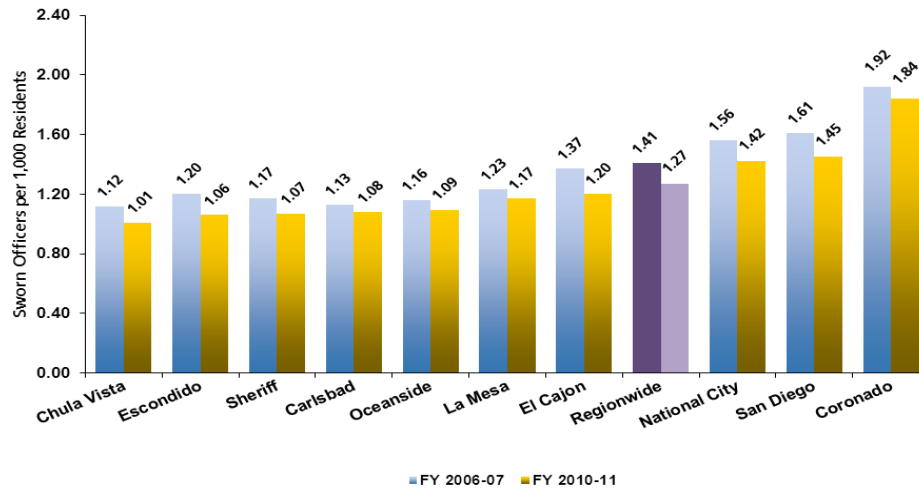


Sworn Staffing Drops Countywide Amid Economic Recession, But Crime Still Down

San Diego County spent fewer dollars on public safety in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 for the third consecutive year, according to SANDAG’s annual bulletin, *“Public Safety Allocations in the San Diego Region: Funding and Staffing for Fiscal Year 2011”*. Public safety spending, which comprised 26 percent of the region’s FY 2011 expenditures, peaked at \$1.91 billion in FY 2008 and fell each year thereafter to \$1.78 billion in FY 2011. Along with a drop in spending, sworn staffing also fell for all law enforcement agencies in the County to a regional average of 1.27 sworn officers per 1,000 residents, down from five years ago (1.41). To put these proportions into context, the 2010 national average was 2.8 officers per 1,000 residents for cities with populations over 250,000¹. Figure 1 shows how sworn staffing to population ratios decreased for all agencies over the past five years.

Figure 1
SWORN OFFICER-TO-POPULATION RATIO DOWN OVER FIVE YEARS FOR ALL AGENCIES



SOURCE: SANDAG; San Diego County and Cities Staffing

Despite downturns in public safety spending and sworn staffing ratios, the San Diego region continues to be a relatively safe place to live compared to other large cities, as evidenced by a steady drop in rates of property and violent crime. Illustrating this point are the most recent available data showing a five-year drop in the region’s rates of violent (down 19%) and property crime (down 31%)². This trend is due in no small part to law enforcement’s willingness to collaborate with the community to identify crime patterns and effectively address them.

SANDAG’s annual analysis of regional crime rates through December 2011 will be released in April 2012. The public safety expenditures bulletin for FY2012 will be released in the fall of 2012. To view the entire 2011 bulletin, or other Criminal Justice Research Division publications, please visit our Web site at www.sandag.org/cjc.

¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2010). *Crime in the United States 2009*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

² Burke, C. (2011). *Thirty Years of Crime in the San Diego Region: 1981 through 2010*. Available [On-line] at www.sandag.org/cjc.