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LETTER TO COMMISSION
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TO: Mayor Matti Herrera Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: March 1, 2010

SUBJECT: **2009 ANNUAL PART I UNIFORM CRIME REPORT**

This letter to the Commission is to inform the Mayor and City Commission of the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) statistics for Part I Crimes as indexed annually, for calendar year 2009. Part I Crimes include Homicide, Forcible Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny and Motor Vehicle Theft.

During calendar year 2009, the City of Miami Beach experienced a 1.52% increase in total Part I Crimes reported compared to 2008. This increase is significantly lower than the 3.69% increase from calendar year 2007 to 2008. This modest increase in overall crime is directly attributed to the 2.73% increase in non-violent crimes which include Burglary, Larceny and Auto Theft. However, what is remarkable is the **-8.48%** decline in violent crimes due to the significant decrease of -18% in Rapes and -17.39% in Aggravated Assaults.

Larcenies, defined as the *unlawful taking, carrying or riding away of property from the possession, or constructive possession, of another person*, continue to drive up the overall crime picture. Due to concerted proactive enforcement efforts, the rate of increase in larcenies declined from 9.58% in 2008 to 6.88% in 2009. Contributing to this rate of decline is the 9% increase in the number of adult larceny arrests from 881 to 962 in 2008. Auto Thefts declined by an impressive -16.04% from 2008. This decline in auto thefts is due in part to the Auto Theft Squad's concentration on subjects involved in organized auto thefts, coupled with innovative covert operations to include the effective use of seized vehicles for decoys and surveillance purposes.

The chart below depicts that **4 of the seven** Part I UCR categories **declined** from calendar year 2008:

Type of Crime	2008	2009	Percent Difference from 2008
Homicide	6	7	16.67%
Rape	50	41	-18.00%
Robbery	405	421	3.95%
Aggravated Assault	529	437	-17.39%
Total Violent Crime	990	906	-8.48%
Burglary	1,279	1,207	-5.63%
Larceny	6,144	6,567	6.88%
Motor Vehicle Theft	792	665	-16.04%
Total Property Crime	8,215	8,439	2.73%
Total Part I UCR Crimes	9,205	9,345	1.52%

In addition, the following are highlights of some of the proactive crime prevention initiatives and noteworthy case investigations by the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD) during 2009.

Proactive Patrol Initiatives:

- In an effort to stop Beach Thefts and related crimes, the Anti-Theft Beach Operation was implemented by the RDA Squads. The RDA Squads working closely with the Crime Analysts determined the times when and locations where the thefts were occurring. Armed with this information they conducted high visibility patrols combined with covert surveillance from life guard stands. To further enhance their effectiveness these officers dressed as lifeguards, utilizing undercover vehicles and bicycles from the property room to further fit the part. This innovative and proactive enforcement approach led to 19 felony and 16 misdemeanor arrests.
- Operation "DROP ZONE" was conducted from October 26 to December 21, to address community concerns related to quality of life issues. Emphasis was placed on traffic infractions in school zones, drivers under the influence of alcohol, sweeps of the beach to deter theft, as well as enhancing security for holiday shoppers. This initiative led to 62 felony and 271 misdemeanor arrests, in addition to 160 Traffic Citations issued and 160 Field Interview Cards completed.
- During December, the City Center RDA Squad conducted an enforcement initiative in the area of Lincoln Road. This initiative targeted crimes such as, urinating in public and public drunkenness. Working closely with merchants and workers in the area, they implemented innovative community policing strategies which led to 11 felony and 40 misdemeanor arrests. As a result of their efforts, this Squad received the Unit Commendation.

Investigative Highlights:

- Of the 7 homicides committed in 2009, all subjects have either been arrested or identified making for a 100 percent clearance rate. This is due to the team approach and effective use of crime scene evidence, crime analysis and good old fashioned effective interviews of subjects and witnesses.
- One particular strangling death homicide of an adult male committed by a subject who was also responsible for kidnapping of an elderly woman and her son at knifepoint stands out as exceptionally vicious. In this investigation, detectives worked tirelessly in identifying the subject who had the clear potential to harm or kill again. Once the subject was positively identified he was apprehended. Had it not been for the tenacious actions of these detectives, this desperate subject would have killed again.
- The Auto Theft Squad consistently made several high profile arrests for organized auto theft. One case in particular is worth detailing and speaks to the tenacity of this Squad. This investigation determined that a subject utilized "Craigslist", an electronic buy and sell forum, to steal autos. During the last quarter of 2009, this subject was responsible for stealing three vehicles by contacting the victim owners and buying the vehicles with fraudulent checks. This subject would also sell a vehicle via Craigslist, take the cash, and in turn outright steal the vehicle. Following up on several leads detectives were able to apprehend the subject and charge him with three counts of Auto Theft, one count of Organized Fraud and one count of Dealing in Stolen Property.
- The Robbery Squad continues to take violent subjects into custody after methodical investigations. An excellent example of this, involved the arrest of three subjects for the armed robbery of two patrons outside a restaurant in the 4100 block of Royal Palm Avenue. The subjects confronted the victims at gun point and demanded their property. One of the victims resisted and was subsequently pistol whipped by one of the subjects. The subjects then fled with the victim's cellular telephone and other property. After receiving a court order authorizing the tracking of the cellular telephone, detectives were able to approximate the location of the subjects. Their investigation led to the arrests and recovery of the weapon used in the robbery. As a result of their investigative know how and their unwavering pursuit, these detectives took three violent subjects off the street.

Although Part I UCR crime increased by a modest 1.52% from 2008 to 2009, the -8.48% decrease in violent crimes, coupled with decreases in Burglaries (-5.63%) and Auto Thefts (-16.04%) for the same period has greater significance. However, in an effort to maintain crime rates at or near national trends, and ensure the City of Miami Beach a safer place to live, the MBPD will continue the commitment to take proactive crime prevention measures, utilize effective use of crime analysis, technology and crime scene processing.

JMG/CN/RAM/MG