

OFFICE OF THE ORANGE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



2010 BUSINESS PLAN

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DISTRICT ATTORNEY

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY 2010 BUSINESS PLAN

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Executive Summary

The Office anticipates facing unprecedented challenges in 2010. These challenges stem from the ongoing economic decline coupled with the County's public safety funding model. Specifically, the County's budget structure which allocates the majority of the Office's budgeted revenue from *projected* sales tax. Historically, the Board of Supervisors has annually allocated 20% of the County's annual share of Proposition 172 "Public Safety Sales Tax" Revenue to the Office of the District Attorney. Although this revenue source has historically been subject to volatility, sales tax revenue severely plummeted in FY2008-09.

Consequently, in FY2008-09 the Office faced an \$8 million budget gap attributable to sales tax revenue shortfalls. The plan to close this gap required a myriad of actions including: staff layoffs, fundamental changes in the prosecution of certain types of cases, implementing a deferred entry of judgment program, and the elimination of non-essential training, travel and equipment purchases. Although the Office's FY2009-10 Budget included layoffs of welfare fraud staff, substantial expense reductions, and a General Fund augmentation, a funding gap remained. Since 90% of the Office's budget funds personnel costs, the plan to close this gap included staff furloughs, temporary layoffs, and pay cuts. Thus, managing workloads and meeting legal mandates is increasingly challenging.

Successfully conquering these budget and operational challenges requires continued teamwork and collaboration with the County Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office, and our criminal justice partners.

MISSION

The mission of the Office of the District Attorney is to enhance public safety and welfare and create a sense of security in the community through the vigorous enforcement of criminal and civil laws in a just, honest, efficient and ethical manner.

Duty of the District Attorney

The District Attorney represents the People of the State of California in the justice system. Performing this duty requires initiating criminal prosecutions and representing the People in some civil cases.

Mandated Responsibilities

District Attorney Prosecution Mandate

Government Code Section 26500 mandates that the District Attorney initiate and conduct, on behalf of the people, prosecutions of public offenses.

Local Government Funding Mandate

The protection of the public safety is the first responsibility of local government and local officials have an obligation to give priority to the provision of adequate public safety services. (California Constitution, Article 13, Section 35(a))

Achieving the County's Mission and Strategic Objectives

The core service provided by the Office of the District Attorney is criminal prosecution. Effective prosecution of crime is essential to achieving the County's mission of:

Making Orange County a safe, healthy, and fulfilling place to live, work and play, today and for generations to come, by providing outstanding, cost-effective regional public services.

The People of the State of California, in particular the residents of Orange County, rely on the Office of the District Attorney to bring those engaging in criminal activities to justice.

Furthermore, prosecution supports the County's strategic objectives of:

1. Promoting a Healthy Community
2. Building for the Future of Our Community
3. Protecting our Community

Attaining these objectives requires, first and foremost, a safe community. Prosecuting those who commit criminal acts upon residents or visitors, as well as individuals who violate environmental protection laws is critical to ensuring community safety.

District Attorney Strategic Goal

Protecting the public from criminal activity is the Office's Strategic Goal and is measured by felony conviction rate. In 2009, the Office maintained a felony conviction rate in excess of 90%.

Resource Management Strategy

Ensuring the integrity of case prosecution, while managing budget shortfalls and staffing shortages, requires on-going assessment and strategically aligning staffing with dynamic changes in caseload demands and funding restrictions.

I. Agency Overview

VISION

Enhance community safety through successful collaboration with both our criminal justice partners and the public at large while leveraging technology to maximize staff and resource effectiveness to deliver quality public safety services.

MISSION

The People of the State of California, in particular the residents of Orange County, rely on the Office of the District Attorney to bring criminals to justice.

The mission of the Office of the District Attorney is to enhance public safety and welfare and create a sense of security in the community through the vigorous enforcement of criminal and civil laws in a just, honest, efficient and ethical manner.

Duty of the District Attorney

The District Attorney represents the People of the State of California in the criminal justice system. Performing this duty requires initiating criminal prosecutions and representing the People in some civil cases.

Value to Community

Prosecuting those engaging in criminal conduct is essential to maintaining public safety. The District Attorney represents the People of the State of California in criminal prosecution to ensure justice for the crime victims, their families and the community at large.

CORE SERVICE

The core service provided by the Office of the District Attorney is **criminal prosecution**. Implementing this core service requires a team of prosecutors, investigators, and support staff working together with crime victims, their families, witnesses, and justice system partners.

Effective prosecution of crime is essential to achieving the County's mission of:

Making Orange County a safe, healthy, and fulfilling place to live, work and play, today and for generations to come, by providing outstanding, cost-effective regional public services.

The People of the State of California, in particular the residents of Orange County, rely on the Office of the District Attorney to bring those engaging in criminal activities to justice.

