

USCCA e-newsletter "Armed American", December 05, 2008

<http://www.usconcealedcarry.org/news/newsletter/97/>

“New Sheriff in Orange County, CA bans civilian CCWs.”

“...The public revocation makes former CCW holders perfect targets for criminals...”

California has civilian CCWs? They are few and far in-between. Now there will be even less. Previous Orange County Sheriff Mike Carona had issued over 1,100 permits to civilians. He stepped down earlier this year after facing federal corruption charges.

Appointed new Sheriff is Sandra Hutchens, a 27-year veteran of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. Part of her statement during the swearing-in ceremony was: "It is only by leading the department, doing an analysis of all the things we do right, that we can have the solid foundation to identify what we do wrong and fix it."

In terms of permits to carry, there had been allegations that the previous Sheriff had handed out permits to large campaign contributors, The Orange County Register lists \$68,000 and up in an article of October 9.

If these individuals indeed "purchased" their permits meaning that mandatory background checks and training were bypassed, there is only one correct response: their permits have to be revoked.

Recent developments show that in fact the overwhelming majority of permits is being revoked. The list of occupations/reasons for CCW's that have now been determined insufficient include FFL Dealers, People handling large amounts of cash, Real Estate Agents, Doctors with direct access to narcotics and firearms instructors, to name just a few.

The approach that Sandra Hutchens takes is deceiving.

Her tone two weeks after being sworn in was quite tame. In an interview on July 8, the new Sheriff stated: "I probably will tighten it [the requirements to qualify for a CCW] up a bit, but probably not as drastically as some people might assume."

On October 7, during her 120-day update, the OCSD released to the media that "To date, no existing license holder has had their permit revoked" .

True – several hundred letters had gone out, most of them on the same day. The letters tell the license holders, that "the Department's present intention is to revoke your CCW license [...]".

Her statement that no licenses had been revoked was deceptively true. As of the day of the hearing, the licenses are technically still valid.

However according to the Orange County Register,” it seems unlikely that those who are getting the letters won’t be revoked.”

The Sheriff’s own words fortify the newspaper’s statement:

“Hutchens said the state law is clear that concealed weapons are not legal. Exceptions are just that.”³ This comes from a former LA Sheriff’s Deputy – one of the counties that categorically deny permits to carry for the majority of people outside the law enforcement community.

How does Sandra Hutchens justify her actions? Her blog on the OCSD website states: “It’s simple - it’s the law”.

I’ve had a number of Students from northern California who have concealed carry permits. They got them for the very reasons that Hutchens declared to be insufficient. Does that mean that the Sheriff in Placer County is breaking the law?

Fact is that the guidelines that indicate which reasons are good reasons leave room for interpretation. Some Sheriffs listen to the needs of the people in their county and act accordingly. Others ignore those needs and follow their own agenda.

Hutchens justification is a slap in the face for those Sheriffs who grant permits for reasons less stringent than hers. It is also a slap in the face of the people who she has been appointed to keep safe.

Lists of no-longer-valid-reasons can be found online.

I personally know two part-time firearms instructors who received the revocation letter. One part-time FFL that supplies firearms to fellow Suarez International instructors is also a victim of the adjusted qualifying factors.

Both of the instructors teach at one of the last remaining outdoor ranges in the vicinity of Orange County. The road to the training facility winds for a good 30 minutes from leaving the last houses behind to arriving at the range, with no cell-phone coverage in-between. Both of them advertise their schedule on the internet and offer rental firearms to their students.

Sheriff Hutchens’ action is basically telling criminals: “Ladies, Gents, every resident of Orange County who was likely to have a CCW will no longer have one.”

The consequences are apparent: It is truly possible that armed robberies within Orange County will increase. Focus will almost certainly be people who carry valuables, cash or narcotics. This by itself is bad enough.

If any of the remaining few civilian CCW holders are targeted it is likely that those confrontations will result in casualties. The bad guys will be violent and aggressive to discourage their intended victims from using any of the remaining legal alternatives, such as pepper spray, tasers, knives or impact weapons. An overwhelming amount of aggression and violence in this situation comes close to mandating the use of lethal force as defense.

I know two of those who did not have their license revoked. They are excellent marksmen and highly trained individuals – there is no doubt in my mind that they will be reacting with full force and win the fight that has been bestowed on them.

I encourage those of our readers who are residents of Orange County or have friends or relatives here who are affected to contact the board of supervisors and complain about Sandra Hutchens actions.

John Moorlach: John.Moorlach@ocgov.com

Janet Nguyen: janet.nguyen@ocgov.com

Pat Bates: pat.bates@ocgov.com

Bill Campbell bill.campbell@ocgov.com

Chris Norby chris.norby@ocgov.com