

**POST AUDIT REVIEW OF
FIRE RESCUE'S CONTROLLED
SUBSTANCES, MEDICAL RECORDS, AND
EQUIPMENT**

PAR20-02



WEST PALM BEACH

Internal Audit

**City of West Palm Beach
Internal Auditor's Office**

**Beverly Mahaso Esq., CIA, CFE
Chief Internal Auditor
February 6, 2020**

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Audit Committee
City of West Palm Beach
401 Clematis Street
West Palm Beach, Florida

**RE: POST AUDIT REVIEW OF FIRE RESCUE'S CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES,
MEDICAL RECORDS, AND EQUIPMENT REPORT NO. AUD18-02**

Dear Audit Committee Members:

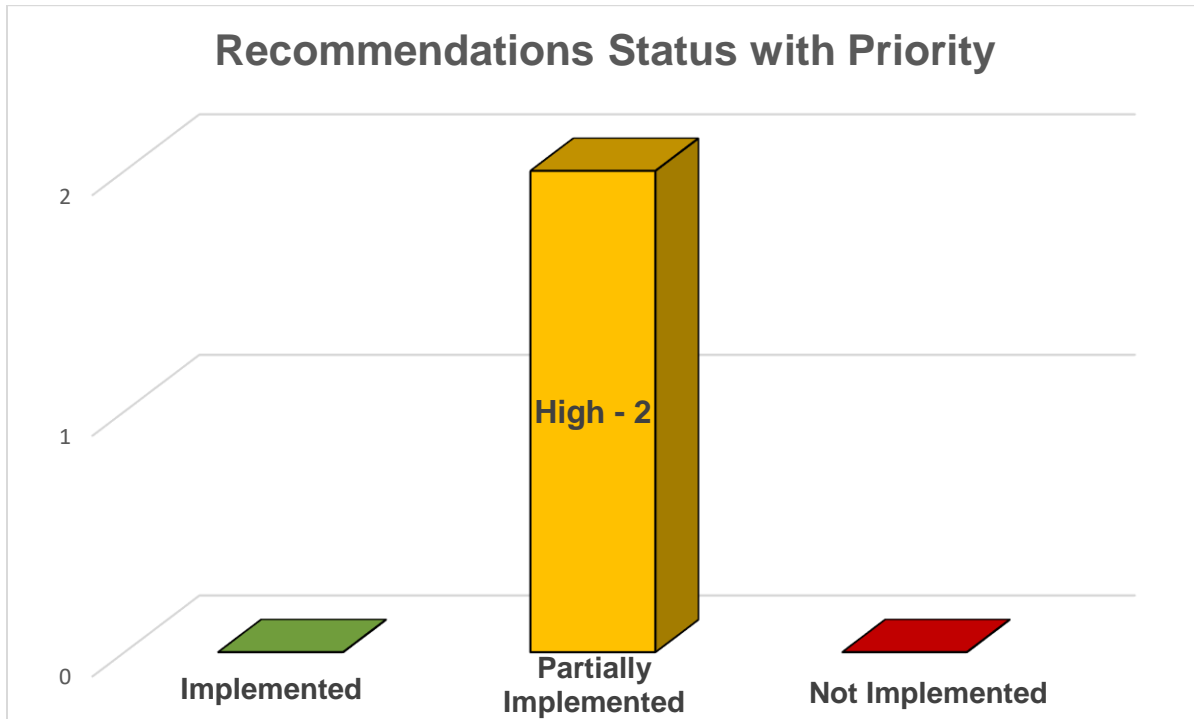
In FY2018, the Internal Auditor's Office released an audit of Fire Rescue's Controlled Substances, Medical Records, and Equipment. We performed certain procedures, as enumerated below, with respect to activities of the Fire Department in order to render a conclusion on the status of the recommendations made as a result of that review.

This Post Audit Review (PAR) consisted primarily of inquiries of City personnel and examinations of various supporting documentation. It was substantially less in scope than an audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

The evidence obtained provided a reasonable basis for our conclusions; however, had an audit been performed, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you and our conclusions may have been modified.

The audit contained two (2) recommendations that addressed the audit's findings. Based on the review performed, we concluded that both recommendations were partially implemented.

We have enclosed a table listing all the recommendations with the current statuses. We found that management made significant efforts to take corrective action. Further, we note that the Fire Department is actively continuing to make improvements. As such, additional steps may have been taken to implement the recommendations after the conclusion of this Post Audit Review. We will conduct another Post Audit Review in approximately 6 to 12 months, resources permitting, at which time we will review all additional changes made after the conclusion of this Post Audit Review.



