

Underground

Cruz Room, 1332 Hermosa Ave, HERMOSA BEACH, CA 90254
September 23, 2007 0105 hours

**HERMOSA BEACH FIRE DEPARTMENT
HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS / OVERCROWDING
INVESTIGATION REPORT**

SUMMARY OF INCIDENT

On 09-23-2007, E11 responded to Cruz Room, 1332 Hermosa Avenue, Hermosa Beach, CA, at the request of Hermosa Beach Police Officers Sellan and Sullivan, to check on possible overcrowded conditions inside.

On arrival I contacted the manager, Richard Lord, at the front door. I then asked how many people he had inside and he replied, "We're a little over, about 55". I advised Lord that we were there at the request of the Police Department because of a possible overcrowding situation.

I sent Engineer Smotrys and FF Ramirez to the inside, one with a mechanical hand counter, with instructions to count the people inside independent of each other. The posted occupant load for the inside is 49. Engineer Smotrys returned with an initial count of 66 and a secondary of 55, and FF Ramirez returned with an initial count of 66 as well. Both numbers are in excess of the allowed maximum of 49, a violation of Section 2501.16.3 of the Uniform Fire Code stating "*Overcrowding and admittance of people beyond the approved capacity of a place of assembly is prohibited.*"

This establishment is located above other business on the second floor and lacks a legal secondary exit limiting the occupancy load to 49. It shares a rear corridor with The Underground, apparently the parent business, for access to the restrooms, not as a legal or approved second exit.

I advised Lord that he was being cited for maintaining a hazardous condition, the overcrowding situation. Lord was very cooperative and took actions to immediately bring the occupant load down to the permitted and safe number. Lord was issued the citation and was allowed to resume business now that the occupant loads were acceptable.

DETAILS

EXTERIOR EXAMINATION

DR #07-3258

Cruz Room, 1332 Hermosa Ave, HERMOSA BEACH, CA 90254

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Cruz Room is a bar located at 1332 Hermosa Avenue, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254 and is apparently part of The Underground, the dining/drinking establishment located to the rear and with a common corridor between the two. At this time it is unclear if the Cruz room is a non-licensed business or part of The underground. The control point for entry into the Cruz Room is bottom of the stairs that serve as the access and sole exit from the 2nd story business. I observed on my arrival that no line outside waiting to get in. There was a doorman (Lord) posted at the door.

I explained to the doorman (Lord) that the Fire Department had responded at the request of the Police Department to check for overcrowding.

INTERIOR EXAMINATION

Engineer Smotrys and FF Ramirez were sent inside to count the number of occupants. Upon exiting Engineer Smotrys related that there were definitely more people inside than was legally allowable posted amount of 49. The room contains a bar located on the east side of the room and a dance floor in the center area. Seating is located around the perimeter of the west wall.

INTERVIEWS

I interviewed Richard Darrell Lord, [REDACTED], the manager of Cruz Room this evening. As related above, I had asked Lord how many people he thought he had inside and he responded "We're over, about 55." I advised Lord that his posted occupant load was 49. I explained that ultimately it was his responsibility to ensure that the doormen (or himself) were not letting in too many people. Lord was issued citation H368175

VIOLATIONS OBSERVED

UNIFORM FIRE CODE
SECTION 2501.16.3
PERMITTING OVERCROWDING

UNIFORM FIRE CODE
SECTION 103.4.4
MAINTAINING A HAZARDOUS CONDITION

HERMOSA BEACH FIRE DEPARTMENT FR #07-1571

DR #07-3258

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ATTACHMENTS

Photocopy of citation issued

Photocopy of Hazardous Conditions Incident Report

Fire Department Incident Report

Photocopy of Occupant Load Sign

DISPOSITION

The case was referred to the City Prosecutor for the prosecution of the issued citation.

Brian P. Scott

Captain

HERMOSA BEACH FIRE DEPARTMENT

**CC: FIRE CHIEF
FIRE MARSHAL**

