASTER TRAINING PLAN

**Police Officer
Field Services**

I. POST Mandatory Training	Hours/Frequency
1. POST Basic Academy	Dependent on Academy
2. Continual Police Training	24 hours – POST Training Cycle
3. Perishable Skills Program	18 hours – POST training Cycle
a. Tactical Firearms	4 hours
b. Driver Training/Awareness	4 hours
c. Arrest and Control	4 hours
d. Strategic Communications	2 hours
e. Use of Force	4 hours
4. OPD Field Training Program	
a. Entry Level Officer (G.P. from 1,2)	12 weeks minimum
b. Lateral Officer (G.P. from 1,2)	Dependent on Qualifications
 II. Legislative Mandated Training	
1. California Code of Regulations	Annually
2. CPR-First Aid Refresher	8 hours every two years
3. Domestic Violence	2 hours every two years
4. Racial and Cultural Diversity	2 hours every five years
5. CLETS	Test every 2 years
 III. Essential Training	
1. Basic Collision Investigation	40 hours
2. Sexual Assault Investigation	40 hours
3. 11550 H&S	24 hours
4. Interviews and Interrogation	40 hours
5. Tactical Rifle	32 hours
6. Radar Operation	24 hours
7. SFST – DUI	24 hours
8. ARIDE Course	16 hours
 IV. Professional Enhancement	
1. Gang Awareness	
2. Basic Criminal Investigations	
3. Drug Recognition Expert	80 hours
4. FTO	40 hours
5. UAV Basic Pilot Course	32 hours



OAKDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT MASTER TRAINING PLAN

VI. Training Policy 203

This master training plan is designed to ensure all training compliances are met and to ensure that we are in compliance with Oakdale Police Department Policy 203 - Training

VI. Standards and Training Coordinator (Training Manager) Responsibilities

Tracking the progress of officers' training is crucial, and the coordinator oversees the maintenance of accurate records, ensuring compliance with mandated training requirements. This involves monitoring officers' participation, evaluating their performance, and identifying areas in need of improvement. The STC is responsible for getting all officers scheduled for the aforementioned POST-mandated, state-mandated, and continual police training. This will be achieved by utilizing the newly commissioned LEFTA training program. All officers' training will be scheduled and/or documented through the LEFTA system to ensure that all training requirements are timely met.

Training

203.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

It is the policy of this department to administer a training program that will provide for the professional growth and continued development of its personnel. By doing so, the Department will ensure its personnel possess the knowledge and skills necessary to provide a professional level of service that meets the needs of the community.

203.2 PHILOSOPHY

The Department seeks to provide ongoing training and encourages all personnel to participate in advanced training and formal education on a continual basis. Training is provided within the confines of funding, requirements of a given assignment, staffing levels, and legal mandates. The [DepartmentOffice] will use courses certified by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) whenever possible.

203.3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Training Program are to:

- (a) Enhance the level of law enforcement service to the public.
- (b) Increase the technical expertise and overall effectiveness of our personnel.
- (c) Provide for continued professional development of department personnel.
- (d) Ensure compliance with POST rules and regulations concerning law enforcement training.

203.4 TRAINING PLAN

A training plan will be developed and maintained by the Training Manager. It is the responsibility of the Training Manager to maintain, review, and update the training plan on an annual basis. The plan will address the following areas:

- Legislative Changes
- State Mandated Training
- Critical Issues Training

203.5 TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Training Section will conduct an annual training-needs assessment of the Department. The needs assessment will be reviewed by staff. Upon approval by the staff, the needs assessment will form the basis for the training plan for the fiscal year.

Oakdale Police Department
Oakdale PD Policy Manual

Training

203.6 TRAINING COMMITTEE

The Training Manager may establish a Training Committee, on a temporary or as-needed basis, which will serve to assist with identifying training needs for the Department.

