



CALIFORNIA

# LAPD assistant chief is investigated over allegations he stalked a subordinate



Los Angeles Police Headquarters at First and Spring streets downtown. (Al Seib / Los Angeles Times)

BY LIBOR JANY, RICHARD WINTON

SEPT. 14, 2023 9:05 PM PT

A high-ranking Los Angeles Police Department official is under internal investigation after an LAPD officer with whom he was romantically involved accused him of using at least one Apple AirTag to track her movements, sources say.

The official, Assistant Chief Al Labrada, had his city phone confiscated shortly after the woman filed a police report in Ontario within the past week, according to the sources, who requested anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the ongoing probe publicly.

The woman alleged that she discovered an AirTag — a small tracking device that can be attached to personal items — in some of her possessions.

Labrada, who joined the LAPD in 1993, is one of three assistant chiefs who report directly to Chief Michel Moore. He oversees the Office of Special Operations, which includes most of the department's specialized units, including the Major Crimes, Gang and Narcotics, and Air Support Divisions.

When reached by phone on Thursday, Labrada declined to comment. Later, his attorney, Jeremy Tissot, sent a statement to The Times saying that Labrada “denies all allegations against him, which are completely false.”

“We expect him to be fully vindicated of these allegations, and he is considering all potential legal remedies by and through my office, against responsible parties in relation to these false and defamatory allegations,” the statement read.

An LAPD spokesperson confirmed that the department had launched an internal affairs case into a “crime report involving the actions of AC Labrada,” but would not comment further. Capt. Kelly Muniz, the spokesperson, said that Labrada would remain in his current post.

The allegations against Labrada are still coming into focus. But two sources familiar with the case said the female officer suspected that Labrada was the person who left the AirTag in her possessions because he was the only one with access to them. AirTags were introduced in 2021 as a way of helping people keep track of and recover lost personal items, allowing users to get notified when a device is nearby. But the quarter-

sized devices have drawn the concern of advocates for victims of domestic violence, who have warned that they can be used for monitoring someone without their consent.



CALIFORNIA

## Female commander fired after drunken incident calls out LAPD ‘double standard’

Aug. 9, 2023

Ontario police confirmed that a woman with that name made a report alleging that she was being stalked, and officials there released an incident log that showed the report was taken on Sept. 7. However, police said the report itself was not public record.

The LAPD began its own investigation after learning of the report.

Another assistant chief, Jorge Villegas, retired abruptly in 2019 [under a cloud of scandal](#) after sources told The Times he was having an improper sexual relationship with a female subordinate. An LAPD surveillance unit caught Villegas and the subordinate [apparently engaged in a sex act in a parking lot](#), the sources said.

Villegas’ case resurfaced earlier this year in a [court filing from a former LAPD commander](#) who is suing the department for retaliation.

The commander, Nicole Mehringer, who was fired after being caught drunk in a crashed vehicle with a male subordinate, contended that there is a double standard in the way the department handled similar allegations against male command staff.

She named Villegas and other male leaders, painting a culture of debauchery and favoritism that dates back years and reaches into the LAPD’s upper echelons. In an interview with The Times, Moore denied that such a double standard exists.

According to sources, a captain and a commander — both men — were reassigned in the past few months after coming under scrutiny internally for relationships with lower-

ranking officers.

Allegations of LAPD officers using AirTags surfaced recently in an investigation of a Valley-area gang unit. Sources who requested anonymity to discuss that ongoing case told The Times that the gang unit officers were accused of slipping the devices into some of the vehicles they stopped, allowing police to track them without a court-issued warrant.



Libor Jany

Libor Jany covers the Los Angeles Police Department. Before joining the Los Angeles Times in 2022, he covered public safety for the Star Tribune in Minneapolis. A St. Paul, Minn., native, Jany studied communications at Mississippi State University.



Richard Winton

Richard Winton is an investigative crime writer for the Los Angeles Times and part of the team that won the Pulitzer Prize for public service in 2011. Known as [@lacrim](#) on Twitter, during almost 30 years at The Times he also has been part of the breaking news staff that won Pulitzers in 1998, 2004 and 2016.