Furthermore, prosecution supports the County's strategic objectives of:

1. Promoting a Healthy Community
2. Building for the Future of Our Community
3. Protecting our Community

Attaining these objectives requires, first and foremost, a safe community. Clearly, prosecuting those who commit criminal acts upon residents or visitors, as well as individuals who violate environmental protection laws is critical to ensuring community safety today and for generations to come.

II. Operational Plan

A. ENVIRONMENT

CLIENTS

The Office of the District Attorney represents the People of the State of California. Therefore, the broadest group of clients are the over three million Orange County residents. In addition to residents, according to the Anaheim/Orange County Visitor & Convention Bureau, 43 million people visit the Orange County region each year. Having residents and visitors feel an adequate level of safety and security is the cornerstone of the Office's mission.

- **Crime Victims:** Ensuring justice for crime victims, their families, and the community at large remains a top priority. Having violent offenders in prison and off the streets protects the public from further victimization.
- **The Community:** Change in the overall population is important as an indicator of the size and diversity of the community we serve. Assessing particular community needs assists in identifying effective strategies and allocating scarce resources designed to achieve our goals.

Another noteworthy demographic characteristic involves ethnic and cultural groups. Many of these residents were raised in cultures with far different relationships between individuals and the criminal justice system. The need for outreach and education activities remains critical to the recent immigrant communities. The increases in Hispanic and Asian populations (particularly Vietnamese and Korean) indicate the need for bilingual services and multicultural educational services will continue to increase.

- **Justice System Partners:** Our effectiveness is reliant on successful partnerships with others in the criminal justice system, including police agencies, the Superior Court, Probation, victim advocates, and a host of state agencies.

CHALLENGES

The Office anticipates facing unprecedented challenges in 2010. These challenges stem from the ongoing economic decline coupled with the County's public safety funding model. Specifically, the County's budget structure which allocates the majority of the Office's budgeted revenue from *projected* sales tax. Historically, the Board of Supervisors has annually allocated 20% of the County's annual share of Proposition 172 "Public Safety

Sales Tax” Revenue to the Office of the District Attorney. As indicated below on Chart 1, this revenue source has historically been subject to volatility, and in FY2008-09 sales tax revenue severely plummeted.

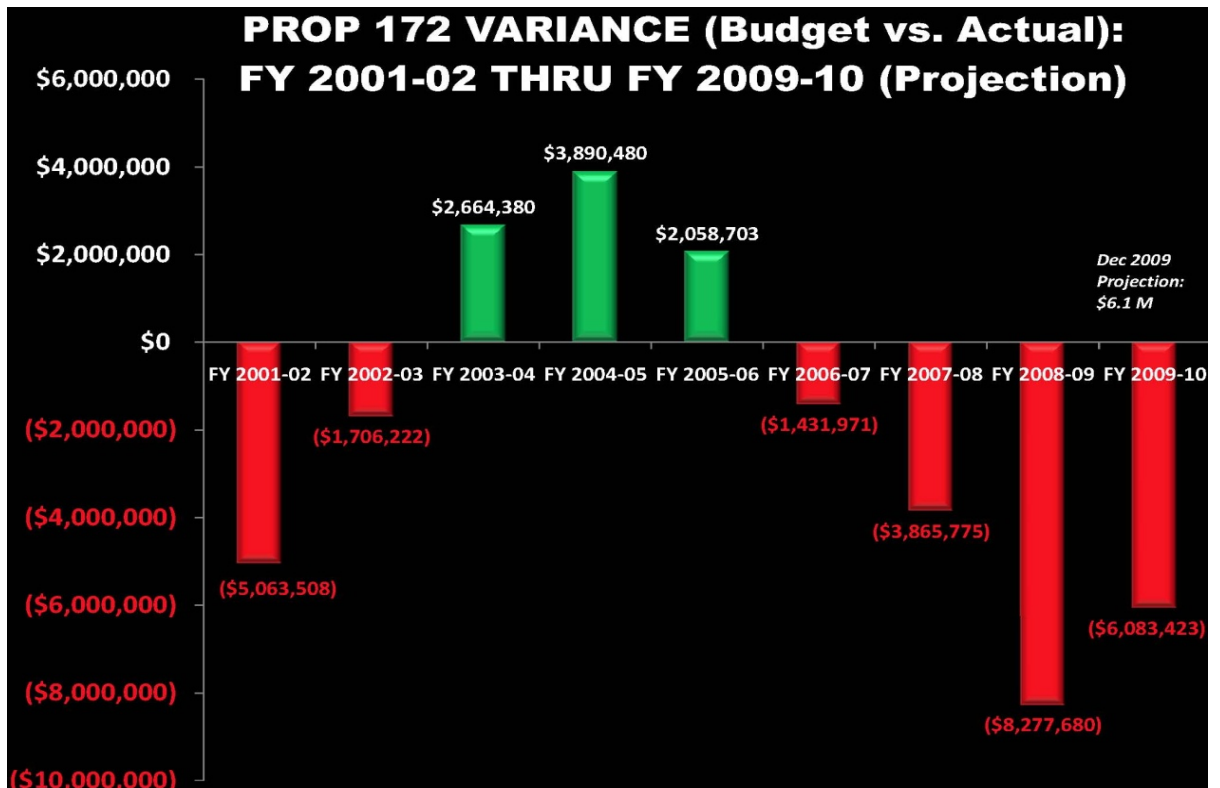
Balancing the FY 2009-10 Budget required a myriad of actions including: deleting 71 positions, staff layoffs, staff furloughs, temporary layoffs, fundamental changes in the prosecution of certain types of cases, and the elimination of non-essential training and other expenditures.