The Training Committee shall be comprised of at least three members, with the senior ranking member of the committee acting as the chairperson. Members should be selected based on their abilities at post-incident evaluation and at assessing related training needs. The Training Manager may remove or replace members of the committee at his/her discretion.

The Training Committee should review certain incidents to determine whether training would likely improve future outcomes or reduce or prevent the recurrence of the undesirable issues related to the incident. Specific incidents the Training Committee should review include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Any incident involving the death or serious injury of an employee.
- (b) Incidents involving a high risk of death, serious injury or civil liability.
- (c) Incidents identified by a supervisor as appropriate to review to identify possible training needs.

When the training committee is active, the Training Committee should convene on a regular basis as determined by the Training Manager to review the identified incidents. The committee shall determine by consensus whether a training need exists and then submit written recommendations of its findings to the Training Manager. The recommendation should not identify specific facts of any incidents, such as identities of employees involved or the date, time and location of the incident, but should focus on the type of training being recommended.

The Training Manager will consider the recommendations of the committee and determine what training should be addressed, taking into consideration the mission of the Department and available resources.

203.7 TRAINING PROCEDURES

- (a) All employees assigned to attend training shall attend as scheduled unless previously excused by their immediate supervisor. Excused absences from mandatory training should be limited to the following:
 - 1. Court appearances
 - 2. First choice vacation
 - 3. Sick leave
 - 4. Physical limitations preventing the employee's participation.
 - 5. Emergency situations
 - 6. Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave

Oakdale Police Department

Oakdale PD Policy Manual

Training

7. Military Leave
 - (b) When an employee is unable to attend mandatory training, that employee shall:
 1. Notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible but no later than one hour prior to the start of training.
 2. Document his/her absence in a memorandum to his/her supervisor.
 3. Make arrangements through his/her supervisor and the Training Manager to attend the required training on an alternate date.

203.8 DAILY TRAINING BULLETINS

The Lexipol Daily Training Bulletins (DTBs) is a web-accessed system that provides training on the Oakdale Police Department Policy Manual and other important topics. Generally, one training bulletin is available for each day of the month. However, the number of DTBs may be adjusted by the Training Manager.

Personnel assigned to participate in DTBs should only use the password and login name assigned to them by the Training Manager. Personnel should not share their password with others and should frequently change their password to protect the security of the system. After each session, employees should log off the system to prevent unauthorized access. The content of the DTBs is copyrighted material and shall not be shared with others outside of the Department.

Employees who are assigned to participate in the DTB program should complete each DTB at the beginning of their shift or as otherwise directed by their supervisor. Employees should not allow uncompleted DTBs to build up over time. Personnel may be required to complete DTBs missed during extended absences (e.g., vacation, medical leave) upon returning to duty. Although the DTB system can be accessed from any computer with access to the internet, employees shall only take DTBs as part of their on-duty assignment unless directed otherwise by a supervisor.

Supervisors will be responsible for monitoring the progress of personnel under their command to ensure compliance with this policy.

203.9 POLICY

The Department shall administer a training program that will meet the standards of federal, state, local, and POST training requirements. It is a priority of this department to provide continuing education and training for the professional growth and development of its members.

203.10 TRAINING MANAGER

The Chief of Police shall designate a Training Manager who is responsible for developing, reviewing, updating, and maintaining the department training plan so that required training is completed. The Training Manager should review the training plan annually.

Oakdale Police Department
Oakdale PD Policy Manual

Training

203.10.1 TRAINING RESTRICTION

The Training Manager is responsible for establishing a process to identify officers who are restricted from training other officers for the time period specified by law because of a sustained use of force complaint (Government Code § 7286(b)).

Improving the Lives of Animals in Stanislaus County
Case # 23-14GJ

Reason for Investigation

The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury believes community awareness of animal issues is vital, including an understanding of how the agency and the community can work together. The allocation and use of budget monies is needed to create a more humane and efficient way for the agency to achieve "no kill shelter" status.

