

Harris County Sheriff's Department
2008/2009 PAY RAISE
PROPOSAL

PROPOSED BY: SHERIFF ADRIAN GARCIA &
PAY RAISE COMMITTEE 2008

1200 BAKER STREET
HOUSTON, TX 77002

2008 / 2009 PAY RAISE PLAN

HARRIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

INTRODUCTION

In 2008, at the direction of (then) Chief Deputy Mike Smith, Richard Newby, President, Harris County Deputies' Organization, Joe Freeman, Past President of the Harris County Fraternal Order of Police, and Lieutenant Lynwood Moreau (collectively "the committee") conducted this study of comparable police agencies that compete with the Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) for qualified applicants. In 2009, at the direction of the Garcia administration, James Phillips, President of the Afro-American Deputy Sheriff's League (AASDL) and Alberto Rivera, President of the Mexican American Sheriff's Organization (MASO) were added to the committee. Major considerations in this study include these facts:

- A nationwide shortage of qualified police, detention, communications, and nurse applicants exists.
- A high rate of attrition and a grave manpower shortage at the Harris County Sheriff's Office are forcing Harris County to pay inordinate sums of overtime.
- Forced overtime is a leading cause of employees leaving the Harris County Sheriff's Office, thus exacerbating the attrition and staffing problems.
- Other area police agencies, particularly the Houston and Austin Police Departments, offer better salaries and hiring bonuses to attract qualified applicants. Those qualified applicants include former and current Harris County Sheriff's Office employees.
- Studies show that younger police applicants, those born after 1980, the group most attractive to police agencies today are:
 - less interested in police careers than people born in earlier generations;
 - less loyal to the employer—thus more likely to leave for a more attractive offer;
 - more interested in the benefits an employer has to offer them; and
 - more likely to conduct Internet research to find which agency has the most to offer.¹
- Other competing agencies collectively bargain with their employees. Many of the existing contracts are about to expire; thus, many of the salaries listed in this December 2008 study will be different in the near future.

LAW ENFORCEMENT PAY COMPARISON / LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPERVISORS

Leaders in Harris County law enforcement should continuously ensure that we are providing professional services to our community. Ensuring that our employees have incentives will encourage them to promote. Currently senior employees and employees in specialized assignments, have no financial incentive to promote. In fact, specialized employees would actually see up to a 9.6% reduction in salary with a promotion; Accident Investigator/CSI-I to Sergeant III (Arguably some of the best problem solvers and hardest working people in the organization). For this reason alone, many senior employees, including senior sergeants and lieutenants, have elected not to pursue a promotion due to the lack of financial compensation. Typically there is a substantial pay increase to compensate for the added responsibility and the loss of days off, shift, vacation and holiday seniority.

¹ Hicks, Dr. Rick and Kathy, *Boomers, Xers, and other Strangers* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale Publishing) 271-286.

What is an acceptable minimum salary increase for a promotion? In 1994, the Hay Group advised that the average salary promotion increase for 1990 was 12%. In 1999, Lazerar advised that the average salary promotion increase was 14%. Automatic Data Processing, Inc. (ADP) reports that there is an 8.9-11.4% salary increase for promotions. In 2005, a survey by WorldatWork revealed a salary increase of 7.7-11.4% for promotions. While there is certainly more information and opinions concerning this topic, it seems to be the accepted opinion that most individuals expect a salary increase that differentiates them from their previous position. If we take into consideration that with each rank ascension the employee's responsibility increases, it is understandable that employees expect and deserve financial compensation when promoted. In order to encourage employees to take on this additional responsibility, we should provide an appropriate salary increase. At a minimum, an employee should receive a 5% salary increase when promoting from the highest tier of one rank to the lowest tier of the next higher rank. This would eliminate the possibility of supervisory employees, who have a greater span of responsibility and control, from receiving less pay than their subordinates.

The committee recommends adjusting scales to ensure that the lowest paid supervisor in any classification earns 5% more than the highest paid supervised employee. The benefits include:

1. Employees are encouraged to promote.
2. Competition for promotion is increased.
3. A correlation between responsibilities and financial compensation increases.
4. Supervisors are ensured that they receive more compensation than their subordinates.
5. Retention of employees is aided.
6. Recruitment of employees is ensured.

FLSA EXEMPTION

Though Harris County Sheriff's Office lieutenants and captains are "non-exempt" civil service employees, they are considered "exempt" for purposes of the Fair Labor Standards Act and, as such, are not eligible for paid overtime. For that reason, many sergeants who are eligible for promotion to lieutenant will not take the promotional test, and some that have tested have declared that they will not accept a promotion because of the additional money they now make in overtime that would be unavailable if they were promoted. Additionally, lieutenants and captains at the Houston Police Department and most other agencies are not considered FLSA exempt. For this reason, the committee recommends that the county make lieutenants and captains FLSA non-exempt.

CONCLUSION

By creating a competitive pay scale for supervisory personnel, we can encourage our employees to promote and share their knowledge, skills and experience with others. Furthermore, a competitive pay scale demonstrates that employees will be financially compensated for the additional responsibilities that accompany a promotion. In conclusion, it will greatly aid in recruitment, retention, promotional competition and increased morale.

