

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

August 2, 2024
14.2

TO: The Honorable Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief of Police

SUBJECT: GANG AND NARCOTICS DIVISION QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION
PROCESS AUDIT (AD NO. 24-002)

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Board of Police Commissioners REVIEW and APPROVE the attached Gang and Narcotics Division Qualification and Selection Process Audit.

DISCUSSION

Audit Division conducted the Gang and Narcotics Division Qualification and Selection Process Audit to evaluate compliance with Department policies and procedures.

If additional information is required, please contact Police Administrator Sharon Sargent, Commanding Officer, Audit Division, at (213) 486-8480.

Respectfully,



DOMINIC H. CHOI
Chief of Police

Attachment

**GANG AND NARCOTICS DIVISION
 QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS AUDIT
 Conducted by Audit Division
 2024**

OVERVIEW

Audit Division (AD) evaluated the competitive selection process for the Detective Bureau’s Gang and Narcotics Division (GND) in accordance with the Los Angeles Police Department’s (Department) policies and procedures as part of the Department’s Annual Audit Plan for Calendar Year 2024.

The GND’s overall compliance rate is summarized in Table No. 1.

Table No. 1 – Findings by Objective

Objective No.	Audit Objectives	Number Meeting Standards/ Evaluated	Percent Meeting Standards
1	Evaluation of Internal Controls Over Sworn Positions Selection Process		
	Commanding Officer’s Rationale for Justification of Selection	19/19	100%
2	Evaluation of Qualifications		
	Review of Selected Candidate’s Polygraph Examination and Background Investigation Reports	3/3	100%
3	Evaluation of Review Process		
	Review of Selected Candidate’s Disciplinary History Prior to Selection	19/19	100%

BACKGROUND

The City of Los Angeles uses a civil service system of employment and promotion, based on the principles of merit, fairness, and equal employment opportunities. Therefore, the Department is committed to maintaining a selection process that provides sworn and civilian employees the opportunity to be considered fairly for any assignments for which they meet the required qualifications. It is essential that employees know they are being given an equal opportunity to be considered for lateral, advanced paygrade, and coveted assignments. The most effective method for addressing these goals and thus eliminate discrimination in employment practices is to establish and follow job-related procedures for all phases of the selection process.

Gang and Narcotics Division’s mission is to disrupt violent criminal organizations, by targeting the manufacture, transportation, and sale of illicit drugs and the illegal sale and distribution of firearms. Officers are selected to GND positions through a competitive selection process. Positions are advertised on the Paygrade Advancement and Transfer Opportunities Notice, and the selection process follows the Department’s Employee Selection Guidelines. To be assigned to a GND Major Enforcement Section (MES), High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), Lab Squad, Cannabis Unit, LA Impact (narcotic units), Asset Forfeiture, or to a K9 unit assignment, officers shall submit a completed Confidential Financial Disclosure Face Sheet, Form 01.74.00, and undergo an additional background investigation

including a polygraph examination. The Department Confidential Informant Coordinator (DCIC) is only subject to a background investigation and a polygraph examination.

All selection packages are maintained and secured by restricted access at Gang and Narcotics Division.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The audit scope included sworn employees who received a paygrade advancement or lateral transfer to GND from Deployment Period (DP) 13, 2022, through DP 13, 2023. Audit Division tested the entire population.

Gang and Narcotics Division provided AD with a list of 37 sworn employees who received a paygrade advancement or lateral transfer to GND during the audit period. Auditors reviewed 19 of the 37 selection packages.¹

DETAILED FINDINGS

Objective No. 1 – Evaluation of Internal Controls Over Sworn Positions Selection Process

Commanding Officer’s Rationale for Justification of Selection

Criteria

Department Employee Selection Guidelines, dated January 9, 2013, Section VIII, *Making the Selection*, Subsection B, *Selection*, states:

“For all selections, the commanding officer or officer in charge must ensure that a written rationale for selecting the candidate(s) above all others is prepared. Detailed comments, as to the specific job-related factors setting this candidate apart, shall be included. Depending on individual Office, Bureau, or Group policy, this document is often in the form of a 15.2, Intradepartmental Correspondence, from the commanding officer to the bureau head or other manager responsible for final approval of the selection. In the absence of an Office, Bureau, or Group policy, the minimum requirement is that a memorandum “to file” be prepared and signed by the commanding officer. In any case, the document should be retained with the final selection package (see Section VIII. D).”

Audit Procedures

Auditors reviewed each of the 19 selection packages and evaluated the Intradepartmental Correspondence, Form 15.02.00 (Form 15.2), to determine if the commanding officer’s (CO’s) rationale was included in the package and if it contained insight and justification to support the final selection. The Department met the standard for this objective if the selection package contained a written rationale with insight and justification to support the final selection.

¹ The remaining 18 not reviewed were lateral transfers or return to work following being injured on duty.

Findings

Each of the 19 selection packages (100 percent) met the standard for this objective.