We thank the personnel at the Fire Department for their assistance in conducting this review and on continuing implementation efforts.

Respectfully Submitted,

s/ Beverly Mahaso
 Chief Internal Auditor

cc:

Christina Lambert, Commission President
 Kelly Shoaf, Commissioner
 Cory Neering, Commissioner
 Richard Ryles, Commissioner
 Joseph Peduzzi, Commissioner

Keith James, Mayor
 Faye Johnson, City Administrator
 Diana Matty, Fire Chief

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Legend
■ Implemented
■ Partially Implemented
■ Not Implemented

AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

No.	Auditor's Condition and Recommendation	Management's Response	Management's Status Update
1 High Priority	<p>Condition: The EMS Division is responsible for the purchase, storage, administration, and disposal of all controlled substances utilized by the West Palm Beach Fire Rescue Department. Both suppression and rescue apparatus carry controlled substances, as well as other lifesaving medications. We reviewed the controls in place over the inventory life-cycle process and noted that the entire system remains paper-based, with current controlled substance logs maintained and carried on each apparatus, and prior month's logs remaining back at EMS' Administrative Base. In FY18, a request for an electronic inventory system was deferred to FY19. We were not provided with documentation for any routine audits, or surprise counts performed of either the controlled substances, or general medication</p>	<p>Paper based inventory system - Management agrees with the implementation of an electronic inventory system. The EMS Division spent the past year working on the cumbersome transition to the paperless EMS report system, SafetyPAD. We will begin research of an electronic system as soon as the new budget year begins on October 1, 2018. We agree that it would improve tracking controls.</p>	<p>Management Update January 2020</p> <p>Partially Implemented</p> <p>The Fire Department is currently looking into a software for an electronic inventory system. Additional research is being performed to determine if current software can be configured to provide a more electronic process for orders, distribution, and inventory reconciliations.</p> <p>Target Implementation Date – December 2020</p>

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	<p>inventory within the Department. During our visits to all 9 City Fire Stations, we determined that in order to protect against expiration dates, some controlled substances are transferred from the suppression to the rescue apparatus, as the rescues will use the medications first, which adds to the challenge of tracking inventory.</p> <p>Recommendation: The Department should evaluate and consider the implementation of an inventory system that will enable EMS management to track all medications, including controlled substances, in a manner which ensures accountability and transparency. Ideally, an electronic system would greatly improve controls and tracking of controlled substances.</p>		
2 High Priority	<p>Condition: The EMS Division is responsible for the ordering and securing of controlled substance medications used in the pre-hospital setting. As part of our review, we requested copies of the DEA Form 222, which is utilized for ordering</p>	<p>Reconciliation of Inventory - Management will ensure that periodic reconciliations between supplies on hand and SafetyPad Data are conducted. We will create a schedule</p>	<p>Management Update January 2020</p> <p>Partially Implemented</p> <p>The Fire Department made updates to the Controlled Substance Vehicle Logs and in 2019 SafetyPAD was</p>

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	<p>controlled substances. After review of three completed forms, we noted that the forms appeared to be incomplete: the National Drug Code information was not entered, information was blank for the number of packages received, and the date of receipt was not stated. We were not provided with any inventory records showing at what points re-orders were done of the controlled substances and how those records were reconciled with the actual usage and waste of controlled substances records per SafetyPAD, or the paper-based system utilized on the apparatus. We requested information from the SafetyPAD system for controlled substances and other specialty medications administered for the period January 2017 – June 2018. There were 665 instances of administration of controlled substance medications and specialized medications carried only by the EMS Captains. Our review of SafetyPAD data showed that there were no signatures by hospital personnel of any controlled substances waste by the</p>	<p>in addition to ensuring that crews obtain hospital signatures when appropriate. Preparation of the schedule and training analysis will commence on October 1, 2018.</p>	<p>updated so that a witness could sign for controlled substance waste.</p> <p>Fire is currently looking into a software for an electronic inventory system and additional research is being performed to determine if current software can be configured to provide a more electronic process for orders, reconciliations, and distribution.</p> <p>Target Implementation Date – December 2020</p>
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	<p>receiving hospital for the patient. In addition, the chronology of the calls, and required signatures did not follow a consistent pattern. We also reviewed the Controlled Substance Vehicle Logs in use as of August 7, 2018 and noted that the logs in use appear to pre-date the revision of the Administrative Policy in 2017, as they are dated 2016. Therefore, they do not include critical information that would allow for a reconciliation such as: run (call) number, date, time, amount of medication administered, or amount of wasted medication.</p> <p>Recommendation: The Department should initiate a system of periodic inventory reconciliations between supplies on hand and SafetyPAD data of medications administered.</p>		
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