

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

MOTOR VEHICLE CRIME PREVENTION AUTHORITY

GRANTS BUDGET and REPORTING (GBR)  
COMMITTEE MEETING

Texas Department of Motor Vehicles  
4000 Jackson Avenue  
Building 1  
Lone Star Room  
Austin, Texas 78731

1:00 p.m.  
Tuesday,  
April 18, 2023

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Julio Gonzalez, Chair  
Sharon Jones  
Dean Smith (absent)

STAFF:

Joe Canady, Interim Director  
David Richards, General Counsel

*ON THE RECORD REPORTING*  
*(512) 450-0342*

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8. The Committee may enter into closed session under one or more of the following provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Government Code Chapter 551: Section 551.071 Section 551.074 Section 551.076 Section 551.089	--
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P R O C E E D I N G S

1  
2 MR. GONZALEZ: Good morning. My name is Julio  
3 Gonzalez, and I am pleased to open the meeting of the  
4 Grants Budget and Reporting Committee of the Board of the  
5 Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority. It is one  
6 o'clock and I am now calling the Committee meeting for  
7 April 18, 2023 to order. I want to note for the record  
8 that the public notice of this meeting containing all  
9 items on the Agenda was filed with the Office of Secretary  
10 of State on April 10, 2023.

11 Before we begin today's meeting, please place  
12 all cell phones and other communication devices in a  
13 silent mode. And please, as a courtesy to others, do not  
14 carry on side conversations or other activities in the  
15 meeting room.

16 I want to welcome those who are with us today  
17 for today's Committee meeting. If you do wish to address  
18 the Committee or speak on an Agenda item during today's  
19 meeting, please complete a speaker's sheet at the  
20 registration table.

21 Please identify the specific item you are  
22 interested in commenting on, your name and address, and  
23 whether you are representing anyone or speaking for  
24 yourself. If your comment does not pertain to a specific  
25 Agenda item, we will take your comment during the general

1 public comment portion of the meeting.

2 In accordance with the Department's  
3 administrative rule, comments to the Committee will be  
4 limited to three minutes. To assist each speaker, a timer  
5 has been provided at the podium. The timer light will be  
6 green for the first two minutes, yellow when the speaker  
7 has one minute left, and then red when the speaker's time  
8 is up.

9 Individuals cannot accumulate time from other  
10 speakers. Comments should be pertinent to the issues  
11 stated on the comment sheet. When addressing the  
12 Committee, please state your name and affiliation for the  
13 record.

14 There are things that will assist in making the  
15 meeting run smoother and assist the court reporter in  
16 getting an accurate record. Please identify yourself  
17 before speaking, speak clearly and slowly, do not speak  
18 over others, and please ask the Chairman for permission to  
19 speak and be sure to get recognized before speaking.

20 I would like to thank our court reporter who is  
21 transcribing this meeting.

22 Before we begin today, I'd like to remind all  
23 presenters and those in attendance of the rules of conduct  
24 at our Committee meetings. In the Department's  
25 administrative rule, I have authority to supervise the

1 conduct of meetings. This includes the authority to  
2 determine when a speaker is being disruptive of the  
3 meeting or is otherwise violating the timing or  
4 presentation rules I just discussed.

5 The posted Agenda stated that a quorum of the  
6 MVCPA Board may be present at this meeting. However,  
7 Board Members who are not members of the Grants Budget and  
8 Reporting Committee will not vote on any Committee Agenda  
9 items today, nor will any Board action be taken today. I  
10 don't see any other Board Members here.

11 Now, I'd like to have a roll call of the  
12 Committee Members. Please respond verbally when I call  
13 your name.

14 Member Jones, are you present?

15 MS. JONES: Present.

16 MR. GONZALEZ: Member Smith?

17 (No response.)

18 MR. GONZALEZ: Let the record reflect that I,  
19 Julio Gonzalez, am here. We do have a quorum.

20 Please all stand and honor our country and  
21 state with the Pledges of Allegiance. I will lead us in  
22 the U.S. Pledge.

23 (The U.S. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

24 MR. GONZALEZ: I now turn it over to David  
25 Richards and the Texas Pledge.

1 (The Texas Pledge was recited.)

2 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you, David, for leading us  
3 in the Pledges. Okay.

4 I will now move on to Agenda Item 3, comments  
5 and announcements from the Committee Chair, Committee  
6 Members, and the MVCPA Director. I have no comments.

7 Director Canady?

8 MR. CANADY: No comments.

9 MR. GONZALEZ: Members, any comments?

10 MS. JONES: No, sir.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: No? Okay. All right.

12 We will now move on to Agenda Item 4 and hear  
13 taskforce grantee presentations. Presentations will be  
14 limited to 20 minutes, and I will now turn it over to El  
15 Paso.

16 MR. NAVARRETE: Good afternoon. My name is  
17 Luis Navarrete. I am with the El Paso Police Department.

18 I am the sergeant with the auto theft --

19 (Pause for A/V set up.)

20 Start over? Once again, for the record, my  
21 name is Luis Navarrete. I am with the El Paso Police  
22 Department. I am a sergeant with the Auto Theft Task  
23 Force. I'm here to present on behalf of the El Paso  
24 Police Auto Theft Taskforce for the MVCPA fiscal year  
25 2024.

1           Just talking about El Paso a little bit --  
2 we're very unique as far as where we sit in Texas. The El  
3 Paso Police Auto Theft Taskforce is the only auto theft  
4 taskforce in far west Texas and the largest auto theft  
5 taskforce in the southwest United States.

6           The city of El Paso has four international  
7 bridges connecting the city of El Paso with a population  
8 of approximately 867,947 people with the City of Juarez,  
9 Mexico. That has a population of about 1.6 million  
10 people, according to the U.S. Census Bureau and the State  
11 of Chihuahua CIES. The El Paso/Ciudad Juarez community is  
12 the largest metropolitan area on the border between the  
13 United States and Mexico, and it is estimated that this  
14 metropolitan area comprised of El Paso, Texas, and Ciudad  
15 Juarez has a combined population of approximately 2.5  
16 million inhabitants.

17           The city of El Paso also borders the state of  
18 New Mexico to the north and northwest, which lends to  
19 criminal groups crossing state lines between New Mexico  
20 and Texas, and ultimately crossing stolen vehicles into  
21 Juarez, Mexico. Also bordering El Paso to the northeast  
22 is one of the largest military bases in the country, which  
23 is Fort Bliss, Texas.

24           And then, some of the crimes that we  
25 investigated with the taskforce are theft of vehicles, the

1 unauthorized use of motor vehicles, catalytic converter  
2 thefts, insurance fraud, false reports, tampering and  
3 fraudulent government records, as well as burglary of  
4 vehicles.

5 Some of our unit responsibilities, as far as  
6 the investigations -- we have -- the taskforce is broken  
7 down into three teams: two field teams, one  
8 investigative. The investigations team follows up and  
9 investigates all the theft of vehicle and UUV reports and  
10 other reports that come in.

11 The field teams usually will do the covert  
12 operations, which are the bait operations, your  
13 surveillance operations at hot spots and drop-off  
14 locations and other known criminal gathering areas, such  
15 as hotels or trap houses and other known criminal places.

16  
17 The unit deploys with the LPR. Currently, each  
18 member is assigned a department cell phone, and on that  
19 cell phone, it's equipped with the mobile LPR capability.

20 Pretty much it's mounted on your dashboard, and you have  
21 a mobile LPR through the Vigilant Company. And pretty  
22 much every member of the field team deploys with one of  
23 those on a daily basis.

24 The field teams -- they also conduct on-view  
25 arrests of suspected auto thieves and other criminal



1 offenses and offenders. We also conduct recoveries of  
2 stolen vehicles and respond countywide to patrol-generated  
3 calls for assistance.

4 In addition to that, we do 68-A inspections  
5 bi-weekly, and we do them at the impound yard. And  
6 currently, they're free of charge for the citizens of El  
7 Paso. As well, we do conduct countywide vehicle  
8 identification assistance to other agencies.

9 We also provide educational awareness and  
10 community outreach, such as presentations at school,  
11 businesses, and other law enforcement agencies. We also  
12 conduct salvage inspections in other dealerships in  
13 conjunction with DMV. And then we also provide other  
14 local agencies in the borderplex -- to include southern  
15 New Mexico and Mexican law enforcement with training in  
16 order to better serve and protect the region.

17 Some of the things we do well with the El Paso  
18 Police Auto Theft Taskforce is that we do staff two field  
19 teams, as mentioned, and one investigative team. The  
20 proactive field teams will usually conduct the end tow  
21 analysis, crime pattern detection, and deployment to  
22 address any identified trends before they become major  
23 established crime problems, while the investigative team  
24 investigates all the assigned reports.

25 Given the unique geographic location of El

1 Paso, our investigations often lead us to other  
2 jurisdictions. This has allowed us to create strong  
3 working relationships with all local state and federal  
4 agencies in the El Paso County and southern New Mexico.

5 We remain in constant contact and information  
6 sharing with all of our local law enforcement partners.  
7 We also distribute our hot sheet and intel dissemination  
8 regionally with the JOIC, which is spread out throughout  
9 the state.

10 We also have a great working relationship with  
11 the Mexican law enforcement on the Juarez side, who assist  
12 us in conducting recoveries and arrests in Mexico. We  
13 provide them with basic auto theft investigation training  
14 in order to enhance our impact on the region.

15 We continue to remain productive, even as we  
16 continue to face staffing challenges and we are tasked  
17 with additional duties. In fiscal year '22, we increased  
18 the total number of recoveries from 775 to 801. We also  
19 increased the number of people arrested from 156 to 213.  
20 And we increased the number of burglary of motor vehicle  
21 cases cleared from one to four in fiscal year '22.

22 Also increased the number of LPR deployments  
23 from 68 to 1,263. The reason for the huge increase is, as  
24 mentioned, we deploy with the cell phones that are used as  
25 LPRs through the Vigilant mobile companion app. All

1 members have access and are expected to deploy with it  
2 throughout their day.

3           What can we improve on? Our taskforce needs to  
4 improve on the number of bait operations that we conduct  
5 on a monthly basis. We also need to improve on the number  
6 of salvage vehicle inspections on a quarterly basis and  
7 increase the number of southbound operations at the port  
8 of entries, as well as the number of burglary of motor  
9 vehicle and fraud related vehicle cases that we  
10 investigate.

11           Some of the resources that we need are newer  
12 equipment and bait vehicles to entice auto thieves to  
13 steal them. Currently, some of our bait trucks are about  
14 20 years old.

15           And just as an example, we conducted one bait  
16 operation last week, and we set it up for about 20  
17 minutes. And the guy actually called dispatch -- our  
18 suspect, the one that we thought was going to take the  
19 truck -- and they're calling dispatch on a suspicious  
20 vehicle. And once we recovered it, they knew it was going  
21 to be a bait and it's just kind of old and not very  
22 enticing.