Managing this variable and uncertain revenue flow requires astute budget management to balance resources and prosecution demands. Funding shortfalls and caseloads carried by prosecutors and investigators are key measurements of these challenges. Successfully conquering these budget and operational challenges requires continued teamwork and collaboration with the County Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office, and our criminal justice partners.

Funding

As indicated in Chart 1, the variances between the annual **projected** sales tax revenue derived from Proposition 172 “Public Safety Sales Tax Revenue” versus the **actual** Proposition 172 revenue received during the fiscal year can vary greatly.

Chart 1: Public Safety Sales Tax Revenue (Prop 172) Annual Variances
FY 2001-02 through FY 2009-10 (Projection)



To address staffing shortfalls, beginning in January 2009, the Office fundamentally changed the way it prosecutes certain types of cases. These programs include:

- **OCDA Public Safety, Crime Prevention and Deterrence DNA Program**

This program offers alternatives to traditional prosecution for certain types of cases where defendants meet certain eligibility criteria. These alternatives require the defendant provide a DNA sample and pay any restitution associated with the crime. Defendants may also be required to complete a deferred entry of judgment program which requires completion of diversion classes. The net effect of this program is that these cases are resolved in the early stage of the proceedings thereby significantly reducing the Office resources expended on the case.

- **Fast Track/Strike Team**

In this program, certain types of felony cases are reviewed by experienced prosecutors and a determination is made by the prosecutor whether a lower charge would be appropriate to offer the defendant. These offers are made at the early stage of the proceedings. Those cases not resolved are moved directly to the trial stage.

Additionally, the Trial Attorney Partnership (TAP) Reserve Program was expanded. This program utilizes volunteer experienced private attorneys who are trained and deputized to prosecute certain types of misdemeanor cases while temporarily assigned to the Office. In 2009, the TAP Program added 21 experienced attorneys to the District Attorney team, each averaging an eight week term. Collectively, this reserve team completed 35 jury and court trials, conducted 134 preliminary hearings, 107 motions and various other assignments. The savings in prosecutor salaries in 2009 was approximately \$625,000.

In an effort to reduce the prosecutor's time out of the office and associated travel expenses, prosecutors now appear via video at some Lifer Parole Hearings.

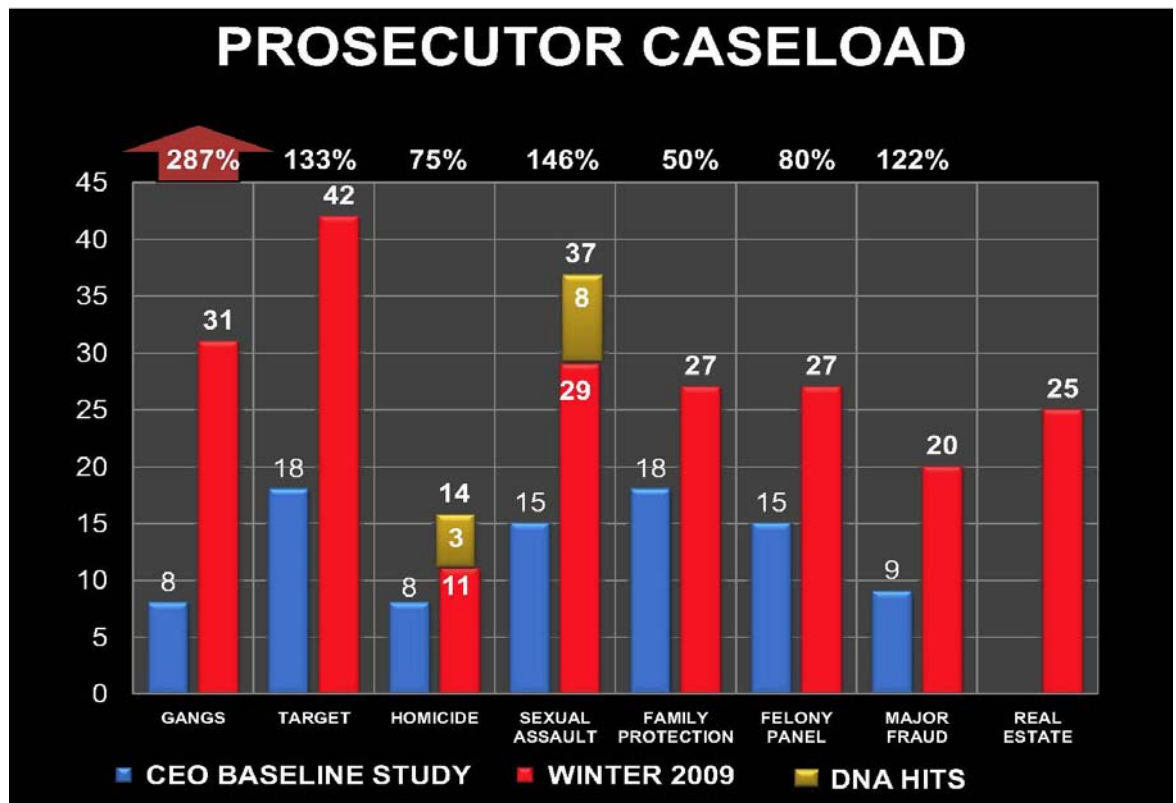
Recognizing the implications to public safety from the projected budget shortfalls, the Board of Supervisors formed a Public Safety Working Group (PSWG) comprised of Supervisor Pat Bates, Supervisor Bill Campbell, CEO Tom Mauk, Sheriff Sandra Hutchens, and District Attorney Tony Rackauckas. The PSWG is conducting a thorough review of public safety budgets, reductions already implemented, and further potential reductions.