Agencies Asked to Respond

- ❖ Agency #1 Stanislaus Animal Services Agency:

Findings	Agree w/ Finding	Agrees Partially	Disagrees Wholly	Recommendations	Implemented	Will Implement	Further Analysis Needed	Will Not Implement/Other*

F1. The return of monies to JPA members during fiscal year true-ups reduces SCAS resources to meet its mission statement.		X		R1. Unused restricted funds should stay with SCAS instead of being returned to JPA members.	X			
F2. In FY2020-2021, as part of their true-up, SASA returned \$572,227 to JPA members.	X			R2. SASA should allocate monies in the budget to increase staffing.				X
F3. SASA budget summary for FY2013-FY2022 indicates an unspent amount of \$3,133,521 of restricted funds to be used for spay/neuter programs.	X			R3. SCAS should work to implement an active budget subcommittee.	X			

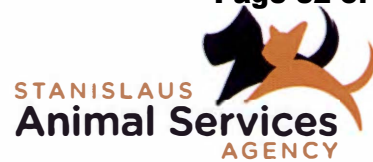
F4. SASA has insufficient staff to perform its operational needs.		X		R4. SASA's budget subcommittee should include some members of the public to help provide community input of shelter needs, budget processes, and goals.				X
F5. SCAS online appointment option does not provide a reasonable time frame for spay/neuter of pets.	X			R5. SCAS should seek ways to increase its profile by hosting promotional and fundraising events at venues outside of the shelter working in cooperation with other local animal rescue groups.				X
F6. The foster program and the volunteer program are not prominently advertised to the public outside of their social media sites.			X	R6. SCAS should update and unify its social media presence.				X
F7. SASA and SCAS social media presence is confusing and outdated.			X	R7. SCAS should shorten wait times for available online appointments.				X
F8. SASA holds its board meetings in the mornings limiting public participation.		X		R8. SASA should hold its board meetings in the evenings to increase public participation.				X
F9. SASA board meetings were cancelled for lack of a quorum.			X	R9. SCAS should improve communication with the public by promptly returning phone calls and emails.				X

F10. SCAS has a poor response time to phone calls and emails.	X		R10. SASA should implement its Advisory Committee.		X		
F11. SASA Advisory Committee is currently not functioning.	X		R11. SCAS should conduct a survey of animal shelters within California with similar animal intake numbers and compare staffing levels.		X		
F12. SASA lacks a current budget subcommittee.		X	R12. SCAS should work with SASA to create a long-term plan that provides a clear understanding of the future of SCAS.		X		
F13. SCAS has no long-term plan for meeting the increasing demands of the shelter.		X					

Conclusion

The Civil Grand Jury acknowledges that a detailed response was submitted within the timelines required.

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StanislausAnimalServices.com



July 20, 2023

RECEIVED

Honorable Carrie Stephens
Presiding Judge, Superior Court of California
County of Stanislaus
P.O. Box 3488
Modesto, CA 95353

AUG 02 2023

BY: GL

Subject: Stanislaus Animal Services Agency (SASA) JPA Board Response to Improving the Lives of Animals in Stanislaus County 2022-2023 Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ) Case Number 23-14GJ

Honorable Carrie Stephens,

This letter is in response to the Stanislaus County 2022-2023 Civil Grand Jury Final Report for Case #23-14GJ, which was provided to the Stanislaus Animal Services Agency on May 25, 2023. The Stanislaus Animal Services Agency JPA Board has reviewed the findings and recommendations of the Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury - Improving the Lives of Animals in Stanislaus County 23-14GJ. We thank the Civil Grand Jury for their efforts to raise awareness on important issues regarding animal welfare and the operational support required to provide effective services to the community and providing our agency the opportunity to respond.

The Stanislaus Animal Services Agency (SASA) joint powers agency (JPA) Board has reviewed the findings and recommendations of the report and have noted our responses below.

The responses to FINDINGS from the SASA JPA Board are as follows:

F1: The return of monies to JPA members during fiscal year true-ups reduces SCAS resources to meet its mission statement.

