

Final Audit Follow Up

As of March 31, 2000



Sam M. McCall, CPA, CIA, CGFM
City Auditor

“General Services Division of Tallahassee Police Department”

(Report #9706, Issued March 10, 1998)

Report #0005

May 12, 2000

Summary

This report follows up on report #9706, issued March 10, 1998. That audit of the General Services Division of the Tallahassee Police Department identified three broad areas where there could be improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. The areas identified for improvement were systems issues, records management, and property and evidence.

The Tallahassee Police Department (TPD) was receptive to the issues identified in the audit with the understanding that some of the issues were systemic and would require significant time, effort and funds to address. To date, except for property and evidence, TPD has been effective in addressing the issues and completing the objectives as stated in the audit.

The first issue addressed in report #9706 related to systems weaknesses in the Computer Aided Dispatch/ Records Management System (CAD/RMS). The CAD/RMS in use by the City did not interface with the mobile data computers (MDCs). We noted that the CAD/RMS may not meet the City's future needs and should be evaluated for possible upgrade or replacement. We also noted that major changes to contracts did not go through the proper approval process.

The second area identified for improvement was records management. We noted several issues including: duplicate records, inefficiencies in report processing, backlog of reports for input, and possible issuance of incomplete prior arrest reports. Other areas for improvement included the need for a monthly productivity report, implementation of

an imaging system, monitoring of “pool vehicle” usage, and evaluation of the fee structure for copies provided.

The final area where improvements could be made was the property and evidence section. The audit noted problems with the timely disposal of evidence. The inventory process and the management of items in property and evidence also needed improvement.

Purpose

Report #9706

The purpose of report #9706 was to evaluate the various programs within the division and identify opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes within those programs.

Report #0005

The purpose of this report is to follow up on report #9706, Audit of the General Services Division of Tallahassee Police Department, issued March 10, 1998.

Scope, Objectives, and Methodology

Report #9706

The scope of the audit was a review of the Department's Records Unit and Property and Evidence Section. The focus was on fiscal year 1997. Our audit objective was to identify areas where there could be improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

The above audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests

of the records and other auditing procedures as were considered necessary.

The methodology used for the audit involved interviewing key staff, documenting the major processes, analyzing program data, and confirming results with the audit liaison.

Report #0005

This report is the last follow up that will be performed on report #9706 and closes out that project. The purpose of this audit is to report on the progress and/or status of Department efforts to implement recommended action plan steps. In addition, this close-out report formally transfers certain unresolved issues to the Department for its follow up, review, and disposition. To verify and validate reported progress, we conducted interviews with key department staff and reviewed and examined supporting documentation.

Background

The General Services division provides support to the Tallahassee Police Department for records management, property and evidence, fleet management, and identification. The primary functions of the division are acting as the central repository for all records and statistical information maintained by the department, collecting and preserving physical evidence, and warehousing items held in evidence. The division had a staff of 41 in 1997, and its FY '97 expenditures were \$1.7 million. As a result of departmental reorganization in January 1998, five positions were transferred out of the division. Report #9706 focused on the division's Records Unit (RU) that had a staff of 20.5 and Property and Evidence (P&E) section that had a staff of seven.

The Records Unit is responsible for maintaining police report information in the department's records management system (RMS). The Uniform Crime Report, a statistical report required by the Florida Department of Law

Enforcement, is generated semi-annually for designated crimes. The types of crimes reported include murder, robbery, burglary, larceny/theft, arson, embezzlement, and fraud offenses. The RMS provides the information for this reporting. Police activity is documented on offense reports by officers in the field and input into the RMS. In addition, the RMS provides supplemental reports that are generated throughout the department to provide additional case information or to close out cases.

The Property and Evidence section is responsible for receiving, logging, maintaining, and distributing property and evidence. The section must also ensure that an accurate inventory of property/evidence is maintained until it is disposed of according to Department Policy, accreditation standard #84, State Statutes and/or City Ordinances.

Previous Conditions and Current Status

Report #9706 identified three broad areas in the division for improvement: systems issues, records management, and property and evidence.