The PSWG recommendations will be forwarded for consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

Caseload Levels and Complexity

In 1999 the CEO performed a Staffing Assessment Study establishing benchmarks for recommended felony caseload levels. As indicated below in the Chart 2 prosecutor caseloads far exceed those recommended in the 1999 study. In addition to filed cases, the gold numbers represent “Cold Cases.” Typically, these cases are unsolved homicide or sexual assault cases where with new evidence is discovered. These “Cold Cases” require prosecutor and investigator time to review and work with the agency of jurisdiction. These cases often require and follow up work in order for the prosecutor to determine if charges can be filed.

**Chart 2: Prosecutor Caseloads
1999 Recommendations and Winter 2009 Actual**

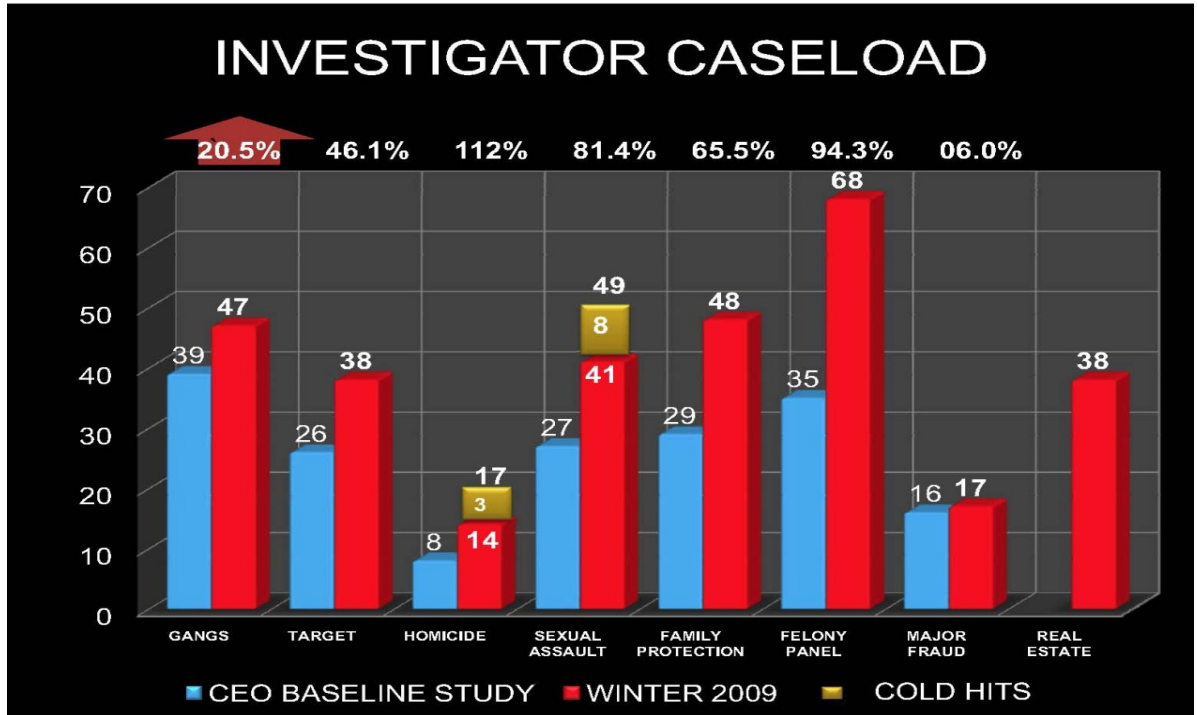


Note: Real Estate Unit Established in April 2009.

Clearly, higher caseloads result in less time for prosecutors to work on individual cases and provides less time between scheduled hearings and trials. As mentioned earlier, the Office implemented several initiatives to reduce caseloads through changing the manner in which some types of cases are processed.

