

**POST AUDIT REPORT
FIRE RESCUE'S CONTROLLED
SUBSTANCES, MEDICAL RECORDS,
AND EQUIPMENT
PAR22-03**



WEST PALM BEACH

Internal Audit

June 29, 2022

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

Beverly Mahaso Esq., CIA, CFE
Chief Internal Auditor

June 29, 2022

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

**RE: POST AUDIT REPORT OF FIRE RESCUES'S CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES,
MEDICAL RECORDS, AND EQUIPMENT (PAR22-03)**

Dear Audit Committee Members:

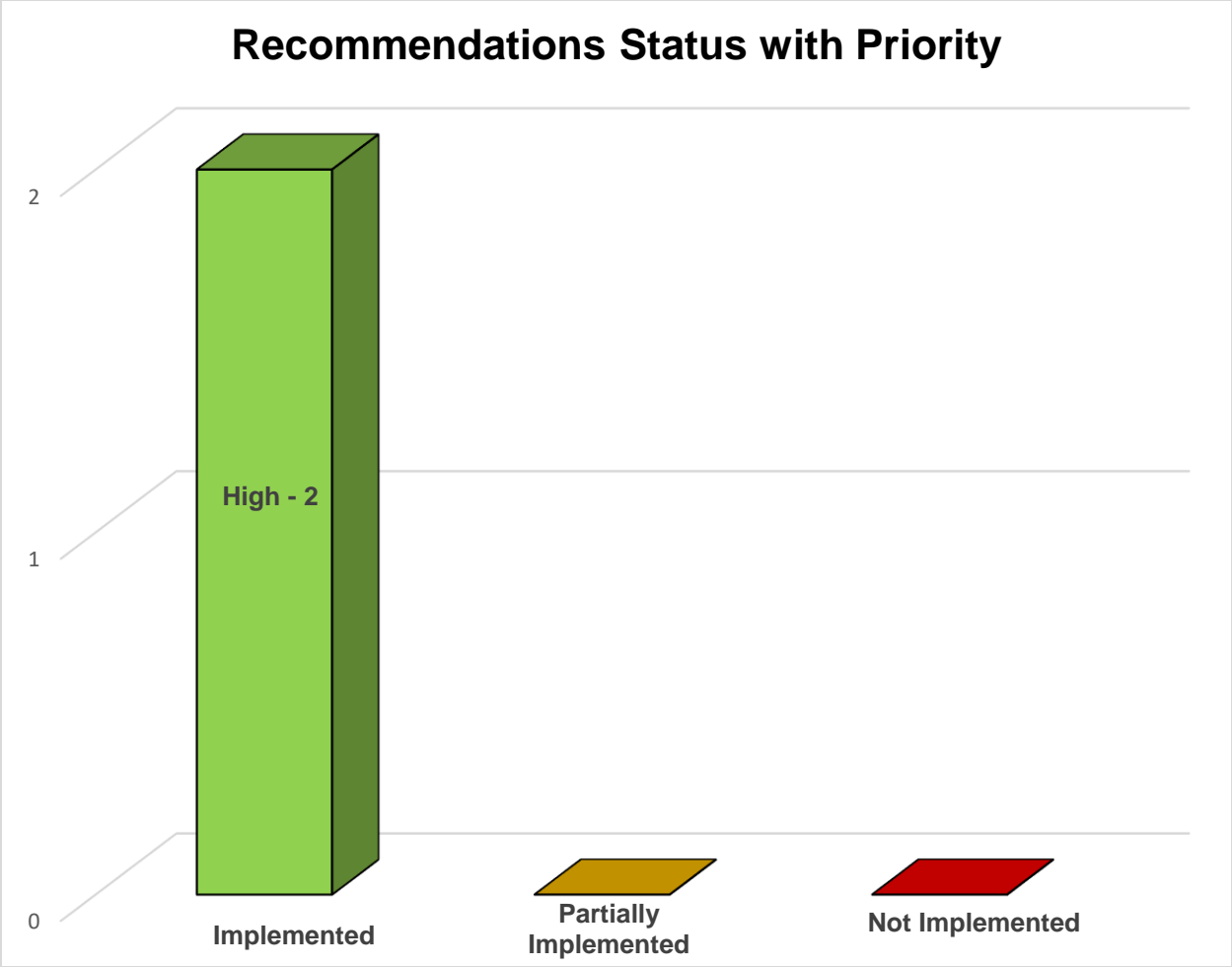
In FY 2018, the Internal Auditor's Office released an audit of Fire Rescue's Controlled Substances, Medical Records, and Equipment (**AUD18-02**). We performed certain procedures, as enumerated below, with respect to activities of the Fire Department in order to render a conclusion on the status of the recommendations made as a result of that review.

This Post Audit Report (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. Upon completion of this PAR, we concluded that both recommendations were implemented.

We have enclosed a table listing all the recommendations with the current statuses.



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

Respectfully Submitted,

s/ Beverly Mahaso
 Chief Internal Auditor

- cc:
- Christy Fox, Commission President
 - Cathleen Ward, Commissioner
 - Christina Lambert, Commissioner
 - Shalonda Warren, Commissioner
 - Joseph Peduzzi, Commissioner

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

Encl.

POST AUDIT REPORT

FIRE RESCUE'S CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, MEDICAL RECORDS, AND EQUIPMENT

Legend
■ Implemented
■ Partially Implemented
■ Not Implemented

AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

No.	Auditor's Condition and Recommendation	Management's Response and Update	Auditor'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 inventory within the Department. During our visits to all 9 City Fire Stations, we determined that in order to protect against expiration</p>	<p>Managements Initial Response - 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>January 2020 - Partially Implemented The Fire Department is currently looking into a software for an electronic inventory system. Additional research is being performed to determine if the current software can be configured to provide a more electronic process for orders, distribution, and inventory reconciliations.</p>	<p>AUDITOR'S STATUS UPDATE IMPLEMENTED JUNE 2022 Based on the review we conducted, we found that sufficient corrective actions were taken to implement this recommendation. The Fire Department EMS has implemented a paperless, electronic inventory tracking system for controlled substances and medications. The system provides a full chain of custody and integrates with a database for managing and tracking medications including controlled substances.</p>

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	<p>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>		
<p style="text-align: center;">2 High Priority</p>	<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 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,</p>	<p>Managements Initial Response - Reconciliation of Inventory - Management will ensure that periodic reconciliations between supplies on hand and SafetyPad Data are conducted. We will create a schedule 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>AUDITOR'S STATUS UPDATE IMPLEMENTED JUNE 2022 Based on the review we conducted, we found that sufficient corrective actions were taken to implement this recommendation. The Fire Department EMS has implemented a paperless, electronic inventory tracking system for controlled substances and medications. The system provides a full chain of custody and integrates with a database for managing and tracking medications including controlled substances. Further, the inventory system alerts management</p>

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<p>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 substance waste by the 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.</p>	<p>January 2020 - Partially Implemented</p> <p>The Fire Department made updates to the Controlled Substance Vehicle Logs and in 2019 SafetyPAD was updated so that a witness could sign for controlled substance waste. Fire is currently looking into a software for an electronic inventory system and additional research is being performed to determine if the current software can be configured to provide a more electronic process for orders, reconciliations, and distribution.</p>	<p>when there are discrepancies during inventory reconciliations.</p>
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	<p>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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