The SASA JPA disagrees partially with this finding.

The year-end accounting true-up is a reconciliation process that aligns budgeted amounts with actual financial performance, ensuring accurate fiscal reporting and informed decision-making. The true-up credit to partner agencies can reflect underspending in the prior year that may have impact to services; however, the true-up credit can result from additional revenues or a combination of underspending and additional revenues and is not a clear indicator on its own that it reduces resources to meet the agency's mission. The true-up process provides confidence in budget utilization and monitoring and provides partners with a credit to support future year



costs. The budget process is the primary process that reveals how designated resources will support the organization's mission.

Of note with this finding, and others, is the misinterpretation that the Stanislaus County Animal Shelter (SCAS) and Stanislaus Animal Services Agency (SASA) are one and the same. SASA is the sole name and identifier for the agency and its six-member governing authority is the SASA JPA Board. The agency does not use nor does it have any authority over any entity identified as SCAS.

F2: In FY2020-2021, as part of their true-up, SASA returned \$572,227 to JPA members.

The SASA JPA agrees with this finding.

Expenditures during FY2020-2021 were \$572,227 less than that budgeted for the fiscal year and funds contributed in excess were refunded or credited, to partners accordingly.

F3: SASA budget summary for FY2013-FY2022 indicates an unspent amount of \$3,133,521 of restricted funds to be used for spay/neuter programs.

The SASA JPA agrees with this finding.

For clarification, the \$3,133,521 figure, which is taken from Appendix D, is not a budget summary but rather appears to be a summary that reflects income from license differentials and fines, minus the amount paid for public spay/neuter vouchers and canvassing expenses. The \$3,133,521 represents an unspent amount of appropriated funds that should have been used for spay/neuter voucher programs according to Stanislaus County Code 7.20.010 sections A & C.

F4: SASA has insufficient staff to perform its operational needs.

The SASA JPA disagrees partially with this finding.

While there are numerous areas at SASA where additional staff would undoubtedly benefit the community and the animals we serve, SASA currently meets the basic minimum requirements as a municipal animal shelter and animal control agency. Economic factors, competing demands for public funds, and budgetary constraints of JPA partner agencies' governments all limit the available funding needed to expand staffing. However, in FY2022-2023, the SASA JPA took a significant step towards improvement by augmenting the staff with two full-time positions in the business office, resulting in substantial assistance and support for that department.

F5: SCAS online appointment option does not provide a reasonable time frame for spay/neuter of pets.

The SASA JPA agrees with this finding.

At present, our clinic faces obstacles in providing a substantial number of public spay/neuter appointments, particularly on days when we don't have a contract veterinarian available. These challenges primarily arise from the limitations posed by our clinic's physical space and the challenges to recruit and hire contract veterinarians.

Again, SASA does not use nor does it have any authority over any entity identified as SCAS.

F6: The foster program and the volunteer program are not prominently advertised to the public outside of their social media sites.

The SASA JPA disagrees wholly with this finding.

In addition to our social media efforts to promote our foster program and volunteer opportunities, we have adopted a comprehensive multi-channel approach to maximize visibility. These opportunities are prominently showcased within our shelter premises and extensively highlighted in press releases that have gained coverage in reputable outlets such as the Modesto Bee, channels 3, 13, 40, and 58, as well as radio stations 104.1, 105.3, and Spanish radio 88.7. Furthermore, our successful collaboration with a generous donor resulted in the funding of a mailer that reached 10,000 recipients last December, effectively promoting fostering.

As a result of these concerted marketing endeavors, we have witnessed solid expansion over the past year in both the foster and volunteer programs.

F7: SASA and SCAS social media presence is confusing and outdated.

The SASA JPA disagrees wholly with this finding.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS (Stanislaus County Animal Shelter). Considering the presence of SCAS on social media platforms, it is understandable that individuals may become confused if they were seeking information and materials related to SASA (Stanislaus Animal Services Agency).