LAW ENFORCEMENT PAY COMPARISON / FIRST LINE PERSONNEL

In an attempt to compete with other agencies, the committee sought to discover what other comparable agencies in the state are paying their officers. We met first with Houston Police Officers' Union President Gary Blankenship to find what progress, if any, has been made in their negotiations toward their next contract. He advised their contract negotiations had not yet started. However, he stated he hosted a meeting with the presidents of the Austin, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Dallas, and El Paso unions to discuss pay issues and had collected pay scales and other data from them, and shared that data with the committee. Blankenship stated that in every meeting he had with Mayor White and Chief Hurtt, they raised the issue of their inability to hire new personnel. The Houston Police Department's difficulty in hiring will be a major factor in the collective bargaining process in 2009. The Houston Police Department is our largest, closest, and foremost recruiting competitor. Since Houston competes with Austin, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Dallas, and El Paso, and since those are the agencies to which they compare themselves, we also used these agencies for peace officer comparisons.

MONTHLY BASE-PAY COMPARISONS²

Department	Entry-Level	Mid-Range	Top-Range
Houston Police Department	\$3,154	\$4,026	\$4,863
Austin Police Department	\$4,134	\$5,479	\$6,712
San Antonio Police Department	\$3,195	\$4,723	\$5,010
Fort Worth Police Department	\$3,838	\$4,706	\$5,777
El Paso Police Department	\$2,815	\$3,772	\$4,592
Dallas Police Department	\$3,474	\$4,432	\$5,388
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$3,386	\$4,224	\$4,982

These salaries used as base comparisons are consistent with other agencies in the area that advertised in *The Blues*, a monthly newspaper distributed to all police officers in Harris and contiguous counties and most of Texas. The February 2009 edition of *The Blues* contained these ads:

- Alvin Police Department: Starting minimum salary \$36,712, with five years prior experience, \$42,600.
- La Marque Police Department: Starting minimum salary \$36,490, with five years prior experience, \$41,868.
- U.S. Border Patrol: \$70,000 within three years. "Change your call sign, not your calling."
- Missouri City Police Department: Salary negotiable, minimum starting salary \$42,000
- Bellaire Police Department: Starting minimum salary \$44,327; after six months \$45,878.

² These are 2008 figures.

PAY COMPARISON / DETENTION OFFICERS

In 2006 the Harris County Sheriff's Office devised an ambitious plan to hire more detention officers to staff the jails so sworn peace officers could be transferred from the jail to patrol and to other enforcement duties. That plan failed to produce anywhere near the desired number of detention officers. The salary offered to law enforcement deters individuals from pursuing a long term detention officer position. Most indicate they would rather pursue a law enforcement career due to the increased salary and career opportunities. Harris County's Detention Officers received a significant pay increase two years ago, and the Harris County Civil Service Commission has created a promotional process that will go into place in 2009 (25 candidates passed that test and are now eligible to promote). Nevertheless, the HCSO continues to attract low numbers of qualified applicants for Detention Officer positions needed.

MONTHLY BASE PAY COMPARISON³

Department	Entry-Level	Mid-Range	Top-Range
Dallas County Sheriff's Office	\$2,700	\$3,295	\$3,779
Tarrant County Sheriff's Office	\$2,486	\$2,797	\$3,100
Travis County Sheriff's Office	\$3,228	\$3,731	\$4,454
Travis County Sheriff's Office (Sr. Detention Officers)	\$3,508	\$4,056	\$4,841
El Paso County Sheriff's Office	\$3,225	\$3,944	\$4,835
Bexar County Sheriff's Office	\$2,244	\$2,840	\$3,139
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office	\$3,538	Unknown	\$4,634
Cook County Sheriff's Office	\$3,667	Negotiated on individual basis	Negotiated on individual basis
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$2,674	\$3,147	\$3,749

DETENTION OFFICER PROPOSED

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
DO VI	Entry	\$2,674	\$2,807	\$2,974	\$3,062	\$3154
DO V	After 1 year	\$2,915	\$3,061	\$3,214	\$3,310	\$3409
DO IV	After 2 years	\$3,147	\$3,333	\$3,500	\$3,605	\$3713
DO III	After 3 years	\$3,367	\$3,535	\$3,712	\$3,816	\$3930
DO II	After 6 years	\$3,570	\$3,748	\$3,935	\$4,052	\$4174
DO I	After 8 years	\$3,749	\$3,936	\$4,133	\$4,257	\$4385
Senior D.O.	After 12 years + advanced certificate	New category	\$4,199	\$4,409	\$4,541	\$4677
D.O. Sergeant			\$4958	\$5206	\$5466	\$5739

³ The Austin, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Dallas, and El Paso Police Departments do not have "Detention Officers", so we had to find County agencies for comparison. The Los Angeles County Jail is the largest in the United States; the Cook County (Illinois) Jail is the second largest; and the Harris County Jail is third, thus the comparison to these agencies outside Texas.

PAY COMPARISON / MEDICAL STAFF

Like peace officers, Registered nurses (RNs) are in short supply across the United States and the training facilities cannot keep up with demand. Today there are more than 100,000 RN vacancies in the United States. Nursing literature predicts that the nursing shortage will be acute by the year 2010, and the shortage will reach 1 million by 2020.⁴ The Harris County Sheriff's Office already has to depend on nursing agencies to provide nurses to take care of the day-to-day medical needs of the inmates. The HCSO has an additional problem that its "patients" in the county jail are part of the criminal element and present a constant threat of danger, and other working conditions are also less favorable.

