

FCC ISSUES REPORT – 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2024  
Jan-Mar  
KABC-TV

ABC7 -CORE ISSUES  
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2024

CORE ISSUES

ABC7 gave significant coverage to the following community issues and concerns arising in the first quarter of 2024:

- 1. Public Safety and Crime**
- 2. Community**
- 3. Weather/Climate**
- 4. Sports**

The station's coverage of these core issues is detailed in the next section of this report.

## ABC7 - CORE ISSUES COVERAGE

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2024

### **PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME**

***Eyewitness News*. Air Dates: Jan 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. Feb 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. Mar 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.**

**Total Coverage: 2 Days 1 Hour 46 Minutes**

*ABC7 Eyewitness News* devoted substantial airtime on public safety and crime issues during the first quarter of 2024. Angelenos were informed of safety issues and concerns regarding Boeing's manufacturing problems, as well as of Oceanwide Plaza, an unfinished skyscraper in downtown Los Angeles that became a target for vandals.

*Eyewitness News* allocated extensive airtime to the problems with Boeing parts in Alaska and United aircrafts. The troubles for Boeing began in January 2024 when the door plug for the fuselage of a Boeing 737 Max 9 fell off a few minutes after Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 took off from Portland International Airport for Ontario International Airport, depressurizing the cabin and exposing passengers to open air thousands of feet above ground. The plane was able to land safely back at Portland International Airport, but the incident led to the grounding of all Boeing 737 Max 9 planes, impacting Alaska Airlines and United Airlines. This event caused chaos, with hundreds of flights being canceled, affecting passengers, and raising concerns about the safety of Boeing aircrafts.

ABC7 reported that in the subsequent weeks, the situation had escalated as more incidents involving Boeing planes were reported. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) had found that crucial bolts had been missing from the door plug, highlighting potential negligence in the manufacturing process. The head of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had said that it was "pretty clear" that it was manufacturing issue and not a design problem. The agency had said that it would conduct an audit of Boeing's 737 Max 9 jetliner production line. The probe would also look at parts suppliers and how inspections were conducted to see where faults might be. Boeing had said that it would fully cooperate with the agency's investigation. This revelation has prompted a criminal investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), adding to the legal challenges faced by Boeing.

The impact of these incidents extended to passengers, including some Angelenos, who had experienced severe emotional trauma and post-traumatic stress because of the mid-air blowout. ABC7 reporter Leticia Juarez spoke to a Riverside couple who had been on that Alaska Airlines flight when the panel blew out. They had talked about their ordeal and how the experience had left them emotionally traumatized for which they were offered \$1,500 each by the airline as compensation. Like many of the other passengers on that flight, they have hired an attorney. Lawsuits have been filed against Boeing, Alaska Airlines, and Spirit AeroSystems, seeking significant compensation for the damages caused.

Boeing's response to these challenges have been under scrutiny, with the company's CEO, Dave Calhoun, announcing his intention to step down by the end of the 2024.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME (continued)**

During the first quarter of 2024, ABC7 also covered the story of Oceanwide Plaza, an unfinished residential and retail complex composed of three towers in downtown Los Angeles, across the street from Crypto.com Arena and the Los Angeles Convention Center. Construction had started in 2015 but then stopped in 2019 when the complex's developer went bankrupt before the project could be completed. The abandoned high-rise towers, once intended for upscale condos, a five-star hotel, and a shopping mall, had become a hotspot for vandals and individuals engaging in dangerous stunts. The tagging had spread across all floors of the towers, creating a safety risk and an eyesore in the area. The situation had escalated when a video surfaced showing individuals base jumping from the highest point of one of the towers, leading to concerns about potential accidents and injuries.

*Eyewitness News* viewers learned that city officials, including Los Angeles Councilmember Kevin de León, have been taking steps to address the graffiti problem at Oceanwide Plaza. De León had introduced a motion directing city departments to initiate the cleanup process and secure the site. The Los Angeles Police Department had been actively patrolling the area 24/7, resulting in multiple arrests for trespassing and vandalism. L.A. Police Chief Michel Moore had emphasized the significant resources and hours spent by the police department at the site to prevent further incidents and ensure public safety.

ABC7 viewers learned that despite efforts to address the graffiti issue, challenges had persisted at the site. The property owners had been given a deadline to clean up the towers, with the city prepared to intervene and bill the owners if necessary. Crews had started removing scaffolding and installing a metal barrier to deter unauthorized access to the site. However, there had still been instances of individuals breaking into the towers even after new fencing had been installed, prompting continued police intervention.

## COMMUNITY

***Eyewitness News*. Air Dates: Jan 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. Feb 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. Mar 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.**

**Total Coverage: 1 Day 17 Hours 42 Minutes**

*ABC7 Eyewitness News* covered the community happenings that affected the station's viewing area in the first quarter of 2024. Topics of interest for Angelenos included the station's coverage of the parades and events commemorating Martin Luther King Jr. Day and the retirement of the Los Angeles Police Department's Police Chief, Michel Moore.