23           Additional staffing, also -- some of the  
24 biggest resource that we need -- current staffing prevents  
25 us from conducting more operations and more inspections

1 than we wish.

2 As far as the unauthorized use vehicle crime  
3 rate, the El Paso Police Department implemented department  
4 policy changes a few years back that included filing  
5 reports in person and having the handling unit secure a  
6 sworn, non-consent prosecution statement at the scene.  
7 The report is not filed if the reporting party refuses  
8 prosecution or refuses to sign the prosecution statement.

9

10 This is done to limit the amount of fraudulent  
11 UUV reports filed with our agency and to limit the  
12 liability of cases where cars are "rented out" in exchange  
13 for narcotics or sexual services. The plan is to continue  
14 to use these screening methods to minimize the amount of  
15 cases where the reporting party files a UUV in order to  
16 only recover their vehicle without ever desiring  
17 prosecution.

18 The current challenges still facing our  
19 taskforce is the amount of vehicles being lent out in  
20 exchange for narcotics and later reported as stolen when  
21 the vehicle is not returned as expected. The main  
22 challenge with the UUVs that we're facing is the lack of  
23 cooperation and prosecution by the victims. The majority  
24 of our UUV reports are either filed by parents against  
25 their children or between drug users in what we know as

1 crack rentals.

2           During fiscal year '22, the taskforce received  
3 a total of 414 reports. And so far during fiscal year  
4 '23, we have received 228 unauthorized use of vehicle  
5 reports to year to date. In '22, we had a clearance rate  
6 of 37 percent, and so far this year, we're at 30 percent.

7           As far as burglary of motor vehicles and  
8 fraud-related motor vehicle crime, the El Paso Police  
9 Department is broken up in five regional command centers.

10          Each regional command has a TAC unit who is the primary  
11 investigative unit for the burglary of motor vehicles.  
12 The taskforce continuously provides assistance to all  
13 command TAC units in the form of surveillance,  
14 intelligence sharing, and access to database and resources  
15 not available to the TAC units.

16          The theft of vehicle cases typically originate  
17 as a burglary of vehicle spree, and the taskforce will  
18 work hand in hand when investigating both the burglary and  
19 the theft of vehicle cases.

20          Currently, the auto theft taskforce does not  
21 have an assigned prosecutor, and cases are randomly  
22 assigned at the District Attorney's Office. The taskforce  
23 is pretty successful in obtaining prosecution from  
24 victims. However, the majority of the cases are either  
25 pled down to a lesser offense or are pled to a minimal

1 sentencing, such as deferred adjudication.

2 For example, in 2022, we had a serial auto  
3 thief who was charged with aggravated assault after he  
4 rammed one of our unmarked units in an attempt to escape,  
5 along with 14 other felonies which ended up being pled out  
6 by the District Attorney's Office to five years deferred  
7 adjudication and released back to the streets back in  
8 February.

9 Another issue we're experiencing by the  
10 taskforce is that offenders are being released by the  
11 local magistrates on PR bonds due to the offense being  
12 considered a property crime, and pretty much a revolving  
13 door with these guys.

14 So now, how many vehicles were reported stolen  
15 to the taskforce do we recover each month? As far as how  
16 many direct touches we have by the taskforce, we conduct  
17 an average of 73 stolen vehicle recoveries on a monthly  
18 basis. Currently, we do not track how many vehicles are  
19 recovered by patrol.

20 And as far as other jurisdictions recovering  
21 our stolen cars, the average is about six stolen vehicles  
22 per month. As mentioned before, we do a very good as far  
23 as sharing information with other agencies in the area.  
24 The task force develops intelligence information through  
25 various means to include the use of SOCMINT, open source,

1 and research analysis of reports generated along with the  
2 tracking of repeat offenders.

3 We provide services not only to our department,  
4 but also to surrounding agencies in El Paso, Hudspeth  
5 County, and Dona Ana County in southern New Mexico. The  
6 taskforce communicates via phone and e-mail with our local  
7 partners in the region and take part in different meetings  
8 held throughout the year.

9 Our taskforce also takes part in a weekly Joint  
10 Operations Intelligence Center meeting -- the JOIC --  
11 where crime trends, arrests, and developing information is  
12 shared across the state of Texas and with our federal  
13 partners to include Border Patrol, CPB, FBI, and the New  
14 Mexico Fusion Center in Albuquerque. The taskforce also  
15 distributes our weekly hot sheet via the El Paso Fusion  
16 Center to various law enforcement agencies in Texas and El  
17 Paso.

18 Some of the information that we've recently  
19 shared via e-mail with the U.S. Border Patrol and Las  
20 Cruces Police was reference a group targeting the Kias and  
21 the Hyundais. And we've managed to find out that they had  
22 a link to human smuggling. So they were stealing our  
23 Hyundais and taking them up north with the illegal aliens  
24 being transported to Las Cruces and Albuquerque, New  
25 Mexico.

1           Border Patrol was able to link additional  
2 suspects with the information we provided and created  
3 alerts on the group. Las Cruces PD was also made aware of  
4 some of the targets that had been spotted in their area,  
5 as well.

6           We also disseminate BOLOs on stolen vehicles  
7 and wanted subjects. We have the El Paso Fusion Center,  
8 which is distributed regionally.

9           And the taskforce is currently working a case  
10 where several clone trucks were found at a local Ford  
11 dealership. The information was shared with MVCPA via  
12 e-mail where other taskforces confirmed having the same  
13 type of cases -- the now so famous Diamond O Crew, they're  
14 targeting the whole state pretty much -- or affecting the  
15 whole state. It appears that that crew is working out of  
16 Houston.

17           What do we need from MVCPA? As always, we need  
18 your continued support, additional funds to purchase new  
19 equipment and, as mentioned before, funds to purchase  
20 newer bait vehicles as their current ones are pretty old.

21           Any questions?

22           MR. GONZALEZ: Sarge, thank you for the  
23 presentation.

24           Members, any questions?

25           MS. JONES: Yes. What is SOCMINT?



1 MR. NAVARRETE: Social media intelligence.

2 MS. JONES: Okay. You mention areas of  
3 improvement for your taskforce. Besides staffing and the  
4 need for additional bait vehicles, you had some other --

5 MR. NAVARRETE: Equipment?

6 MS. JONES: You had equipment --

7 MR. NAVARRETE: Yes, ma'am.

8 MS. JONES: -- staffing. But there was  
9 something else up there. I think about fraud.

10 MR. NAVARRETE: On this one?

11 MS. JONES: Yes, sir.

12 MR. NAVARRETE: It was --

13 MS. JONES: I thought you mentioned needing --

14 MR. NAVARRETE: Oh, wait. We need additional  
15 staffing so we can conduct more investigations when it  
16 comes to burglary of vehicles and fraud-related  
17 investigations, such as paper tags and the titles and  
18 stuff like that.

19 MS. JONES: Okay.

20 MR. NAVARRETE: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. JONES: So, the two areas that you just  
22 mentioned where you need staffing for -- are you saying  
23 that you guys are not --

24 MR. NAVARRETE: We're deficient on doing those  
25 burglary of vehicle. There are some reasons why we -- as

1 far as the burglary of motor vehicles is for one, the TAC  
2 units at each command center -- they're the primary  
3 leading investigative unit for the burglaries. And also,  
4 we don't have enough staffing in the auto theft taskforce  
5 to do auto theft and then also get into the burglary of  
6 motor vehicles like we would like to.

7 MS. JONES: Okay. Got it.

8 MR. NAVARRETE: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. JONES: Thank you.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: Sarge, I've got a question for  
11 you. Does the City of El Paso own those four bridges that  
12 you were mentioning?

13 MR. NAVARRETE: They own two. One is -- the  
14 third one is out in the county. And then, the Bridge of  
15 the Americas is out in -- well, I should rephrase. The  
16 fourth one is an inbound bridge that's pedestrian, and  
17 pedestrian is both ways -- the one at El Paso, Stanton  
18 Street.

19 Then, you have El Paso Street, which is  
20 incoming. And then, you have Bridge of the Americas,  
21 which is a free bridge. The City doesn't control that  
22 bridge. The other ones -- we have toll booths at the  
23 other bridges.

24 MR. GONZALEZ: It sounds like you're having  
25 quite a bit of success with those mobile LPRs.

1 MR. NAVARRETE: Yes, sir.

2 MR. GONZALEZ: I would like for you all to be  
3 able to explore fixed LPRs on that El Paso bridge. Is  
4 that something you all would be willing to consider?

5 MR. NAVARRETE: Yes, sir. Yeah, if we could  
6 get the additional funding. Currently, there are some  
7 LPRs, but those are handled by CPB, and it's on a case by  
8 case if they want to share the information with us. So  
9 the fixed LPRs would really help us out.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: I would encourage you to apply.

11 MR. NAVARRETE: Okay. Sounds good, sir.

12 MR. GONZALEZ: That's all I've got.

13 MS. JONES: And I will encourage you to apply  
14 for bait vehicle --

15 MR. NAVARRETE: Okay.

16 MS. JONES: -- in your application.

17 MR. NAVARRETE: All right. Sounds good, ma'am.

18 MS. JONES: Always, I tell all the taskforces,  
19 ask for what you need. We'll try to make it work. But if  
20 you don't ask, we can't tell you yes or no.

21 MR. NAVARRETE: Right. Okay. Sounds good,  
22 ma'am.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: All right. We will now hear  
24 from Victoria.

25 Thank you, Sarge.

1 MR. KELLY: Good afternoon. I'm Detective  
2 Kelly with the Victoria Police Department's Auto Theft  
3 Taskforce. Not with me today is my partner and the other  
4 taskforce member, Detective Russell Copeland.

5 So just to jump into it, some of the strengths  
6 of the taskforce for the year was the arrests for  
7 unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. As you can see from  
8 2021, we're averaging about 25 -- or we had 25. 2022 is  
9 26. This year, we're projected for 30.

10 If it continues -- and, as you can see, another  
11 strength was our cases presented up from 2021, which was  
12 60. Last year was 87, and projected is about 83 this  
13 year, as well, with a 30 percent clearance rate.

14 Some of the issues we had with the taskforce  
15 was we had a complete turnover of the grant positions.  
16 Both investigators -- which we have two -- have been  
17 assigned to the taskforce for less than a year. We didn't  
18 have much guidance from the previous taskforce members as  
19 they had left the department. We didn't have much  
20 training or kind of guidance on how the grant was  
21 previously run.

22 And then we also had minimal success with bait  
23 operations and deploying bait vehicle. Going forward, we  
24 need to continue with deploying the vehicle for longer  
25 periods of time. We tried it with shorter periods and it

1 wasn't successful.

2           Again, like I said, with the challenges we  
3 had -- the complete turnover of the taskforce positions --  
4 and for a period of about six months, I was the only  
5 investigator covering our service area doing inspections,  
6 cases, and everything by myself. We now have both  
7 positions filled.