The committee spoke with nursing staff from local hospitals and recommends the following:

- Starting salaries commensurate with experience
 - LVN
 - RN
 - Prior experience
- Security / safety concerns (hazard pay)
- Shift differential (typically \$3 - \$4 a hour)
- Weekend Pay (typically \$1 an hour)
- Paid parking
- Increase salaries
- Training opportunities (LVN to RN)
- Tuition assistance or reimbursement
 - Hermann pays \$7,500 per semester
 - Bayshore pays \$5,000 per year
- Varying shift opportunities (12 hour shifts)
- Education Pay
 - Associate Nursing Degree
 - Bachelor Nursing Degree
 - Certified Corrections Health Care Provider

- Pay incentives for nurses with a BSN, CCHCP, or AJA certification.

⁴ E.g., see "Seeking Real Solutions to the Nursing Shortage: Increasing education capacity gets at the root of the problem," American Journal of Nursing, October 2008, Vol 108, No. 10.

LVN & RN CURRENT / PROPOSED PAY RAISE PROPOSAL

Rank	Current	
	Hourly	Monthly
R.N. (ENTRY)	\$30.17	\$5,229
R.N. (AFTER 4 YEARS)	\$32.98	\$5,716
R.N. (AFTER 7 YEARS)	\$34.86	\$6,042
R.N. (AFTER 10 YEARS)	\$35.80	\$6,205
L.V.N. (ENTRY)	\$22.69	\$3,932
L.V.N. (AFTER 2 YEARS)	\$23.98	\$4,156
L.V.N. (AFTER 4 YEARS)	\$25.25	\$4,376
L.V.N. (AFTER 6 YEARS)	\$26.42	\$4,579
L.V.N. (AFTER 8 YEARS)	\$27.58	\$4,780

RN MONTHLY BASE PAY COMPARISON

Hospital	Entry-Level	Mid-Range	Top-Range
LBJ Hospital	\$3,960	\$5,201	\$6,364
Ben Taub Hospital	\$4,264	Unknown	\$6,104
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$5,229	\$5,716	\$6,205
UTMB	\$3,484	\$5,266	\$7,627

LVN MONTHLY BASE PAY COMPARISON

Hospital	Entry-Level	Mid-Range	Top-Range
LBJ Hospital	\$2,483	\$3,168	\$3,853
Ben Taub Hospital	\$2,483	Unknown	\$3,358
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$3,932	\$4,376	\$4,780
UTMB	\$2,427	\$3,033	\$4,360

LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSES / PROPOSED

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
LVN	ENTRY	\$3,932	\$4,129	\$4,335	\$4,552	\$4,719
	AFTER 2 YEARS	\$4,156	\$4,363	\$4,581	\$4,810	\$5,050
	AFTER 4 YEARS	\$4,376	\$4,595	\$4,825	\$5,066	\$5,319
	AFTER 6 YEARS	\$4,579	\$4,808	\$5,048	\$5,300	\$5,565
	AFTER 8 YEARS	\$4,780	\$5,019	\$5,270	\$5,533	\$5,810

REGISTERED NURSES / PROPOSED

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
RN	ENTRY	\$5,229	5,490	\$5,764	\$6,052	\$6,355
	AFTER 2 YEARS	\$5,716	6,001	\$6,301	\$6,605	\$6,935
	AFTER 7 YEARS	\$6,042	6,344	\$6,661	\$6,994	\$7,344
	AFTER 10 YEARS	\$6,205	6,515	\$6,841	\$7,183	\$7,542

PAY COMPARISON / COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS

The compensation package available to applicants who might want to pursue a career as a communications officer is insufficient to attract or retain enough qualified applicants. Like pilots who receive expensive training in the United States Air Force then move to private airlines to earn more money, police-trained dispatchers are in demand in private industry that is willing to pay more to attract and retain well-trained employees. Turnover and competition for dispatchers from other agencies is so great that the committee, working with Captain Nancy Hennessy, had a difficult time getting the salary ranges from other competing agencies.

The committee and Captain Hennessy believes there are several changes needed to stop the attrition drain on Communications. The job responsibilities of a “call-taker” and a “dispatcher” are quite different.⁵ New employees on the job are first taught to receive and process in-coming calls, and that is their first assignment. “Call-takers” take a lot of guff from the public, but their jobs are far less demanding and less stressful than “dispatchers” who must multi-task during tense situations, and whose actions can and often do affect the safety of the deputies that depend on them. For these reasons, the committee recommends a “radio” incentive for those communications officers that take on that added responsibility.

The committee also recommends a new classification of Emergency Numbers Professional (ENP).⁶ ENP is a professional certification that requires particular training, an exam⁷ similar or analogous to the TCLEOSE test, ten years minimum experience, and admission by the NENA certification committee⁸. The Harris County Sheriff's Office only has one ENP; the Houston Police Department has none; there are only 91 in Texas.

