



# FBI PRESS RELEASE

## LOS ANGELES FIELD OFFICE

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**For Immediate Release: June 16, 2008**

### **GROWING CYBER CRIME IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LEADS TO DOJ-APPROVED FUNDING OF NEW REGIONAL COMPUTER FORENSICS LABORATORY IN ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

Earlier this year, FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III announced from Washington, D.C. that the Los Angeles Field Office territory; specifically, Orange County, would be one of two sites selected to host a new FBI-sponsored Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory RCFL. The second designated site is Albuquerque, New Mexico.

An RCFL is a digital forensics laboratory where highly trained certified examiners, known as Computer Analysis Response Team (CART) members, combine their resources to conduct forensic examinations of all forms of digital media in support of investigations and/or prosecution of federal or state crimes. With the addition of the Orange County facility, the number of RCFLs nationwide will increase to 16.

An RCFL will serve as a critical resource to the Orange County region and allow law enforcement to stay competitive with the technology used by the growing number of cyber criminals in the Southern California region. The most recent Internet Crime Report (2007) published by the FBI lists California as the state where the largest number of victims reported cyber crime (14.4% of nationwide figure). California is also listed as the state with the highest percentage of individuals or groups perpetrating cyber crime (15.8% of nationwide figure). To read the full report, please visit: [http://www.ic3.gov/media/annualreport/2007\\_IC3Report.pdf](http://www.ic3.gov/media/annualreport/2007_IC3Report.pdf).

An RCFL is a unique partnership between the FBI and other law enforcement agencies representing federal, state and local governments operating within a geographic area. The FBI provides start-up and operational funding, training, and equipment, while participating law enforcement agencies assign personnel to work at the laboratories. In return, participating agencies receive access to expert digital forensics examination and advisory services, while their staff receives sophisticated technical training and FBI CART certification as examiners.

“The RCFL will assume a key role in solving computer crimes through forensic analysis in Southern California, where technology evolves rapidly, and where cyber criminals focus much of their illegal activity. The center will serve as a much needed resource for the FBI and regional law enforcement community to solve these crimes,” said Sal Hernandez, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI in Los Angeles. “When the

new RCFL is opened in the near future, our law enforcement partners, who have worked toward the creation of this center with a great spirit of cooperation, will contribute approximately 20 forensic examiners.”

*Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas said, “Law enforcement in Orange County has always recognized the need to keep pace with the ever changing technology of computer forensics. By partnering with the RCFL we will enhance our ability to prosecute cases more efficiently”.*

Over the last three years, the Los Angeles CART program has been among the most productive CART programs in the FBI. On average and currently, the Los Angeles CART program averages over 10% of all computer forensic work nationally based on the amount of data imaged and/or processed.

*“With the opening of the new RFCL in Orange County, our law enforcement agencies can keep pace with the rapidly evolving world of computer technology,” said Chief Paul M. Walters. “This RFCL will allow the Santa Ana Police Department to continue to provide up to date and relevant police services in an environment where technology has changed the way modern police investigations are handled. The RFCL is another tool that allows our agency to solve technology assisted crimes.”*

*David L. Maggard Jr., Chief of Police for the City of Irvine said: “Business owners and residents of the City of Irvine have an expectation that their law Police Department agency is on the cutting edge of technology. The RCFL will provide our city, and the region, with a valuable resource for effective crime fighting within a dynamic and technology rich community.”*

In just the last year alone, the Los Angeles CART Team has seen a 71% increase in data seized, imaged and archived on behalf of FBI cases. In the past three years, overall, the amount of data seized and examined by the Los Angeles CART Team alone has grown by almost 700%. These escalating numbers are a result of the growing amount of cases opened, and the consequent seizure of more hard drives which are increasingly larger in size.

*“We have all seen a significant increase in the amount of computer based crimes. We quickly realized these cases require more than a local response”, said Westminster Police Chief Andrew Hall. “We are looking forward to this partnership with the FBI and our neighboring agencies as it will effectively address these types of crimes.”*

*Captain Geoff Spalding, Commander, Investigative Division of the Fullerton Police Department, said, “The Fullerton Police Department is excited to be partnered with FBI and local law enforcement in the establishment of the RCFL. There is clearly a need for this technology and enforcement effort.”*

The Los Angeles CART Team estimates that the Orange County RCFL will have over 30 FBI trained/ certified forensic examiners working collaboratively to support various types of cyber crime throughout Orange County and the Central District of California.

*Chief John Klein of the Newport Beach Police Department said, "The RCFL will allow us to provide a higher level of service to our community as we continue to investigate cyber crimes that often take us beyond our immediate area."*

*Chief John Welter-Anaheim Police Department said, "The RCFL will greatly enhance the ability of Law Enforcement to investigate and prosecute computer related crime through Law Enforcement partnerships. We are looking forward to engaging the business and academic communities in partnerships to address computer related crimes through the RCFL. "*

It is anticipated that the following agencies, in addition to the FBI, will participate the new RCFL: Orange County District Attorney's Office, Orange County Sheriff's Department; Anaheim Police Department; Santa Ana Police Department; Irvine Police Department; Westminster Police Department; Newport Beach Police Department; and Fullerton Police Department.

Typically, a period of between 18 and 24 months is required to fully establish a new RCFL, which includes building and equipping the facility, as well as training and certifying the incoming examiners. To learn more about the RCFL Program, visit [www.rcfl.gov](http://www.rcfl.gov) or contact personnel with the Orange County RCFL directly at [www.ocrcfl.org](http://www.ocrcfl.org). Agencies interested in participating in the RCFL located in Orange County should visit [www.ocrcfl.org](http://www.ocrcfl.org).

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