8           We also recently just got a detective who is  
9 assigned to non-priority BMV and UUMV cases to free us up.

10          And we also have a sergeant specifically over our  
11 taskforce now, which we didn't have previously.

12           Some of the stats for UUMV and the challenges  
13 we had -- a lot of the major crimes that we have are  
14 offenders coming from different cities, specifically  
15 Houston, where they come, take vehicles in our city. And  
16 then will commit other crimes inside the city,  
17 specifically ATM thefts and some heavy equipment thefts.  
18 So we've had issues with that.

19           In 2021, we had 99 UUMV cases in the city. In  
20 2022, 75, and so for this year, we've had 17. As I said,  
21 with the clearance rate, the taskforce had previously in  
22 2021 a 35 percent, and 2022 was 30. And so far, it's at  
23 21 percent, but that's just as we are currently.

24           A lot of those cases are still open and haven't  
25 been closed out. On average, we present six cases a month

1 to the DA's Office, which is the same average we've had  
2 since 2021.

3 For the BMV and cat thefts, the trends we've  
4 had -- as you can see from 2021, we're down significantly  
5 from 442 to a projected of 296 this year. And cat thefts  
6 are down significantly, as well, from 95 in 2021 to  
7 projected of 35 this year if it continues the same way.

8 Prosecution -- like most agencies, we're having  
9 issues with DAs accepting some charges, especially more  
10 uncommon ones like fraud and things like that where  
11 they're not particularly versed with it. We've been  
12 having issues with them accepting those, and we've also  
13 been having difficulty with meaningful sentences and  
14 frequent offenders and keeping them in jail -- getting  
15 deferred adjudication and probation for several felonies,  
16 as well.

17 And then, of course, we've had a lack of  
18 punishment for juveniles. We make an arrest on juveniles  
19 for several crimes, and they'll do 10 days in juvenile  
20 detention and then are released. And at most, will get  
21 probation and will be back out on the streets after those  
22 10 days. So we've been having issues with that as well.

23 Stolen vehicle recoveries -- the average  
24 vehicles we recover per month is two to three. That's  
25 direct touches. For this year, we have 18 year to date.

1           Other divisions in our department, it's been  
2 six, year to date. And then, other recoveries in other  
3 jurisdictions, it's been one so far this year.

4           Intelligence sharing -- the taskforce has  
5 served as a point of contact for surrounding agencies in  
6 our coverage area. Intelligence has primarily been shared  
7 by e-mail and phone. The majority of our information that  
8 we do share is interagency with our patrol division and  
9 other divisions in our agency.

10           Currently, we do not have access to the VCC.  
11 That's been an issue. Previously, the administrator for  
12 our agency changed like three times. I've been trying to  
13 get it.

14           Finally, I was able to figure out who it is  
15 now. I'm in the process of getting access to it, but I  
16 still don't currently have it.

17           And the assistance we provide to our coverage  
18 area -- we frequently provide VIN verifications for other  
19 agencies, some of those listed below. Primarily, the ones  
20 we do are county, sheriff's office, and the surrounding  
21 county sheriff's offices that ask for our assistance.

22           We've also assisted in conducting inspections  
23 at salvage and repair yards in Port Lavaca, which is one  
24 of our service areas. And they ask for assistance and  
25 guidance in what they can and can't do at these repair

1 shops, and also need the assistance with VIN verification.

2 We also assisted our sheriff's office on  
3 several search warrants recovering stolen vehicles, which  
4 had been very successful -- recoveries of \$100,000 from  
5 just one person.

6 And these are just some of the bulletins that  
7 we've shared interagency. This was just a recent one for  
8 juggling. It wasn't anything specific, but just kind of  
9 covering the things for our patrol officers to look out  
10 for.

11 This one was similar, just for BMVs -- a  
12 specific vehicle that had committed some BMVs in our area  
13 that we sent out to our patrol for them to look out for.  
14 And the last one is a frequent offender who's stolen  
15 hundreds of thousands of dollars of equipment and vehicles  
16 that keeps getting out. Just kind of something for our  
17 patrol to look out for.

18 And we're asking for MVCPA just to continue  
19 funding, and that would be a fully staffed taskforce. Now  
20 that we have a detective assigned for non-priority cases,  
21 that will free us up for being more proactive and  
22 recovering more vehicles.

23 If there's any questions?

24 MR. GONZALEZ: Members, any questions?

25 MS. JONES: What percentage of VIN assists are



1 you doing for other agencies?

2 MR. KELLY: I'm sorry?

3 MS. JONES: VIN inquiries that you mentioned  
4 for other agencies -- what percentage are you receiving?

5 MR. KELLY: I'm sorry. I'm not understanding  
6 what the --

7 MS. JONES: You mentioned that you have VIN  
8 verifications --

9 MR. KELLY: Correct.

10 MS. JONES: -- from other agencies. I think  
11 you said Refugio and --

12 MR. KELLY: Yes, ma'am.

13 MS. JONES: What percentage of requests -- or  
14 how many?

15 MR. KELLY: How many?

16 MS. JONES: Yes.

17 MR. KELLY: I mean, on average, probably one to  
18 two a month just for other agencies that are requesting  
19 our assistance.

20 MS. JONES: Okay.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: So, Detective, if I'm not  
22 mistaken, on your budget, pretty much the biggest  
23 component of your budget are the salaries and fringe  
24 benefits for two detectives, right?

25 MR. KELLY: Yes, sir.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Is there support from your chief  
2 or from your department about possibly adding in a  
3 supervisor to be as part of that grant funding? Or no?

4 MR. KELLY: There absolutely would be. Like I  
5 said, we have a sergeant currently who is assigned to our  
6 taskforce. He's just currently paid as a city sergeant.  
7 So, there definitely would be.

8 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. And I ask that because it  
9 seems like a significant amount of knowledge has been  
10 lost, I guess, in transition.

11 MR. KELLY: Absolutely.

12 MR. GONZALEZ: And so we don't want to be  
13 slowing down operations.

14 MR. KELLY: Right.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: And so if that's something that  
16 your department is willing to consider, it may be  
17 worthwhile applying for that.

18 MR. KELLY: I will definitely bring it up to  
19 them, sir.

20 MR. GONZALEZ: All right. All right. Thank  
21 you.

22 MR. KELLY: Thank you.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: And we will now hear from Smith  
24 County.

25 MR. RICHBourg: Good morning. Kenneth

1 Richbourg with DPS, and I'm also the Commander of the  
2 Smith County East Texas Auto Theft Taskforce, and I've  
3 been doing that for about eight years.

4 Our taskforce is comprised of four  
5 investigators other than myself. Smith County Sheriff's  
6 Department provides one that's been on the taskforce for  
7 22, 23 years. Tyler PD investigator, he's been on the  
8 taskforce for 24 years. Most recent -- or not the most  
9 recent -- but Henderson County's been participating for  
10 about 10 years, and the most recent is Rusk County with  
11 three years of service being on the taskforce.

12 So that's a lot of experience in a small group.

13 The primary things that we do are theft investigations  
14 and vehicle identifications. We assist other agencies  
15 with their investigations; sometimes we take them over.

16 And we assist fire marshals, troopers, and  
17 anybody that asks for a vehicle identification. We attend  
18 educational outreaches, trade shows, booths, VIN etchings.

19 BMVs -- we don't have a high amount of those  
20 that we participate in the prosecution or the  
21 investigations of. When we do have one with actionable  
22 intelligence, we'll investigate it.

23 We do bait trailers with trackers on them. We  
24 don't have any bait vehicles, per se. And we do fraud  
25 investigations, title, registrations, and e-tags.

1           What we've done well -- we have a high  
2 percentage of arrests that we do for our theft cases and  
3 UUV cases. Criminal cases are all filed that we get good  
4 prosecution on.

5           Recover a lot of vehicles, a lot of them out of  
6 the Dallas area, Houston area that are stolen and resold  
7 up in our areas. In particular, recently, the late model  
8 GM vehicles with the VIN switches and clones.

9           We meet our demand for 68-A inspections. We  
10 did those every week, and we usually do probably 30 to 40  
11 every Monday morning. That takes a lot of time. And  
12 assist other agencies with their thefts.

13           What else we do -- we do law enforcement  
14 training. We usually put on two classes per year that  
15 teaches theft prevention and identification of vehicles,  
16 and that's through the law enforcement and any feds that  
17 want to come. So, CID and patrolmen that are interested,  
18 we open it up countywide. And we're having one this next  
19 month in Henderson County.

20           Paper tag investigations, we've done two of  
21 those. We worked one with DMV, a dealership that was  
22 selling an enormous amount of them. Did an undercover  
23 buy, DMV investigators there with us after the buy.

24           We went in and investigated their documents,  
25 and they ended up getting their license suspended where

1 they couldn't issue e-tags. They had to go to the tax  
2 office for every one. And I think DMV fined them  
3 \$200,000. So that was a good case.

4 And we share intel with the other agencies.  
5 What we don't do well is social media, and we could do  
6 more business and salvage inspections. There's some stats  
7 of cases that we've done the prior three years -- or two  
8 years and this current year, what we had so far.

9 We still continue to work with the coverage  
10 agencies to share intel. Dealers online, purchases with  
11 identity thefts -- we try to educate our dealers on that  
12 to see what to look for, to call us if they have any  
13 questions. And we're trying to utilize some new  
14 technology for burned vehicles and that sort of thing to  
15 track and see if it's an arson case as well as a fraud  
16 case using cellular technology that we've had some success  
17 on.

18 These are just some stats from '22 and this  
19 year so far. Challenges are responding to requests from  
20 outside agencies being with the new case loads, heavy case  
21 loads, and the new investigations for fraud and e-tag  
22 stuff. It takes a lot of time for those.

23 Thefts in our jurisdiction for 2022 within our  
24 participating agencies are 632. Coverage agencies, which  
25 make up the 11 counties surrounding us -- 739, for a total

1 of 1,371.

2 We filed 71 cases last year with the District  
3 Attorney's Office. That's about six a month. We usually  
4 write about five or six arrest warrants a month, and make  
5 about five arrests. Prosecution is exceptionally high.

6 We are blessed to have prosecutors that take it  
7 seriously. If we file a case, we're pretty much  
8 guaranteed there's going to be some kind of disposition on  
9 it.

10 It may be pled down, but the vast majority are  
11 state jail felonies. But they're going to get something.

12 They're not just dismissed.

13 Again, the recoveries -- most of those are --  
14 just about all those are touches. If it's shown as a  
15 recovery, we've had some part of the investigation or  
16 we've gone out and processed it for someone else. Or if  
17 it's picked up over the weekend and taken to impound,  
18 we'll go process it, go through the vehicle, look through  
19 the trash, see if there's any cell phones, and we'll print  
20 most of the vehicle, as well.

21 Intel sharing -- some intel we get from  
22 confidential informants, debriefs at jail from people that  
23 have been arrested, and from other law enforcement. And  
24 that's probably the primary with the number of years that  
25 our investigators have on, making relationships over those

1 years with other counties and police officers and  
2 investigators. Sharing that information is the best way  
3 to get that. And they also attend briefings with other  
4 agencies, too, whenever they have their CID meetings.

