

United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Evaluation Summary

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Date: February 20, 2000

Report Title: CDD Interagency
Review

Type of Evaluation: Special

The review team believes that the CDD will be successful in restoring this important law enforcement program by:

- Fulfilling the CDD District Manager's intent to fill the District Ranger position.
- Staying on track with recruitment efforts in progress, with the goal of restoring the total number of law enforcement rangers in the CDD to 46 (as recommended in the 1996 CDD law enforcement plan).
- Returning the law enforcement vehicles back to the CDD law enforcement fleet.
- Fulfilling the remaining recommendations made in this review report.

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CHAPTER

Number Title

1 Ranger Staffing

The staffing of law enforcement ranger positions has declined considerably over the past few years. A program that once had a high of 54 incumbent positions, now has only 29 incumbents who have been delegated with law enforcement authority. The review team found this to be particularly acute at the El Centro Field Office, which is now down to only 4 delegated law enforcement rangers from a high of 12. This staffing level is equivalent to the number assigned to the El Centro Field Office in 1978. It appears that increases in recreation visitation, additional restrictions related to implementation of the California Desert Plan, and designation of wilderness areas have all contributed to a rapidly increasing law enforcement workload. In addition, the emerging issues of unruly behavior at the ISDRA and illegal "rave parties" occurring throughout the CDD have significantly added to this workload. It is obvious that the current staffing level of law enforcement rangers in the CDD is not sufficient to handle the workload.

The team found that the El Centro Field Office has been making attempts to deal with the workload through soliciting the assistance of law enforcement rangers from other field offices and agencies on busy holiday weekends. Although this seems to be minimally meeting the peak workload needs in the short term, it tends to create a crisis in the weeks immediately preceding a holiday weekend in obtaining the required number of law enforcement rangers.

The team has focused its recommendations in the area of restoring the CDD law enforcement workforce to levels that are reasonably commensurate with the observed workloads. The team relies on the information contained in the approved 1996 California Desert Law Enforcement Plan. This plan sets a projected need for 46 law enforcement rangers throughout the CDD. The team believes that restoring the law enforcement ranger workforce to this level will give the CDD a basic capability to handle the law enforcement workload. However, the team believes that because of the intensity of law enforcement responsibilities in the ISDRA, the El Centro Field Office should be restored to its historic peak level of 12 law enforcement rangers. There was considerable discussion about the "seasonal" nature of the ISDRA law enforcement workload. However, the team also found that this workload runs from October to April (at least six months or slightly longer). It, therefore, makes sense to recruit permanent law enforcement rangers for assignment to the El Centro Field Office. The Field Office would then be free to make arrangements for detail assignments of several of these positions to other locations and agencies in the summer season. For example, they could be used in Northern California or Western Oregon during the marijuana cultivation field season, or agreements could be made with certain National Parks that have well defined summer seasons. The team leaves it up to the CDD to determine appropriate assignment of the remaining 34 rangers.

The team recognizes the work-in-progress being done by the CDD and the California State Office to solve these staffing problems. According to NLEO records, there are currently 5 rangers awaiting FLETC training and an additional 2 rangers awaiting background investigation clearance. Further, California is participating with the NLEO in working towards recruiting another 5 entry-level candidates on or about June 2000. If the CDD stays on track with these plans, they should have 41 law enforcement rangers in place by September 2000. The team has further recommended that the California State Office and CDD place a higher priority on filling law enforcement ranger vacancies and streamline some processes for providing retention incentives for incumbent law enforcement rangers.

United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Inspection Worksheet

Date: February 20, 2000

Worksheet #: 1

Office Evaluated: California Desert

Type of Evaluation: Special

By: National Law Enforcement Office

Worksheet Subject: Adequacy of law enforcement ranger staffing

Findings:

1. The CDD does not have enough incumbent law enforcement rangers to handle historic or projected law enforcement workloads. The total CDD law enforcement workload includes field offices other than El Centro being able to assist at the ISDRA during peak visitor-use periods.
2. The El Centro Field Office does not have enough incumbent law enforcement rangers to handle regular field office law enforcement workloads, let alone peak visitor use periods.
3. The CDD quite often has found itself in the position of losing law enforcement rangers at a much faster rate than the vacancies can be filled.
4. The "metering" of personnel workloads in the State Office may be contributing to a back-log problem in filling vacancies.