Like Patrol and Detentions that have Field Training Officers (FTO) and Detention Training Officers (DTO), communications also has Communications Training Officers (CTO) that go through a selection process and are trained to be on the job trainers. CTOs go through an extensive training program that utilizes skilled dispatchers with a minimum of two years of experience, possess training in all areas of the operation, pass a written test, and sit for an oral review board before they are allowed to conduct on-the-job training, and are then responsible for the actions of the trainees during the training periods. But where FTOs receive \$175 a month for their efforts, CTOs only receive \$150. The committee recommends the CTOs receive the same incentives as the other employees.

Finally, there currently is no incentive for Communications Officers to seek the required training to attain intermediate and advanced status. Accordingly, the committee recommends recognizing and offering an incentive to Communications Officers that take the training and have the time in grade to attain Intermediate and Advanced certification offered by TCLEOSE.

⁵ The term “Communications Officers” or “COs” is used to describe “call takers” and “dispatchers”.

⁶ This new classification would also have to be approved by the Civil Service Commission.

⁷ The first test for ENP is \$475; subsequent tests to maintain ENP status are \$395 every four years, the cost of which is borne by the person testing.

⁸ For additional information on NENA and certification testing go to NENA.org.

CURRENT / PROPOSED PAY RAISE PROPOSAL

Rank	Current	
	Hourly	Monthly
Harris County Sheriff's Office C.O. VI	\$15.43	\$2,674
Harris County Sheriff's Office C.O. V	\$16.82	\$2,915
Harris County Sheriff's Office C.O. IV	\$18.16	\$3,147
Harris County Sheriff's Office C.O. III	\$19.43	\$3,367
Harris County Sheriff's Office C.O. II	\$20.60	\$3,570
Harris County Sheriff's Office C.O. I	\$21.62	\$3,747

MONTHLY BASE PAY COMPARISON

Department	Entry-Level	Mid-Range	Top-Range
Houston Police Department	\$1,520	\$2,092	\$2,664
Austin Police Department	\$2,486	\$2,797	\$3,100
San Antonio Police Department	\$2,117	\$2,677	\$2,872
Fort Worth Police Department	\$2,503	\$4,087	\$4,729
El Paso Police Department	\$2,371	Unknown	\$3,653
Dallas Police Department 911 Call Taker Trainee	\$2,183	\$2,668	\$3,228
Dallas Police Department 911 Call Taker	\$2,893	\$3,578	\$4,330
Dallas Police Department Senior 911 Call Taker	\$3,602	\$4,489	\$5,432
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$2,674	\$3,147	\$3,747

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS / PROPOSED

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
CO VI	ENTRY	\$2,674	\$2,900	\$3,045	\$3,197	\$3,357
CO V	AFTER 1 YEAR	\$2,915	\$3,061	\$3,214	\$3,375	\$3,544
CO IV	AFTER 2 YEARS	\$3,174	\$3,333	\$3,499	\$3,674	\$3,858
CO III	AFTER 3 YEARS	\$3,367	\$3,535	\$3,712	\$3,898	\$4,093
CO II	AFTER 6 YEARS	\$3,570	\$3,748	\$3,935	\$4,132	\$4,338
CO I	AFTER 8 YEARS	\$3,747	\$3,934	\$4,130	\$4,337	\$4,554
SR. CO	AFTER 3 YEARS + ENP	\$4121	\$4,327	\$4,543	\$4,770	\$4,998

INCENTIVE PAY COMPARISONS / ALL PERSONNEL

PARKING

The Harris County Sheriff's Office is the only police agency in the survey—possibly in the state and certainly in this area—where employees are required to pay to park their own vehicles.⁹ When deciding whether to continue their career with the Harris County Sheriff's Office or move to one of the area agencies, the constant rising cost of parking is a major consideration. Parking in the downtown Criminal Justice Complex is expensive, particularly for those employees that earn less than \$20 an hour. As of February 1, 2009 these are the fees charged in commercial lots.

- \$3 per day in the 1300 block of Baker
- \$4 per day in the Credit Union facility at Franklin and Austin
- \$5 per day in the 700 block of San Jacinto
- \$8 per day in the 1300 block of Commerce (before 11:00 AM)
- \$10 per day in the 100 block of Austin

Sheriff Garcia has attempted to ameliorate that problem by getting permission from a property owner approximately one mile from the Criminal Justice Complex for deputies to park there, but that created an additional transportation problem and the half-hour it sometimes takes to move to and from that lot. For these reasons the committee recommends county-provided parking for employees in the downtown Criminal Justice Complex.

SUPERVISORY TRAINING

Second only to recruiting, Sheriff Garcia has placed an emphasis on training. A decade ago supervisors stood in line hoping for the opportunity to attend the FBI Academy or the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas (LEMIT), but today it is difficult to get supervisors to commit to take these classes because, among other things, it requires students to be away from home for weeks at a time, and there is no financial incentive. Arguably, the majority of people who attend this training do so only to make themselves more attractive to future employers. Accordingly, the committee recommends creating a new incentive to encourage supervisors (lieutenants and above) to undergo this training.