*Eyewitness News* devoted significant airtime to the Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) parades and celebrations that took place in various cities, including Long Beach, Gardena, and Los Angeles during first quarter of 2024.

ABC7 viewers learned that in Long Beach, the theme of the 36th Martin Luther King Jr. Parade and Celebration was "Unity in Diversity," which had highlighted the unity of people coming together despite differences in race, gender, and backgrounds and had showcased a message of inclusivity and togetherness. Gardena's 41<sup>st</sup> annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Parade and Celebration had featured a vibrant display of colors and dances along a route from Serra High School to Rowley Park. The parade was followed by a celebration at the park, including a battle of the bands and other entertainment for attendees to enjoy.

For the 16<sup>th</sup> year in a row, ABC7 was the proud media sponsor for the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Kingdom Day Parade, the nation's largest and longest-running celebration of Dr. King's life and legacy. The station had broadcasted the parade live, with *Eyewitness News* anchors Marc Brown and Rachel Brown co-hosting the event. The parade had featured a diverse range of participants, including marching bands, colorful floats, drumlines, dancers, and had included special appearances by Disney's Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, and Princess Tiana from the animated film "The Princess and the Frog" and Disney's first African-American lead animation character. KABC meteorologist Dallas Raines, anchor Jovana Lara, reporter Ashley Mackey, and LA Rams' mascot Rampage, all participated in the parade. Reporters Josh Haskell and Michelle Fisher covered the action from the ground. Along with the parade team, the station also had DRONE 7 soaring above the parade route, giving viewers a unique perspective of this amazing community event.

ABC7 reported on the various service projects and community events that had been organized to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day, which is also a national day of service. In Long Beach, volunteers planted trees and assembled care packages for the homeless while the City of Compton held a city-wide clean up where volunteers had come together to clean up the streets and neighborhoods. Compton Mayor Emma Sharif had delivered a speech at the iconic MLK & Cesar Chavez monument, highlighting the importance of unity and community collaboration. At the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Elementary School, the non-profit community group Big Sunday, had hundreds of volunteers working on winter weather kits for the South Los Angeles community. Big Sunday has been around since 1989 and has been doing this type of work for more than a decade -- bringing all groups together to assist.

## **COMMUNITY (continued)**

The other story of interest for Angelenos in first quarter of 2024 was the retirement of Los Angeles Police Chief Michel Moore.

*Eyewitness News* covered how at the end of February 2024, Los Angeles said goodbye to Chief Michel Moore, who had officially retired after a forty-two-year career with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). Chief Moore, who had served as the 57<sup>th</sup> Chief of Police for the past five and a half years, had announced his retirement in January, marking the end of an era for the city's law enforcement. Throughout his tenure, Chief Moore had dedicated himself to the safety and well-being of the community, rising through the ranks from a police officer in 1981 to being appointed as Chief of Police in 2018.

The station covered how as Chief Moore took his final steps out of LAPD headquarters, he had been honored by officers and civilian employees in a Ceremonial Honor Cordon, one of the department's highest tributes. Moore said that he had planned to spend more time with his wife and would move away from Los Angeles to be closer to his daughter.

ABC7 viewers also learned that the Board of Police Commissioners had selected Assistant Chief Dominic Choi as the interim chief of police, and that Choi had been formally sworn in as the department's 58<sup>th</sup> chief the day after Chief Moore's last day. Choi was the deputy chief in August 2019 and had been assistant chief since July 2021. With his appointment, Choi became the first Asian American to lead the LAPD. After Choi was sworn in, his father pinned his new badge on his son's uniform. Chief Choi, a seasoned veteran with nearly thirty years of experience, had confirmed that he would not apply to fill the position permanently, following rules that the commissioners established in their search for an interim chief.

As of the end of first quarter 2024, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass and the Board of Police Commissioners were continuing a nationwide search for the next chief of police, who will lead the department through world events coming to the Los Angeles region, such as the 2026 World Cup and 2028 Olympics.

Moore will continue to serve the city of Los Angeles as a consultant while officials search for his permanent replacement.

## WEATHER/CLIMATE

*Eyewitness News*. Air Dates: Jan 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. Feb 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. Mar 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

**Total Coverage: 22 Hours 26 Minutes**

*ABC7 Eyewitness News* devoted extensive airtime to weather and climate issues during the first quarter of 2024. As climate change continues to make weather more unpredictable everywhere, nowhere was it more evident than in California.

