

## HISTORY OF IAB

The year was 1929, and it was the beginning of the Great Depression. The sheriff of Los Angeles County was William I. Traeger (1921-1932). On January 21, an incident occurred at the Hall of Justice Jail (HOJJ) that would mark the creation of the Internal Affairs Bureau.

Two deputies were escorting inmates from a courtroom on the eighth floor of the HOJ back to the 10th floor jail. The inmates were members of an organized crime gang. During the ride in the elevator, one of the inmates produced a concealed handgun and shot one of the deputies in the throat. Both deputies returned fire, killing the inmate.

An extensive investigation ensued that would later reveal that the inmate's handgun had been smuggled into the jail by another deputy who had been bribed. Sheriff Traeger established Personnel Administration, which would consist of a team tasked solely with investigating misconduct by Department employees.

When Sheriff Traeger left office in 1932, Eugene W. Biscailuz succeeded him as sheriff. Sheriff Biscailuz, who organized the California Highway Patrol, would remain the sheriff of Los Angeles County for 26 years. Sheriff Biscailuz put the decision-making concerns of all administrative investigations in the hands of his undersheriff, Arthur C. Jewell. Personnel Administration, however, was still responsible for conducting the actual investigations.

Undersheriff Jewell resigned in 1952 amid a corruption scandal. Sheriff Biscailuz then appointed Peter J. Pitchess as undersheriff. Undersheriff Pitchess was originally an agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation assigned to the Los Angeles field office to investigate allegations of corruption within the Sheriff's Department. Undersheriff Pitchess would later be elected sheriff in 1958. He discovered the Department maintained poor, and in some cases, no files on employees.

Then, in 1969, a deputy-involved shooting occurred in the Firestone Station area. The shooting resulted in the death of a burglary suspect, and the investigation culminated with the conviction of Deputy Robert Shaffer for second-degree murder. This incident prompted Sheriff Pitchess to compose a new unit within the Sheriff's Department, one that would be specifically assigned to handle administrative investigations. Thus, the Internal Investigations Bureau (IIB) was born, relieving Personnel Administration of any involvement in misconduct matters.



Sheriff Pitchess believed that the IIB investigators should be experienced and at the rank of sergeant and have clean personnel records and credibility. He also believed administration investigations should only be initiated by a division chief, and not IIB. Disciplinary decisions of 15 days or fewer were to be determined by the employee's unit commander. Greater discipline was assessed and imposed by the concerned division chief. These are elements that still exist today.

The exact year when IIB was renamed to Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) is unknown. It is likely, however, that the change came within Sheriff Sherman Block's tenure, as documents have been discovered showing the unit named as IAB during that era. When Sheriff Pitchess created IIB, he did not care for the term "affairs." Since IIB conducted investigations, he felt "affairs" was too ambiguous of an expression. ☆