

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: November 26, 2007

ARPAIO PUSHES BACK

EVERY POLICE AGENCY IN VALLEY MUST ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUTSTANDING WARRANTS

(Phoenix, AZ) It is one of the biggest public misperceptions of the Sheriff's Office – that the Sheriff is responsible for arresting the 75,000 people who currently have outstanding criminal warrants in Maricopa County.

It is categorically untrue and the misperception results in unwarranted criticism of the Sheriff and the Sheriff's Office by supporters of illegal immigration and some local law enforcement officials.

"We only house these warrants and other court documents," Arpaio says. "The misperception is that people think the Sheriff is charged with arresting all these felons when, in fact, every police officer in the state is court ordered to make these arrests."

A variety of court documents including warrants have been housed in the Sheriff's Office which was made the custodian of records as far back as 1914.

As of today, there are approximately 42,000 felony warrants and 34,000 misdemeanors, many of which are more than five years old.

Statistics show that of those, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office has about 1600 outstanding felony warrants resulting from criminal arrests (not 75,000) for which they are responsible. Other local police agencies have nearly 21,000 felony warrants all generated by police actions by Phoenix, Mesa, Glendale, Scottsdale, Tempe Police and DPS.

"These agencies surely don't expect that the Sheriff's Office is responsible for finishing their cases," Arpaio says. "We simply house their paperwork."

Phoenix Police did, however, publicly go on record this month saying it does not

News Release

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have enough resources to go after all outstanding warrants.

Critics are also publicly chastising Arpaio for arresting illegal aliens instead of violent felons wanted by the law.

“Many illegals in jail today *are* violent felons,” Arpaio says. “Collectively they’re charged with 8500 felonies including nearly 100 counts of murder and 500 counts of kidnapping, among other violent crimes. So who is kidding who?”

Arpaio says his office has taken criticism for years about the number of warrants housed by his office.

“My office always gets the blame for this problem,” he says. “The truth is every agency should be responsible enough to go after its own warrants. I’ll go after my 1600 felons and if they go after theirs, we’ll solve this problem together.”

It should be noted that the Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office is ranked second in the number of county jail bookings, with over 10,500 bookings occurring this year.

Maricopa County Jail Bookings - January 2007 to September 2007

Maricopa County Agencies:

- 1) Phoenix Police Department - 34,576
- 2) Maricopa County Sheriff’s Office - 10,593
- 3) Mesa Police Department - 6,749
- 4) Glendale Police Department - 4,444
- 5) AZ Department Public Safety - 3,629
- 6) Tempe Police Department - 3,317
- 7) Chandler Police Department - 2,729

Federal Agencies

- United States Immigration & Customs - 534
- United States Marshal’s Office - 234

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