Recommendations:

1. Restore the number of law enforcement ranger positions back up to the authorized table of organizations at least as many (46) as projected to be needed in the 1996 CDD law enforcement plan.
2. Restore the number of law enforcement ranger positions in the El Centro Field Office to its peak historic level of 12.
3. Explore implementing incentives-based retention methods such as grade increases, awards, specialty pay, or retention bonuses under the Federal Law Enforcement Pay Enhancement Act. Pursue maintaining permanent open roster for entry-level ranger positions.
4. Place a higher priority on filling law enforcement ranger vacancies.

Final Reviewing Officer	Title: Chief, National Law Enforcement Office	Signature:	Date:
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II	Equipment

The team found that all law enforcement rangers have been issued the basic compliment of law enforcement equipment required by the Law Enforcement General Orders. However, it appears that issuance of additional equipment as authorized by General Order 21, V., had not been done in all field offices of the CDD. The team was most concerned about the safety equipment necessary for working in potentially hostile crowds.

The team found that during the near-riot situations of Thanksgiving Weekend 1999, several law enforcement rangers had full beer cans and other objects thrown at them. During the President's Weekend 2000, the team observed that at least four LEOs were hit by beer cans and other objects; one LEO was hit by a bag of fecal matter; and 2 other LEOs had things thrown at them. Therefore, the team is most concerned about individual issuance of police-style riot helmets to protect the head and face from thrown objects. The team found that the Barstow Field Office and the Needle Field Office had acquired police-style riot helmets for their rangers as a result of need for dispersing "rave parties" and an incident involving an unauthorized encampment of protesters. It was found that the recently-issued General Order amendment that provides standards for these helmets to have "ballistic" protection renders the current available helmets to be substandard and causes some expense and availability issues. The team recommends that this standard be reviewed. Following that, all CDD LEOs should be individually issued helmets meeting the G.C. Standard.

The team found that if LEOs working in the ISDRA were ever called to participate with other agencies in a crowd dispersal operation, they did not possess riot batons or gas masks for protection from chemical agents that may be launched to effect dispersal. The team recommends that these two items also be individually issued to all LEOs in the CDD. The NLEO is working towards solving this problem during the 2000 In-Service training by issuing riot batons and gas masks, and providing training in their use.

There was much discussion about the possibility of hazardous air quality issues at the bottom of Competition Hill at nighttime. The team observed the hazy and smoky conditions that seem to originate from illegal magnesium fire coupled with exhaust fumes from numerous vehicles and dust and particulate matter. The team recommends the BLM obtain the assistance of the State of California Department of Health Services or other responsible agency to sample the air at the bottom of Competition Hill during peak use, and determine the degree of pollution and whether respirators or other protective devices should be issued to LEOs and other BLM personnel who must work under such conditions.

The availability of appropriate law enforcement vehicles is a significant issue. The team found that vehicles originally acquired for law enforcement purposes had been reassigned for non-law enforcement use due to the fact that the law enforcement ranger positions were vacant. This occurred despite the El Centro Field Office needing to provide such vehicles to LEOs from other states who could not bring their vehicles to assist at the ISDRA on holiday weekend. Further, now that ranger vacancies are being filled, vehicles are not currently available for these positions. The team believes it necessary for the CDD to transfer these vehicles back into the CDD law enforcement fleet as soon as possible. Also, the team found that LEOs working the "sand drags" and Competition Hill needed a more efficient way to quickly transport prisoners and suspects out of the crowds to an appropriate control location. A sand rail vehicle assigned to law enforcement in ISDRA would facilitate this need.

The team is aware of the developments in law enforcement technology related to "less-than-lethal" weapons. The most common of these is the "bean bag" shotgun. The team believes that further research in this area may yield the possibility of applying some of the new "less-than-lethal" technology to the ISDRA-type situations.

