

Maricopa County Sheriff's Office

Joe Arpaio, Sheriff



Date: October 16, 2009

SHERIFF ARPAIO: "NOTHING CHANGES"

Crime Suppression Operation Underway in the Northwest Valley

Sheriff Arpaio Will Video Tape Law Enforcement Operations

(Maricopa County, Arizona) Sheriff Joe Arpaio is moving forward today with another two-day crime suppression operation in the Northwest Valley despite the federal government's move to deny over 100 deputies of their ability to act as federal immigration agents effective at midnight last night.

The operation is the 12th of its kind and commenced today based at the Sheriff's Office's sub-station located at 13063 W. Bell Rd. in Surprise.

The Sheriff stated that today's operation will be multi-pronged and will incorporate all aspects of illegal immigration laws such as employer sanctions, human smuggling, and crime suppression.

The Sheriff stated that it is unfortunate the federal government has taken this approach given the fact that his office has arrested and detained over 33,000 illegal aliens since the inception of the 287g program in 2007. Those arrests account for approximately 25% of all arrests made nation wide by the state and local agencies participating in the 287g program.

Sheriff Arpaio's deputies will also be using a new tool today to overcome safety concerns and interference by outside agitators during law enforcement operations.

News Release

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Deputies have experienced the added challenge of dealing with activist groups video taping and harassing them during traffic stops that already pose officer safety concerns.

During a recent visit to the Valley, the Reverend Al Sharpton called on civil rights activists to start conducting “freedom rides” using video cameras which he claimed were used in the late sixties to expose racial profiling practices by law enforcement authorities.

Reverend Sharpton is back in town today conducting a civil rights forum just blocks away from protestors downtown who oppose the Sheriff’s enforcement of immigration laws on the same day that Sheriff Arpaio announced he would conduct a crime suppression operation.

Starting today, Sheriff’s deputies will utilize special teams to video tape deputies’ contact with the public to preserve an accurate account of any incident and to assist deputies during law enforcement operations.

The Sheriff stated that he understands and respects citizen’s first amendment rights. However, he also understands those rights need to be balanced by the possibility of danger to his deputies when they are distracted by these agitators approaching while they are trying to focus on their already difficult duties.

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