The current status of tasks due is as follows:

Tasks Due and Completed by Department			
Responsible Department	# of Tasks Due by 3/31/00	# of Tasks Complete	Percent Complete
Information Services	15	15	100.00%
Police	45	41	91.11%
Procurement Services	1	1	100.00%
Totals	61	57	93.44%

The previous condition and current status of issues is shown in Table 1, as follows:

Table 1	
Conditions Identified in Report #9706 and Current Status	
Previous Condition	Current Status
Information Technology (System) Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no interface between mobile data computers and the CAD/RMS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A limited interface has been established. The mobile data computers can now query FCIC and NCIC for a limited number of items. The Department continues to desire an increased level of access to the CAD/RMS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decision needed to be made on replacing versus upgrading CAD/RMS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The decision has been made to replace the current CAD/RMS system, and the acquisition process has begun on the new system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the Motorola and Omnicom, Inc., contracts did not go through the proper approval process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Management has implemented procedures to ensure that the City policies are followed. Additional training was also provided to project managers.
Records Management Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplicate records in the RMS master name file should be merged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Management made the decision that the problems associated with duplicate records in the master file did not justify the costs and other potential problems that may arise as a result of merging and converting data. This condition will no longer be monitored by the Office of the City Auditor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing of police reports should be streamlined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Management has streamlined the processing of reports to the extent possible with the current infrastructure.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monthly productivity (activity tracking) report should be revised and used as a management tool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The report has been modified to enable management to use the report as an effective management tool.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A plan should be developed for implementing imaging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Management made the decision to utilize EDMS that has been established by the Treasurer/Clerk's Office and is already in place. If the usage by TPD creates the need for an upgrade to EDMS, TPD will be responsible for the associated costs. Imaging is currently in the pilot project stage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage of police "pool vehicles" should be monitored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The form used to "log out" pool vehicles was modified to enable the monitoring of usage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fee structure for copies should be re-evaluated against the City's Administrative Policy 206. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Management reviewed the policy and determined that the policy provides for an exemption of TPD. Management did agree that a tracking system should be implemented to determine the amount of revenue that could be realized.

Property and Evidence Issues	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Property and Evidence section should ensure that inventory is disposed of in a timely manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X At this time, the condition has not been resolved and will no longer be monitored by the Office of the City Auditor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inventory process should be improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X At this time, the condition has not been resolved and will no longer be monitored by the Office of the City Auditor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory management of property and evidence should be improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X At this time, the condition has not been resolved and will no longer be monitored by the Office of the City Auditor.

Table Legend:

- Issue addressed in the original audit
- ⇒ Issue sub-components

- ✓ Issue addressed and resolved
- X** Issue not resolved

Significant Outstanding Issues

The problems identified in the area of property and evidence have not been successfully resolved. Management is aware of the problems and has realized that the problems are systemic. It is management's expectation that the problems will be resolved by December 2000.

There is currently an ongoing project to acquire a new CAD/RMS system. This project is, at the time of the issuance of this report, in the planning/needs determination phase. It is management's intention to have this project address and further resolve these remaining issues.

The CAD/RMS acquisition project is a long term project with implementation estimated for the end of 2001.

We appreciate the assistance from the Tallahassee Police Department in the follow up close-out.

Appointed Official Response

City Manager's Response: I appreciate your review of the business processes in the General Services Division of the Police Department. Chief McNeil has indicated to me that your staff provided excellent suggestions for process improvements and is confident the audit has added value to the Police Department's goal of always providing quality service to our citizens. Chief McNeil will be responsible for implementing the three remaining recommendations in the Property/Evidence Section when the CAD/RMS project is completed.

Copies of this Final Audit Follow Up or audit report #9706 may be obtained via request by telephone (850 / 891-8397), by FAX (850 / 891-0912), by mail or in person (City Auditor, 300 S. Adams Street, Mail Box A-22, Tallahassee, FL 32301-1731), or by e-mail (dooleym@mail.ci.tlh.fl.us).

Final Audit Follow Up conducted by:
 Dennis R. Sutton, CPA, Senior Auditor
 Sam M. McCall, CPA, CIA, CGFM, City Auditor