



Marin County Sheriff's Office
Bureau of Administration and Support Services
Professional Standards Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sheriff's Office Response to Lawsuit

San Rafael, CA – On Monday, August 30, 2010, a representative from a local news station left a voicemail message advising the Marin County Sheriff's Office that Mr. Peter McFarland had filed a lawsuit against the sheriff's office related to his arrest on June 30, 2009. The Marin County Sheriff's Office has not been served with a lawsuit with respect to the arrest of Mr. Peter McFarland on June 30, 2009, nor has it yet had an opportunity to review the allegations made to the media on August 30, 2010 by Mr. McFarland's attorney.

The decision to resort to the use of force is never taken lightly and deputy sheriffs undergo an extensive amount of on-going training to ensure those decisions are both appropriate and fall within the guidelines established by law and department policy.

Irrespective of the totality of facts that lead to a decision to apply force in an arrest situation, the actual application of that force is often a very difficult thing to watch, as evidenced by the reaction of some to seeing the effects of the TASER deployment used during Mr. McFarland's arrest. That reaction can all too often also be influenced by using only small, selected segments of a much lengthier video that better depicts the complexity of the event in question.

Regardless, the Marin County Sheriff's Office is committed to as transparent a process in its arrest procedures as possible, a process that requires every TASER weapon in our inventory to contain a video / audio recording device that is automatically activated each time the weapon's safety is removed. It is that very video system that recorded the footage recently released to the news media by Mr. McFarland.

The Sheriff's Office takes all allegations of excessive force and/or deputy misconduct seriously and will do so in this case as well. After all the facts have been made public, we are confident the actions of our deputies will be found to have been both within the law and department policy.