United States
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Bureau of Land Management

Inspection Worksheet

Date: February 20, 2000

Worksheet #: 2

Office Evaluated: California Desert

Type of Evaluation: Special

By: National Law Enforcement Office

Worksheet Subject: Appropriate safety equipment

Findings:

1. Only the Barstow Field Office Needles Field Office had issued some of their law enforcement rangers police style helmets. Riot batons have not been issued. There has been only limited gas mask distribution from stock provided by the NLEO.
2. The Law Enforcement General Orders requirement for "ballistic" protection in helmets may cause expense and availability issues.
3. It appears that there may be hazardous air quality problems at the bottom of Competition Hill.
4. Law enforcement does not generally have a "sand rail-type" vehicle available for law enforcement transport and extractions.
5. There are recent trends in the use of "less-than-lethal" weapons in law enforcement confrontations that may have application in the ISDRA situations.

Recommendations:

1. Issue police-style riot helmets to all law enforcement rangers in the CDD. A number of these will be made available by the NLEO following the 2000 in-service training. NLEO will also be providing riot batons and gas masks and training in their use.
2. The LELO should review the "ballistic" requirement for police-style helmets currently in the General Order.
3. Consult with the State of California Department of Health Services about air quality problems at the bottom of Competition Hill during peak use and ask for their recommendations on potential respiratory protection.
4. Acquire a "sand rail" for law enforcement applications at ISDRA.
5. Research the possibility of obtaining some "less-than-lethal" (bean bag shotguns, etc.) weapons for use in the ISDRA for crowd control when situations may warrant it.

Final Reviewing Officer	Title: Chief, National Law Enforcement Office	Signature:	Date:
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Assigned to:	Date:
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III

Training

The team found that the emerging law enforcement workloads at the ISDRA are so intense and so unique that most of the LEOs who come from other field offices to work on holiday weekends are not trained or experienced enough to efficiently handle these assignments. Most BLM LEOs are typically trained to deal with the normal law enforcement workloads of issuing misdemeanor citations for resource-type violations and making an occasional arrest. When confronted with a situation that requires making numerous vehicle stops, protection and extraction of fellow officers, prisoners and victims, conducting DUI tests, recognizing illegal drugs and paraphernalia, etc., visiting LEOs are ill-equipped to do these things safely and efficiently. The team believes that some of this training can be accomplished through the annual in-service training. However, specific hands-on training must be provided through an effective Field Training Officer program with experienced senior LEOs teaching these skills one-on-one.

The team also found that most BLM LEOs are used to working alone. When they are suddenly thrust into a situation that requires working as a team (such as crowd control), they are hesitant to act and seem to await further instruction. A mere pre-operations briefing is not sufficient to provide visiting LEOs with sufficient information on what to do in hostile crowd events. The team believes that conducting some drill and practice sessions prior to the holiday weekend will solve some of this problem.

While the BLM would normally not be involved in crowd control and crowd dispersal operations, it is reasonable to expect that BLM LEOs may on occasion be asked to assist State and local agencies in such activities. However, the BLM has found themselves confronted by crowd control and dispersal responsibilities in the past (i.e., unauthorized "Barstow-to-Vegas" Race, timber sale protests, etc.). It is obvious that the BLM law enforcement program must be made ready for crowd control and dispersal responsibilities in the future. General crowd control training is a planned curriculum item for the 2000 Law Enforcement In-Service. This will include use of gas masks, helmets, riot baton and platoon formations. The training will be provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office crowd control unit.

Additionally, BLM LEOs who lead, direct, and supervise others in crowd control situations need an adequate grounding in the principles of crowd dynamics and behavior. The U.S. Park Police member of the review team has invited BLM California LEOs to participate in some upcoming crowd control events in Washington, DC to help them understand these principles. This will assist in obtaining sufficient knowledge to determine what additional training should be obtained in this area by the BLM.

United States
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Date: February 20, 2000

Worksheet #: 3

Office Evaluated: California Desert

Type of Evaluation: Special

By: National Law Enforcement Office

Worksheet Subject: Adequacy of training

Findings:

1. Some law enforcement rangers temporarily working at the ISDRA do not have essential skills in determining appropriate locations of stops, or protection and extraction of fellow officers, prisoners or victims, etc.
2. Most law enforcement rangers are generally accustomed to working alone, and do not often know how to perform when they must operate as a team with partners or squads of other officers.
3. Most law enforcement rangers do not have training and experience in managing crowds and dispersing crowds.
4. There is also a lack of training and experience in crowd dynamics, behavior, etc.