CERTIFIED DIVER INCENTIVE

Possibly because there are only four of them, certified divers were overlooked when previous committees recommended incentives for deputies who undergo specialized training and perform specialized law enforcement duties, but their training and the need for their services should not be overlooked. To become a certified HCSO diver, a deputy must, at minimum, have an advanced dive certification from the National Association of Underwater Instructors, Professional Association of Dive Instructors, YMCA or equivalent nationally recognized certifying agency to get a seat in the police diver course. The diver must complete at least the basic police diver course and pass other skills tests to be a member of the dive team. Police divers

⁹ During this study the committee heard that a few HPD officers that work in the City Hall complex are required to pay parking but receive a stipend to off-set the cost. We were not able to verify whether that was accurate.

are routinely called upon to recover deceased persons, vehicles and other evidence from the water, and are always on-call for that purpose. For this reason, the committee recommends that certified police divers who are members of the dive team receive a \$250 per month incentive.

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY OFFICER

Like the diver incentives, Fire and Life Safety Officers were overlooked because there are only three of them. To qualify for that position, the employee must be an arson investigator and that requires him or her to be a peace officer and have a minimum of 478 class-room hours in basic structural fire-fighting, 90 hours of Arson investigation (including cause and detection), 40 hours of TCLEOSE Instructor Development, 24 hours in Nation Fire Protection Association Fire Safety training, 40 hours of NIMS fire-fighting training, 24 hours training in the Americans with Disabilities Act, and be OSHA-COSS certified. For these reasons, the committee recommends an incentive for these certified individuals.

FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS

When we requested and the commissioners court granted incentive pay for Field Training Officers (FTOs) we omitted academy and detention trainers who perform the same functions and must have the same credentials, possibly because there are only 15 of them (13 at the academy and 2 in detention training).. Accordingly, the committee recommends that academy trainers also receive the same FTO incentive.

COLA

Retired Harris County deputies have never received a cost of living adjustment (COLA). A deputy that retired in 1990 with a \$50,000 annual retirement would need \$81,264.35 today to have the same buying power. A deputy that retired in 1998 with a \$50,000 annual retirement would need \$65,161.04 today to have the same buying power. The committee recommends that the county provide annual cost of living adjustments to its retirees. However, if a COLA came at the cost of losing post-retirement medical, we would oppose that plan.

SHIFT DIFFERENTIAL

During previous discussions concerning benefits the employee organizations sought weekend and shift differential because law enforcement personnel, unlike most county employees, have to work around the clock. That portion of the proposal was withdrawn because of Sheriff Thomas' personal objection. The committee again submits this item for consideration.

CURRENT SHIFT/WEEKEND DIFFERENTIAL INCENTIVE

Department	Shift Differential	Comments	Weekend Differential	Comments
Houston Police Department	\$150		\$75.00 a day	Sat & Sun (up to \$150 a month)
Austin Police Department	\$300	Starts after 2pm	\$0.00	
San Antonio Police Department	\$350	Starts after 2pm	\$0.00	
Fort Worth Police Department	3%	2pm – 12am	\$0.00	
Fort Worth Police Department	5%	12am – 6am	\$0.00	
El Paso Police Department	4% of base pay	6pm – 6am	\$0.00	
Dallas Police Department	3.5%	3pm - 11pm	\$0.00	
Dallas Police Department	6.5%	12am - 8am	\$0.00	
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$0.00		\$0.00	

PROPOSED SHIFT/WEEKEND DIFFERENTIAL INCENTIVE

Description	Shift Differential	Weekend Differential
Any shift that starts after 12pm (noon)	\$125 month	\$0.00
Any shift that starts after 8pm	\$250 month	\$0.00
Any shift that includes any part of Saturday		\$75 month
Any shift that includes any part of Sunday		\$75 month

CURRENT TCLEOSE PEACE OFFICER CERTIFICATIONS

Department	Intermediate	Advanced	Master Peace Officer
Houston Police Department	\$117	\$280	\$690
Austin Police Department	\$50	\$100	\$150
San Antonio Police Department	\$160	\$200	\$240
Fort Worth Police Department	\$30	\$60	\$120
El Paso Police Department	\$47	\$105	\$120
Dallas Police Department	\$200	\$0	\$500
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$130	\$285	\$500

PROPOSED TCLEOSE PEACE OFFICER CERTIFICATIONS

Department	Intermediate	Advanced	Master Peace Officer
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$150	\$300	\$700

CURRENT TCLEOSE JAILER CERTIFICATIONS

Department	Intermediate	Advanced	Master Jailer
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$50	\$100	\$150

PROPOSED TCLEOSE JAILER CERTIFICATIONS

Department	Intermediate	Advanced	Master Peace Officer
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$75	\$150	\$350

CURRENT TCLEOSE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER CERTIFICATIONS

Department	Intermediate	Advanced	Master Jailer
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$0	\$0	\$0

PROPOSED TCLEOSE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER CERTIFICATIONS

Department	Intermediate	Advanced	ENP
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$75	\$150	\$500

CURRENT EDUCATION INCENTIVE

Austin Police Department	\$100	\$220	\$300	\$0
San Antonio Police Department	\$215	\$315	\$335	\$350
Fort Worth Police Department	\$60	\$120	\$120	\$0
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$110	\$265	\$375	\$375

PROPOSED EDUCATION INCENTIVE

(Deputies, Detention Officers, and Communications Officers)

Department	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	Ph.D.
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$150	\$325	\$550	\$750

