

INTRADPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

BPC # 16-0047

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January 4, 2016  
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RECEIVED

JAN 27 2016

POLICE COMMISSIONER

M. M. Sepan 1/28/16

TO: The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: LOS ANGELES COUNTY FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. That the Board of Police Commissioners (Board) REVIEW and APPROVE the attached Fact Sheet on the impact of Los Angeles County Fingerprint Identification System (LAFIS).
2. That the Board TRANSMIT the attached Fact Sheet to the Los Angeles City Council Public Safety Committee.

DISCUSSION

At the request of the Los Angeles City Council and the Public Safety Committee meeting on October 21, 2015, the Technical Investigation Division of the Los Angeles Police Department has prepared the attached Fact Sheet. The Fact Sheet provides details of system issues associated with the LAFIS. These issues resulted in over 400 hours of LAFIS downtime between June and August 2015, which impacted the ability of the Latent Print Unit to launch searches of latent prints into this database thereby hampering efforts to identify possible suspects in both violent crime and property crime cases. The Fact Sheet identifies the LAFIS system issues encountered by the Latent Print Unit and the steps that have been taken to resolve the problems.

If you have any questions or require any additional information regarding this issue, please have your staff contact Police Administrator D'Anna Markley, Commanding Officer, Technical Investigation Division, at (213) 473-0630.

Respectfully,



CHARLIE BECK  
Chief of Police

BOARD OF  
POLICE COMMISSIONERS  
Approved February 2, 2016  
Secretary Maria Silva

Attachment

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

RECEIVED

JAN 27 2016

POLICE COMMISSIONER

December 31, 2015  
1.8

**TO:** Chief of Police

**FROM:** Chief of Detectives

**SUBJECT:** LOS ANGELES COUNTY FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

It is requested that the Chief of Police approve and transmit to the Board of Police Commissioners the Los Angeles County Fingerprint Identification (LAFIS) Fact Sheet.

As requested at the Public Safety Committee meeting on October 21, 2015, the Technical Investigation Division of the Los Angeles Police Department has prepared the enclosed Fact Sheet. The Fact Sheet provides details of system issues associated with the LAFIS. These issues resulted in over 400 hours of LAFIS downtime between June and August 2015, which impacted the ability of the Latent Print Unit to launch searches of latent prints into this database thereby hampering efforts to identify possible suspects in both violent crime and property crime cases. The Fact Sheet identifies the LAFIS system issues encountered by the Latent Print Unit and the steps that have been taken to resolve the problems.

If you have any questions or require any additional information regarding this issue, please have your staff contact Police Administrator D'Anna Markley, Commanding Officer, Technical Investigation Division, at (213) 473-0630.



KIRK J. ALBANESE, Deputy Chief  
Chief of Detectives

Attachment

## FACT SHEET

### IMPACT OF LAFIS SYSTEM ISSUES

December 31, 2015

**Issue.** On October 21, 2015, the Public Safety Committee of the City Council recommended approval of \$500,000 to address property crime latent print cases including cases that became backlogged due to system issues with the Los Angeles County Fingerprint Identification System (LAFIS). During the meeting, Committee members requested a written report from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) that detailed recent system issues with LAFIS and the actions performed by Latent Print Unit (LPU) personnel while the system was down.

**Background.** The LAFIS system, both hardware and software, is owned and operated by the County of Los Angeles. The LAPD utilizes this system along with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), and other smaller law enforcement agencies within the County of Los Angeles. The system administrator is the Los Angeles County Regional Identification System (LACRIS), which is staffed by the LASD. Oversight and funding is approved by the Remote Access Network (RAN) Board, which is established by the Penal Code, and funded through the California Department of Justice through criminal penalty assessments and a one-dollar fee on all vehicle registrations. The LAPD is a voting member of the RAN Board.

The current LAFIS system, a Cogent product, is approximately 13 years old. It houses over 20 million finger and palm prints. The RAN Board has recently voted to approve a new system, the Multimodal Biometric Identification System (MBIS), a NEC product. The LACRIS has estimated that this system will be implemented in the first quarter of 2017.

**Findings.** Beginning in mid-June 2015, the LAPD began to experience system problems and increased downtime. Between June 14 and August 8, 2015, the LAPD's LPU experienced over 400 hours of system downtime, impacting their ability to enter and launch LAFIS searches of latent prints recovered from both violent crime and property crime scenes. Much of the LAFIS downtime was due to the fact that it is an aging system which impacts the entire Los Angeles County; however, there have been specific issues that have only impacted the LPU.

The LAFIS interruptions to service have been attributed to the following:

- **Outdated server.** Each agency has a server(s) that acts as a gateway(s) to LAFIS. The current LAPD LAFIS server used by the LPU is 12 years old and is operating on outdated software, Windows Server 2000, which is no longer supported by Microsoft. An upgrade to the main LAFIS server in June 2015 resulted in severe service disruptions and approximately 400 hours of server downtime for the LPU. Although the system has stabilized, the operating efficiency has dramatically decreased. Since that time, LPU staff have experienced frequent, prolonged periods of sluggish system performance, increasing the time needed to log in, plot minutia, and launch searches.

## FACT SHEET

### IMPACT OF LAFIS SYSTEM ISSUES

December 31, 2015

- **Latent Print Unit queue.** The “queue” on agency servers consists of images that have been searched against the LAFIS database. The final step to register these images in the database is to technically review the work performed. Although a case can move forward prior to registering the images, the images remain in the queue until reviewed. After the system disruption noted above and due to the volume of searches conducted by the LAPD, the LPU’s server queue contained over 14,000 images. The LACRIS Helpdesk advised that the size of this queue could be contributing to the problems experienced by LAPD. In response, the LPU assigned several employees tasked with reducing the queue. By the end of August, the number of images was reduced by over 60 percent. The current queue is at 6,917 images. Efforts to further reduce the queue are ongoing and procedures have been put in place to ensure that the queue does not increase, such as purging cases out of statute from the system.

During the periods in which the LAFIS or the LPU server was down, LPU personnel that typically perform LAFIS searches were diverted to perform other duties. Primarily, staff were tasked with performing manual comparisons and/or verifications of latent fingerprint impressions that were previously searched in the LAFIS database. In addition, LPU analytical staff were diverted to the field to respond to requests for crime scene investigations. Requests for field investigations have increased since May of this year. The number of hours that analytical personnel have been diverted to cover the field has increased from an average of 131 hours to 324 hours per deployment period.

**Summary.** The ability to increase print case processing is contingent on LAFIS system stability. Managers from Technical Investigation Division (TID), who have oversight of the LPU, are involved in ongoing discussions with LACRIS regarding the continuing system issues. A quote for a new server for the LPU has been provided to LACRIS from Cogent. Funding for this server has been made an agenda item for the next RAN Board meeting in late January. However, even with RAN Board approval, this is not a quick fix. Cogent estimates it may take as much as four months to install the new server, which cannot begin until the County procurement process has been completed. In the meantime, TID management is working with LACRIS on alternative solutions to improve the performance of the existing LPU server, including off-loading or archiving data to an external storage device. To address a worst case scenario of another system failure, LACRIS is looking at the possibility of an alternate processing location which could be utilized by LPU personnel. Both TID management and the LPU will continue to monitor these issues and their possible impact on print case processing.

Prepared by:  
Technical Investigation Division