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PHOTO CREDIT: LT. MIKE PARKER

'Tagger Task Force' Makes 63 Arrests in 3 Early-Morning Raids

(Sept. 28, 2004) A three-week-long investigation by a combined law enforcement task force resulted, last week, in 63 arrests for graffiti vandalism – much of it targeted at Metro vehicles and property.

Coordinated by Lt. Pat Jordan of the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau, the deputies, along with Metro Security officers, LAPD and County Probation officers made early-morning raids on 172 homes in an effort to catch suspects before they left for school or work.

The "Tagger Task Force" raids, which took place on Sept. 2, Sept. 16 and Sept. 23, netted 11 arrests for vandalism, 16 for drug possession, four for firearms violations, 21 for probation violations and 10 for outstanding warrants.

"Targeting vandals is part of an on-going effort by the Transit Services Bureau to help Metro bring graffiti vandalism under control," said Lt. Mike Parker. In FY 2004, Metro spent \$7.8 million dollars cleaning up graffiti damage systemwide.

"The same individuals who are tagging buses and trains and bus stops, are also tagging freeway overpasses in communities and neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles," Capt. Dan Finkelstein, Metro police chief, told the media.

Sheriff's deputies prepare for an early-morning raid on the homes of graffiti vandal suspects. From left are Deputy Henri Sayegh, Sgt. Mike Estrada, and deputies Brad Jerzykowski, Victor Locklin, Eric Jaime and Darin Martin.



Sheriff's Deputy Dave Certvantes directs his firearms detection dog, Kona, in a search for illegal weapons at a suspect's home.

