



Public Safety Budgets in the San Diego Region: Expenditures and Staffing for Fiscal Year 2006

July 2006

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PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGETS IN THE SAN DIEGO REGION: EXPENDITURES AND STAFFING FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

INTRODUCTION

This bulletin, part of the Crime in the San Diego Region series, focuses on current regional public safety budgets, as well as expenditures for prior years. Changes in funding over time are tracked and related, when possible, to recent crime trends. County and municipal public safety budgets for Fiscal Year (FY) 2005-2006 are compared to expenditures for FY 2001-2002 (five years ago) and FY 2004-2005 (one year ago). The ten-year trend for public safety expenditures also is shown. This single publication shows how dollars are allocated for different parts of the criminal justice system regionally, how different jurisdictions allocate dollars for law enforcement, and how staffing figures are related to expenditures. The methodology section at the end of this report explains how these figures were compiled.

FAST FACTS

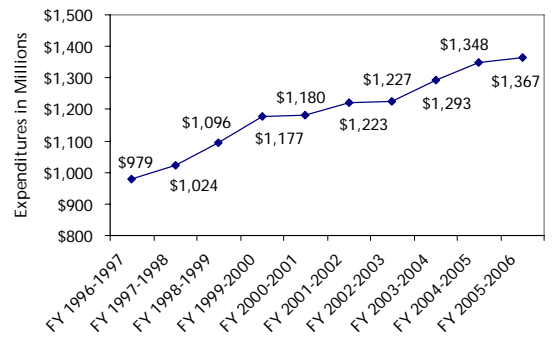
- Costs associated with public safety have grown consistently over the past ten years; a 40 percent increase, even when adjusting for inflation.
- Law enforcement constitutes the largest proportion (59%) of public safety costs in the region (\$1.37 billion), higher than the national percentage (45%).
- Per capita, \$448 is budgeted for public safety.
- Over one-third (37%) of the general funds for the incorporated cities are dedicated to law enforcement. Over one-quarter (27%) of the County budget is used for public safety functions.
- Staffing for sworn law enforcement personnel is not keeping pace with population growth over the past five years.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGETS

Distribution Across Activities

In FY 2005-2006, approximately \$1.37 billion was budgeted for local public safety efforts. This figure represents a steady climb over the past ten years (Figure 1), even when adjusted for inflation, a 40 percent increase. The regional population grew 16 percent during the same time period, and staffing for public safety increased 7 percent. Over five years, total expenditures rose 12 percent (compared to \$1.22 billion in FY 2001-2002). Most recently, the budget for public safety rose one percent, from \$1.35 billion in FY 2004-2005. Rising costs are associated with growing retirement and benefit expenses.

Figure 1
PUBLIC SAFETY EXPENDITURES CLIMBED
STEADILY OVER TEN YEARS

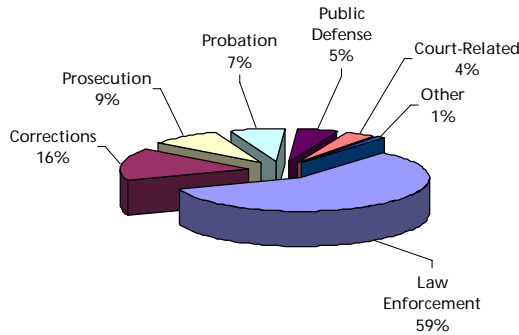


SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Budgets

As Figure 2 shows, over half (59%) of these public safety dollars went to law enforcement activities. This proportion has been relatively stable over time (not shown). This figure is higher than the national proportion, where 45 percent of the total justice budget goes

toward local police due to a higher proportion of correctional expenditures by the states¹.