5 And just a couple of bulletins that we've done  
6 recently. A suspect -- we never caught this one on the  
7 first slide. We were able to recover this backhoe and got  
8 it back to the paving company that lost it. And I think  
9 they made an arrest out of that.

10 And this person -- they're still on our --  
11 still looking for them -- haven't found them, but they  
12 were responsible for several trailer thefts in the  
13 downtown area of Tyler.

14 And I want to say that we're all border  
15 counties, also. I think our governor said that this  
16 morning. Every county in Texas is a border county?

17 And I'll answer any questions if you have them.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: Members, any questions?

19 MS. JONES: Why the lack of inspections for  
20 business and salvage?

21 MR. RICHBOURG: Time. We have increased them  
22 over the past years. We usually do those in the spring  
23 and summertime.

24 But it's just timing, getting everybody  
25 together to do them. There's no reason we can't, but we

1 just haven't.

2 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you, LT.

3 MR. RICHBOURG: Thank you.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: And we will now hear from  
5 Mansfield.

6 MR. HARRELL: Good afternoon, Board. I am  
7 Lieutenant Jim Harrell with Mansfield Police Department  
8 assigned to Tri-County Auto Theft. I've been with them  
9 for three years now.

10 Tri-County is a multi-agency auto theft group.  
11 We're comprised of Mansfield, Midlothian, Kennedale,  
12 Burleson, Tarrant County Constable's Office, and Alvarado  
13 Police Department. We actually sit in three different  
14 counties.

15 The makeup of the auto theft is one lieutenant,  
16 and that's me. We have a grant administrative secretary,  
17 and then five investigators. Two of them from Mansfield:  
18 one of those is paid for by the grant, the other is  
19 in-kind match. We have one paid for from Midlothian,  
20 Kennedale, and Burleson.

21 Taskforce has been around since 2011, and  
22 Mansfield is a grant managing agency. The taskforce is  
23 co-located in Mansfield, which means all investigators are  
24 housed together. We have a coverage area which is Johnson  
25 County, Ellis County, Tarrant County, and some of



1 Arlington, Grand Prairie, and unincorporated Tarrant  
2 County.

3 We cover 60 -- or 21 police departments and  
4 roughly 36 cities. What we do is vehicle theft,  
5 automotive, ATVH, trailers, RVs, BMVs, catalytic  
6 converters, juggings, and fraud-related.

7 Our taskforce works a little bit different. We  
8 respond to all occupied stolen vehicles. We respond to  
9 all occupied vehicles that were stopped and detained for  
10 burglary.

11 We interview on the roadside. We found that we  
12 get more information roadside than we do by going to a  
13 jail cell. We're also able to determine at the roadside  
14 whether this is a single individual or a single mistake  
15 they made and they may want to provide more information to  
16 us and work with us, versus trying to talk to them inside  
17 a jail cell.

18 We also respond to all vehicles being actively  
19 tracked. If they have a personal tracker on it, if they  
20 have a LoJack on it and they call us -- no matter what  
21 time of day it is -- and we will respond. This allows us  
22 to get to them before the tracker's disabled.

23 It also gets us onto a lot more chop shops.  
24 And we recover a lot more vehicles tracking them than  
25 waiting until the next day coming in and it being 24 hours

1 later, trackers are disabled, and we have a location of  
2 where it was, not where it is.

3 We do respond to a lot of calls, BMV and MVT  
4 cases -- but a lot of the BMV and MVT stuff, the BMV is  
5 not as much as the motor vehicle stuff. We recover a lot  
6 more motor vehicle. Our additional responsibility is  
7 going to be 68-A inspections, vehicle identification,  
8 salvage inspections, LPR hits, recover stolen vehicles,  
9 and educational awareness.

10 Our recoveries over the last three years -- we  
11 had 336 in '21 for over \$6 million. '22 -- 259 for \$4  
12 million. And currently, we're sitting at about \$6  
13 million, 164 vehicles this year.

14 Our arrest and clearance rates -- in '21, we  
15 had 80 arrests, 193 cases charged. In '22, 73 arrests,  
16 130 cases. And in '23, we have 17 arrests and 41 cases  
17 charged.

18 On 68-A's, we do our 68-As every Thursday at  
19 8:00 a.m. We take 60 registrants for Thursday morning,  
20 and when we get there, we do all 60 or however many show  
21 up. In '21, we did 1,536. In '22, 1,605, and year to  
22 date, we're at 932.

23 Shop inspections -- we average 50 businesses a  
24 year. We're trying to increase that. But within our  
25 jurisdiction, we're mostly rural.

1           So we have a lot of salvage yards. We have a  
2 lot of recycling yards, a lot of little pop-up garages.  
3 So we try to inspect each and every one of those at least  
4 every year so we can make sure we're not having a lot of  
5 chop shops popping up in our area.

6           Our bait operations -- we put out bait weekly,  
7 and that could be trailers. That could be motorcycles.  
8 That could be -- we don't put out our truck anymore.

9           Our truck is old. Like the other taskforce  
10 said, ain't nobody stealing it. They leave us money when  
11 we put it out.

12           (Laughter.)

13           MR. HARRELL: So, we stopped putting that one  
14 out. We have recently outfitted a 2018 Challenger and a  
15 2018 Charger, and those should go into service as soon as  
16 we get the brains back up and running through Covert,  
17 hopefully by the end of this month. So, we'll get those on  
18 the street and that should do an increase for us there.

19           We don't have a lot of arrests out of our  
20 vehicles because they were so old. Hopefully that will  
21 increase. But our bait trailers get stolen weekly, and  
22 we've arrested the same guy four times for stealing four  
23 of our different trailers.

24           As what they said with property crimes, they're  
25 in. They're bonded. They're out. They're stealing again

1 because they know two years, three years before they go to  
2 court, they're going to steal as much as they can before  
3 we can get to them.

4 Agency assist in '21, it was 156. In '22, it  
5 was 141, and 55 year to date.

6 Education -- we put on at least five auto theft  
7 recognition apprehension classes per year. Try to get  
8 about 150 officers per year. We also have instructors  
9 that teach the TAVTI conferences. One of our reserve  
10 officers who I took his place, Dan Davis, is still doing a  
11 lot of instruction for us.

12 Our LPR recoveries -- because of what we do, we  
13 don't have enough manpower to chase every Flock hit that's  
14 out there now. But if they get stopped by patrol, we  
15 respond and take the investigation from them. A lot of  
16 officers will chase down the Flock, get the stop for us.

17 We'll come out. We'll handle the  
18 investigation. They like it that way because they get the  
19 fun of making the stop and no paperwork.

20 We show up. All they've got to do is give us a  
21 quick supplement, Hey, I stopped this car because it's a  
22 Flock hit. If it's a legitimate stolen, we take it. If  
23 it's not, we figure out what's with it and clear it.

24 The VCC -- I'm the only one posting at the  
25 moment. We've had a few issues getting the rest of the

1 investigators done. But I've got that situation worked  
2 out, so hopefully they can all start posting their own  
3 stuff and it won't tie me up as much posting for them.

4 Resources needed -- it would be nice to have a  
5 secondary supervisor so when I'm not there, I have another  
6 supervisor. It would also free me up a little bit because  
7 at this time, I'm one of the investigators. I carry a  
8 case load. I'm out every Tuesday, which is our operation  
9 day, doing inspections with them -- shop inspections with  
10 them, warrant round up -- whatever is called for.

11 Monday, they get to stay in the office and work  
12 cases. Tuesday, we're in the field all day. Wednesday,  
13 they work cases. Thursday, half a day 68-A inspections  
14 and we're working cases. So, it would help out.

15 It would also be nice if we had a Spanish-  
16 speaking investigator because a lot of the stuff --  
17 especially the stolens out of Houston -- are sold to  
18 Spanish speakers, and they do that for a reason, because  
19 they're afraid to report it to us. So if I had an  
20 investigator that had that -- we utilize patrol officers  
21 right now, but they don't have the knowledge.

22 So we're trying to get them to ask the proper  
23 questions, and the translation sometimes gets lost. But  
24 that would be a big plus for us.

25 Impact of the taskforce -- in '23, we had three

1 chop shops, six vehicles recovered. As I was driving down  
2 here yesterday, my guys hit another shop in Red Oak.  
3 Twenty-five vehicles recovered and they're still  
4 processing the scene right now.

5 In '22, we had five shops, 50 vehicles. And in  
6 '21, six shops. And these are in these little tin  
7 buildings that are thrown up in the middle of nowhere.  
8 They're driving them out from Dallas and they'll cut them  
9 up. And so, between us and the Dallas taskforce, we're  
10 working hand in hand most times trying to get this knocked  
11 out.

12 We had, like I explained, the bait vehicles --  
13 we put them out as much as we can. If a jurisdiction has  
14 a problem, they call us. We'll take bait out and put it  
15 out and respond to their area once it goes off.

16 Again, we take all cases that the bait  
17 generates. They don't have to do anything except help us  
18 chase it down and call us.

19 As far as the taskforce, we put together  
20 PowerPoints for the jurisdictions and e-mail them out to  
21 each jurisdiction -- such as one we send out each year  
22 because we know they get new officers and sometimes new  
23 chiefs. It basically tells them what the taskforce is,  
24 how to get hold of us, what we can do for them, and answer  
25 almost any question they could have about what the

1 taskforce can do for them.

2           What we do -- paper tags -- like what was sent  
3 out by DMV, we send out. So make sure everybody in our  
4 area gets those PowerPoints. We also stop by and try to  
5 visit these agencies when we're out in the area working  
6 shops. So we try to make hand-to-hand contact with them,  
7 also.

8           We will work with them on catalytic converter  
9 operations, online sale buy busts, temp tag operations,  
10 and assist other taskforces when they need it. Because in  
11 our area, we do have Dallas and we do have Tarrant  
12 Regional. And sometimes they need manpower, and we'll go  
13 assist them when they do need it.

14           We also work investigations provided by DMV and  
15 NICB. When they put together fraud cases or insurance  
16 fraud cases, they'll get with us. And if it's in our  
17 area, they'll send us the case. We adopt it and we'll  
18 investigate a case.

19           Motor vehicle theft -- this shows you over the  
20 last three years what our stats look like. 2021 in our  
21 program area, 211, but jurisdiction wide, we had 717  
22 stolens. In '22, we had 215 and then 697. So, we made a  
23 little impact there.

24           Again, here's our cases assigned and cases  
25 cleared, cleared by arrest. So, in '21, we had 785. We

1 cleared 785 with 129 arrests. In '22, we had 723. 727  
2 cleared, 78 arrests. And 331 year to date with 21  
3 arrests. Average cases filed per month are: in '21 was  
4 17, in '22 is 11, and in '23 it's four currently.

