



STORY BY GINES ARNAU TLO

Passion for World-Class Protection:

Reserve Dignitary Protection Unit

Team Leader LASD Detetive Rewald is one of only six POST-Certified Dignitary Protection instructors statewide. He believes firmly that one can never be over- trained.

In 2004, the Emergency Operations Bureau's (EOB) Terrorism Early Warning Group (TEWG), created shortly after the 9/11 attacks, began receiving requests to protect dignitaries visiting Los Angeles County. The EOB's then-Captain Parra ordered the formation of a Dignitary Protection Unit (DPU) with greater ability to meet current threats. The DPU structure was based upon the Department's experiences and relationships with the U.S. Secret Service, the State Department and the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

Within the Sheriff's Department there, already existed several groups handling different aspects of dignitary protection--SEB, Arson, Explosives, HAZMAT, Tactical Planning, Court Services, Major Crimes Bureau, International Liaison, the Open Source Intelligence Unit (OSINT) and the Aero Bureau. Detective Jim Rewald, assigned to TEWG the previous year, had been working protection details for executives and politicians in the private sector as well as teaching dignitary protection and other tactics to military and law enforcement. Detective Rewald began recruiting reserves with specialized abilities and experience in executive and dignitary protection work. His first recruit was Reserve Deputy Kent Moyer of the Orange County Sheriff's DPU who conducts dignitary protection assignments full-time all over the world.

The DPU's original Team Leader was Sergeant Rolando Barcamontes who, together with Detective Rewald, Reserve Lieutenant Bryant Manning, and Reserve Captain Fred Humphreys, formed the unit. Leadership and training of the unit has expanded under Sergeant Ed Winslow to number more than 15 dedicated reserves, leaders, and instructors such as Reserve Deputy Charles Segars, a contract employee for the White House (pictured above with President Obama). Others experts include Reserve

Lieutenant Bryant Manning, a full-time executive protection employee of the Boeing Corporation, and Reserve Deputy Alon Stivi who teaches tactics and security issues and oversees protection details internationally. Thus the unit consists of members with U.S. military experience and with British and Israeli special operations backgrounds. Many have extensive experience as medics, defensive tactics, dignitary protection, as well as firearms instructors. In addition to their areas of expertise, the reserves excel in undercover mode. For this reason, when working with the United States Secret Service, the unit frequently fulfills a counter-surveillance role.

In 2009 Detective Rewald took over as Team Leader and the DPU grew to 22 reserves (including retired full-time deputies and police officers) and approximately 10 full-time LASD personnel who join details as needed. Yet Detective Rewald affirms that the DPU's efficiency and effectiveness depends especially on reserves who frequently volunteer to work full-time and holiday hours: "I am constantly impressed by their motivation and think paid department members have a lot to learn from them."

Detective Rewald is one of only six POST-Certified Dignitary Protection instructors statewide. He established the core skill set required to be an effective operator within the unit and believes firmly that one can never be over-trained. DPU training covers drawing and shooting from concealment, protecting the principal in formations and rope lines, drilling for attacks on the principal, proper dress and etiquette, motorcade driving, advance protective reconnaissance, route planning, equipment and gear selection and developing operations plans. The Secret Service and the Emergency Services Detail has also provided the unit with additional training. Prior to promotion, a second POST-Certified Dignitary Protection instructor (as well as former SEB Operator and world-

wide trainer), Sergeant Zach Conner, helped lead the unit and polish the unit's shooting skills.

MISSION PARAMETERS

The DPU provides security and full protection details for foreign dignitaries that do not qualify for State Department protection. It works as a counterpart of the U.S. Secret Service on Counter-Surveillance and Protective Intelligence missions and augments operations of the U.S. Capitol Police and U.S. State Department.

Examples of high-risk protective missions the DPU has performed are details for former Pakistani Prime Minister General Musharraf and for Reza Pahlavi, son of the Former Shah of Iran. As a regular detail, the unit collaborates with U.S. Capitol Police to protect Senior Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii.

UNIT CAPABILITIES

Having a highly trained, specialized unit is the core commitment of the DPU's leadership. In today's environment of organized terrorism standard law enforcement skills do not suffice.

Detective Rewald has built a broad curriculum of training activities for the unit and insists that it cross-train with both the U.S. Secret Service and the U.S. Capitol Police. In addition, members are encouraged to attend other accredited training programs such as those offered by the Department of Justice. ✪

