

# **Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program**

## **Local Evaluation Plan**

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

Prepared by:  
Major Crimes Bureau Lt. - Alex Gilinets  
LASD Grants Unit - Ricky Johnson  
562-946-7002 / 213-229-1802  
grantsunit@lasd.org

Grant Period:  
October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2026

April 24, 2024

## Project Background

The title of Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's (LASD) proposed project is the Organized Retail Crimes Task Force (ORCTF). Funds from this grant will be utilized to create a fully staffed and equipped investigative unit with the ability to specifically focus on organized retail theft crimes, cargo theft, and automobile/automobile accessory theft with an innovative and judicious approach. Funds will also support modern surveillance training sponsored by various investigative organizations including California Robbery Investigators Association, where task force members will receive valuable techniques in robbery investigations, organized retail crime prosecution strategies, gang crimes involving "Smash n Grab" robberies, task force operations, and technical support. This type of training is designed to enhance investigative abilities, provide investigators with the latest information related to new methods and tools used by suspects, and discuss case presentation for successful prosecution. In addition to personnel and trainings, funds will be utilized to purchase investigative equipment to execute theft prevention tactics such as the utilization of security cameras, undercover and surveillance vehicles, stealth vehicle trackers, tactical raid equipment, forensic lockers, office space and various other types of equipment needed to implement theft prevention objectives. The goal overall of the LASD is to reduce and prevent these types of organized theft crimes within our policing areas, and to improve the quality of life for the residents and businesses we serve.

LASD is vigilant in recognizing emerging crime trends and their impact upon residents. In recent years property theft crimes have increased dramatically in Los Angeles County, reflecting patterns within California. Within the property theft category, retail and cargo theft have seen the most growth, particularly in incidents where multiple suspects are involved, and appear to be part of a conspiracy. Vehicle theft, including catalytic converter and copper wire and other metal theft, has also been on the rise. Stolen items are quickly resold on a thriving black market for immediate profit and appear to be one of the main factors driving the increase in these theft incidents. It was determined that proactive actions must be implemented to curtail theft crimes and increase the safety of the residents of Los Angeles County.

## Implementation – Method & Design

To increase efficiency in investigating theft crimes, the LASD's intention is to utilize funding provided by this grant program to assemble and deploy, via backfill and overtime expenditures, a fully staffed regional investigative unit formed with the goal of reducing organized retail theft crimes, cargo theft, and automobile/automobile accessory theft. The ORCTF is organized as an inter-departmental task force in which experienced sworn and civilian personnel from various units have been placed on a loan assignment onto this team, which is broken up into three regional teams covering the entire County of Los Angeles.

The three (3) investigative teams: North, South, and Burglary Robbery Task Force Central teams, all operating out of the Major Crimes Bureau. ORCTF maintains a minimum of 33 sworn personnel across each investigative squad along with various administrative civilian personnel to assist in accomplishing the goals of the grant. To increase staffing flexibility to align with the needs of each operation, the ORCTF will utilize personnel station loans along with backfill overtime to staff according to the needs of each operation. The ORCTF investigates incidents of organized retail theft, cargo theft, and automobile/automobile accessory theft occurring within any of the LASD's 23 patrol stations and covering over three thousand (3,000) square miles and serving over three million (3,000,000) residents.

The three teams are deployed geographically within Los Angeles County. These squads respond to and conduct investigations of significant theft incidents. Modern surveillance methods that are compliant with privacy laws/regulations will be utilized for the purpose of positive identification and apprehension of suspects involved in sophisticated theft incidents. ORCTF investigators or deputy personnel will be used for visible uniformed security positions at locations that experience high rates of thefts. High visibility posting will be implemented as theft prevention. High visibility posting may not produce arrests but will usually result in a drop of crime in the area. Due to the size of the Los Angeles County, the amount of theft incidents within LASD's jurisdictions are substantial and we know we cannot solely rely on arrest as means to reduce crime. Utilizing proven crime prevention tactics and strategies we can reduce the number of targeted theft crimes. Training for the three taskforce teams is constantly evolving to keep up with the rate of sophistication in theft crimes. Training opportunities are conducted on three levels: departmental, specialized unit, and outside vendor training such as the California Robbery Investigators conference. In addition to the above, taskforce personnel are provided limited racial bias training and required to adhere to Los Angeles County Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/000.5- Bias of Free Policing.