5 BMVs -- again, they're worked mostly by  
6 jurisdictions, unless they have workable leads. If they  
7 have what they know is a BMV ring, we take that case from  
8 them. We'll work that case. Sometimes we have more  
9 resources to work these kinds of cases than the smaller  
10 jurisdictions we have.

11 Challenges is our staffing. Recently, one of  
12 the agencies had to pull an investigator back because they  
13 didn't have enough manpower. They're almost back to  
14 staffing. They promised me by the end of this month I  
15 should see that investigator back. But that's been about  
16 five months of us working one man down, and that kind of  
17 put a hit on us.

18 We'd like to work more on the online sales.  
19 But again, we don't have that manpower to sit at the desk  
20 and go through all the websites that are selling vehicles  
21 stolen from Houston and brought down here.

22 Recently, we've been hit by catalytic converter  
23 thieves again. We've tracked both sets to Houston, and  
24 it's hard to keep up with that catalytic converter theft  
25 because when one goes away, you've got six more pop up.



1            Prosecution -- cases are accepted by all three  
2 counties we're in. In Ellis County, we have a lot more --  
3 they're a little bit harder on them down in Ellis County.  
4        They accept them a little bit quicker and they give them  
5 higher bonds.

6            But the Ellis County DA is also on our board of  
7 directors, so she understands our process. And she has  
8 asked us to come in, and we've gone in and spoke with the  
9 DAs and explained some of the cases that we've filed.

10           When we start filing cases against recyclers  
11 for taking in cars without titles and stuff, they're not  
12 versed in stuff like that. So we go in and we teach them  
13 prior to us filing these cases. So we've had a lot of  
14 good luck in Ellis County.

15           Johnson County's pretty good about taking them.

16           And Tarrant County -- since we've got the full-time  
17 prosecutor over there on side, has made things a lot  
18 better, easier, and slimlined. Because, again, it was a  
19 revolving door depending on which intake got your case,  
20 whether they liked it or not, whether we got accepted.

21           But now, we just put our prosecutor's name in  
22 there. He gets all our cases. If he's got a question, he  
23 calls us.

24           Otherwise, they're accepted and we move on. We  
25 seem to get a lot better deal that way.

1 Recoveries -- we have 336 for the year, an  
2 average of 28 per month for '21. In '22, we had 259, 22  
3 per month. And in '23, we're at 164, 20 per month.  
4 Eighty percent are recovered by taskforce, and that means  
5 we are physically going out, touching them, and doing the  
6 cases.

7 We take them from the roadside, from the  
8 officers when they get them stopped. Twenty percent are  
9 recovered by other agencies because sometimes the smaller  
10 agencies forget to call us.

11 We're not there. They don't see us as much.  
12 But we're trying to generate more by making more contact  
13 with them so that we do get those calls.

14 Intel -- either I or one of the investigators  
15 attends the intel meetings that Tarrant Regional holds  
16 monthly where all the auto theft in the region gets  
17 together and we discuss what's going on. We also have  
18 another intel meeting in Ellis County where all the Ellis  
19 County, Johnson County investigators get together there  
20 and go over intel.

21 We send out intel bulletins to surrounding  
22 agencies and to the VCC. And we -- each investigator  
23 attends briefings at their home CID office and generates  
24 intel there. And again, we try to meet with all our area  
25 agencies at least quarterly to see if we can do anything

1 for them.

2 We also receive additional intel from NICB,  
3 DMV, and DPS. All intel is vetted and what's valuable, we  
4 make sure everybody gets.

5 And again, we respond to all requests for  
6 assistance and provide guidance. Our assistance could be  
7 by phone. It could be by e-mail or in person if they need  
8 it. We adopt major cases when they don't have the  
9 resources or trainings.

10 And again, like I said, we send out PowerPoints  
11 to make sure we can teach them as much as we can possibly  
12 give them. We also do public and citizen events when they  
13 call and say, Hey, we've got this going, whether it be a  
14 school or women's auxiliary, or whatever request. We show  
15 up and we'll do a presentation there, and we provide VIN  
16 etchings and education to the citizens.

17 Here are some of the bulletins we put out. The  
18 top one is three pages there. You could see the one page  
19 is where it hit all in our city and the surrounding areas  
20 and the Dallas area. And then, you could see where it was  
21 in Houston.

22 This vehicle is based out of Houston, and it  
23 came down and spent three days in the surrounding areas  
24 and Dallas and took as many catalytic converters as they  
25 could get, and then disappeared back to Houston. So this

1 intel was provided in our area, but also sent to Houston.

2 So, hopefully, they can check that out and see if we can  
3 get on top of that.

4 The second one was another catalytic converter  
5 suspect. That was one of our hotels, but they were  
6 arrested up north around Denton. So, between us and them,  
7 we've got good cases on all suspects.

8 And the third one was on a wrecker who was  
9 going around picking up cars on the side of the road  
10 there. So we do put out our bulletins as quickly as we  
11 can get them out because intelligence helps not only us,  
12 but other agencies.

13 And that would be all I have, unless you have  
14 questions.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: Members, any questions?

16 MS. JONES: Yes, sir. From the Flock cameras,  
17 the LPR, you only respond to the stolens that patrol stop?  
18 You do roadside interviews, and you only respond to  
19 vehicles that are occupied -- the stolen vehicles that are  
20 occupied with subjects?

21 MR. HARRELL: If it's a Flock hit -- depending  
22 on what time of day it is -- if we're in the city, yes,  
23 we'll respond to it as it happens, even if it's not  
24 occupied. But what I'm clarifying is that 24/7, 365, if  
25 it's occupied when they stop it or get it stopped or

1 locate it, we're going to come out and interview.

2 They do -- because some Flock hits, you'll get  
3 a Flock hit. They start checking the areas, like the  
4 shopping areas, and they find the car but nobody's in it.

5 So if we're close, we'll come out and we'll sit on it,  
6 try to get an arrest out of that, too.

7 MS. JONES: So, it seems that you're basically  
8 reactive, not proactive.

9 MR. HARRELL: To the Flock. And let me explain  
10 that.

11 MS. JONES: But also to roadside interviews and  
12 for when the vehicles are occupied only.

13 MR. HARRELL: We've got five investigators.  
14 We're working 30 cases each. That's an average.

15 On Tuesdays, we're out doing inspections for  
16 salvage yards. We're doing -- I mean, with the five  
17 investigators I've got and the area we cover, we're doing  
18 as much as we can, but still including going out and  
19 taking these cases off of the officers who make these  
20 stops.

21 So, that's up and above. Because we are one of  
22 the few taskforces that still go out to every occupied  
23 that we can get our hands on. We try to get out there.

24 I'm not saying we make every one. But if we're  
25 called and we're available, we're there. We cover a

1 little over 1,200 square miles.

2 So if I'm at one end of our county doing  
3 inspections out there and I get called at this end, it's  
4 almost impossible for me to go back and forth. We're  
5 homed out of Mansfield, and if we're called within the  
6 area and we're in the office, we leave the office.

7 There are days where we try to get case work  
8 done, but we're out assisting other cities, assisting  
9 other officers. So, we do try to make every one we can.

10 I'm going to tell you that with the staffing  
11 that I have, we are doing a pretty good job, I feel. But  
12 with more staffing, more ability.

13 MS. JONES: So, basically, what I heard you say  
14 is that you are doing the best you can with what you have  
15 to work with.

16 MR. HARRELL: Yes, ma'am.

17 MS. JONES: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: I just want to say I appreciate  
19 the Tri-County social media efforts. It's great to see  
20 you guys and all the work that you all are doing online.

21 MR. HARRELL: I forgot all about social media,  
22 but that is another aspect.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: I'd say that's one thing you all  
24 do well for sure. So, thank you, sir.

25 MR. HARRELL: Thank you.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: And we will now hear from Dallas  
2 County.

3 MS. KNIGHT: Good afternoon. I'm Captain  
4 Shelley Knight with the Dallas County Sheriff's  
5 Department. I'm the Program Manager for the North Texas  
6 Auto Theft Taskforce. I have also with me today my  
7 sergeant, who is the taskforce commander. So, if anything  
8 comes up that I don't know the answer to, he'll be able to  
9 answer that.

10 MS. JONES: That's why he's hiding over there.

11 MS. KNIGHT: Yes, that is exactly it.

12 A little bit about us -- I'm going to have to  
13 step back a little bit so you all can see me because I'm a  
14 little vertically challenged. But we were created in  
15 1993.

16 VOICE: Use this.

17 MS. KNIGHT: I like that open. It's better  
18 than having to look up.

19 We were originally under the Dallas County  
20 District Attorney's Office. And in 1999, the Dallas  
21 Sheriff's Department took over. At one time, we had eight  
22 full-time investigators, one NICB agent, one sergeant, one  
23 lieutenant, one captain, one administrative assistant, and  
24 we were over five counties.

25 Well, we are still over five counties, and we

1 have three full-time investigators. We have two  
2 investigators that are given to us at 20 percent of the  
3 time -- which that means they come once a week -- and one  
4 NICB agent, one sergeant, one captain, and one  
5 administrative assistant. We also have the City of  
6 Corsicana that is in addition to our five counties.  
7 That's one little extra area that we have.

8 The things that we're going to be discussing --  
9 this is the agenda. I don't really have to go through all  
10 that. Y'all know all the questions y'all have asked of  
11 us. So, I'll move on off of that.

12 What have we done well? Well, the one thing  
13 that I can tell you that I'm convinced that we've done  
14 really well on is our number of recoveries. With the  
15 limited number of detectives that we have, the taskforce  
16 has been very successful in recovering stolen vehicles.

17 The 2023 numbers are on track for equaling and  
18 surpassing 2022. Right now, we have 550 vehicles  
19 recovered year to date.

20 Also, we do 68-A inspections weekly. We do  
21 those very well. We're averaging anywhere between 85 and  
22 100 inspections each week.

23 With those inspections, we recover at least two  
24 stolen vehicles a week. Last week, for instance, we did  
25 recover one 2022 GMC Denali and a trailer that was



1 recovered.

2           The other thing that we do well is we've  
3 increased our efforts in coordinating with the tax office  
4 in doing title fraud, and we have pretty much doubled our  
5 numbers from 2022. This year alone, year to date, we've  
6 already done 201, and that was at the end of March. And I  
7 know April, we've added more. So, just letting you know  
8 that that is one of the things we're really proud of.

9           As far as what we've not done well -- our  
10 arrests. I can tell you right now that our numbers for  
11 actual arrests are dismal, and you'll actually see those  
12 numbers later on. But most of the people that we arrest  
13 on our recovered vehicles -- or most of the vehicles that  
14 are recovered are unoccupied, therefore there's no one to  
15 arrest at that time.

16           Now, we do investigate and do what we can to  
17 figure it out. But most of those that were stolen are  
18 from other jurisdictions, and we just let them know, Hey,  
19 we've recovered your vehicle. We are seeing an increase  
20 in fraud-related arrests, and that's something that I'm  
21 really wanting to bring our focus into -- is going into  
22 more fraud arrests.

