



Waller County

ALAN YOUNTS

COUNTY AUDITOR

April 4, 2017

The Honorable Carbett "Trey" J. Duhon III, County Judge and
Members of the Commissioners' Court

Gentlemen:

Subject: Waller County Sheriff's Department Firearm Tracking System Audit

I am pleased to attach the report and the Sheriff's response for an audit requested by the Waller County Sheriff to review the Waller County Sheriff's Department (WCSD) firearm tracking system. The audit began on December 12, 2016 and concluded with the receipt of the Sheriff's response on March 29, 2017.

The WCSD should be commended for their cooperation, assistance and prompt responses during this audit. The WCSD plan indicates full acceptance of all six recommendations in our report.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan R. Younts

Waller County Auditor

Attachments: Waller County Sheriff's Office Firearm Tracking System Audit
Response Letter, R. Glenn Smith, Waller County Sheriff



Waller County

ALAN YOUNTS

COUNTY AUDITOR

March 17, 2017

The Honorable R. Glenn Smith
Waller County Sheriff
701 Calvit Street
Hempstead, Texas 77445

Dear Sheriff Smith,

I am pleased to send you this report for an audit requested by the Waller County Sheriff's Office (WCSD) that included a physical inventory of county owned weapons, a review of the internal controls in place and the reconciliation of prior inventory lists to current revised lists.

The WCSD should be commended for their cooperation, assistance and prompt responses during this review.

I have included recommendations that if implemented should strengthen the WCSD's ability to account for and track county owned firearms. Before I release the report to the Waller County Commissioners' Court please provide a written response to my recommendations.

I want to personally thank you and your staff for the opportunity to serve you in this capacity and I am available to discuss this material with you individually at your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan R. Younts".

Alan R. Younts

Waller County Auditor

Overview

This report is the result of a request made by the Waller County Sheriff to review the Waller County Sheriff's Department (WCSD) firearm tracking system. The main objectives of this audit were to:

- Inventory the current firearms owned by the WCSD and create an auditor weapons inventory list to compare to the WCSD inventory list.
- Determine if internal controls over firearm tracking were adequate to ensure WCSD firearms are accounted for and properly tracked.
- Reconcile a prior weapon list prepared by WCSD to list compiled at actual physical inventory.

This report includes background information to assist the reader in understanding WCSD firearm tracking controls and processes. The body of this report consists of observations and recommendations.

Results in Brief

There were no written internal controls in place to track WCSD firearms. This report has identified opportunities to improve accountability, modernize processes, enhance controls and reduce the potential for loss and misuse of county assets.

Our recommendations are summarized below. We commend the WCSD efforts for already having implemented some of these since the initial request of this review.

- Perform a physical inventory of all firearms at least once a year conducted by WCSD personnel.
- Select an industry software system to track firearms that includes adequate security and audit trail functionality.
- Develop written firearm tracking policies and educate and communicate expectations to all WCSD personnel.
- Perform a physical inventory of all firearms at least once a year conducted by the Waller County Auditor's office (WCAO) and reconcile the WCSD firearm inventory list to the WCAO firearm inventory list.

- Create a transaction worksheet for every firearm transaction approved by those who are identified in the new written policy as responsible for approving all transactions. These transactions should include purchases, sales; trade-in's and transfers (transfers to and from inventory (safe) or transfers from employee to employee). A copy of each transaction worksheet must be sent to the WCAO when completed and as soon as practical.
- Corrections or revisions to the firearm inventory list should be made as soon as practical to ensure that any WCSD registered firearm can be located and retrieved as necessary.

Background

It is the responsibility of the WCSD to ensure the efficient distribution and safe operation of all WCSD weapons and equipment. It is also the responsibility of the WCSD to track firearms owned and used by WCSD personnel.

Prior to the request by the Waller County Sheriff, I could find no record of a prior firearm audit/inventory that had ever been conducted by the WCAO. In addition, we determined that there were no written internal controls or policies in existence at the time of the audit. These facts led to the above listed audit objectives.

Currently, the WCSD uses Excel to keep track of their weapons and it is the responsibility of Major Joe Hester to update the worksheet as transactions dictate. In the past few months Major Hester had conducted an internal review of the weapon inventory list and had updated the list prior to the dates scheduled for the joint inventory that included the WCSD and the WCAO.

Objective 1

On December 12-14th the WCSD and the WCAO conducted an inventory of weapons in inventory and assigned to WCSD employees. All weapons were brought to the conference room at the Sheriff's office and the auditor's staff compiled a list of all the weapons that were presented to us. We filled out individual transaction sheets that included all pertinent information for future inventories. All transaction sheets were signed by the employee, Major Hester and the County Auditor. This action allowed the WCAO staff to prepare an independent list of weapons in inventory and assigned to employees. This list includes employee name, brand, model, serial number and date purchased/vendor if that information was readily available. Auditing when/where the weapons were purchased were not ever considered in the scope of this inventory. If the new internal controls are approved then future audits can include this audit step.

Conclusion:

WCAO staff then compared our newly created list of weapons to the updated list that Major Hester provided and reconciled the differences. As of December 16, 2016, the WCSO had 223 weapons. There were 187 weapons assigned to staff and 36 in inventory.

Objective 2

The WCAO interviewed the Sheriff and staff and concluded that there were no internal controls in place prior to the request to review the WCSO firearm tracking system. This resulted in inventory lists that were not updated because frequent physical inventories of weapons were not conducted. This could potentially result in loss, theft and/or misuse of WCSO firearms.

Conclusion:

WCAO has offered recommendations to strengthen internal controls to track ALL weapon transactions. Again, I would like to commend the Sheriff and his staff for making some changes before we conducted our review.

Objective 3

The final step was to reconcile the differences between the WCSO original weapon list received by the WCAO in February/March, 2016 and the revised WCSO weapon list that Major Hester had prepared after his internal review.

Conclusion:

WCAO staff compared the WCSO original weapon list to the revised WCSO weapon list that Major Hester provided and reconciled all the differences.



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF WALLER COUNTY

701 Calvit Street • Hempstead, Texas 77445-4699
979 / 826-8282 • 281 / 391-8755 • FAX 979 / 826-7781



R. GLENN SMITH
Sheriff

CRAIG DAVIS
Chief Deputy

March 29, 2017

Alan R. Younts
Auditor
Waller County

Auditor & Staff,

I want to first thank you and staff for taking on this task, I know it was not the "norm", but as always your office was up for the task at hand.

I totally agree with your recommendations and as you referred to, some have already been established. All six are almost complete and I am happy to report that the Sheriff's Office has an IT advisor, along with a Reserve Captain, that have developed a software system that includes all personnel info, along with equipment issued. This software includes a complete weapon inventory, as well as a one click audit function at any time. It will be used to coincide with a transactional worksheet and firearm inventory. The really good news is the program will be donated to the county in the very near future from the newly created Waller County Sheriff's Office Foundation. You will be invited to inspect the system in the next couple of weeks.

Again, thank you and staff. The Sheriff's Office looks forward to completely implementing all recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Glenn Smith".

R. Glenn Smith
Sheriff
Waller County