

**Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence:
Findings By Use of Force Team**

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GIBSON DUNN

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1. LASD Personnel Have Used Force Against Inmates Disproportionate To The Threat Posed or When There Was No Threat At All.

- LASD policy prohibits personnel from using force that is “unnecessary or excessive given the circumstances.”
- Accounts from inmates, non-inmates and LASD’s own documents describe instances in which LASD personnel have used force against inmates who were restrained or confined to a cell or have used more force than necessary to eliminate a threat from an inmate.

2. The Drop In Use of Force Incidents Following Public Scrutiny of the LASD Corroborates the Anecdotal Evidence of a Historical Use of Force Problem.

ALL FORCE INCIDENTS MONTHLY AVERAGES 2006-2012			
Date Range	Jan 2006 – Dec 2010	Jan 2011 – Sept 2011	Oct 2011 – June 2012
Number of Months	60	9	9
Total Number of Force Incidents	5049	478	344
Average Number of Force Incidents per Month	84	53	38

SIGNIFICANT FORCE INCIDENTS MONTHLY AVERAGES 2006-2012			
Date Range	Jan 2006 – Dec 2010	Jan 2011 – Sept 2011	Oct 2011 – June 2012
Number of Months	60	9	9
Total Number of Significant Force Incidents	3057	368	179
Average Number of Significant Force Incidents per Month	51	41	20



3. The Vast Majority of Force Used in Los Angeles County Jails Has Been “Significant” Force.

- From 2006 through 2011, 62% of force used by LASD personnel was Significant; 38% was Less Significant.
- The percentage of force incidents involving Significant Force increased during the same period.
 - In 2006, 50% of all force incidents involved Significant Force.
 - In 2011, 72% of all force incidents involved Significant Force.




4. Most Force in Los Angeles County Jails is Non-Directed and Unsupervised.

- 84% of all force incidents from 2007 through 2011 involved non-directed force.
- In 73% of all force incidents from 2007 through 2011, no supervisor was present when the incidents occurred.

5. Most Force Incidents in 2011 Were Not in Response to Inmate Assaults.

- 57% of the force incidents did not involve inmate assaultive activity.
- At least 168 of these force incidents involved Significant Force.



6. LASD's Determination That Less Than 1% of Force Incidents from 2006 to 2011 Involved Founded Allegations of "Unreasonable" Force in Violation of Policy Casts Doubt on the Integrity of its Force Assessments and the Reliability of its Data.

- From 2006 through 2011, LASD determined that use of force was unreasonable and imposed punishment in 36 out of 5,630 use of force incidents (0.6%).



7. Deputies Have Enabled Inmates to Use Force Against Other Inmates.

- Witnesses have told the Commission that deputies enabled inmates to attack other rival inmates by opening the doors to several cells at once, which inmates refer to as “racking the gates.”
- The Commission also heard about deputies who have intentionally placed inmates in dangerous situations, such as placing high-security inmates in the general population and announcing their crimes to the other inmates.

8. Deputies Have Used Humiliation as a Tool to Harass Inmates.

- Witnesses told the Commission that strip searches have been used as a tool to humiliate inmates.

9. Use of Heavy Flashlights as Impact Weapons Leads to Unnecessary Injuries

- Experts and jail heads believe that heavy metal flashlights can lead to easily to broken bones and other serious injuries and should not be used as impact weapons.
- Although LASD has recently prohibited the use of heavy metal flashlights, it has been slow in implementing this prohibition and the Situational Use of Force Options Chart continues to list flashlights as permissible impact weapons.

10. LASD's Statistics on Use of Force Are Not Completely Reliable.

- FAST and PPI are not directly linked, so the data on force incidents in the two systems are inconsistent.
- Data on force incidents is likely entered into the systems inconsistently because there is no specialized, uniform training for those who enter the data, nor is there a uniform manual on data entry.
- Neither FAST nor PPI effectively tracks inmate grievances relating to excessive force.
- PPI does not track use of force complaints at all.
- FAST tracks grievances relating to all issues, but information is not retrievable by deputy name and not separated by category – meaning it cannot produce statistical force trend analysis.
- There is likely underreporting of the use of force.



11. Anecdotal Evidence Suggests that the Use of Force is Underreported.

- Anecdotal information indicates that not all force incidents are reported by deputies, inmates or witnesses.
- Witnesses and inmates fear retaliation for reporting an incident. Anecdotal information indicates that inmates are, at times, placed in disciplinary segregation after excessive force is used against them.
- The inmate complaint process requires participation by the deputies.



12. LASD Does Not Have a Comprehensive, Integrated and Understandable Use of Force Policy.

- Experts stated that an effective use of force policy must be a comprehensive and easy-to-understand guide on what to do when confronted with a use of force scenario.
- LASD does not have a single, comprehensive and organized use of force policy.

13. LASD Did Not Have a Policy That Set Forth Basic Force Avoidance Principles Prior to November 2011.

- That LASD did not have any policy incorporating the basic principle of force avoidance until last Fall is troubling and sent the wrong message to LASD personnel.
- The current force prevention provision is insufficient until its principles are fully integrated into an overall coherent use of force policy.



14. The Situational Use of Force Option Chart is Not an Adequate or Well-Founded Use of Force Guide.

- The Chart is not an adequate guide for deputies facing ever-changing, dynamic situations.
- The Chart is problematic because it includes no mention of force avoidance or the “objectively reasonable” standard articulated by the Supreme Court and instead implies that the deputies may use unnecessary force.

15. LASD Policies Concerning the Reporting of Force are Confusing and Fail to Clearly Articulate the Timeline and Process for Reporting.

- Ambiguities and omissions in the LASD force reporting requirements diminish the integrity and reliability of the reporting process.