23           Another thing that we do not do well are covert  
24 bait operations, and that is due to manpower. We have  
25 three detectives. The other two detectives that we have

1 are, like I said, 20 percent, and we usually utilize them  
2 at our 68-A inspections and for business inspections that  
3 we do.

4 We also don't have the equipment. All of our  
5 equipment is old, as far as bait operations go. But we  
6 have been in talks with DeSoto PD, who used to actually  
7 have a taskforce member, and they are now very willing to  
8 join back into the taskforce. And they have told us that  
9 we have access to their bait vehicle, and we will start  
10 using that and working with DeSoto to start some more  
11 covert operations which will also get our arrest numbers  
12 back up.

13 I want to bring up our LPRs. Our LPR hits are  
14 actually pretty decent, but this year I've been very  
15 disappointed because we got new equipment at the end of  
16 August and that equipment has not been working properly.  
17 It has taken until March of this year to get that issue  
18 resolved.

19 We have worked with the company, and we have  
20 worked with our IT, and our ITs -- they finally figured  
21 out that we were given the wrong GPS device for each one  
22 of those LPRs. And those have now all been replaced and  
23 they seem to be working. I'm still kind of hesitant about  
24 that.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: What company is that?

1 MS. KNIGHT: Is it ELSAG? ELSAG. We have two  
2 different companies. That's why I had to clarify.

3 The resources that we needed to get those  
4 things done -- staff members. We need more people on our  
5 team.

6 The other one is our vehicles. Our vehicles --  
7 we received -- one of my officers needed a vehicle. It  
8 was supposed to be here two years ago. He just got it in  
9 August, or we got it on the ground in August.

10 And it's been waiting. He still does not have  
11 it to drive because he's been waiting on the equipment to  
12 outfit it. It's just been sitting there at Pursuit  
13 waiting on the equipment. And I know that there's a lot  
14 of agencies that are having this issue of getting that  
15 equipment and being able to put this stuff that we need on  
16 them.

17 We have a county-provided squad car that we've  
18 had the VIN number for months. Still waiting on that  
19 vehicle to arrive from the dealership. We just are having  
20 a lot of issues with that.

21 And finally, of course, the LPR, as I was  
22 talking about. Those computers -- we need our equipment  
23 to work, okay?

24 The taskforce's impact on UUV -- this is where  
25 I talked about our arrest numbers. You'll see they're

1     dismal. We have made nine arrests, and I'm not very happy  
2     about that.

3             We've only filed three cases just since  
4     February -- and I'll go into this a little bit more. But  
5     we have made more arrests on fraud than we are for UUV, or  
6     we're starting to.

7             Our clearance rate is pretty decent. We  
8     cleared 478 cases this year. These are the things that  
9     we're trying to do to actually combat the crime. The  
10    sheriff's department alone has only received 33 cases of  
11    UUV for the fiscal year.

12            We are conducting VIN etchings around our  
13    coverage area. In fact, we have one scheduled this week  
14    and one scheduled next week. So we're really picking up  
15    the VIN etchings that we have scheduled.

16            We're educating the public on the scams that  
17    are out there, such as the Facebook Marketplace. We are  
18    letting the public know that if they want to purchase --  
19    if they're buying a vehicle off of one of those places  
20    like Facebook Messenger, we will meet them at the local  
21    tax office and look at that vehicle before they exchange  
22    money. And we know that they're not going to show up. If  
23    it's a stolen vehicle, they're not going to do that.

24            We're educating our officers throughout our  
25    jurisdiction about the latest trends in paper tags and VIN

1 switches. And we are working with local dealerships and  
2 trying to negotiate times and places to etch catalytic  
3 converters -- which we just got that equipment in about a  
4 month ago, but we haven't been able to schedule anything.

5 Our impact on BMW and fraud -- we have no  
6 impact on BMVs. We don't really concentrate, with only  
7 the three officers. We really don't have the resources to  
8 even look at that.

9 Fraud, however -- our taskforce has increased  
10 our efforts in working with the tax office. And since  
11 attending our training February 16 at the car show in  
12 Dallas that was hosted by Houston PD, we have made two  
13 arrests at a local dealership, which is Clay Cooley Nissan  
14 in south Dallas. And we actually arrested them on site  
15 and charged them with five felonies.

16 Now, with that being said, Clay Cooley has 19  
17 dealerships and 17 of those are within our coverage area.

18 And they're wanting to create something to where we help  
19 and we can go and get more dealership fraud going. And we  
20 will also be educating their finance managers and all of  
21 them on what to look for.

22 Our prosecutions and convictions -- in the  
23 past, we have not had a very good relationship with the  
24 District Attorney's Office as far as they would reject our  
25 cases. If the driver had keys or if there wasn't a broken

1 steering column, they weren't going to take the cases.

2 Well, that has gotten easier over the years  
3 where we're working on our relationship. And I really  
4 think the Dallas Police Department really had a bigger  
5 impact on that in getting a better relationship with them,  
6 also, and I think they've helped us more than they realize  
7 they have. And we've had no problems filing our fraud  
8 cases. Every single one of them have been accepted.

9 On our stolen vehicle recoveries, we average 79  
10 recoveries a month. These are all direct touches. Our  
11 traffic division alone only gets about seven a month.

12 So my three officers and my sergeant are out  
13 there on a constant basis recovering, and I think they're  
14 doing an outstanding job when it comes to recovering the  
15 vehicles. With that being said, we've recovered over \$10  
16 million worth of vehicles this year alone.

17 Our information sharing, we do it a number of  
18 ways. We have weekly meetings after our 68-A inspections.

19 This is where we have -- Corsicana is there. NICB is  
20 there.

21 Lancaster Police Department comes in. We have  
22 our agents. And then we also have local constables and  
23 everyone that assists with our 68-As. And we have  
24 meetings and do a lot of intelligence sharing there.

25 We go to traffic details with our traffic

1 division, and we will go to any other agencies that  
2 request us to go in there and train their officers on  
3 paper tags. Whatever they want the training on, we go in  
4 and we do that training, and we build the personal  
5 relationships.

6 We attend the NTACIN monthly meetings. Now, I  
7 want to do a caveat on there. We have not been doing them  
8 until the last month because they used to be on Thursdays,  
9 and they just recently changed them to Wednesdays. So we  
10 are now able to attend.

11 We send out e-mails. We network, and we send  
12 out eBlasts -- and I'll show an example of that. And then  
13 we attend the monthly MVCPA meetings, and we submit to the  
14 Virtual Command Center.

15 These are some of the bulletins that we have.  
16 The top two are the dealership bulletins. We send those  
17 out by eBlast to all the North Texas Auto Dealers  
18 Association. We put them on Virtual Command Center and we  
19 send copies to our local coverage agencies.

20 One of the ways I've talked about the  
21 networking -- we do that by all the assist and all the  
22 collaborations that we do with our taskforce. In 2022, we  
23 assisted 966 times to all different agents all across the  
24 state of Texas and the United States. The taskforce also  
25 collaborated 438 times with different divisions, agencies,

1 and taskforces in 2022. Each one of those times, we're  
2 building up relationships and we're able to share  
3 information with people.

4 What we need from the MVCPA -- well, it's just  
5 like everyone else. We need more funding. We need money.  
6 We need officers. And we need vehicles.

7 And one thing that I would like to see -- and  
8 if it's already there, please let me know -- but I would  
9 like to see something where maybe the MVCPA Board or NICB  
10 could find some sort of partnership to help these agencies  
11 get the vehicles they need and the equipment they need.  
12 Because if you're having to go through each individual's  
13 purchasing department to try and find the best deals,  
14 that's not always the best option.

15 And maybe NICB or someone could help us out on  
16 that. And that's just throwing an idea out there. But  
17 that's what we need is the working equipment and the  
18 officers. Any questions?

19 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you for the presentation.

20 Well done. My question to you is how do y'all define a  
21 cleared case?

22 MS. KNIGHT: That was one of my questions also.

23 What happens is every time we pull over or we find a  
24 recovered vehicle, we have to generate a service number  
25 and a report. That goes into our clearance rates for our



1 RMS system.

2 So we have to do a report in every one and we  
3 clear those. Now, there are some of them that we still  
4 have going because you're going to notice our clearance  
5 rates are not the same as our recovery rates because of  
6 the fact that we still have some ongoing investigation  
7 that we'll find with them. And then, once we either make  
8 an arrest or we figure out what's going on, then, we clear  
9 it.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: So, to you all, a clearance is  
11 every incident that you have, I guess, an encounter with  
12 an individual --

13 MS. KNIGHT: Yes, sir.

14 MR. GONZALEZ: -- albeit whether it's auto  
15 theft or not.

16 MS. KNIGHT: No, we only count the auto theft  
17 ones.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: So, if it's a stolen vehicle?

19 MS. KNIGHT: Yes, sir.

20 MR. GONZALEZ: So, 478 times there have been  
21 stolen vehicles that you guys have come across?

22 MS. KNIGHT: Yes, sir.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: But we only have nine arrests?

24 MS. KNIGHT: Like I said, most of them have  
25 been unoccupied.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

2 MS. KNIGHT: Yes, sir.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. So, we're counting  
4 recoveries as cleared cases?

5 MS. KNIGHT: Yes, sir.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. So, one of the things  
7 that we need to, and we probably need to formalize this or  
8 something -- but we need to be following the NIBRS  
9 definition of a cleared case.

10 MS. KNIGHT: Okay.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: And so, when I think of a  
12 cleared case -- either cleared by exceptional arrest or  
13 cleared by arrest of a NIBRS offense -- of an auto theft  
14 offense. It just really confused me when I'm  
15 understanding now that, okay. So the recovered vehicles  
16 are considered a cleared case according -- for how Dallas  
17 County is looking at it.

18 But can we make that change to that manual,  
19 please?

20 MR. CANADY: Yes.

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. That's all I have.

22 MS. JONES: You covered it.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you.

24 MS. KNIGHT: Thank you.

25 MR. GONZALEZ: And we will now hear from

1 Montgomery County.

2 MR. SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank you. Good  
3 afternoon.

4 My name is John Sanchez. I'm Lieutenant with  
5 the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and I'm the  
6 Commander over the Montgomery County Auto Theft Taskforce.

7 Thank you for allowing us to come here and tell you who  
8 we are and what we do.

9 We were established in 1993, so we're getting  
10 ready to celebrate our thirtieth year in existence. And  
11 yes, we were established in the last century. So we're  
12 that old.

13 This is our coverage area. We cover nine  
14 counties: Montgomery County, Grimes County, Walker  
15 County, Madison, Trinity, Polk, San Jacinto, Liberty  
16 County, and Angelina County.

17 Our area of responsibility -- we cover 7,646  
18 square miles, and going by each county's website and  
19 looking at their 2020 census, the total population of our  
20 coverage area is a little bit over a million people. That  
21 does not include visitors and others that come into those  
22 areas on a regular basis.

