

This document is an extract of a larger publication.

civilgrandjury.org is a project of UnGovr.org, a US-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to government transparency and public accountability.



RIDE-ALONG MERCED POLICE DEPARTMENT

Members of the 2012-2013 Merced County Civil Grand Jury recently participated in a Ride-Along with the Merced Police Department.

The Civil Grand Jury members observed officers briefing and were given a complete overview of the police car and equipment. During routine patrols with the officers several incidents occurred that demonstrated the overall effectiveness and outstanding work of the police department. These incidents included:

- Arrested three individuals with outstanding warrants.
- Responded to a fight in progress and an arrest was made.
- Pulled over vehicle towing overloaded trailer.
- Responded to a fight between two males, one of which was transported for booking into jail.
- Responded to a call regarding suspicious vehicle parked in neighborhood and possible theft of bicycle at that location.
- Responded to the scene of a DUI accident.
- Responded to a domestic dispute. Subject had a large cut on his hand and was transported to the hospital by ambulance. The Officer interviewed all witnesses then proceeded to the hospital.

The Civil Grand Jury observed that the current radio system was poor, making it hard to hear dispatch and other officers. There were areas of non-reception.

A booking at county jail facilities is a slow process because of county cut backs and layoffs. They can only book two people at a time and the officer has to stay with the suspect until booking accepts responsibility. This can take an hour or more of the officer's patrol time. In cases of emergency, backup is provided by other agencies.

The staff was professional, friendly and willing to answer all questions.

FINDING

F1. Radio system is poor and at times there are areas of non-reception.

RECOMMENDATION

R1. The 2012-2013 Merced County Civil Grand Jury recommends that the equipment and communication system be upgraded.

DISCLAIMER

Grand Jury reports are based on documentary evidence and the testimony of sworn or admonished witnesses, not on conjecture or opinion. However, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing such evidence except upon the specific approval of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, or another judge appointed by the Presiding Judge (Penal Code Sections 911, 924.1(a) and 929). Similarly, the Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing the identity of witnesses except upon an order of the court for narrowly defined purposes (Penal Code Sections 924.2 and 929).