Figure 2
LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES ACCOUNT FOR OVER HALF OF ALL EXPENDITURES



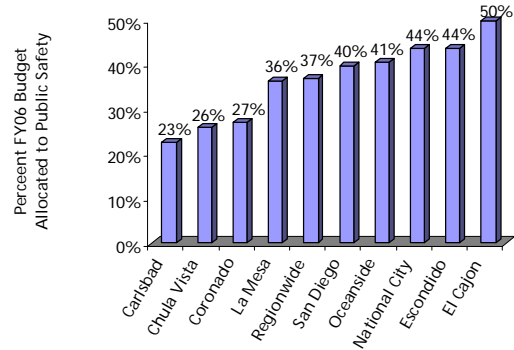
TOTAL = \$ 1,366,728,531

SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' FY 2005-2006 Budgets

Share of Jurisdictions' Budget

Figure 3 shows the proportion of each jurisdiction's FY 2005-2006 budget allocated toward public safety (defined as police services in the municipalities, and services provided by the District Attorney, public defense, probation, Sheriff, and other areas for the County). There was considerable variability across jurisdictions, from 23 percent in Carlsbad, compared to El Cajon, which allocated half of general funds to law enforcement activities. The regional municipal average was 37 percent. These allocations across jurisdictions are relatively stable over time, with similar proportions dedicated to public safety in FY 2004-2005 (not shown).

Figure 3
PUBLIC SAFETY ALLOCATIONS VARY ACROSS JURISDICTIONS

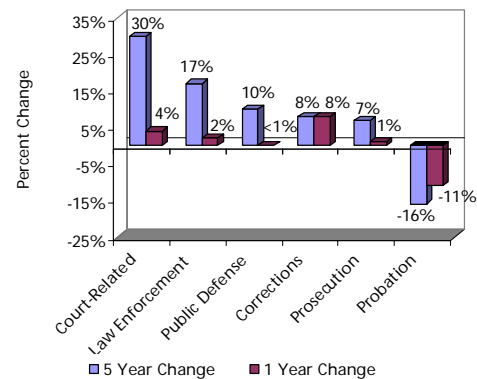


SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' FY 2005-2006 Budgets

Changes Over Past Five Years

As Figure 4 shows, court-related services (which include the Sheriff's Court Services Bureau, the Grand Jury, and Pretrial Services) increased the most over the past five years. This five-year increase was most directly related to increased costs associated with staffing in the Sheriff's Court Services Bureau, which have since stabilized. Growing retirement and benefit costs produced the 17 percent increase over five years for law enforcement. The five-year decrease for Probation (16%) was related to the movement of staff from field services to corrections, particularly within the past year.

Figure 4
PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET CHANGES STABILIZED OVER THE PAST YEAR



SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Budgets

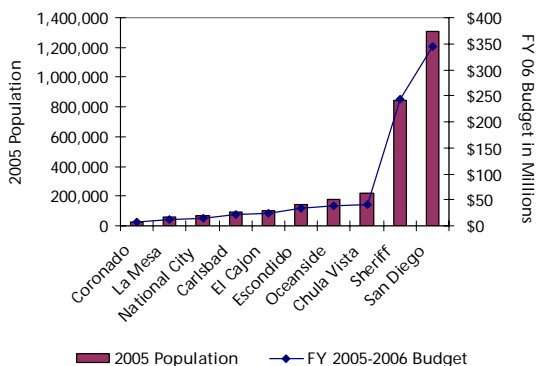
¹ Hughes, K.A. (April 2006). *Justice Expenditure and Employment in the United States, 2003*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

The smallest increase over five years occurred for prosecution (7%), which includes the offices of both the District Attorney and San Diego City Attorney. Between the two of them, all local criminal cases are prosecuted. This rise was related to the establishment of the Family Justice Center (FJC) in October 2002. This center was operated with funds from the City Attorney's budget until December 2004, when it became a separate entity. For comparability across time, the costs associated with FJC are included with the City Attorney figures in this report.

Law Enforcement

Overall, \$808.15 million was allocated toward regional law enforcement activities in FY 2005-2006 (not shown). There was significant variability across the ten reporting agencies (excluding the Harbor Police) in terms of their annual budgets, which ranged from \$7.91 million in Coronado to \$343.92 million in the City of San Diego. In general, these budgets were closely related to jurisdictional population, as Figure 5 shows. The Harbor Police Department's FY 2005-2006 budget was \$23.95 million. This amount is not shown in Figure 5 because there is no population base related to the services provided by the Harbor Police.