23 Currently, my taskforce is comprised of one  
24 lieutenant, myself; a sergeant, Kelly Smith, who's right  
25 here with me to offer me moral support. I have two

1 detectives, one from Montgomery County and one from Walker  
2 County; three investigators, two from Montgomery County  
3 and one from Grimes County. I have a DPS CID agent who's  
4 available to us, and I have an NICB agent who's available  
5 to us on a part-time basis.

6 Our accomplishments -- from September 1, 2021,  
7 through August 31, 2022, we recovered 561 stolen vehicles.  
8 We made 101 arrests. Our recovery value was \$8.6  
9 million. Covert operations -- we did 14 of those with  
10 four of those resulting in arrests.

11 LPR alert responses -- we had 60. We recovered  
12 33 vehicles, made 22 arrests from those.

13 Collaborations with the tax office were 65. We  
14 do wish they'd stop calling us at 3:30 every Friday to  
15 come to the tax office. I think it's a little burdensome  
16 sometimes, but we're happy to do it.

17 Property seizure hearings -- we did 78 of  
18 those. We did 1,395 68-A inspections and 25 business  
19 inspections.

20 From September 1, 2022, through March 31, 2023,  
21 we have 282 recoveries, 53 arrests. Our recovery value as  
22 of the end of March is a little over \$5 million. We've  
23 done 21 covert operations with nine arrests.

24 We've been very fortunate in the end of January  
25 and February. We were able to get folks to bring us clone

1 vehicles, VIN switch vehicles up into Montgomery County so  
2 that we could make those arrests. Those are undercover  
3 operations.

4 For some reason, folks from Harris County and  
5 City of Houston do not like to cross the creek and come  
6 into Montgomery County. We have been fighting that for  
7 quite a while. We finally got lucky and were able to drag  
8 some of them up and over.

9 Interesting story before I move on: one of the  
10 ones we recovered, we had a gentleman who flew down from  
11 Ohio, was purchasing a vehicle online, and had met --  
12 actually met with the crooks on a Friday. He wanted --  
13 he's a businessman. He wanted to wire transfer the money.  
14 They wanted it in cash.

15 So, that kind of deal dragged through the  
16 weekend. Monday, when he was going to meet with them, he  
17 got an Uber driver to come meet him. The Uber driver and  
18 the gentleman started talking and the Uber driver said,  
19 That doesn't sound right. Let me take you to the  
20 Sheriff's Office.

21 So he did. We got involved. Found -- he had  
22 the VIN number for the vehicle he was supposed to be  
23 buying. We backtracked that vehicle.

24 I talked to the owner of the vehicle and they  
25 said, No, the vehicle is sitting in my driveway. And no,

1 it's not for sale. So we had them take a picture of the  
2 vehicle, take a picture of the VIN number, send it to us.

3

4 We didn't recover the stolen vehicle that day,  
5 but we got it the next day. We were able to recover it.

6 So we get stuff from anywhere. And we'll take it and run  
7 with it.

8 To date, LPR response is 21 vehicles recovered,  
9 and -- I'm sorry, 19 vehicles recovered and nine arrests.

10 We've done 27 collaborations with the tax office and 33  
11 seizure property hearings, 461 68-A inspections -- and we  
12 only do them once a week -- and 16 business inspections.

13 Who do we help? We help all these people on  
14 the list: our Montgomery County Organized Crime Unit, our  
15 gang unit, our homicide and violent crime unit, our tow  
16 enforcement unit -- and they come to us when tow companies  
17 have vehicles that need to be identified so they can send  
18 their contact letters out or see if they're stolen. They  
19 come to us. We go out and do that.

20 Our training academy -- we go and teach our new  
21 cadets about auto theft. The Fire Marshall's Office will  
22 call us primarily with burned vehicles. Again, the tax  
23 office, all of our constables' offices call us. DPS asks  
24 us for assistance.

25 Navasota Police Department, Grimes County Tax

1 Office, Walker County Tax Office, Harris County Sheriff's  
2 Office collaborates with us a lot, as does HPD. Harris  
3 County Precinct 4 Constable's Office has come to us for  
4 assistance. Leon County and the game wardens are always  
5 asking us for assistance.

6 So we help anybody that comes and asks. If  
7 it's in our ballpark, we'll help anybody. We don't care  
8 where you're from.

9 Public events that we do -- we do the  
10 Montgomery County Citizens' Academy. That is held twice a  
11 year. Sergeant Smith takes care of that and addresses  
12 them, teaches them about auto theft, how to protect their  
13 vehicles, how to keep them, hopefully, from being stolen  
14 or, at least, lessening the probability that they'll be  
15 stolen.

16 The Woodlands is a huge subdivision in our  
17 county. They have a huge safety expo that we're invited  
18 to and we go to every year, address the citizens there.  
19 City of Shenandoah does the same.

20 We do National Night Outs across our coverage  
21 area. If we get invited, we go. And we do multiple  
22 recruiting events for our agency and other agencies.

23 Okay. This is some of the things that we've  
24 done. This is a chop shop that we hit. Four vehicles  
25 were recovered and one travel trailer, and we arrested

1 three folks on site.

2 This is -- we got called out to this because  
3 there was at least one travel trailer that was stolen. By  
4 the time we got done, we had three vehicles recovered, one  
5 travel trailer, three cargo trailers, and had three people  
6 in custody.

7 This was three recoveries were made the same  
8 night. Two people were arrested. Three vehicles were  
9 stolen from the Wood Forest subdivision.

10 Patrol was able to respond and get one. They  
11 called us. We were able to follow up quickly and get two  
12 more that night.

13 Another chop shop we did with three recovered  
14 vehicles, one travel trailer, and two arrests. Another  
15 chop shop. This was a motorcycle one. We had three  
16 motorcycles recovered. We arrested one individual. He  
17 was chopping them in his garage.

18 These are the vehicles that we've recovered.  
19 Most of -- well, not every single one -- but most of these  
20 vehicles are the ones we've recovered in our undercover  
21 operations that were for sale online. They're VIN  
22 switches. You see they're some very nice vehicles.

23 Every time we recover one of these, we ask the  
24 insurance company if we can have it because we need to  
25 update our bait vehicles. Like everybody else said, ours



1 are old. So far, we've not had success, but we're going  
2 to keep asking it until somebody gets tired and gives us  
3 one.

4 We do temp tag initiatives. We've made four  
5 arrests for producing and selling fake tags to undercover  
6 officers. A lot of times that's me because they're  
7 Spanish speakers.

8 Okay. What do we need? What do we want? We  
9 would like to add a detective from the San Jacinto County  
10 Sheriff's Office. They have been trying to get in the  
11 taskforce.

12 We'd like to add a detective from our county.  
13 We'd like to add two investigators. We dearly would love  
14 to add a prosecutor, okay?

15 Just like other presentations before me -- and  
16 I'm not going to beat that horse to death -- but we're  
17 having trouble getting some of our cases prosecuted  
18 because they don't understand or -- especially the more  
19 complex ones -- or even the simple ones, like a UUMV. And  
20 they're seeing them as property crimes. We're trying to  
21 educate them, but a dedicated prosecutor would certainly  
22 help.

23 We'd like to add overtime funding. It is not  
24 unusual for my office to be completely empty on a Thursday  
25 afternoon or a Friday because everybody's reached their

1 work hours. And without the overtime funding, I lose  
2 folks and they lose time to do investigations or go out  
3 and do something.

4 There are times where we get out there and some  
5 information comes in and it's just me and Sergeant Smith,  
6 and we'll go out and do the best that we can. And  
7 sometimes we've just got to push it off to Monday where  
8 everybody's back and fresh starting. Some overtime would  
9 really, really help us.

10 We want to update our bait vehicle equipment,  
11 not just the vehicles. But Sergeant Smith was down at HPD  
12 not too long ago, and he saw the type of cameras and  
13 equipment that they have in their bait vehicles. And he  
14 came back, said, Please, can we have this? So, we're  
15 going to ask for this in our next grant.

16 Okay. I have, I think --

17 MR. GONZALEZ: A video?

18 MR. SANCHEZ: Yes.

19 MR. GONZALEZ: Yeah, let me pull that up on the  
20 other system.

21 MR. SANCHEZ: Okay. So, our elected officials  
22 wanted to address you all, also, regarding this.

23 (Video is played.)

24 MR. SANCHEZ: I want to just point out that  
25 this was important enough for the sheriffs to actually

1 make this video upon our request. And I want to point out  
2 that Sheriff McRae had missed the original video date  
3 because he had a family emergency and had to be at the  
4 hospital. When he actually made this video two days  
5 later, he had had one hour of sleep to come make this  
6 video. But he thought it was important enough to do this.

7 That's our presentation. I want to thank you  
8 for your time. If there are any questions?

9 MR. GONZALEZ: So I want to thank you for that  
10 video. I mean, well done. And I think it's very  
11 important to be able to see that your taskforce does have  
12 the support of the top administrators within your agency.

13

14 Because that's always one of the questions that  
15 I have in my mind is, I know we're all asking for more  
16 resources, more time and money. But at the end of the  
17 day, what we really need to know is how much support does  
18 your agency also have for that? I mean, there is a 20  
19 percent cash match.

20 So that is very well done. I think that goes a  
21 long way.

22 MR. SANCHEZ: Thank you.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Members, any questions?

24 MS. JONES: Great job.

25 MR. SANCHEZ: Thank you.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: We will now recess for 10  
2 minutes and reconvene.

3 (Whereupon, a short recess was taken.)

4 MR. GONZALEZ: We are now back from break at  
5 2:46 p.m., and we will now hear from Joe Canady on Agenda  
6 Item 5.

7 MR. CANADY: Good afternoon, Chairman and  
8 Member. Joe Canady, for the record, Director of the Motor  
9 Vehicle Crime Prevention Authority.

10 For Agenda Item 5, overtime is listed as its  
11 own budget category and it allows taskforces to utilize  
12 grant-funded personnel to participate in special motor  
13 vehicle crime operations or to support other local and  
14 federal operations involving crimes related to motor  
15 vehicle theft when flexible or variable schedules cannot  
16 accommodate the staffing needs.

17 On page 15 of your Board book, you have the  
18 information presented here -- 15 and 16. Current policy  
19 limits the use of overtime for grant-funded personnel  
20 salaries to five percent of that amount. For example, if  
21 total personnel costs are \$100,000, then the overtime is  
22 limited to \$5,000.

23 The amount allowed may only be used for MVCPA  
24 funded or cash-matched personnel. Another example listed  
25 in the grant administrator manual on the last paragraph of

1 the page is overtime costs are allowable expenditures and  
2 may be requested or approved as a distinct budget category  
3 in the application or in a grant adjustment request, not  
4 to exceed five percent of direct funded salaries.