Recommendations:

1. The California Field Training Officer (FTO) program needs to be revitalized. The program also should be adopted on a National basis that will include the essential skills necessary for officer safety in these areas
2. Law enforcement rangers planning to work a heavy weekend at ISDRA should report for duty several days early when orientation training and practice can take place. All the officers who will be working together for the weekend will be put through practical scenarios and drills designed to focus on working as teams.
3. General crowd control training will be provided at the 2000 Law Enforcement In-Service.
4. A training course in crowd dynamics and behavior needs to be developed for shift leaders who will supervise groups of officers and will be making crowd control strategy decisions on holiday weekends

Final Reviewing Officer	Title: Chief, National Law Enforcement Office	Signature:	Date:
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United States
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Inspection Worksheet

Date: February 20, 2000

Worksheet #: 4

Office Evaluated: California Desert

Type of Evaluation: Special

By: National Law Enforcement Office

Worksheet Subject: Program leadership

Findings:

1. Excellent leadership in solving issues and problems for ISDRA (often under very trying circumstances) has been provided by Greg Thomsen, Bob Zimmer, and John Blachley.
2. There is a serious void of law enforcement program leadership at the District Office in terms of direct support and advocacy for budgetary planning, filling vacant positions, coordinating a law enforcement vehicle fleet, finding extra assistance for peak visitor-use periods, law enforcement planning and other program priorities. Providing for these responsibilities by committee is only working in the short range.
3. The CDD law enforcement program has seriously declined in workforce numbers and in prominence. This has occurred despite widespread support from various constituencies and user groups.

Recommendations:

1. Greg Thomsen, Bob Zimmer and John Blachley should be commended for their efforts and encouraged to continue with innovative solutions.
2. The review team fully endorses the District Managers intention to fill the District Ranger position. In the interim, an official Acting should be appointed to begin work on several of the recommendations made in this report. The Acting should not be one of the Chief Area Rangers who are already fully engaged in the regular duties.
3. The District Manager should begin an initiative to increase the visibility and prominence of the law enforcement program. Presentation at CDCA Advisory Council meetings and other forums should be considered. Also, the DM should develop policy statements and media releases in meetings with U.S. Attorneys and other justice officials. Promotional field trips for other State Directors and Field Office Managers who contribute the assistance of their LEOs to the ISDRA should occur.

Final Reviewing Officer	Title: Chief, National Law Enforcement Office	Signature:	Date:
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V	Budget and Finance

The team found that legitimate management decisions had been made over the last few years that resulted in law enforcement ranger vacancies remaining unfilled and law enforcement vehicles being reassigned to non-law enforcement purposes. These are indicators that inadequate funds have been allocated for law enforcement purposes. However, to a large extent, this is attributable to the BLM budgetary method for funding law enforcement ranger operations. That method involves providing the majority of law enforcement ranger salary and operations funds from benefitting subactivities rather than exclusively from the 1630 - Law Enforcement and Resource Protection subactivity. In the past, the CDD law enforcement program received substantial appropriations from Congress. However, these allocations were made in a variety of benefitting subactivities. While the priority was on funding of law enforcement activities for the first few years after the initial appropriations, the priorities for individual subactivities tended to change over the years. The CDD is also confronted with a variety of changing priorities and emerging workloads. The DM must be able to make decisions on how best to utilize available funding to meet the various priorities. In the CDD, funding had necessarily been diverted to other priorities, leaving the law enforcement program with short falls. The DM has stated his intention to fill vacant law enforcement ranger positions (in fact, significant progress is being made). This represents a necessary shift in priority towards the law enforcement program. The team supports this intention. The team believes that, in order to adequately provide for a law enforcement program that includes at least 46 law enforcement positions, approximately \$3,500,000 should be set aside each year for this purpose.