As indicated below in Chart 3, caseloads for Investigative Staff also exceed recommended levels.

Chart 3: Investigator Caseloads
1999 Recommendations and Winter 2009 Actual



Note: Real Estate Unit Established in April 2009.

The spike in caseloads is coupled with a growing complexity in cases and types of evidence. Across the Office, staff are facing increased demands to review digitized data, various communication, video, and computing devices for gang, homicide, sexual assault, as well as traditional high tech crimes such as identify theft cases. Moreover, the influx of complex fraud cases requires highly skilled forensic accountants to review complex records to detect fraud or analyze cash-flows.

RESOURCES

Public Safety Sales Tax (Prop 172) and County General Funds are the Office’s primary sources of funds. Additionally, the Office receives grant revenue from a variety of state and federal sources. The grant funds are earmarked to fund certain types of prosecution, investigation, or to procure specified equipment. Overall, the Office’s budget is shrinking. The FY2009-10 Adopted Budget was \$8 million less than the prior year and funded 71 fewer staff.

Staffing and Budget Resource Summary

<u>District Attorney Budget</u>	<u>FY 2008-2009</u>	<u>FY 2009-10</u>
Adopted Budget	\$120 Million	\$112 Million
Budgeted Staff	799	728

Staff reductions began in the middle of FY 2008-09 when the Social Services Agency (SSA) reduced their budgeted allocation to the Office by \$1 million requiring the layoff of 10 Welfare Fraud Investigators in February 2009. An additional SSA reduction in their funding for these services resulted in the layoff of another 8 Public Assistance Fraud Investigators in July 2009. Also, in July 2009, Office wide budget cuts impacted the remaining DA staff whom, depending upon their classification, were required to furlough, undergo a temporary layoff or take a 5% pay cut. The Office continues to attrite staff at all levels. Clearly, at some point, further attrition will require backfilling to meet Constitutional mandates.

Staff Organization

The Office is organized into prosecution teams, or units, which are comprised of staff from each of the three major divisions:

- Legal
- Bureau of Investigation
- Administrative Services

Additionally, the Government and Community Relations Unit and Public Affairs Unit provide support services for the entire Office. Please see *Appendix A* for a detailed staff organization chart.

Each staff member plays a critical role in performing the tasks required to bring criminals to justice. We are committed to continuously improving our services. Our success affords Orange County residents and visitors the utmost in safety and security.

Prosecution

Prosecution operations are divided into the following four areas:

Vertical Prosecutions/Violent Crimes: Prosecutes the majority of violent felony crimes. Units in this area include:

- The **Homicide** Unit prosecutes non-gang related homicides, including those with special circumstances.
- The **Sexual Assault** Unit prosecutes rapists, sexually violent predators, child molesters and other violent sexual assaults.
- The **Family Protection** Unit prosecutes violent assaults, attempted murders, felony domestic violence, child abuse, child abduction, stalking and elder abuse.
- The **Gang** Unit prosecutes crimes committed by gang members, including murders and attempted murders
- The **TARGET** Unit is comprised of anti-gang teams which include a police officer, a probation officer, a District Attorney Investigator, and a prosecutor. These teams are housed in police departments throughout the county. TARGET prosecution is focused on the eradication of gang crime and violence by targeting the gang's "serious offenders."
- The **DNA** Unit is comprised of specialists in the use of DNA evidence in prosecution.

Branch Court Operations: Prosecutes adult misdemeanor crimes in each of the four Justice Centers (**Central Justice Center, Harbor Justice Center – Newport Beach, North Justice Center, West Justice Center**) and felony and misdemeanor juvenile petitions in the Lamoreaux (**Juvenile**) **Justice Center**. In addition to misdemeanor prosecution, each of the four adult Justice Centers includes a Felony Charging Unit. The Felony Charging prosecutors review potential felony cases presented by police agencies to the justice centers for filing consideration. In 2009, the Court added a new in-custody arraignment court in the Central Jail (**CJ-1**). This new court required the redeployment of prosecutors and support staff.

General Felonies/Economic Crimes: Prosecutes variety of general felonies and includes:

- The **Felony Panel** Unit prosecutes a variety of felony crimes not handled by specialized felony units.

- The **Consumer/Environmental and Insurance Fraud** Unit prosecutes complex cases involving environmental crimes and also companies and individuals that engage in fraudulent or unlawful business practices affecting large groups of people. Additionally, this unit prosecutes workers' compensation fraud, auto insurance fraud, medical and disability fraud crimes.
- The **Economic Crimes** Unit prosecutes high tech crime, identity theft, high-dollar fraud crimes and includes the White Collar Crime Prosecution Team. Real Estate Fraud was added in April 2009.
- The **Narcotic Enforcement Team (NET)** Unit prosecutes major narcotic traffickers and illegal drug manufacturers. Additionally, the NET Unit handles the distribution of forfeitures proceedings from illegal drug trade.
- The **Career Criminal Team** prosecutes dangerous repeat offenders. Many of these cases involve potential life sentences.
- The **Public Assistance Fraud** Unit prevents, detects and prosecutes crimes related to fraudulent receipt of public assistance. This unit is funded by the Social Services Agency.
- Cases arising out of the Office's Orange County Auto Theft Task Force (**OCATT**), primarily auto theft rings.