CURRENT CLOTHING ALLOWANCE INCENTIVE

Department	Current
Houston Police Department	\$67
Austin Police Department	\$0
San Antonio Police Department	\$60
Fort Worth Police Department	\$0
El Paso Police Department	\$40 (Detective only)
Dallas Police Department	\$0
Harris County Sheriff's Office (deputy)	\$50
Harris County Sheriff's Office (D.O. & C.O.)	\$0

PROPOSED CLOTHING ALLOWANCE INCENTIVE

(Plain clothes only)

Department	Proposed
Harris County Sheriff's Office (deputy)	\$75

CURRENT BILINGUAL PAY INCENTIVE

Department	Current
Houston Police Department	\$150
Austin Police Department	\$175
San Antonio Police Department	\$0
Fort Worth Police Department	\$220
El Paso Police Department	\$0

Dallas Police Department	\$0
Harris County Sheriff's Office (deputy)	\$150

PROPOSED BILINGUAL PAY INCENTIVE

(Deputies, Detention Officers, and Communications Officers)

Department	Proposed
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$225

CURRENT MOTORCYCLE PAY INCENTIVE

Department	Current
Houston Police Department	\$575
Austin Police Department	\$0
San Antonio Police Department	\$0
Fort Worth Police Department	\$0
El Paso Police Department	\$78 (hazard pay)
Dallas Police Department	\$0
Harris County Sheriff's Office (deputy)	\$585

PROPOSED MOTORCYCLE PAY INCENTIVE

Department	Proposed
Harris County Sheriff's Office	\$750 ¹⁰

CURRENT TRAINING OFFICER PAY INCENTIVE

Department	Current
Houston Police Department	\$150
Austin Police Department	\$175
San Antonio Police Department	\$265
Fort Worth Police Department	\$0
El Paso Police Department	\$110
Dallas Police Department	\$100
Harris County Sheriff's Office (Deputy)	\$175
Harris County Sheriff's Office (D.O. & C.O.)	\$150

¹⁰ The agencies that do not have a Motorcycle allowance furnish the motorcycles; the Harris County Sheriffs Office and Houston Police department pays an allowance and the employee buys and maintains the motorcycle. The "hazard pay" offered by the El Paso Police Department is based on the assumption that motor officers will sustain more injuries and more serious injuries.

PROPOSED TRAINING OFFICER PAY INCENTIVE

Department	Proposed
Deputy (FTO) & Academy Instructors	\$175
Detention Officer (DTO)	\$175
Communications Officer (CTO)	\$175
Mental Health Training Officer	\$175

PROPOSED / OTHER PAY

Description	Proposed
Equipment Allowance (Deputy)	\$175
Equipment Allowance (D.O.)	\$90
Polygraph Examiner Allowance	\$250
Canine Handler Allowance	\$250
Bomb Technician – Hazard Pay	\$250
DRE	\$250
Traffic Accident Reconstruction	\$250
FBI or LEMIT Certification	\$250
Certified Diver Incentive	\$250
Fire & Life Safety Incentive	\$250
Emergency Numbers Professional (ENP)	\$250

RADIO PAY

(Communications Officers)

0-2 years	2-4 years	4-7 years	7+ years
\$400.00	\$500.00	\$600.00	\$700.00

PROPOSED / YEARS OF SERVICE PAY

Description	Proposed
DEPUTY VI	After 1 year
DEPUTY V	After 4 years
DEPUTY IV	After 7 years
DEPUTY III	After 10 years
DEPUTY II	After 14 years
DEPUTY I	After 16 years + MPO
SENIOR DEPUTY	After 1 year
SERGEANT III	Entry
SERGEANT II	After 3 years
SERGEANT I	After 7 years
SENIOR SERGEANT	After 10 years + MPO
LIEUTENANT III	Entry
LIEUTENANT II	After 3 years
LIEUTENANT I	After 7 years
SENIOR LIEUTENANT	After 10 years + MPO
CAPTAIN III	Entry
CAPTAIN II	After 3 years
CAPTAIN I	After 7 years
SENIOR CAPTAIN	After 10 years + MPO
D.O. VI	Entry
D.O. V	After 1 year
D.O. IV	After 2 years
D.O. III	After 3 years
D.O. II	After 6 years
D.O. I	After 8 years
SENIOR D.O.	After 12 years + Advanced Cert.
C.O. VI	Entry
C.O. V	After 1 year
C.O. IV	After 2 years
C.O. III	After 3 years
C.O. II	After 6 years
C.O. I	After 8 years
SENIOR C.O.	After 12 years + ENP

PROJECTED PAY COMPARISONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

The Harris County Sheriff's Office has a history of lagging behind other area agencies in pay and benefits, then catching up after several years. Though the Houston Police Department is the Harris County Sheriff's Office's greatest competitor for recruits, only once in the last 25 years has sheriff's deputies' salaries been greater than our counterpart's, and that was only in some ranks and for a period of about a year.

The pay and benefit disparity has hampered the Harris County Sheriff's Office's ability to attract, hire, and retain qualified applicants. To demonstrate this fact, the committee went back as far as 2000 and compared the number of cadets hired and trained by the Houston Police Department and made that comparison to the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

2000

- The HPD graduated 2 classes (176, 177) totaling 132 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2000) totaling 43 graduates.

