



NEVADA FIREARMS COALITION

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September 21, 2012

Donald G. Burnette, County Manager
500 S Grand Central Pky 6th Fl.
Las Vegas, NV 89155-1111

Mr. Burnette,

Thank you for your reply to our letter of August 16, 2012 requesting that you as County Manager initiate an audit of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Handgun Registration Unit. Based on the lack of justification for the program as provided by the Sheriff to Commissioner Collins' and former Commission Chair Reid in their requests for information on the Handgun Registration Unit, we agree with your determination to not audit the unit. The response indicates that the unit is not providing a significant service to the Citizens of Clark County. It is a program, however, that drains significant resources at a time when the Sheriff's budget is facing a severe shortfall. This shortfall is so severe that several programs have already been curtailed, and the Sheriff will be asking for more tax money to operate his department.

We agree that the Handgun Registration Unit and the registration requirements should be eliminated because the program is not providing cost-beneficial results. The reasons for its establishment are also outdated. Given that estimates based on the personnel costs of the civilian and sworn staffs assigned indicates an annual cost of as much as \$2,000,000.00, we think the Handgun Registration Unit should be dissolved. Costs savings should be directed towards programs directly benefiting Metro's service to its citizens such as hiring deputies.

In Commissioner Collins' May 29, 2012 letter to Sheriff Gillespie, he asked specific questions, but Sheriff Gillespie's responses were short and non-informative. For example:

Question 15. *How many handguns are seized each year as a result of failures to register?*
Answer: *We do not track firearms impounds by violation.*

These minimal responses cause us, as concerned citizens, to question how the Sheriff is in compliance with several Nevada statutes, to wit:

- NRS 179.118- Distribution of proceeds from forfeited property.

- NRS 179.119-Reports by law enforcement agencies that receive forfeited property or related proceeds; inclusion of such anticipated revenue in budget prohibited.
- NRS 202.340-Confiscation and disposition of dangerous weapons by law enforcement agencies.

These statutes are very specific regarding the seizure of firearms, their disposition, and requirements that any balances from such seizures are to be placed in the *special account established by the Metropolitan Police Committee of Fiscal Affairs pursuant to NRS. 179.1187*. These statutes require the Sheriff to keep specific records and make specific reports on certain firearms-related matters.

Comparing the responses to Commissioner Collins and the requirements of Nevada State Law there seems to be only two conclusions that a reasonable person can make: 1) The Sheriff is not complying with Nevada State Law, .or 2) The Sheriff has chosen to not provide Commissioner Collins or former Chairman Reid with the data they requested.

Either option is of concern to the citizens of this county, who are funding the operation of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and are subject to their enforcement programs.

As a result of the inadequate responses to Commissioner Collins' and former Chairman Reid's letters (which fail to establish the validity and efficacy of the Handgun Registration Unit), and your understandable reluctance to spend valuable audit resources on a program of dubious value, we conclude that there is no reasonable alternative other than to request of our County Commission and the Las Vegas City Council that Clark County Codes 12.04.110-Registration of pistols within seventy-two hours; 12.04.200-Registration of firearms capable of being concealed, and 12.04.210-Unlawful transfer of firearms capable of being concealed be repealed as soon as possible. The savings of these misdirected resources can be utilized by more high risk areas of METRO's operation.

Sincerely,

Don Turner, President
Nevada Firearms Coalition

cc: Clark County Board of County Commissioners
Las Vegas City Council