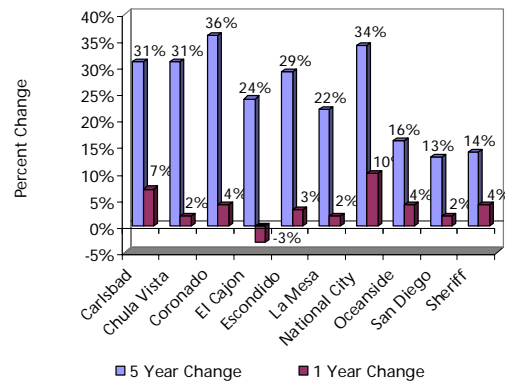
Figure 5
LAW ENFORCEMENT BUDGET MIRRORS JURISDICTION POPULATION



SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Budgets

Over the past five years, law enforcement budgets have increased 17 percent overall (not shown), ranging from the San Diego Police Department (a 13 percent increase) to the Coronado Police Department (up 36%) (Figure 6). Several agencies had increases of over 30 percent (Carlsbad, Chula Vista, Coronado, and National City). This rise is due to augmented retirement and benefit costs for each agency. Over one year, the increases slowed. In fact, the budget for the El Cajon Police Department declined 3 percent since FY 2004-2005. Increases over one year ranged from 2 percent in Chula Vista, La Mesa, and San Diego to 10 percent in National City.

Figure 6
LAW ENFORCEMENT BUDGETS ROSE OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS



SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Budgets

Corrections

Over the past five years, the budget for local correctional facilities increased eight percent (from \$196.70 million in FY 2001-2002 to \$212.31 million in FY 2005-2006). This budget includes adult institutions operated by the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and juvenile facilities managed by the Probation Department. A total of 2,256 correctional staff positions were funded in FY 2005-2006 (not shown).

Prosecution

In FY 2005-2006, a total of \$124.93 million was allocated toward prosecution in the region, a seven percent increase since FY 2001-2002. This total included a budget of \$109.78 million for the District Attorney's Office (1,038 staff positions, including general and specialized criminal prosecution, juvenile court, and public assistance fraud) and \$15.15 million for the City Attorney's Office Criminal Division (161 staff positions), which includes staff of the Family Justice Center (FJC) for consistency across years (not shown).

Probation

Probation's field services budget has declined 16 percent since FY 2001-2002 and 11 percent since FY 2004-2005 (Figure 4). The FY 2005-2006 budget of \$95.94 million includes funding for 812 positions, 537 of which are sworn personnel (not shown). As previously mentioned, the reductions have been primarily related to movement of staff to the detention facilities operated by probation. Specifically, supervision of work projects was transferred to institutional services.

Public Defense

Public defense includes the Offices of the Public Defender and the Alternate Public Defender, as well as the Private Conflict Council contract (the contract with the San Diego County Bar Association for attorney services in cases where there is a conflict of interest for the staff of the Public Defender's office). Public defense's FY 2005-2006 budget of \$69.27 million (which included 422 staff positions) showed a five-year increase (10%) from FY 2001-2002 expenditures, though this change slowed over one year to less than one percent from FY 2004-2005 (Figure 4). The rise is associated with costs for contracted services with the San Diego County Bar Association. These costs exceeded the budgeted amount in

FY 2003-2004 and were paid in FY 2004-2005, producing the five-year budgetary increase. The current budget includes reserve funds to cover these costs.

Court-Related Services

In FY 2005-2006, the court-related services budget was \$48.75 million, which included Pre-Trial services, the Grand Jury, and the Sheriff's Department Court Services Division (not shown). The Sheriff's Court Services Division staff provide weapon screening and courtroom security around the County and also execute, serve, and return all writs, warrants, and other processes (e.g., subpoenas, eviction notices, and restraining orders) issued by the court. Funding for the San Diego County Superior Court is not included here as a result of the Lockyer-Isenberg Trial Court Funding Act of 1997 (which stipulated that the State would assume full responsibility of costs associated with trial court operations) and the unification of the Municipal and Superior Court Systems in December 1998.

Other

In FY 2005-2006, the "other" areas of public safety had a budget of \$7.50 million (not shown). Two groups were included in this other category: 1) the San Diego County Public Safety Executive Office, which provides administrative oversight to nine County public safety departments; and 2) the Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board, which receives and investigates complaints of misconduct by peace officers and custodial officers employed by the Sheriff's and Probation Departments. From FY 2001-2002 to FY 2003-2004, the Juvenile Justice Commission's budget (which was absorbed into the Probation budget in FY 2004-2005) also was included in this category.