Special Projects: Oversees for special projects, coordination of high profile cases, and two prosecution units:

- The **Special Prosecutions Unit** prosecutes a variety of specialized felonies (arson, hate crimes, political corruption, and cases dealing with Mentally Disordered Offenders). Additionally, this Unit investigates Officer Involved Shootings.
- The **Law and Motion** Unit conducts over 700 Felony Pretrial Motions, Writs and Appeals annually. The Unit also provides prosecutors legal research assistance and training.

Bureau of Investigations

The Bureau consists of both sworn and non-sworn personnel responsible for providing investigative and other related technical

services to support criminal prosecution. Investigators provide trial support by conducting complex criminal investigations as well as interviewing and subpoenaing witnesses and DNA Collection at the four adult justice centers and the Central Jail Arraignment Court (CJ-1). Investigators also assist other County law enforcement agencies with complex investigations, cases involving multiple jurisdictions, and investigation of officer-involved shootings and in-custody deaths occurring in Orange County. Additionally, the Bureau operates two investigative units:

- The **Anti-Terrorism/Organized Crime** Unit is the only countywide intelligence unit operating in the surveillance of organized crime. Investigations conducted by this unit have resulted in prosecution of serious crimes, including murder.
- The **TracKRS** (Taskforce review aimed at catching Killers, Rapists and Sexual Offenders) unit provides a variety of resources to assist peace officers in the investigation of homicides and sexual assaults.

The Bureau of Investigation provides contract criminal investigation services on a cost reimbursement basis to two County agencies:

- **Social Services Agency:** Investigative staff prevent, detect, and investigate various forms of Welfare Fraud. Additionally, legal staff conduct welfare fraud prosecutions.
- **Housing and Community Development:** Investigative staff identify and investigate individuals suspected of Section 8 Housing Fraud.

Each agency reimburses the Office the cost of investigative support to staff these operations.

Administrative Services

In addition to providing office services support to the prosecution and investigative units mentioned above, the Administrative Services Division provides a myriad of support services including: Accounting, Budgeting, Facilities, Human Resources, Information Technology, Purchasing, and Research.

Dedicated staff across the office perform their duties professionally to ensure the Office's core service of effective criminal prosecution is fulfilled and the public is protected from criminal activity.

B. ACTION PLAN

Core Service: Effective Criminal Prosecution

STRATEGIC GOAL: PROTECT THE PUBLIC FROM CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Our ability to work together, both within and between teams, as well as partner with other members of the law enforcement community is essential to our successfully fulfilling our mission. Teamwork is integral to the success of the Office. Each staff member plays a critical role in performing the tasks required to bring criminals to justice. We are committed to continuously improve our services to provide Orange County residents and visitors the protection, sense of security, and safety they deserve.

STRATEGIES TO ACCOMPLISH GOAL

1. Sufficiently staff prosecution, investigation, and support personnel
2. Utilize performance management tools with staff to focus on annual goal setting that support department needs
3. Maintain caseloads and provide resources to meet caseload demands by:
 - A. Ongoing triage and review of caseloads
 - B. Redeploy resources to meet caseload thresholds
 - C. Assess and implement changes to business processes to support technological enhancements to effectively prosecute cases

The primary challenge to accomplishing the goal is to maintain sufficient staff. Office staff continue to demonstrate a commitment to performing their duties to ensure public safety. However, revenue shortfalls and staffing shortages present challenges. We will continue to make accomplishing the goal more challenging each year.

2009 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE & REPORTING

Felony Conviction Rate is the Office's Key Performance Measure.

A key measure of success is maintaining a felony conviction rate of 90%. This measurable goal is telling in that it indicates the filing decisions, trial preparedness, and trial performance.

What is the Measurement?

The conviction rate measures the percentage of filed adult felony cases resulting in conviction.

Why Measurement is Important:

This measure directly reflects on the Office's ability to effectively represent the People of the State of California. Furthermore, this measure is of paramount importance to the community since convicting criminals brings justice to the victim and the community at large. Finally, convictions remove dangerous criminals from the community, require restitution be paid to the victim, and where applicable require environmental remediation.