In working with all our patrol station jurisdictions and the LASD Crime Analysis unit, we are currently working on establishing and fine tuning the Department's reporting processes regarding Organized Retail Theft crimes. The current reporting procedures do not accurately depict the magnitude of these crimes and the ability to distinguish specific organized retail theft crimes versus regular theft/burglary/robbery crimes. Once implemented, it will lead to an established data collection process that will provide accurate information on LASD statistical data of these crimes.

LASD has various established methods in place for quality assurance in overseeing the project and making sure proper steps are followed. LASD has internal controls and policies in place to ensure regular monitoring for compliance with grant requirements. These controls include procedures for approving expenditures, documenting activities funded by the grant, and maintaining proper financial records. Besides the unit entrusted for managing the grant, periodic internal reviews are overseen by the Department's Administrative Services Division to ensure that Major Crimes Bureau and the unit's grant managers are progressing as planned and are achieving desired outcomes.

### Process Evaluation Method and Design

Input/Resource/Activity/ Output	Data Element(s)	Data Source(s)	Frequency of Data Collection
Creation and set up of the ORCTF for LASD	Movement of personnel during hiring crisis, identifying, and obtaining office space and equipment	Major Crimes Bureau to manage personnel that are on-loan	On-going
Employee Overtime management	# hours of overtime worked for TF personnel	LASD Grants Unit / MCB will manage hours based on budgeted amount per year	Monthly / on-going / throughout the duration of the grant
Number of investigations generated, identified, and investigated by ORCTF	Combine department statistics with ORCTF statistics to identify and manage number of incidents	MCB project manager Lt. to oversee compare and monitor with stat / crime analysis unit	Monthly / on-going / throughout the duration of the grant
Number of cases reported to LASD from all stations	Crime Analysis will obtain information and monitor	LASD RMS / Internal case mgmt. system	Daily

Number of Blitz Operations conducted	# of Blitz operations, team supervisors to manage and keep track	LASD RMS / Internal case mgmt. system	Daily
Number of arrests made	# of ORT arrest, team supervisors to manage and keep track	LASD RMS / Internal case mgmt. system	Daily
Number of cases referred for prosecution	# of ORT prosecutions referred, team supervisors to manage and keep track	LASD RMS / Internal case mgmt. system	Daily
Public Engagement (community events, social media, press releases, taskforce members and all other deputies and retailers trained)	# of training events, # members trained, # of press releases / stories	Internal databases, and social media records	Each time events occur which is frequently
Electronics / Surveillance Equipment / vehicles / Investigative equipment purchased through Procurement process	All our intended purchases completed	LASD Fiscal process, MCB Ops to oversee and manage	Daily / on-going

Process evaluation includes data elements and activities that are inline with the goals and objectives of the ORCTF, and tangibly tracked through a correlated statistical timeline to determine the effectiveness of the ORCTF during the granting period. Investigative activities and Blitz Operations have a direct link to the addition of equipment and personnel needed to run investigations and operations. The number of arrests and number of cases referred for prosecution will be elevated as one of the outcome achievements. Followed by information sharing events that can be correlated to retail prevention. The evaluation factors that will be considered for the success of the task force will be the ORCTF's activities along with the total LASD statistics for all patrol stations to depict those actual crimes reported.

## Outcome Evaluation - Goals

**Goal #1:** Create a Retail Crimes Prevention Team for our proposed project, the “Organized Retail Theft Prevention Project”, ORCTF, that will focus on addressing the problems caused by organized retail theft, cargo theft, and catalytic converter theft in the communities we serve with the primary goal to reduce organized theft crimes.

**Objectives:** Begin the process of identifying a team of specialized investigators, supervisors/managers for grant management purposes and patrol personnel to assist investigators with enforcement. Utilize funding to obtain necessary equipment for assigned personnel to complete their duties and execute grant related objectives.