The team learned that the CDD continues to make allocations of various funding sources through the traditional programmatic ways utilizing the concept of "program leads." The "program leads" often work towards funding what they believe are the program priorities first and only allocating whatever might remain to the law enforcement function. The BLM has now turned to the concept of strategic planning where specific goals and budget themes have been developed that are worthy of funding from a variety of sources. For example, the strategic plan goal of reducing threats to public health, safety, and property is that in which the CDD law enforcement program fits best. It became obvious to the team that not only are we not reducing these threats, but they are rapidly increasing in the CDD. The CDD should develop initiatives to make their budgetary allocations more responsive to this strategic plan goal. Another law enforcement-related strategic plan goal is preserving natural and cultural heritage. There are also the FY2001 budget themes of "urban interface," "managing public land treasures," and "ensuring safe visits." All of these goals and themes relate to the need for a strong law enforcement program. Further, there is strong support from various constituency groups for additional funding for law enforcement from OHV grants and fee collection revenues. The CDD needs to become more "strategic" in finding funding sources and making allocations to their law enforcement program. A key to this may be updating the CDD law enforcement plan. In that effort, an analysis of annual LAWNET data could be conducted and the reported incidents be sorted according to the various subactivities. From that analysis, a percentage of workload could be established for each benefitting subactivity to determine what proportion of the total \$3,500,000 is required from each benefitting subactivity. In this manner, the District Ranger becomes the "goal lead" for reducing threats to public health, safety, and property using annual LAWNET data and law enforcement-related program element cost data to monitor goal performance.

United States
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Inspection Worksheet

Date: February 20, 2000

Worksheet #: 5

Office Evaluated: California Desert

Type of Evaluation: Special

By: National Law Enforcement Office

Worksheet Subject: Budget and finance

Findings:

1. Clearly, funding for law enforcement purposes is inadequate.
2. The CDD budget allocations are being made according to subactivity practices of the past.

Recommendations:

1. Reallocations of various supporting subactivities must be made and specific amounts directed for law enforcement purposes in the CDD. Considering the 1996 CDD law enforcement plan for 46 law enforcement ranger positions, this amount should be approximately \$3,500,000 annually.
2. Reallocations from the various sub-activities should be conformed to the BLM National Strategic Plan goal of preserving natural and cultural resources and preventing threats to health, safety and property. Adequate support should also be developed under the FY2001 budget themes of "urban interface," "managing public land treasures," and "ensuring safe visits."

Final Reviewing
Officer

Title: Chief, National
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Signature:

Date:

Implementation

Assigned to:

Date:

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VI

Communications
System

The team found that field employees overwhelmingly reported dissatisfaction with the current CDD radio system. This issue became the most contentious issue examined by the team. The team is most concerned about ensuring LEU safety and efficiency through a properly functioning radio system. Specifically, The Departmental Law Enforcement Handbook (446 DM Chap. 16) provides standards for such systems. Although the team did not explore this issue in finite detail, it soon became obvious that the current radio system does not seem to be up to these standards. The team also learned that many BLM non-law enforcement employees found that the current system was not meeting the needs to effectively and safely meet their responsibilities. The short-term solutions involving links to allied agencies appears to be a "stop-gap" solution to a bigger problem. The team is aware that the DOI is undergoing an initiative to convert its radio systems to "narrow banding." Many CDD employees believe that necessary repairs to the existing system are being suspended while waiting for this initiative to begin equipment conversions in the CDD. The team believes that the existing system needs to be immediately evaluated against the DOI standards and necessary repair and installs be made to render it functional.

The team discovered that the BLM may be paying several times for the same services. It is understood that the CDD provides substantial funding each year to the Federal Interagency Communications Center (FICC). However, many employees said that the radio system is so dysfunctional that they are unable to communicate with FICC. Further, many believe that "non-fire" traffic is not getting adequate attention. To address this perceived inadequacy, it seems the BLM may have funded agreements with both the Riverside County Sheriff's Office and the Imperial County Sheriff's Office to meet some of the law enforcement dispatch needs at the ISDRA on busy holiday weekends. If this is the case, the BLM may be paying three times for the same service. Further, the team found that the Imperial County Sheriff was puzzled over how the BLM had developed a link to the Riverside County Sheriff for law enforcement dispatch services that aid the ISDRA operation when the ISDRA is within Imperial County. The team recommends that analysis of these issues be conducted and a determination of where best to obtain the desired services. For example, it does not appear that the BLM is getting much benefit from the FICC arrangement. The CDD should also move immediately to seek primary law enforcement dispatch services in Imperial County from the Imperial County Sheriff's Office.