2001

- The HPD graduated 2 classes (178-179) totaling 140 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2001, B2-2002) totaling 90 graduates.

2002

- The HPD graduated 3 classes (L7-02¹¹, 180, 181) totaling 171 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2002) totaling 40 graduates.

2003

- The HPD graduated 2 classes (182, 183) totaling 142 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2003) totaling 38 graduates.

2004

- The HPD graduated no classes.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2004) totaling 46 graduates.

2005

- The HPD graduated 1 class (184) totaling 62 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2005) totaling 40 graduates.

2006

- The HPD graduated 4 classes (185, L806, 186, 187) totaling 208 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2006) totaling 38 graduates.

2007

- The HPD graduated 6 classes (188, L906, 189, 190, 191, 192) totaling 271 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2007) totaling 48 graduates.

¹¹ The "L"-numbered classes are lateral transfer classes that only lasted 13 weeks. There were former Harris County Sheriff's Office deputies in each lateral class.

2008

- The HPD graduated 7 classes (193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199,) totaling 389 officers.
- The HCSO graduated 1 class (B1-2008) totaling 28 graduates.

2009

- The HPD has graduated 1 class thus far with 58 officers and has additional classes in training now.
- The HCSO has one class in training now (B1-2008) with 18 potential deputies. B1-2009 is slated to start in July with an anticipated 50 cadets.

Sheriff Adrian Garcia’s stated goals of “putting boots on the ground” and making the Harris County Sheriff’s Office the premiere police agency in the state is dependent on an accelerated recruitment program and a highly competitive wage. To that end, Human Resource Major Jes Garcia tasked the committee to project salary and benefit package of comparable agencies for the next four years and recommend a package that will help the HCSO to meet that goal.

The committee contacted the same agencies and representative organizations to which we originally compared our salaries and asked them whether they could project their benefit packages through FY 2012. Only the Fort Worth, El Paso, and Austin Police Departments have a contract already in place though 2012 so we know going in what their salary increases will be. Our projections for the other agencies were based on the average cost of living increases since 1997 of 3%¹², the average salary increases in the comparable agencies since 2004, the fact that the Houston Firefighters just signed a 2-year contract including a 5% increase for each year, and discussions with union and management people from these comparable agencies.

Entry-Level Increase 2004-2008

	2004 Salary	2008 Salary	% Increase
Houston Police Department	\$2,256	\$3,154	39.9
Austin Police Department	\$2,176	\$4,134	89.98
San Antonio Police Department	\$2,176	\$3,195	46.83
Fort Worth Police Department	\$2,533	\$3,838	51.52
El Paso Police Department	\$2,140	\$2,815	31.54
Dallas Police Department	\$2,313	\$3,474	50.19

¹² <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/COLA/colaseries.html> (actual increase 3.03% for 1999-2008).

Actual / Projected Income of Comparable Agencies

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Houston Police Department (Projected)	\$3,154 \$4,026 \$4,863	Approximately 5% general increase.	Approximately 3% general increase.	Approximately 3% general increase. ¹³
Austin Police Department (Actual)	\$4,134 \$5,479 \$6,712	3% increase	3% increase	3% increase
San Antonio Police Department	\$3,195 \$4,723 \$5,010	Data not available ¹⁴	Data not available	Data not available
Fort Worth Police Department (Actual)	\$3,838 \$4,706 \$5,772	3% general increase + 2.5 or 5% step pay increases for eligible officers	3.5% general increase + 2.5 or 5% step pay increases for eligible officers	3.25% general increase + 2.5 or 5% step pay increases for eligible officers
El Paso Police Department (Projected – based on other agencies)	\$2,815 \$3,772 \$4,592	Approximately 4% increase according to the “market approach” ¹⁵	Approximately 4% increase according to the “market approach”	Approximately 4% increase according to the “market approach”
Dallas Police Department	\$3,474 \$4,432 \$5,388	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown ¹⁶

DEPUTY PROPOSED

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
Deputy VI	Entry	\$3,386	\$4,237	\$4,364	\$4,495	\$4,630
Deputy V	After 1 year	\$3,724	\$4,755	\$4,898	\$5,045	\$5,196
Deputy IV	After 4 years	\$3,988	\$5,248	\$5,406	\$5,568	\$5,735
Deputy III	After 7 years	\$4,244	\$5,616	\$5,784	\$5,957	\$6,136
Deputy II	After 10 years	\$4,437	\$6,009	\$6,189	\$6,375	\$6,566
Deputy I	After 14 years	\$4,658	\$6,429	\$6,622	\$6,821	\$7,025
Senior Deputy	After 16 years + MPO	\$4,982	\$6,879	\$7,086	\$7,298	\$7,517

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATOR

¹³ Insofar as Houston has not commenced negotiations, this estimate is an “estimated best guess”, based in part on the Fire Department increases stipulated in their new contract.

¹⁴ In the last contract the San Antonio Police Officers’ Association received 3% across-the-board increase on October 1, 2006; 2% on May 1, 2007; 3% on October 1, 2007; 2% on May 1, 2008, and 4% on October 1, 2008. They are negotiating a new contract now.

¹⁵ The “market approach” provision in the Articles of Agreement between the El Paso POA and the City provide that officers shall receive the “mean” increase of competitive regional cities, namely Albuquerque, New Mexico, Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio, Texas, and Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona.

