

MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

This past year has presented the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department with many difficult challenges resulting from a stark economic downturn not witnessed for several years. Despite the economic challenges, we have had major accomplishments that have kept us at the forefront of law enforcement services, as well as providing the highest level of safety and security for the residents of Los Angeles County. And even with the budget restraints, we are the safest we've ever been in modern history.

Rest assured, we at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department are not sitting idle while the economy is struggling to find its feet. We are continuously exploring funding options for some of our most innovative programs, such as VIDA and our program designed to break the vicious cycle of domestic violence offenders.

We are reviewing and implementing programs, moreover, that will not affect our limited resources. You would be amazed at what can be done through innovation and teamwork. I have asked and received unanimous support from the Board of Supervisors for an independent audit of the Sheriff's Department budget. That audit is pending, and I am convinced when it is finished, the pendulum will swing back in our favor. There is nothing more important at this time in our history than public safety.

This *Year In Review* report serves as a detailed introduction to many of those programs devised and implemented by our sworn and professional staff during 2002.

On a more personal note, I was most gratified the electorate saw fit to return me to office for another four-year term. Effective law enforcement can only be accomplished through a partnership with the public. I am proud to report that the public is a strong partner with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

And finally, there is much work ahead of us. I am committed, as is everyone at the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, to seeing us shape the future of law enforcement as we secure the safety of our citizens today.

- Lee Baca, Sheriff