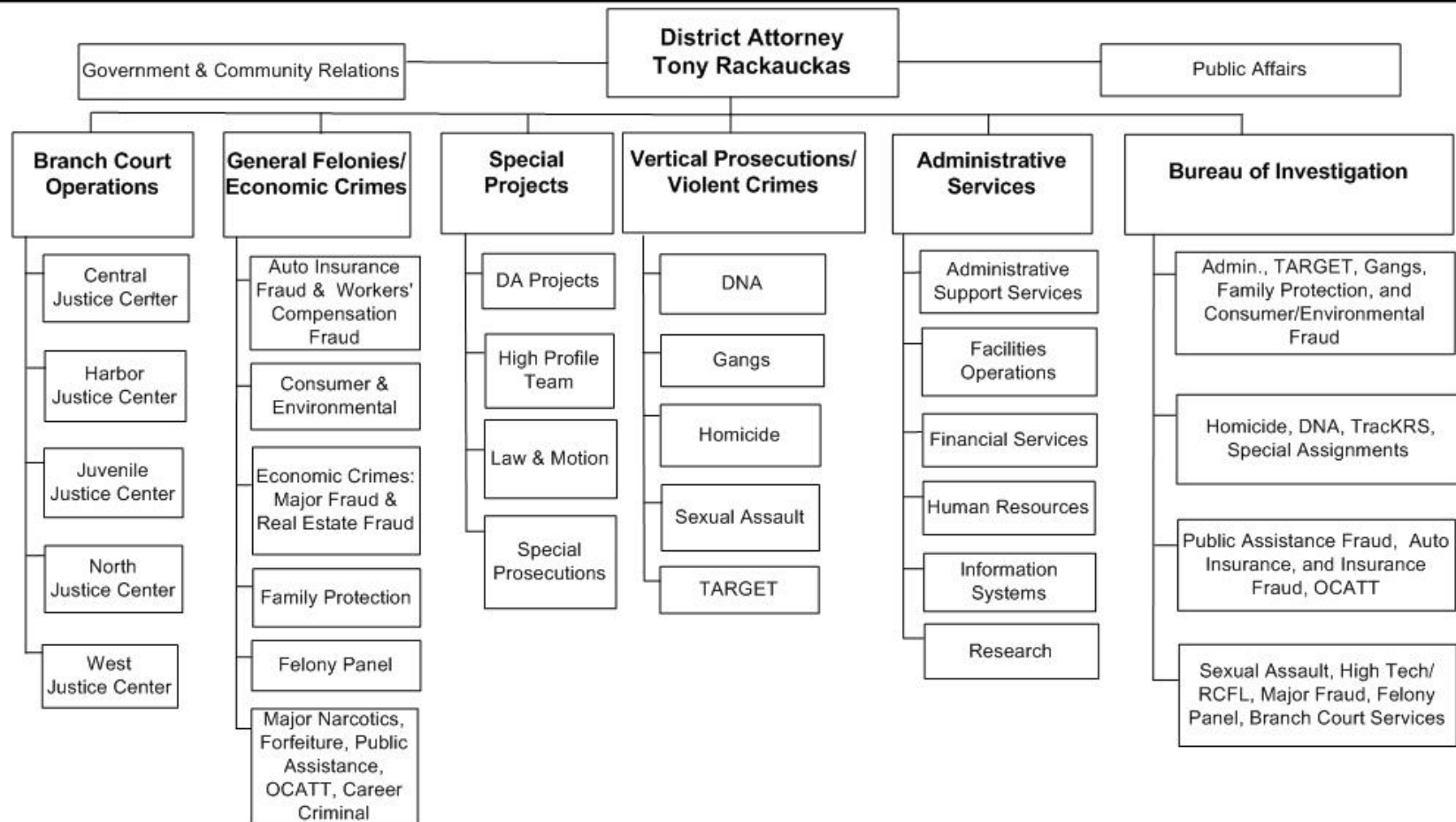
How are we doing?

The Office has continued to maintain an excellent felony conviction rate. The felony conviction rate for 2009 exceeded 90%.

APPENDIX A ORGANIZATION CHART



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
STAFF ORGANIZATION
JANUARY 2010



APPENDIX B

2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Our primary accomplishments require courageous crime victims and witnesses to come forward to report crime. Successful prosecution results from effective collaboration both among internal staff (prosecutors, investigators, and support staff) as well as with outside police agencies and the community.

Prosecution

Notwithstanding an unprecedented reduction in the number of front-line prosecutors over the last few years, the Orange County District Attorney's Office was able to achieve some noteworthy accomplishments in 2009. Here are some highlights:

- Overall Filings in 2009: Approximately 88,447 criminal cases against individuals were submitted for review to our office.
- Homicide Unit Prosecutions: This unit conducted 43 jury trials on murder cases and there were no acquittals. 4 cases resulted in hung juries and will be retried. Since 2005, there have been no acquittals when a homicide prosecutor has conducted a murder trial before a jury.
- Sexual Assault Unit Prosecutions: This unit prosecuted child molesters and rapists. The prosecutions resulted in an overall conviction rate of 94% and approximately 140 defendants were sentenced to state prison for their crimes.
- Gang and Target/Gang Unit Prosecutions: These units who prosecute hard core gang members successfully convicted 1,064 gang members in 2009.
- Gang Injunctions: Between 2006 and 2010, seven gangs have been successfully sued to enjoin them from terrorizing neighborhoods across Orange County. Hundreds of gang members are now prevented from nuisance and gang activities in various "safety zones" in Santa Ana, Anaheim, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Orange, and Garden Grove. Major reductions in crimes have been reported.