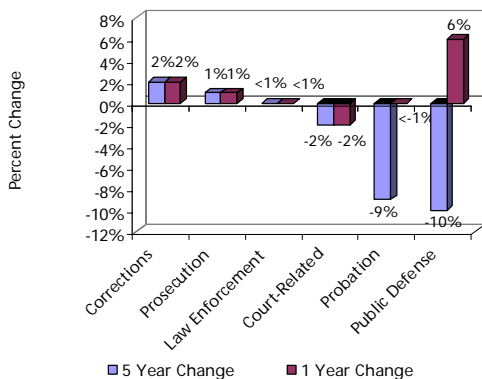
STAFFING

Public Safety Overall

Over the past five years, public safety staffing was at its highest number in FY 2002-2003 (11,589) and then decreased for two years until the current year, when there was a modest increase (1%). In FY 2005-2006, 11,450 staff positions were budgeted across the different activities (not shown).

As Figure 7 shows, changes in staffing over the past five years varied across the agencies, with public defense, probation, and court-related services experiencing decreases (10%, 9%, and 3%, respectively), while corrections, prosecution, and law enforcement increased slightly (2%, 1%, and less than 1%, respectively).

Figure 7
CRIMINAL JUSTICE STAFFING CHANGES VARY BY ACTIVITY



SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Budgets

Law Enforcement Sworn and Non-Sworn

In FY 2005-2006, there were 6,267 law enforcement staff positions across the 11 regional agencies (including the Harbor

Police²). This number included 4,334 sworn officers, as well as 1,933 non-sworn staff. Across the region, 69 percent of law enforcement staff members were sworn, ranging from 60 percent at the Sheriff's Department to 82 percent with the Harbor Police (not shown).

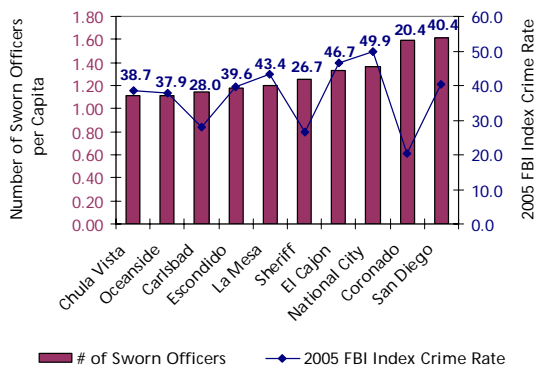
In terms of number of sworn officers per 1,000 population, the regional average in FY 2005-2006 was 1.42. This figure was slightly lower than it was in FY 2001-2002 (1.50), and the same as in FY 2004-2005. The FY 2005-2006 regional figure also was lower than the most recent U.S. figure of 2.3 per 1,000 population (which ranged from 2.8 officers for cities with populations greater than 250,000 to 1.8 for those with 25,000 to 99,999)³ (not shown).

As Figure 8 shows, the number of sworn officers per 1,000 population varied across the jurisdictions (from 1.11 in Chula Vista and Oceanside to 1.61 in San Diego), as did the FBI Index crime rates per 1,000 residents (from 20.4 in Coronado to 49.9 in National City). These proportions are relatively stable over time (not shown). There was a positive relationship between these two variables, especially for six jurisdictions: Chula Vista, Oceanside, Escondido, La Mesa, El Cajon, and National City. However, factors other than the officer-to-population ratio (such as daytime population, crime reporting practices, and crime prevention strategies) can affect crime rates. Further, the number of officers employed is related to workload (e.g., calls for service) and budgetary concerns independent of crime rates.

² In FY 2005-2006, the Harbor Police had 144 sworn and 31 non-sworn positions.

³ U.S. Department of Justice (2005). *Crime in the United States 2004*. Washington, DC: Author.