**Goal #2:** Deploy the team on a multi-year strategic plan that will expand to encompass all 23 Sheriff’s Patrol Stations and other areas of criminal activity with a nexus to Los Angeles County. This will allow us to become a force multiplier with other stakeholders creating an information sharing system to combat these crimes. Implement community outreach education and training for law enforcement personnel to utilize the best practices to combat organized crime.

**Objectives:** Expand on providing law enforcement services and multi-jurisdictional investigations into bad actors and organized crime groups by creating an information sharing system for stakeholders to share. Create a process of conducting surveys and on-going networking with the retailers and industry professionals to involve stakeholders in our fight against bad actors with the goal of reduction of organized theft crimes. Continue overall team management and efficiency, provide feedback and supportive paperwork to grant monitors.

**Goal #3:** Incorporate the use of technology by both private industry partners and LASD personnel to focus on prevention and security against organized theft crimes.

**Objectives:** Identify, acquire, and field the most updated technology designed to combat retail theft. Educate industry partners, LASD personnel, and other law enforcement agencies on the technological advancements in organized theft prevention. Provide financial audit report to BSCC by 06/01/27.

**Goal #4:** Effectively capture statistical data by collecting, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information associated with organized retail crimes.

**Objectives:** Analyze the data to draw conclusions on how to continue to effectively combat retail theft crimes.

## Outcome Evaluation Method and Design

Outcome	Definition	Data Source(s)	Frequency of Data Collection
Increase in Reported ORT cases from businesses / retailers to LASD	Increase in number of reported ORT, Cargo Theft incidents by the public and businesses to LASD	Case Management System	Each time an incident is reported, and proper report number drawn
Increase in ORCTF cases investigated	Making sure all ORT cases are being actively worked	Case management system	Each time a case comes to LASD attention
Improved information sharing between DA, law enforcement and local retailers	Increase in collaboration between agencies in gathering information and evidence to file ORT cases	Case management system	Each time a case is filed
Reduction in the number of ORT incidents around all LASD jurisdictions	Monitor RMS for all reported ORT cases to continue to bring the numbers down	Case management system / cooperation with victims	Each time a case is reported and presented to LASD and ORCTF
Increase in stolen property recovered and returned to victims and victim companies	Identify and recover stolen property on behalf of the victims of ORT crimes	Case management system	Each time a case is adjudicated, and legal authorization is in place
Increase in ORT prosecutions	Increases in the number of ORT cases that are prosecuted and convicted	Case management system	Each time a case is filed with a prosecutorial agency
Improved conviction rates for ORT cases	Increase in the number of ORT convictions in relation to the number of ORT cases filed.	Case management system	Each time a case is closed

## Project Logic Model

Goal Statement: Reduce organized retail crime, cargo theft and automobile/ automobile accessory theft and minimize associated economic losses to the retailers and businesses in Los Angeles County.

### Inputs

- Law Enforcement personnel are required to create specific teams
- Training for law enforcement, retailers, and public
- Communication tools and investigative law enforcement equipment needed (phones, radios, etc.)
- Current lack of equipment, i.e., need tactical vehicles for transportation and specialty investigations
- Funding for operational cost thankfully obtained with the awarded ORT grant

### Activities

- Formation of specialized ORCTF unit within the Sheriff's Department
- Training sessions for ORCTF team members on identification and investigation techniques
- Collaboration with retail industry partners to gather intelligence on organized retail crimes rings
- Conducting surveillance and undercover operations on various aspects of organized retail crimes
- Executing search warrants and making arrests
- Coordinating with other law enforcement agencies to share information and resources

### Outputs

- Number of ORCTF team members and retailers trained
- Number of investigations generated and identified
- Number of surveillance operations conducted
- Number of arrests made
- Number of cases referred for prosecution and filled

### Outcomes

- Short-Team (Months):** Increase awareness and understanding of how to combat organized retail crimes within the Sheriff's Department jurisdictions by LASD personnel.
- Medium-Term (Years):** Reduction in the number of organized retail crimes incidents
- Long-Term (Beyond Grant Cycle):** Decreased economic losses due of organized retail crime in Los Angeles County

### Impacts

- Strengthened partnerships between law enforcement and the retail industry
- Improved public safety and confidence in the local retail environment
- Enhanced deterrence of organized retail crime activities in the region

**This page was intentionally left blank.**