The team also heard from a member of the public about the need for a system through which citizens using BLM recreation areas could make contact with on-duty law enforcement rangers. The public desires this to report incidents or ask for assistance for situations that do not constitute 911-type emergencies. This could be done through providing emergency call boxes (Red Rock Canyon NCA has some of these) or a toll-free number to a dispatch center that monitors and can communicate with on-duty law enforcement rangers. Since many people have cell phones, a number could be set up to be monitored 24 hours per day. This could be well publicized and be printed on brochures, maps, etc. Providing a system through which the BLM can respond to the public's requests for assistance is an essential law enforcement service.

United States
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Inspection Worksheet

Date: February 20, 2000

Worksheet #: 6

Office Evaluated: California Desert

Type of Evaluation: Special

By: National Law Enforcement Office

Worksheet Subject: Electronic communications system

Findings:

1. The BLM-operated radio system appears to be totally non-functional with little hope in sight for adequate repairs and/or replacement. This is despite the Departmental Law Enforcement Handbook (446 DM chapter 16) requirements for law enforcement communications systems. While recent links to allied law enforcement agencies are somewhat effective in meeting short-term goals, the critical need for a BLM system as a lifeline to all employees and members of the public continues to exist.
2. It appears that funds are being allocated to FICC with very little service being rendered to the law enforcement function, causing the expenditure of additional funds to allied agencies. This is creating a "paying twice" situation.
3. The Imperial County Sheriff appeared to be puzzled over BLM developing a direct communication system links to Riverside County Sheriff for handling incidents with Imperial County.
4. Members of the public have indicated that they need a way that they can make contact with BLM law enforcement for incidents of a non-emergency nature they are encountering in our recreation areas.

Recommendations:

1. The radio system in the CDD should be made the highest priority for "narrow band" conversion and installation.
2. The agreement for radio services with the FICC needs an intensive review of "cost v. benefit." This should include a survey of all BLM employees in the CDD to determine the degree of customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction. Depending upon the results, the CDD should consider utilizing the same investment now being made in the FICC in setting up an independent BLM dispatch service.
3. Implement appropriate amendments, including funding, to the law enforcement agreement(s) with Imperial County Sheriff's Office for dispatch services, CLETS access, officer-status tracking, EMS concerns, et
4. Set up a direct or toll-free telephone number that would ring in an appropriate dispatch center that is capable of radio transmission (this may not be true for BLM frequencies or FICC at this time) to on-duty enforcement officers.

Final Reviewing
Officer

Title: Chief, National
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Signature:

Date:

Implementation

Assigned to:

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VII	Land Management Goals

The team understands that the need to conduct specific law enforcement actions (such as crowd control) is directly related to what BLM management intends to achieve in a particular area of public land. For example, the July 1987 *Recreation Area Management Plan for the Imperial Sand Dunes*, has among its objectives: "enhance public safety through a positive program of education, enforcement of safety laws and regulations, and timely emergency response." The emergence of a faction of people who are participating in unruly and lawless behavior has severely shifted the BLM's law enforcement response from the traditional "resource officer" to the required "typical police response. Many employees and members of the public expressed to the team the danger of working in the dunes. Some members of the public described incidents that cause them to fear for their safety in certain locations in the ISDRA. The team believes that in order to meet the public needs for a safer recreational environment, the shift in law enforcement response is proper and necessary. The El Centro Field Office law enforcement staff is encouraged to continue the coordination being done with the ISDRA TRT. Obtaining the continuing support of dunes users will be very important in working towards solving the law enforcement problems at the ISDRA. During the peak-use season consideration should be given to holding monthly (post-holiday weekend) meetings between TRT representative, BLM management, and El Centro law enforcement staff.