SASA's only official social media can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/StanislausAnimalServicesAgency>

<https://www.instagram.com/stanislausanimalservices/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/stanislaus-animal-services-agency>

F8: SASA holds its board meetings in the mornings limiting public participation.

The SASA JPA disagrees partially with this finding.

The composition of the JPA Board consists of City Managers and County Executive staff members who already have commitments and scheduling constraints for evening meetings. Therefore, it would be impractical to introduce an additional night meeting that could disrupt and potentially clash with the schedules of all participating agencies.

Our practice of promptly posting meeting materials and minutes, as well as accepting public correspondence, contributes to transparency, accountability, and public participation. It ensures that stakeholders have access to relevant information and can stay informed about the discussions and decisions made during the meetings.

F9: SASA board meetings were cancelled for lack of a quorum.

The SASA JPA disagrees wholly with this finding.

The recent cancellations of SASA JPA meetings were not a result of insufficient quorum, but rather due to the absence of action items. In 2019, the JPA transitioned from quarterly meetings to monthly meetings, resulting in some months where no specific action items or compelling reasons for convening arose. Consequently, these meetings were appropriately canceled in consideration of the absence of substantial matters requiring discussion or decision-making.

F10: SCAS has a poor response time to phone calls and emails.

The SASA JPA agrees with this finding.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

In order to streamline operations and enhance efficiency, SASA took steps in 2019 to alleviate staff workload by engaging the services of a third-party vendor, DocuPet, for dog license processing. This decision proved highly beneficial, as it replaced approximately 20,000 staff transactions annually with online transactions efficiently managed by DocuPet.

Only a year ago, SASA often encountered response times for phone calls that exceeded four weeks, which was the norm. Due to budgetary constraints, SASA was unable to hire a dedicated receptionist and had to rely on available staff members to handle calls whenever they had a spare moment. Nevertheless, SASA made efforts to improve their service by expanding the business office and adding two positions last year.

As a result of these measures, the wait time for phone calls has now been reduced to approximately 7 to 10 days, marking a significant improvement in customer service. Although not ideal and still a poor response time, this represents a significant improvement in our responsiveness. Additionally, we have added a part-time extra help position dedicated to answering calls and emails.

F11: SASA Advisory Committee is currently not functioning.

The SASA JPA agrees with this finding.

Due to the impact of COVID, the Advisory Committee ceased meeting and disbanded. However, several months ago, diligent efforts were initiated to reestablish the committee. An application process has been implemented, requiring approval from the governing councils of the JPA partners. Presently, we have successfully filled 3 out of the 7 available positions. Once we have at least 4 positions filled, constituting a quorum, we will be able to resume holding Advisory Committee meetings.

F12: SASA lacks a current budget subcommittee.

The SASA JPA disagrees wholly with this finding.

SASA's budget subcommittee operates on a seasonal basis and typically forms approximately three months prior to budget approval. It is important to note that during the SCCGJ's review, there might have been a period when the subcommittee was not actively functioning.

F13: SCAS has no long-term plan for meeting the increasing demands of the shelter.

The SASA JPA disagrees partially with this finding.

This process developing a multi-year strategic plan was delayed because of the arrival of a new Executive Director at SASA. Opting to wait for a period of one to two years before developing and implementing a long-term strategic plan offers several advantages for the organization. The plan is to begin developing the multi-year strategic plan in the next six months.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

The responses to RECOMMENDATIONS from the SASA JPA Board are as follows:

R1: Unused restricted funds should stay with SCAS instead of being returned to JPA members.

Recommendation has been implemented.

Starting with the year-end reconciliation of the FY2022-2023 budget, SASA will retain funds as specified in sections A and C of county ordinance 7.20.010 for carryover and usage for those specified purposes. SASA's intention is to use the appropriated funds for public spay/neuter as they become available each year starting with the FY2023-2024 budget. However, in the event that there are unutilized funds at the end of the year, SASA plans to carry those funds over for the same purpose in the subsequent year.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

R2: SASA should allocate monies in the budget to increase staffing.

Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

SASA operates on a highly constrained budget, making it challenging to reallocate funds specifically for increasing staffing. Doing so would require reallocating resources from other areas within the budget. SASA operates on a meticulously lean budget, where every expenditure is carefully considered. Unfortunately, due to the limited available resources, there are no viable areas to reduce funding in the budget in order to accommodate additional staffing. The JPA reviews staffing on an ongoing basis.

R3: SCAS should work to implement an active budget subcommittee.

Recommendation has been implemented.

Traditionally an ad hoc committee is requested annually by the SASA board chairman, the budget subcommittee has become a valuable means to manage the technical components of the budgeting process and will remain, meeting seasonally prior to the annual budget.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

R4: SASA's budget subcommittee should include some members of the public to help provide community input of shelter needs, budget processes, and goals.

Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

While public participation and transparency are important principles, involving the public directly in a budget subcommittee is not practical or efficient due to the specialized expertise required, the potential impact on decision-making processes, resource

constraints, and the need for effective governance and accountability mechanisms. Ultimately, the responsibility for budget decisions and oversight lies with the governing body, the JPA Board. Involving the public directly in the budget subcommittee may blur the lines of accountability and decision-making authority, potentially undermining the proper governance of the organization.

R5: SCAS should seek ways to increase its profile by hosting promotional and fundraising events at venues outside of the shelter working in cooperation with other local animal rescue groups.

Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

Part of this recommendation, hosting promotional events at outside venues, SASA puts great effort to accomplish. In the past year, the new Executive Director has put a strong emphasis on enhancing public awareness. Throughout FY 2022/2023, we have actively participated in numerous off-site events, including engagements at the El Rematitio flea market, Toyota, Petco, Amazon in Turlock, East La Loma Park, as well as the county's health fair and job fair. Moreover, we have featured dogs on FOX 40 TV on a monthly basis since August, alongside regular press releases that have generated extensive media coverage across print, TV, and radio platforms.

Organizing a fundraising event with local rescue groups poses numerous obstacles and offers limited value to SASA. Given our extremely limited staff, attempting to orchestrate such an event while coordinating with rescue groups that lack sufficient personnel and rely primarily on volunteers would place an overwhelming burden on SASA. The rescue groups' expectation would be for SASA to handle all the event-related tasks and share the revenue. Interestingly, some rescue groups have approached SASA with the suggestion of us hosting a fundraiser on their behalf. Regrettably, our current staff capacity does not allow us to undertake such an endeavor.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

R6: SCAS should update and unify its social media presence.

Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

It is crucial to reiterate that our organization, SASA, should not be confused with SCAS. SASA maintains an established and distinct social media presence under our own name. It is important to note that we do not have any authority or control over SCAS's activities on social media platforms, as SCAS is an entirely separate entity from SASA.

R7: SCAS should shorten wait times for available online appointments.

Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

Due to the constraints of our limited resources and minimal staff at SASA, our primary focus is on fulfilling the essential tasks necessary for the care of over 7,000 animals annually. The wait times experienced by our clients are directly related to the availability of staff and space. Despite our efforts to enhance efficiency within the existing framework, the reality is that without additional staff and/or space, reducing wait times is simply not feasible.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

R8: SASA should hold its board meetings in the evenings to increase public participation.

Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.

The composition of the JPA Board consists of City Managers and County Executive staff members who already have commitments and scheduling constraints for evening meetings. Therefore, it would be impractical to introduce an additional night meeting that could disrupt and potentially clash with the schedules of all participating agencies.

Furthermore, scheduling an evening board meeting would necessitate paying certain staff members overtime, which would impose a financial burden on SASA's already lean budget. Considering the current financial constraints, there is limited room to accommodate this additional expense.

R9: SCAS should improve communication with the public by promptly returning phone calls and emails.

Recommendation will not be implemented because it is not reasonable.