Orange County Regional Computer Forensics Lab (OCRCFL)

In July 2009, a Memorandum of Understanding formalized the establishment of the Nation's 16th Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory (RCFL) in Orange County. An RCFL is a one-stop, full service forensics laboratory and training center devoted entirely to the examination of digital evidence in support of criminal investigations.

Agencies committed to staff the OCRCFL include: the FBI, the Orange County District Attorney's Office, the Orange County Sheriff's Department and the Anaheim, Santa Ana, Irvine, Westminster, Newport Beach and Fullerton police departments.

The agencies cover the cost of their personnel and the FBI funds all other expenses, including on-going training to ensure the team can effectively handle the full spectrum of forensic evidence. The OCRCFL partnership includes full-time forensic examiners who will work on federal and state cases including homicide, child pornography, violent crimes, terrorism, theft or destruction of intellectual property, internet crime, and fraud.

TrackRS

In 2009, Orange County DNA Cold Hits totaled 670. This record number of cold hits is in large part due to the full implementation of the felony arrest provision of Proposition 69, "The DNA Fingerprint, Unsolved Crime and Innocence Protection Act" passed by voters in November 2004. This provision requires law enforcement agencies collect DNA from adults arrested for or charged with any felony offense. The Taskforce Review Aimed at Catching Killers, Rapists and Sexual Offenders (TrackRS) Unit collaborated with local law enforcement agencies serving as a resource to ensure successful implementation of this new requirement.

DNA Database

In 2006 the Board of Supervisors approved the purchase of a local DNA database software system. The OCDA DNA database blends computer software and DNA technologies into an effective tool for solving crimes. Through the local DNA database law enforcement officers are provided with investigative leads to identify possible suspects when no prior suspect existed, to link crimes committed by the same perpetrator and to exonerate those not guilty of committing a crime, all during the early stages of an investigation.

In 2009 we successfully completed the installation of DNA collection stations at all of the branch courthouses and at the newly created jail arraignment court to collect samples for both the local and state DNA databases. Since local DNA samples are often obtained from individuals who are not qualified for inclusion in the state database, maintaining our local DNA database has provided us with an invaluable tool to solve additional crimes, prevent future victimization and protect the citizens of Orange County. At the end of 2009 we have collected over 20,000 DNA samples for the local database. This tool has solved felony cases that would have otherwise gone unsolved.

Gang Injunctions and GRIP

The District Attorney's Office, in cooperation with local police, imposed injunctions on gangs in the cities of Orange and Garden Grove. This is in

addition to those already in place in Anaheim, Santa Ana, San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano.

These injunctions establish rules of conduct for gang members and provide punishment if they violate the rules. These civil lawsuits against gangs and their members are allowing citizens in Orange County to live in a safer environment.

The Gang Reduction and Intervention Partnership (GRIP) Program was initiated by the District Attorney's Office and the Anaheim Police Department. In 2009 we partnered with state and local law enforcement to prevent juveniles from being victims of or participants in gang crimes. The program works to identify at-risk youth, to increase school attendance and to decrease gang activity. GRIP uses positive incentives in working with kids such as rewarding good attendance with trips to Angel's Games, but it also conducts curfew sweeps. A typical curfew sweep will engage approximately 300 police officers and over 20 cities to detain minors who are violating city laws regarding curfews. GRIP provides education and counseling for the juveniles and their parents, as well as requiring community service for juveniles associated with gangs.

Vehicular Homicide Unit

The District Attorney's Office created the Vehicular Homicide Unit because we saw the need for DUI related death cases to be reviewed, investigated, and handled within the office by very experienced prosecutors and investigators. The victims' families need to have these serious vehicular death cases handled in the same way that we handle our other homicides, with a dedicated prosecution team being involved from the beginning of the case until the end. The Vehicular Homicide Unit is incorporated within our existing Homicide Unit with all vehicular death cases being submitted to them for review and filing. They handle all felony manslaughter and vehicular murders and review and assist on all misdemeanor manslaughters. The unit has a designated prosecutor at each branch court to prosecute the misdemeanor vehicular manslaughters. As of January 2010, over 40 of these vehicular murder and felony manslaughter cases were being prosecuted. Other counties in the state have used our office as a model for their own Vehicular Homicide Units.

The Vehicular Homicide Unit has implemented new procedures for working with victim's families. Advocates from Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Community Service Programs (CSP) are assigned to the case from the beginning and face to face meetings with the victim's family are held early on to prepare them for what lies ahead in the course of prosecuting the case.

These changes have resulted in the more efficient and successful prosecution of all of the DUI related traffic deaths in Orange County and we intend to continue to support the goal of seeking justice in these very important cases. Our goal is to make our streets and freeways – our neighborhoods and community – a safer place for all.

