On February 16, 1962, a major step towards ultimate consolidation of the city jail system with that of the county was taken. Operations of the Department's Rehabilitation Center was transferred to the Los Angeles County Sheriff. This move was made possible by a change in state legislature shifting the responsibility for care of most sentenced prisoners to that agency. The consolidation of the jail resulted in an annual budget savings of $577,485.00, the elimination of 63 civilian positions, and the re-assignment of 49 officers to regular patrol duties. Additionally, the Welfare and Rehabilitation Division was dissolved and its remaining functions were assumed by the Jail Division.

The Department, with decreased strength and increased work load, was trying to balance deployment. LAPD extended one-man patrol operations into all geographical divisions in 1954. It was limited to daytime patrol, to increase police coverage. Only certain critical areas of Central and Newton were two-man units used on day watch. Due to a 398% increase in officer assaults, the Department was forced to re-establish two-man patrols on all watches in 1962.

Late on March 9, 1963, the two plainclothes officers, Ian Campbell and Karl Hettinger, stopped a pair of armed ex-convicts just north of Hollywood Boulevard on Gower. During the course of the officers’ investigation, one of the armed suspects was able to gain a tactical advantage over Campbell and demanded the surrender of both officers’ revolvers. After turning over their handguns to their captors, both officers were loaded at gunpoint into a maroon 1946 coupe and driven to a desolate area just beyond the base of the grapevine. After the four exited the vehicle, Campbell was shot in the face. Officer Hettinger, realizing his death was likewise imminent, fled into the darkness. Wayward shots were fired at Hettinger. Four additional shots were fired into Campbell, from his own service weapon. Campbell who was laying defenselessly on his back, died immediately. Hettinger evaded his captors and found refuge in a farmhouse where he notified the Kern County authorities. He provided key information that resulted in the arrest of both suspects. Almost immediately after the incident, the Department published its formal policy on weapon retention.

Beginning November 6, 1961, Los Angeles suffered three days of destructive bush fires. The Bel-Air fire destroyed 484 expensive homes and 21 other buildings along with 15,810 acres of brush in the Bel-Air, Brentwood, and Topanga Canyon neighborhoods.

On November 4, 1963, the Los Angeles City Council passed the necessary ordinance and the LAPD Motto, “To Protect and to Serve," was placed alongside the City Seal on the Department’s patrol cars.

The Baldwin Hills Dam disaster occurred on December 14, 1963, when the dam containing the Baldwin Hills Reservoir suffered a catastrophic failure and flooded the residential neighborhoods surrounding it. It began with signs of lining failure, followed by increasingly serious leakage through the dam at its east abutment. After three hours the dam breached, with a total release of 250 million US gallons, resulting in five deaths and the destruction of 277 homes. Vigorous rescue efforts averted a greater loss of life.