5 On page 16, the proposal for overtime costs to  
6 be reviewed by the MVCPA Director and the MVCPA Board  
7 designee to ensure overtime expenditures are allowable and  
8 reasonable. This is similar to what we have done with the  
9 purchase price of vehicles, as well as the lease of  
10 vehicles because it's been difficult to find those  
11 vehicles within a specific price.

12 The same thing with overtime. There may be  
13 other areas, other situations that the commanders,  
14 taskforce personnel, and investigators may be able to  
15 participate in if they had the additional overtime to work  
16 those cases or participate with other agencies in motor  
17 vehicle theft related cases.

18 And that's all I have for this, if you have any  
19 questions.

20 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you, Director Canady. And  
21 correct me if I'm wrong, but this five percent limit  
22 that's currently in place was put upon -- or, I guess, put  
23 into place because of limited funding in the past?

24 MR. CANADY: That is correct. Counsel and I  
25 have reviewed the information contained in statutes, and

1 there's nothing in statute that prevents an additional  
2 amount above five percent.

3 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Any questions? Okay.

4 I will now entertain a motion on Agenda Item 5.

5 MR. RICHARDS: Ask for questions or comments.

6 MR. GONZALEZ: Yessenia, are there any public  
7 comments on this matter?

8 MS. BENAVIDES: No, sir.

9 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Now, I will entertain a  
10 motion on Agenda Item 5.

11 MS. JONES: Sharon Jones for the record. I  
12 move that the Committee recommend that the Board remove  
13 the limit which requires that overtime pay must not exceed  
14 five percent of MVCPA funded direct salaries and allow the  
15 MVCPA Director and MVCPA Board designee to review on an  
16 annual basis to ensure allowable overtime requests are  
17 reasonable and necessary to meet the goals, strategies,  
18 and activities of the grant.

19 MR. GONZALEZ: I second that motion.

20 We have a motion from Committee Member Jones,  
21 and a second from myself. Is there any further  
22 discussion?

23 (No response.)

24 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. I will now call for the  
25 vote. Committee Members, when I call your name, please

1 state your vote for the record.

2 Member Smith? I'm sorry. Member Jones?

3 MS. JONES: Aye.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: And I, Chairman Gonzalez, vote  
5 aye. Let the record reflect that there are two votes for  
6 and zero against. The motion passes.

7 We will now move on to Agenda Item 6, and I  
8 will turn it over to MVCPA Director Canady.

9 MR. CANADY: Good afternoon again. For the  
10 record, Joe Canady, Motor Vehicle Crime Prevention  
11 Authority Director. In reference to the Agenda Item 6,  
12 for Texas Transportation Code 1006 limits who can perform  
13 an inspection, and these are the 68-A inspections we're  
14 referring to, the confidential VIN inspections.

15 The person must have training by TxDMV rule  
16 217.144. Up until now, inspections have only been  
17 performed by law enforcement officers. And in most of  
18 these cases, these officers are taskforce investigators  
19 that are performing the inspections.

20 In the FY '22, there was a little over 28,000  
21 inspections that were performed. This has caused a  
22 backlog for many jurisdictions, and it reduces time that  
23 investigators and personnel have to spend on priority  
24 investigations and other priorities within their taskforce  
25 grant.

1           However, instead of looking for another source  
2 to do the inspections, there is something in statute that  
3 would allow another person to perform the 68-A or  
4 confidential inspection if they are directly supervised by  
5 a law enforcement officer who is already authorized to  
6 conduct these inspections.

7           And what this means is if some agencies that  
8 have volunteers, have retired law enforcement officers,  
9 such as reserves, other staff that has been vetted  
10 properly and already participate in law enforcement  
11 confidential functions of their agency, they could utilize  
12 these people, once properly trained, to assist them and  
13 conduct some of these 68-As in the field at the same time  
14 their officers are conducting these inspections.

15           This could reduce the number of law enforcement  
16 that's actually out there from a taskforce if they have  
17 the personnel to assist them in doing these inspections,  
18 while increasing the number from each taskforce that could  
19 be doing these inspections to reduce a backlog. Do I have  
20 any questions?

21           MR. GONZALEZ: Any questions, Members?

22           MS. JONES: No, sir.

23           MR. GONZALEZ: I have one. So, Director  
24 Canady, if it's already allowed in statute and by rule,  
25 why do we need a -- what are we doing?



1 MR. CANADY: I think just for clarification,  
2 that we need to discuss with the National Insurance Crime  
3 Bureau and develop the criteria and a process because a  
4 lot of this would be access to proprietary databases with  
5 confidential information.

6 So rather than just us telling NICB what needs  
7 to be done, we should be asking NICB to work with us to  
8 develop that process and that criteria for them to  
9 consider adding another section or another layer to their  
10 system for access.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: Thank you, Mr. Canady.

12 MS. JONES: I have a question. Does NICB know  
13 this is coming? Did we have a discussion with them?

14 MR. CANADY: Yes, I have had some discussions  
15 with NICB and they were aware of and they are willing to  
16 work with MVCPA if that's the direction the Board would  
17 like to go.

18 MS. JONES: So, they're supportive? Or they're  
19 just --

20 MR. CANADY: Yes, they're supportive.

21 MS. JONES: -- going along to get along?

22 MR. CANADY: No, they're supportive.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. Yessenia, are there any  
24 public comments on this matter?

25 MS. BENAVIDES: No, sir.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. I will now entertain a  
2 motion on Agenda Item 6.

3 MS. JONES: Sharon Jones for the record. I  
4 move that the Committee recommend that the Board authorize  
5 the MVCPA Director to coordinate with DMV and the National  
6 Insurance Crime Bureau to develop minimum standards to  
7 allow non-sworn and other trained personnel to perform  
8 confidential VIN inspections under the direct supervision  
9 of an MVCPA taskforce investigator who is allowed to  
10 perform the confidential VIN inspections.

11 MR. GONZALEZ: And I will second that motion.

12 We have a motion from Committee Member Jones  
13 and a second from myself. Is there any further  
14 discussion?

15 MS. JONES: No, sir.

16 MR. GONZALEZ: I will now call for the vote.  
17 Any comments, Yessenia?

18 MS. BENAVIDES: No, sir.

19 MR. GONZALEZ: All right. Committee Members,  
20 when I call your name, please state your vote for the  
21 record. Member Jones?

22 MS. JONES: Aye.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: And I, Chairman Gonzalez, vote  
24 aye. Let the record reflect that there are two votes for  
25 and none against. The motion passes.

1           We will now move to Agenda Item 7, and I will  
2 turn it back over to MVCPA Director Joe Canady and  
3 designated staff.

4           MR. CANADY: Good afternoon. Again, Joe  
5 Canady, MVCPA Director.

6           In reference to the grant conference that we  
7 are going to have this year in June in Kerrville, I'd like  
8 to turn this over to Yessenia for her to give an update to  
9 where we are and where we're going.

10          MS. BENAVIDES: So, for the record, Yessenia  
11 Benavides, Management Analyst, MVCPA. And we wanted to  
12 provide a small, but very important, update concerning the  
13 MVCPA Conference that will be held in Kerrville, Texas, on  
14 June 12 through June 15.

15          An MVCPA Conference Committee meeting was held  
16 remotely on Wednesday, March 22, 2023. And during that  
17 meeting, the Conference Committee developed a draft of the  
18 conference schedule. A special thank you to Member Jones  
19 who greatly assisted with that.

20          After the draft was approved by the Conference  
21 Committee, the conference schedule was shared with all the  
22 taskforces on April 6, 2023, this year. And then a hotel  
23 reservation link was also shared, along with the special  
24 rate link for taskforces to be able to go in there and get  
25 that.

1           And as of April 13, there are 93 hotel  
2 reservations for the MVCPA Conference. Currently, the  
3 MVCPA Conference Committee is finalizing the guest  
4 speakers and the instructors. And a special thank you to  
5 Member Gonzalez for doing a lot of that leg work for us.

6           And lastly, we would like to take a moment to,  
7 again, invite our taskforces to obtain items from their  
8 regions to raffle at the conference. Raffles are a fun  
9 and engaging way to kind of add excitement and  
10 anticipation for an event. And it's also a great way for  
11 local businesses to be introduced to people that maybe  
12 might not know they exist.

13           That's all I have. Any questions?

14           MR. GONZALEZ: Members, any questions?

15           MS. JONES: Sponsorship and vendor letters --  
16 have we started requesting sponsors?

17           MR. CANADY: For the record. Joe Canady, MVCPA  
18 Director.

19           Yes, we're still developing that criteria and  
20 adding to it based off of the information we're receiving  
21 from the hotel on cost to identify those different levels  
22 of sponsorship that's available.

23           MS. JONES: So give me a deadline to expect  
24 those.

25           MR. CANADY: We should be able to get something

1 out late this week, early next week to potential vendors.

2

3 MS. JONES: Perfect. Thank you.

4 MR. GONZALEZ: For the awards, what's the  
5 process going to look like?

6 MS. BENAVIDES: I would imagine that would be  
7 something we would discuss with the Committee meeting --  
8 how would we go about maybe receiving nominations, and  
9 then, voting.

10 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay.

11 MR. CANADY: For the record, Joe Canady.

12 I think our last Committee meeting, we did  
13 identify some potential award recipients. And so that we  
14 can -- I don't want to share the information here, just in  
15 case someone may be in attendance that may have won an  
16 award. But we can certainly develop and expand on that  
17 during our next meeting.

18 MR. GONZALEZ: Members, any other questions?

19 MS. JONES: No, sir.

20 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. We will now move on to --  
21 we will not have a closed session today. So, we're not  
22 going to take up Agenda Items 8 or 9.

23 We will now move on to Agenda Item 10, public  
24 comment. Yessenia, any public comments?

25 MS. BENAVIDES: No, sir. We do not.

1 MR. GONZALEZ: All right. We will now move on  
2 to Agenda Item 11. Unless there is any further business,  
3 I would like to entertain a motion to adjourn.

4 MS. JONES: I move we adjourn.

5 MR. GONZALEZ: We have a motion from Committee  
6 Member Jones and a second from -- I'm sorry. I second the  
7 motion.

8 We have a motion from Committee Member Jones  
9 and a second from myself. Members -- we've got to take a  
10 vote to adjourn?

11 MS. JONES: Yes.

12 MR. GONZALEZ: Okay. When I call your name,  
13 please state your vote for the record. Member Jones?

14 MS. JONES: Aye.

15 MR. GONZALEZ: And I, Chairman Gonzalez, vote  
16 aye. Let the record reflect that the vote is unanimous.

17 The meeting is adjourned.

18 (Whereupon, at 3:01 p.m., the meeting was  
19 adjourned.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MEETING OF: MVCPA Grants Budget & Reporting Committee  
LOCATION: Austin, Texas  
DATE: April 18, 2023

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages,  
numbers 1 through 79, inclusive, are the true, accurate,  
and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording  
made by electronic recording by Elizabeth Stoddard before  
the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles.

DATE: April 28, 2023

/s/ Anna Marie Reyes  
(Transcriber)

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