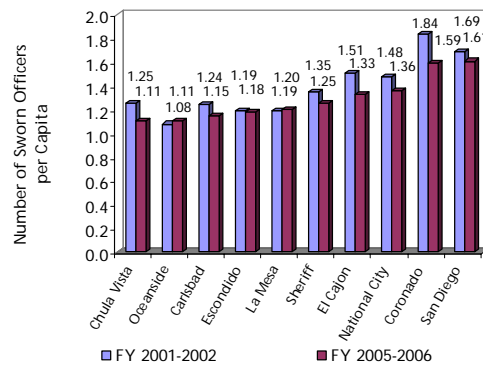
Figure 8
NUMBER OF SWORN OFFICERS PER CAPITA IS RELATED TO CRIME RATES



SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Budgets

Despite five-year budget increases for each of the departments (Figure 6), the number of sworn officers per 1,000 residents has not increased since FY 2001-2002 for most jurisdictions. These statistics indicate that staffing levels of sworn personnel are not keeping pace with increases in population. In fact, as Figure 9 shows, the officer-to-population ratio was lower in FY 2005-2006 than in FY 2001-2002 for eight of the jurisdictions and higher in only two (La Mesa and Oceanside). This discrepancy between population growth and officer staffing is related to a restricted pool of individuals interested in these positions. Proposals have been made to move sworn staff from administrative positions to the street, as well as review benefits packages to ensure that local agencies can attract prospective employees.

Figure 9
SWORN OFFICER-TO-POPULATION RATIO HAS DECREASED SLIGHTLY OVER PAST FIVE YEARS FOR MOST AGENCIES



SOURCES: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities' Budgets

METHODOLOGY

The methods used in the preparation of the data presented in this bulletin are outlined below, as well as factors to consider when interpreting the information.

- Budget data include figures for departments funded by the county and municipal governments. Other entities, such as state and federal justice agencies, are not included because they are not part of the local planning process.
- To reduce the impact of inflation, budgeted expenditures for prior years have been adjusted to be consistent with current dollars, based upon the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for San Diego County.
- While Fire Departments and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) provide essential first-responder services in cases of public safety emergencies, their budgets traditionally have not been included in the public safety figures compiled by SANDAG because they are not directly related to law enforcement and offender accountability.

- All budgeted dollar amounts represent employee salaries and benefits, plus department services and supplies. Capital expenditures are not included because these one-time expenditures could artificially skew comparisons.
- Each staff year represents the equivalent of one full-time position.
- FY 2005-2006 budgeted expenditures and staffing figures include mid-year modifications through December 2005, when available. Current statistics from local jurisdictions may vary from those presented here because of changes made after these numbers were prepared. In addition, for comparability across jurisdictions, some line items have been included or excluded as discussed below. Local departments have approved all numbers presented here prior to publication.
- Budget information is presented for fiscal years (July 1 through June 30). Population and crime data are presented for calendar years (January through December).
- Law enforcement budgets may vary with respect to whether or not parking enforcement and recruits are included. Animal control is excluded.
- There are nine incorporated cities in the region that operate their own police departments. The Sheriff's Department contracts to provide services to the remaining nine incorporated cities and six unincorporated communities, as well as the other unincorporated areas of the county. These groups and the Harbor Police provided information regarding budgets for law enforcement for this report.
- Sheriff's figures for law enforcement do not include detention facilities or court services.
- The San Diego City Attorney's Office Criminal Division prosecutes misdemeanors for the Cities of San Diego and Poway.
- Adult correctional facilities include the Vista Jail, Central Jail, George Bailey Detention Facility, East Mesa Detention Facility, and Las Colinas. Juvenile facilities include Kearny Mesa Juvenile Hall, Girls' Rehabilitation Facility, East Mesa Juvenile Detention Facility, Camp Barrett, and the Juvenile Ranch Facility.
- The budget for Probation correctional facilities also includes the inmate welfare fund. This fund is used to pay for supplemental supplies for inmates related to education, substance abuse treatment, barber services, cable television, videos, crafts, hobbies, holidays, special occasions, newspapers, magazines, physical fitness, sporting equipment, rewards, transportation to and from court, laundry, cleaning, kitchen, paint for rooms, maintenance of halls, etc.

If you are interested in any budget figures not presented here, please contact SANDAG's Criminal Justice Clearinghouse at (619) 699-6912.