¹⁶ The Dallas POA has not started negotiations with the city yet and could not speculate on the increase percentage.

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
Acc. Inv III	Entry	\$5,007	\$5,616	\$5,784	\$5,957	\$6,136
Acc. Inv II	After 3 years	\$5,449	\$6,009	\$6,189	\$6,375	\$6,566
Acc. Inv I	After 7 years	\$5,865	\$6,879	\$7,086	\$7,298	\$7,517

CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATOR

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
CSI III	Entry	\$5,007	\$5616	\$5784	\$5957	\$6136
CSI II	After 3 years	\$5,449	\$6009	\$6189	\$6375	\$6566
CSI I	After 7 years	\$5,865	\$6879	\$7086	\$7298	\$7517

SERGEANT

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
SERGEANT III	Entry	\$5,283	\$6672	\$6,872	\$7,078	\$7,290
SERGEANT II	After 3 years	\$5,600	\$7134	\$7,353	\$7,574	\$7,801
SERGEANT I	After 7 years	\$5,879	\$7638	\$7,848	\$8,084	\$8,326
SR. SERGEANT	After 12 years + MPO		\$8173	\$8398	\$8,650	\$8,909

LIEUTENANT

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
LIEUTENANT III	Entry	\$6,056	\$7,673	\$8,435	\$8,120	\$8,364
LIEUTENANT II	After 3 years	\$6,297	\$8,210	\$8,435	\$8,688	\$8,949
LIEUTENANT I	After 7 years	\$6,551	\$8,784	\$9,026	\$9,297	\$9,576
SR. LIEUTENANT	After 12 years + MPO and B.A. or B.S.		\$9,399	\$9,658	\$9,947	\$10,246

CAPTAIN

		Current Monthly	2009 Monthly	2010 Monthly	2011 Monthly	2012 Monthly
CAPTAIN III	Entry	\$6,877	\$9,493	\$9,754	\$10,047	\$10,384
CAPTAIN II	After 3 years	\$7,219	\$10,158	\$10,437	\$10,750	\$11,072
CAPTAIN I	After 7 years	\$7,581	\$10,869	\$11,167	\$11,502	\$11,848
SR. CAPTAIN	After 12 years + MPO and B.A. or B.S.		\$10,869	\$11,167	\$11,502	\$11,848

CONCLUSION

The single largest law enforcement expense to Harris County taxpayers today is not the vast amount of overtime required for the Sheriff to meet state-mandated jail staffing requirements—that is a symptom of the greater problem. For more than a decade, the Harris County Sheriff's Office has bled badly-needed, trained deputies, detention officers, and communications officers to other area law enforcement agencies at a time when the nation was experiencing a shortage of qualified applicants. We also lost so many nurses to private industry that the HCSO has to rely on nursing agencies and pay premium prices to staff the jails. It does not take a Peat Marwick study to determine why the HCSO had the largest attrition rate for the last decade of any major law enforcement agency in the state. This committee, comprised entirely of present and past employee leaders, asserts in unison that the attrition rate was caused by bad policies, inadequate pay, and the absence of “meet and confer”¹⁷.

The good news is that Sheriff Garcia and his staff recognizes those policies that caused the attrition problems and have already made significant strides to ameliorate that problem. Though it is too soon for us to produce numbers that will prove empirically that these policy changes have had the desired effect, we are the people that hear from these employees daily and assert without reservation that we are experiencing a completely different attitude toward the agency.

In the mid-'80s when the *Alberti* court required the Sheriff's Office to hire a large number of deputies to staff the jails there was a long list of applicants from which to choose, so long in fact that the Department had the luxury of choosing the best applicants of the 5% that met the qualifications. Now that being a police officer is no longer in vogue and Generation-X has entered the workplaces, police agencies have learned that they must do more to attract and retain qualified officers. The agencies that have been successful in hiring and retaining qualified Gen-X applicants have figured out that applicants look to the Internet to learn which agencies offer the best salaries and benefits. The single most successful agency in Texas in terms of hiring and retaining officers has, not surprisingly, been the Austin Police Department. In Harris County the winning agency has been the Houston Police Department. These two agencies and the other comparable agencies used in this study for comparison have two things in common: an attractive salary-benefit package and “meet and confer.” “Meet and Confer” agencies are more successful at retention simply because the employees, through their elected representatives, have input into the issues that comprise the every day working environment; thus the needs of the working employees are better met. In addition to a “meet and confer” agreement with its officers, the Houston Police Department has passed legislation that allowed it to change civil service rules to help that agency better compete in the market for recruits. Additionally, the HPD offers a \$12,000 hiring bonuses, 20 physical fitness days, a pay-out of unused sick time, and a “DROP” retirement program—all items that make it more difficult for Sheriff Garcia to compete.

In the absence of an enabling statute, and thus the opportunity to bargain over wages and working conditions, the committee welcomes this opportunity to offer this input, as we have similarly in the past. These increases would bring us to parity with the Austin Police Department; it would also help Sheriff Garcia hire and retain the qualified applicants the Sheriff needs to fulfill his constitutional duty to the citizens of Harris County.

¹⁷ “Meet and Confer” is an employee representation process similar to collective bargaining, except that the representative organization has no right to strike.