



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC# 421-2014

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Philip Levine and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: December 16, 2014

SUBJECT: Ocean Drive Initiative

In July, the Police Department suspended off-duty work for officers at three nightclubs along Ocean Drive. This event triggered discussions with the Ocean Drive Association (ODA) about police coverage on the strip, and it also triggered an internal evaluation by the Department of the issue. An analysis by the Department of 2013 versus 2014 data showed that the absence of off-duty officers outside the three nightclubs had no negative impact on calls for service or crime during this past summer. Yet anxiety among the ODA businesses continued.

In response, the Police Department's new Deputy Chief, Laretta Hill, new Operations Major, Mark Causey, and new Area 1 Captain, Wayne Jones, undertook an assessment of current deployment of personnel in the area and came up with several new initiatives. Their new initiatives included both permanent and temporary changes and involved the following:

- The reorganization and redeployment of staffing in the Entertainment District
- The implementation of a walking beat on Ocean Drive, with a full-time sergeant and two beat officers.
- The re-implementation and vigorous enforcement of the beach closure hours
- The addition of a second Homeless Liaison Officer (HLO) and an increase in nighttime homeless outreach details.
- Joint targeted enforcement of vice crimes by the Strategic Investigations Squad (SIS) and the Crime Suppression Teams (CST)
- A joint quality-of-life enforcement detail with Code Enforcement

**Staffing:**

As part of permanent staffing changes, three new beat officers were redeployed to Ocean Drive. Two officers, along with a sergeant, were placed on a walking beat. They were assigned to work Thursday through Sunday evenings on a non-traditional "swing shift," 8PM to 6AM. Five additional officers were re-assigned to patrol the beach in the vicinity of Ocean Drive on ATV's.

The ATV officers are tasked with closing the beach each evening at midnight by placing barricades with attached beach close signage across each entrance from South Pointe Drive to 15<sup>th</sup> Street. They were also responsible for enforcing the beach closure ordinance.

A second HLO was added and nighttime homeless outreach missions were doubled to twice weekly and done with members of the City's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT). Much of their combined focus was directed to the beach and Lummus Park.

**Joint Enforcement**

Beginning October 26, 2014 and ending November 29, 2014, the afternoon shift CST was directed to address narcotics possession and sales on Ocean Drive and the Entertainment District. The midnight shift CST and the SIS were directed to supplement these efforts. They were additionally tasked with targeting prostitution and prostitution-related crimes to include theft, robbery and hotel burglaries.

**Quality of Life Detail**

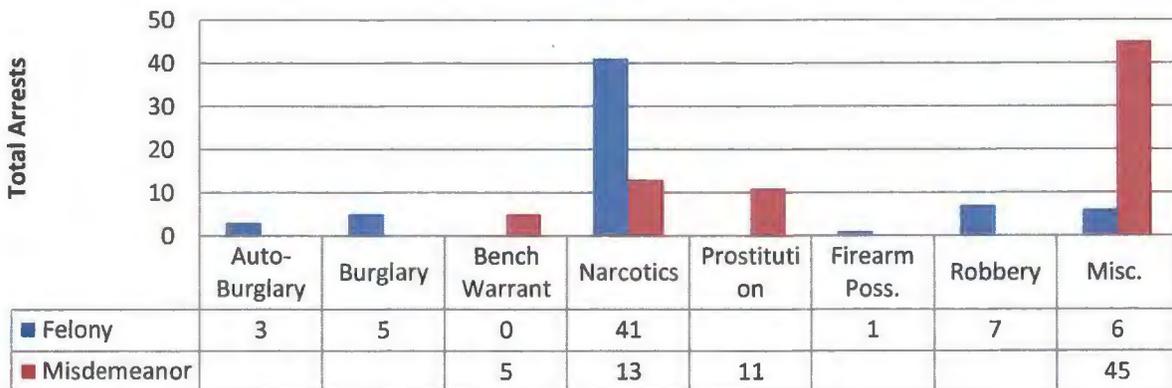
Whereas the walking beat units focused on calls for service, ATV units focused on preventing beach thefts and enforcing the beach closure ordinance, and the CSTs along with SIS on vice crimes. It became evident that addressing quality-of-life issues was also needed to close the gap. From November 13, 2014 through December 14, 2014 the Neighborhood Resource Officers (NROs), in conjunction with the Code Enforcement Department, conducted quality-of-life details. The officers concentrated on minor infractions such as vending without license, panhandling, drinking in public, homeless camping and the displaying of exotic animals.

**Enforcement Statistics**

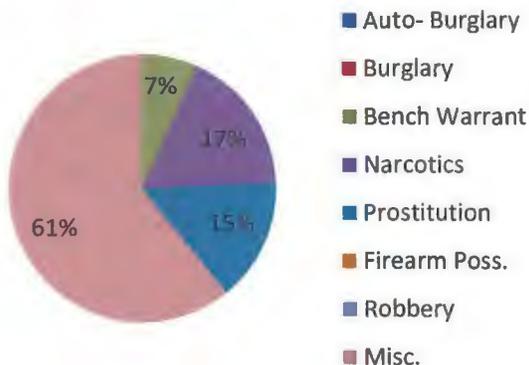
The collective efforts of the temporary assignments of the CSTs, SIS and the quality-of-life detail on Ocean Drive resulted in a total of 137 arrests. A total of 43 code violations were also issued and 33 homeless referrals were made.

Below is a breakdown of the type of arrests made:

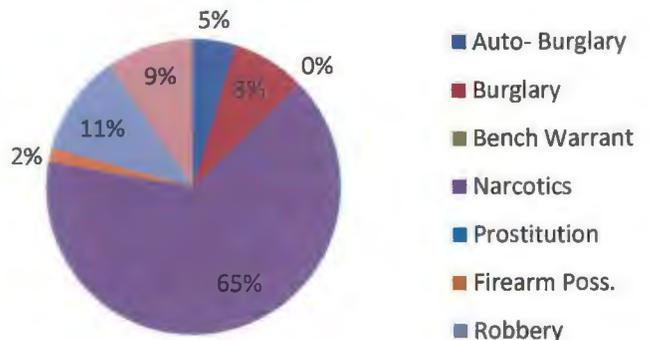
**OCEAN DRIVE ARRESTS**



**Ocean Drive Misdemeanor Arrests**



**Ocean Drive Felony Arrests**



## **Conclusion**

The Ocean Drive corridor remains an important focus of the Police Department's efforts. The Department will continue to study crime and quality-of-life trends and adjust staffing as needed. As police officer vacancies are filled in the coming months and more resources are made available, the Department will continue to experiment with other enforcement and patrol options to provide the best possible coverage to this area.

JLM/DJO/tr