A year ago, it was commonplace for SASA to encounter response times for phone calls that often exceeded four weeks. Due to budget limitations, SASA is unable to employ a dedicated receptionist and must rely on available staff to handle calls whenever they have a moment free. However, with the addition of two positions within the business office last year the wait time for phone calls has been reduced to approximately 7 to 10 days. While this timeframe is still suboptimal and falls short of our desired responsiveness, it represents a significant improvement. Furthermore, we have recently introduced a part-time extra help position specifically dedicated to returning calls and emails. Without additional staff it is not reasonable or possible to promptly return calls and emails.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

R10: SASA should implement its Advisory Committee.

Recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented within six months.

As a result of the impact of COVID, the advisory committee had disbanded. However, in recent months, we have actively engaged in recruiting volunteers to revive the committee. To ensure a functional committee, a minimum of four individuals is required to achieve a quorum. Presently, we have successfully recruited three members and are actively pursuing the recruitment of the remaining positions to complete the committee.

R11: SCAS should conduct a survey of animal shelters within California with similar animal intake numbers and compare staffing levels.

Recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the next six months.

Although a survey was conducted a year ago, and some of the findings were included in the SCCGJ report, SASA will undertake a new survey to gather updated information. We will then provide a comprehensive report to the JPA Board based on the current survey results.

Once again, it's important to clarify that our organization is not SCAS.

R12: SCAS should work with SASA to create a long-term plan that provides a clear understanding of the future of SCAS.

Recommendation has not been implemented but will be implemented in the next six months.

It seems that this recommendation stems from a misunderstanding regarding the two names SCAS and SASA. Let me reiterate that our organization is not SCAS. With that in mind, SASA will develop a comprehensive long-term plan within the next six months to outline the future trajectory of our organization.

The following points aim to clarify information that was not reflected in the report's findings or recommendations:

1. In 2019, SASA achieved and has since maintained 'no-kill' status for dogs, with a commendable live release rate ranging between 95% and 96% each year. This status requires a minimum live release rate of 90%. Similarly, SASA maintains consistently high live release rates for cats, reaching the upper 80s. The set goal is to maintain a no-kill status when possible.

2. Contrary to the report's statement, SASA has not yet procured two new vehicles for canvassing efforts. The funding for these vehicles will primarily come from grants and PFF funding sources.
3. The report mentions SASA considering contract providers, but in reality, we have already engaged contract veterinarians and vet assistants to fulfill the requirements of two spay/neuter grants. These grants specifically support the employment of these contracted professionals.
4. The report states that our website indicates we do not adopt out yellow or red list dogs. However, these animals are indeed available for public adoption, and the majority of animals listed as red or yellow eventually find loving homes through public adoption. We have revised the wording on our website to provide clarification.
5. The report inaccurately suggests that we are not currently accepting owner surrenders. In fact, we do accept owner surrenders by appointment, and the typical wait time is two to three weeks, depending on available space.
6. The report incorrectly states that no stray cat intake is allowed. However, we do accept stray cats by appointment, with a typical wait time of two to three weeks depending on available space.
7. The report mentions a stray dog intake limit of one, but in reality, it is a limit of one stray dog at a time due to space limitations.
8. The report indicates that no clinics are scheduled. However, clinics have resumed since May, and in June we held two clinics with an additional clinic scheduled for July. Our objective is to hold at least one clinic per month going forward.
9. The report suggests that numerous animals are being sent to out-of-state rescue groups without being made available to the residents of Stanislaus County. This is not the standard procedure followed by SASA. There was a unique circumstance involving a significant hoarding case of French Bulldogs, where out-of-state rescues were promptly found due to legal complexities. In all other cases, dogs transported to other shelters have already been available for adoption by residents of Stanislaus County for a significant period of time.

These clarifications aim to provide a more accurate understanding of the situation at SASA, correcting any misconceptions presented in the SCCGJ report.

Respectfully,



Mike Pitcock
JPA Board Chair
Stanislaus Animal Services Agency