



# MEMORANDUM

RCA  
Agenda Item No. 5 (F)

107.07-17A METRO-DADE/GSA-MAT.MGT

TO: Honorable Chairperson Javier Souto  
and Members, Recreation and  
Cultural Affairs Committee

DATE: June 16, 2004

SUBJECT: Tropical Park Security  
Study

FROM: George M. Burgess  
County Manager

Pursuant to the request of Commissioner Javier Souto, the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD), along with Parks and Recreation Department, has prepared the following plan of action addressing security issues at Tropical Park. The Kendall District, which has primary responsibility for police service to Tropical Park, has prepared this study which addresses the following:

- Enhanced Tropical Park Enforcement Details
- Emergency and Non-Emergency response times relative to Tropical Park
- Staffing, Security and Response to Special Events
- Calls for Service and Arrests for Tropical Park
- Additional Security Measures and Response Plans

### Enhanced Tropical Park Enforcement Details

- An Enhanced Enforcement Initiative (EEI) detail has been in effect since 2001 and is ongoing year round. A budget of \$200,000 is specifically allotted on a yearly basis for this EEI detail. The initiative is staffed seven days a week, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. with uniformed officers in marked police vehicles as well as plainclothes officers in unmarked vehicles.
- The duties performed by the assigned personnel include:
  - High visibility patrol
  - Proactive enforcement
  - Community relations
  - Rapid response to calls and incidents within Tropical Park
  - Routine checks of restroom facilities, shelters, maintenance facilities and horse stable areas
- Kendall District specialized units such as the Gang Enforcement Unit, Crime Prevention Unit, Bicycle Patrol Squad and the Crime Suppression Team also supplement the EEI detail to address specific crime trends and criminality. These units have been very effective in performing surveillances to address targeted crimes including but not limited to lewd and lascivious conduct, vehicle burglaries, auto thefts, larcenies, vandalisms, robberies, and narcotic offenses.
- The Mounted Patrol Unit (MPU) also works the EEI in conjunction with the Kendall District. The MPU is able to access areas, which are not easily accessible by vehicle or foot, i.e., nature/bicycle trails and lakeside areas. Their presence has been an effective

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tool in deterring crime. An added benefit has been the high visibility and public relation skills that MPU adds to Tropical Park.

### **Emergency and Non-Emergency Response Times Relative to Tropical Park**

- Response times at Tropical Park are nominal due to the police presence in the park during operating hours. The average response time for emergency calls to Tropical Park is 4.02 minutes. This is below the MDPD's goal of emergency response times under 5 minutes. Additionally, the average response time for non-emergency calls is 20.59 minutes. This is also below the desired response time of 30 minutes for routine calls for service (Attachment 1).

### **Staffing, Security and Response Plans for Special Events**

- The Miami-Dade Police Department utilizes several methods to address security, staffing and response to special events within Tropical Park. Please note that if an event occurs that necessitates a large-scale response, the Incident Command System (ICS) will be deployed. The ICS is utilized to manage critical incidents that occur such as plane crashes, wild fires, explosions, etc. The Critical Incident Management Unit actualizes a Command Post and provides ancillary supplies, (tents, command post bus) to assist/support any large scale event or eventuality.
- In addition to the Kendall District, MDPD has several units and bureaus that handle large scale non-emergency and emergency events. One of these units is the newly created Homeland Security Unit which responds to and addresses incidents of terrorism. Furthermore, the Special Patrol Bureau which includes the Special Response Team, Bomb Disposal Unit, Canine Response Squad and a Dignitary Protection Unit, is utilized to handle special situations that occur of a planned or spontaneous nature.
- The Kendall District also handles the Santa's Enchanted Forest event from November to January of each year. The Special Events Unit coordinates this event countywide by utilizing police personnel from all districts to ensure appropriate staffing levels. All sworn personnel are also trained in Mobile Field Force, Special Events Response Team and have received Weapons of Mass Destruction training.

### **Calls for Service and Arrests for Tropical Park/2003-2004**

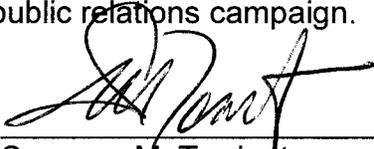
- Attachment 2 details the arrests made in Tropical Park by Kendall District personnel during 2003 and 2004. A total of twenty (20) arrests were made in 2003 and seven (7) have been made year-to-date in 2004. The arrests are indicative of the successful efforts of the Kendall District in coordination with on-duty and EEI efforts.
- Additionally, calls for service are detailed in Attachment 3. This reflects that the most frequently reported calls in Tropical Park are traffic accidents, vehicle burglaries, and minor thefts.

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### **Additional Security Measures and Response Plans**

With regard to ways of reducing the chance of a security breach or attack on public figures, the following is currently in place:

- The Special Patrol Bureau handles dignitary protection details in Miami-Dade County, including Heads and Vice Heads of State, Cabinet Members, Prime Ministers, etc., as well as local community and County VIPs. Requests for these services are also received by the Mayor's Office. Consistent with the need to reduce the chance of a security breach such as a bombing, or attack on a public figure, bomb sweeps utilizing canine units, utilization of tactical teams, controlled access throughout the park by existing police personnel, and the aviation unit can be used before, during, and after an event or visit occurs.
- Tropical Park is unique because it has police presence seven (7) days a week, during park operating hours, available through special funding (EEI) allocated for these purposes. These officers are provided with the most current crime trends, crime bulletins, and any information pertaining to potential terrorist threats or issues of homeland security. Also, they actively coordinate their patrols of the park with existing park security and Mounted Patrol, to ensure that any suspicious person or activity is properly addressed.
- The Kendall District Command Staff has contacted Interim Chief of Security, Mr. Jorge Poulis, Parks and Recreation Department, to implement a notification system between the management team at Tropical Park (Mr. Tom Morgan, Park Manager) and the Kendall District. This notification system will serve to provide a mechanism of contact for police response whenever an event, planned or unplanned, or visit of a public figure occurs. With this system in place, security measures will be improved.
- Additionally, as a coordinated effort between Parks and Police, an outreach campaign is being explored to educate and provide awareness to park patrons and participants to be more aware of their surroundings, any suspicious activity in the park, notification of 911 to report such incidents, etc. This will be accomplished utilizing an existing parks/police public relations campaign.



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Susanne M. Torriente  
Assistant County Manager