*Eyewitness News* reported on how the weather in Southern California had been significantly impacted by an atmospheric river that had brought extensive flooding, intense winds, and record-breaking rainfall totals in early February 2024. The first of two storms began on Thursday, February 1, 2024, with significant rainfall and snowfall. The "Pineapple Express" - called that because its long plume of moisture stretched back across the Pacific to near Hawaii - would be followed by an even more powerful storm that arrived on Sunday, February 4, 2024. The storm had prompted the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to activate its operations center and position personnel and equipment in high-risk areas.

ABC7 was on Storm Track team coverage as the storms brought record-setting amounts of rain. On February 6, 2024, downtown Los Angeles had experienced 7.03 inches of rain over Sunday and Monday, which turned out to be the third-wettest two-day stretch in city history since 1877. The previous wettest two-day stretch was from Jan. 25–26, 1956, when 7.44 inches fell. The storm had dumped more than half of the city's seasonal rainfall in just two days.

*Eyewitness News* viewers were informed that heavy rains had saturated the region, which brought widespread flooding, evacuations, downed trees and power lines, damaged homes, blocked roads, created potholes on freeways and streets, mudslides and landslides all across Southern California. KABC reporter David González and photographer Sean Patrick Lewis had been able to get on a boat to help get a better view to tell the story of a landslide affecting multiple multi-million-dollar homes in Dana Point. The three estate-style homes sitting along Scenic Drive had appeared to be teetering frighteningly close to the edge after a recent landslide. The city of Dana Point had said that the homes had been inspected and determined that there was no immediate threat to the properties.

The station covered the severe weather conditions that had also led to numerous rescues across the region, with swift water rescues in the Inland Empire and flash flood warnings issued for areas like Topanga Canyon. Schools in Malibu had been closed, and residents in burn scar areas had been ordered to evacuate due to the high risk of mudslides and debris flows. The storms brought chaos to the region, with cars trapped on flooded streets, homes damaged by debris flows, and significant disruptions to daily life.

The city of Los Angeles had been incorporating elements of a sponge city design-- an urban planning model that emphasizes flood management via strengthening green infrastructures instead of purely relying on drainage systems-- to retain the rainwater. Over the course of February 4 to 7, 2024, the city had captured 8.6 billion gallons of water, equivalent to the yearly needs of 106,000 homes.

## **SPORTS**

***Eyewitness News.* Air Dates: Jan 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31. Feb 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. Mar 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.**

**Total Coverage: 14 Hours 30 Minutes**

*ABC7 Eyewitness News* devoted significant airtime to sports during the first quarter of 2024. But the topic that continued to captivate the interest of Angelenos was baseball's Shohei Ohtani of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

*Eyewitness News* has continued to follow Shohei Ohtani's journey from the Los Angeles Angels to the Dodgers. After spending six years with the Angels without making the playoffs for nine seasons, Ohtani had signed a massive \$700 million deal with the Dodgers in 2023. The anticipation for Ohtani's regular season debut in Dodger blue was palpable as he had prepared to play the opening game in South Korea.

ABC7 sports anchor Rob Fukuzaki had traveled to South Korea for the Major League Baseball's (MLB) "Seoul Series" and season opener between the Dodgers and the San Diego Padres, which would be the debut of Shohei Ohtani as a Dodger. Fukuzaki had provided numerous live shots and pieces throughout the week. He had talked to the die-hard Dodgers fans who had made the trip to see their team, had tried all the delicious Korean street food and had also caught up with Chan Ho Park, the first Korean born MLB player and former Dodgers star. Fukuzaki was also there to get reaction to the breaking news about Ohtani's interpreter, who had been fired mid-week amidst a gambling scandal.

ABC7 viewers learned of the scandal involving Shohei Ohtani's interpreter, Ippei Mizuhara, that unfolded in a series of events that shocked the baseball world. It had begun with reports of at least \$4.5 million in wire transfers from Ohtani's bank account to a bookmaking operation, leading to Mizuhara's firing by the Dodgers. The wire transfers had raised questions, prompting investigations by federal authorities into the bookmaking operation run by Mathew Bowyer in Southern California.

Initially, a spokesman for Ohtani had stated that the slugger had transferred the funds to cover Mizuhara's gambling debts. However, as the story developed, the spokesman had disavowed Mizuhara's account, leading to Mizuhara's termination from the Dodgers amid allegations of "massive theft." The situation escalated as federal investigators delved into the wire transfers and Mizuhara's involvement with the bookmaker.

As the scandal continued to unravel, Ohtani had publicly denied ever placing bets on sports or intentionally sending money to a bookmaker. He had revealed that Mizuhara had misled him and made false representations on his behalf, leading to the alleged theft from Ohtani's accounts. In the aftermath of the scandal, Ohtani had appointed a new interpreter, Will Ireton, to assist him.

As of the end of first quarter 2024, station viewers learned that the MLB had opened a formal investigation into the matter, and the Internal Revenue Service had confirmed that Mizuhara and Bowyer were under criminal investigation.