Objective No. 2 – Evaluation of Qualifications

Review of Selected Candidate’s Polygraph Examination and Background Investigation Reports

Criteria

Narcotic Division Order No. 3, dated February 10, 2000, *Guidelines for the Completion of Background Package for Narcotic Division Applicants*, states:

“Conduct a background investigation of each applicant and shall consist of the following:

- *Completion of a **typed** ND background package; and,*
- *Polygraph examination.”*

Audit Procedures

Auditors reviewed the Selection Packages to determine if the polygraph examination and the additional background investigation reports were included. The Department met the standard for this objective if the polygraph examination and the additional background investigation reports were included in the selection packages.

Findings

Each of the three selected positions (100 percent) met the standard for this objective.
(See Other Related Matters)

Objective No. 3 – Evaluation of Review Process

Review of Selected Candidate’s Disciplinary History Prior to Selection

Criteria

Human Resources Bureau Notice, dated March 29, 2001, *Paygrade Advancement and Lateral Advanced Paygrade Transfer Procedures*, states:

“The Intradepartmental Correspondence shall indicate that the commanding officer has reviewed and completed an analysis of the selected employee’s TEAMS report, with particular emphasis on the employee’s disciplinary history. This information is provided in the new TEAMS classification screen entitled, “Final Selection by C/O; Transfer...”

“Commanding officers shall indicate that they have contacted Internal Affairs Group regarding pending personnel complaints that may not have been included on the TEAMS report and shall indicate that they have addressed all issues regarding personnel complaints. Commanding officers shall also explain the reason(s) why the employee was selected should there be issues, such as discipline, on the TEAMS report.”

Audit Procedures

Auditors evaluated the Form 15.2 to determine whether a review and analysis of the employee’s disciplinary history was completed. The Department met the standard for this objective if the selection package contained a completed Form 15.2 by the CO.

Findings

Each of the 19 selection packages (100 percent) met the standard for this objective.

Other Related Matters

1. Gang and Narcotic Division currently uses Narcotic Division Order No. 3, dated February 10, 2000, *Guidelines for the Completion of Background Package for Narcotic Division Applicants.*

On January 4, 2009, Gang and Operations Support Division (GOSD) merged with Narcotics Division (ND) to create Gang and Narcotics Division. However, the Department did not update the Policy after GND was created to dictate selection process and background investigation requirements. (See Recommendation No. 1)

2. The audit also uncovered GND’s 2021 Integrity Assurance Plan that stated:

*"BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION – A complete and accurate background investigation of **all** GND and NED candidates, sworn and civilian, contributes to improved divisional integrity. Personnel who have questionable backgrounds, excessive personnel complaints, indebtedness, substance abuse, and improper past association with known narcotic suspects and users are disqualified for assignment to GND and NED. A polygraph examination is a part of the background investigation. Candidates are required to voluntarily submit to an examination."*

As a result of the merger between ND and GOSD, not all GND units are subject to the polygraph examination. The Units whose primary investigative responsibility is not narcotics are exempt from polygraph examinations and financial disclosure requirements.

If Audit Division had used GND’s 2021 Integrity Assurance Plan as the audit criteria for the polygraph examination requirement, the compliance rate would have been 15 percent. The discrepancy was brought to the attention of GND, and the information has since been updated in GND’s 2024 Integrity Assurance Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Gang and Narcotics Division review and update the Narcotics Division Order No. 3, dated February 10, 2000, *Guidelines for the Completion of Background Package for Narcotics Division Applicants*, and ensure they are consistent with current organizational structure, background and polygraph examination requirements.
[Objective No. 2 and Other Related Matters No. 1].

ACTIONS TAKEN/MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE

Audit Division submitted a copy of this report to Gang and Narcotics Division who was in general agreement with the audit findings.

APPENDIX I

Audit Division Contact: Police Performance Auditor III, Dalia Tajirian, Serial No. N6025
(213) 486-8355 or N6025@lapd.online



DALIA TAJIRIAN
Project Manager, Section B
Audit Division



SERGIO SAIS
Officer-In-Charge, Section B
Audit Division



SHARON SARGENT, Police Administrator
Commanding Officer
Audit Division

INTRADEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

July 15, 2024
8.4

TO: Commanding Officer, Audit Division

FROM: Commanding Officer, Gang and Narcotics Division

SUBJECT: GANG AND NARCOTICS DIVISION QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION
PROCESS AUDIT

Gang and Narcotics Division has received and reviewed the Gang and Narcotics Division (GND) Qualification and Selection Process Audit completed by Audit Division. The Commanding Officer is in general agreement with the findings.

As indicated in the audit report, GND updated the Division's Integrity Assurance Plan in June 2024. Additionally, as per Audit Division's recommendation, GND is currently reviewing the Narcotics Division Order No. 3, dated February 10, 2000, *Guidelines for the Completion of Background Package for Narcotics Division Applicants*, and will update to ensure it is consistent with current organizational structure, background and polygraph examination requirements.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact Detective II Moises Ramirez, Gang and Narcotics Division, Staff Services, at (213) 486-0810.



AHMAD ZAREKANI, Captain
Commanding Officer
Gang and Narcotics Division