

## COMMUNICATION

**TO: LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL**

**File No. 12-1127-S1**

**FROM: COUNCILMEMBER MITCHELL ENGLANDER, CHAIR  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE relative to the status of the Police Department's fingerprint analysis backlog.

Recommendations for Council action:

RECEIVE and FILE Motion (Englander - Buscaino) instructing the Police Department to report relative to the status of the fingerprint analysis backlog, how the Department's plan maximizes available resources, and how incoming cases will be prioritized for analysis.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Not applicable.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

### SUMMARY:

On July 24, 2012, Council considered Motion (Englander - Buscaino) relative to the status of the Police Department's fingerprint analysis backlog. Motion states that a recent report has indicated that a shortage of fingerprint analysts in the Police Department has led to a backlog of untested fingerprint evidence, which in some cases may cause a delay of several months to analyze evidence. The Police Department is moving toward adopting a plan that will "ration" the testing capacity for fingerprint evidence in property crimes. The plan will provide each area station and specialized division a maximum of 10 cases per month which will receive prompt fingerprint analysis in these cases. The remaining cases will be added to a waiting list which will take longer to complete. Although the Department's plan may be the best available option, Motion movers believe that the current backlog will also likely increase as a result. Council referred Motion to the Public Safety Committee for consideration.

At the Public Safety Committee meeting held October 12, 2012, the Committee Chair discussed this matter with Police Department staff. Department staff stated that there are over 4,000 kits of backlogged fingerprint evidence for property cases. The 793 kits that still have investigative value will be prioritized for analysis. Fingerprints for violent crime and cold case homicide are analyzed. To reduce the backlog, the Department wants to fill vacant criminologist positions and obtain funding for overtime. The Committee Chair suggested using volunteers and delegating non-scientific tasks to other personnel. The Committee Chair recommended that Council receive and file Motion.

Respectfully submitted,

MITCHELL ENGLANDER, CHAIR  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

- NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS -

MEMBER	VOTE
ENGLANDER:	YES
PERRY:	ABSENT
BUSCAINO:	ABSENT
KREKORIAN:	ABSENT
ZINE:	ABSENT