The team finds that what is happening at the ISDRA may indeed be indicative of what the BLM can expect throughout the CDD. Because of this, the CDD should work toward updating its law enforcement plan to consider these emerging issues and shifts in enforcement response. In that updated plan, evaluation should be made of where continuing and new partnerships should be made with allied law enforcement agencies. For example, in the past the BLM did not find it necessary to have a reimbursable law enforcement agreement with the Imperial County Sheriff's Office, yet now this concept has become an absolute requirement. The team has found that there is tremendous support for strong BLM law enforcement from both protection-related constituencies and use-related constituencies. See Sierra Club article, *BLM Rangers attacked on Thanksgiving Weekend* (Appendix 3) and *Results of TRT Survey* (Appendix 4). Therefore, updating the CDD Law Enforcement Plan is a very timely initiative.

The team also found that the multitude of issues and changes affecting the operation of the ISDRA are tremendous. The team learned that the El Centro Field Office has initiated the process for updating the ISDRA Management Plan. Because of what the LEOs are now confronted with in the ISDRA, the team recommends that the following issues be considered in the updated plan: carrying capacity; bans on alcoholic beverage; dealing with unruly behavior; appropriateness of the organized/unorganized "sand drags" and Competition Hill gatherings; possible nighttime closures of problem areas, controlling access, and providing reasonably safe visits.

The team received a lot of input about the staffing shortfalls at the ISDRA on heavy holiday weekends. The team witnessed this first-hand during the Presidents' Day weekend. Not only is there an acute shortage of law enforcement personnel, there is also a shortage of emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. It is obvious that EMS are being provided at the ISDRA that is far beyond statutory requirements and the agency mission. However, the BLM has a well-established tradition (over 20 years) of providing these services. The group of non-law enforcement personnel present on Presidents' Day weekend seemed to be dealing with a workload that was beyond their capability, and that detracted from other responsibilities (e.g., fee collection compliance patrols). The team brings this to management attention, but, because this is beyond the scope of this review, no specific recommendations are made.

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VII	Land Management Goals

The team also recommends that the El Centro Field Office continue its progress towards a more strategic approach to planning for staffing of the ISDRA operation on busy holiday weekends. Rather than a short operational plan for each particular holiday weekend, a multi-year strategic plan should be developed to address long-term goals, staffing needs, funding needs, and appropriate partnerships. Requests and agreements with other BLM Field Offices or other allied agencies for providing additional LEOs should be done well in advance of the actual need. The team recommends that the BLM immediately begin rendering assistance to the Imperial County Sheriff's Office for obtaining an OHV grant for a "coalition" of multiple agencies (ICSO, CHP, BLM, OHV Division, Border Patrol) to provide for a "joint command" of LEOs to combat unruly behavior at ISDRA.

United States
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Bureau of Land Management

Inspection Worksheet

Date: February 20, 2000

Worksheet #: 7

Office Evaluated: California Desert

Type of Evaluation: Special

By: National Law Enforcement Office

Worksheet Subject: Land management goals, objectives, and planning

Findings:

1. The CDD law enforcement plan is out of date and does not consider emerging issues.
2. The ISDRA recreation activity plan is not current and does not address emerging issues.
3. There is a lack of multiple-year strategic planning for law enforcement and EMS at the ISDRA.
4. There is a need to incorporate additional partnerships with other law enforcement agencies in dealing with the lawless element at ISDRA.

Recommendations:

1. The CDD law enforcement plan should be rewritten and updated. The NLEO should be invited to assist with this process. The law enforcement plan should provide discussion on the appropriate allocation of range positions to the field offices and the staffing of the ISDRA during peak visitation periods.
2. The review team fully endorses the Field Office Manager's intention to complete a new ISDRA activity plan. This plan should address: carrying capacity, bans on alcoholic beverages, dealing with unruly behavior, appropriateness of the organized/unorganized "sand drags" and Competition Hill gatherings, possible nighttime closures of problem areas, controlling access, providing reasonably safe visits, etc.
3. A multi-year strategic plan should be prepared outlining goals, objectives, staffing, and strategies for the law enforcement and EMS operations at the ISDRA.
4. BLM should support the Imperial County Sheriff's Office initiative to submit an OHV grant proposal for "coalition" of multiple agencies (ICSO, CHP, BLM, OHV Division, Border Patrol) to provide for a "joint command" of law enforcement officers to combat unruly behavior at ISDRA.

Final Reviewing Officer	Title: Chief, National Law Enforcement Office	Signature:	Date:
Implementation			
Assigned to:			Date: