

Memorandum

To: Chief Anthony W. Batts

From: Captain Anthony Toribio, Inspector General

Date: December 14, 2010

Subject: **Audit of Mobile Data Terminals**

On November 15, 2010, the Audit and Inspections Unit of the Office of the Inspector General initiated its seventh annual audit of the Department's use of Mobile Data Terminals (MDT). The purpose was to examine the content of car-to-car message transmissions and ensure that user-generated messages do not violate Department policy, or local and/or federal laws.

The audit team interviewed Information Technology staff and reviewed the content of MDT data logs and user generated messages.



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LEAD AUDITOR
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PURPOSE

On November 15, 2010, the Audit and Inspections Unit (Audit Unit) of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) initiated its seventh annual audit of the Department's use of Mobile Data Terminals (MDT). The purpose was to examine the content of car-to-car message transmissions and ensure that user-generated messages do not violate Department policy, or local and/or federal laws.

BACKGROUND

The NSA requires the Department to conduct annual audits of MDT traffic, i.e., the in-car computers used for warrant checks, stolen vehicle inquiries and mobile messaging. The Department's policy on MDT usage is covered by Department General Order I-1, "Personal Computers and Electronic Messaging Devices" published July 1, 2009, and Department General Order I-13, "Mobile Data Computer System," published October 26, 2001. An Information Bulletin, "Use of Mobile Data Terminals," was published on February 16, 2005. The Department also issued Special Order 8967 on December 3, 2008, directing the Information Technology Unit (ITU) to archive MDT transmissions for the duration of the Negotiated Settlement Agreement.

The Bureau of Field Operations assigned a sergeant in the administrative section as the Mobile Data System Manager (MDSM). The MDSM, with the assistance of ITU staff, is responsible for the monitoring and archiving of the MDT transmissions. The 2009 annual audit conducted by OIG found that none of the messages reviewed contained inappropriate language or language that violated policy.

METHODOLOGY

The OIG randomly selected three months in 2010 to review MDT transmissions. The months chosen included March, June, and September, a total of 91 days were reviewed.

All car-to-car messages were sent via the MDT system and each message contained the officer's name, the date, and the time. The messages were logged into the Radix servers' database by sequential order and name; this enabled the OIG to confirm that no messages were lost during the audit. There were 84 individual messages transmitted in the 91 days covered by this audit. All 84 messages were reviewed. Messages were reviewed for inappropriate language (i.e., discriminatory or inflammatory words/statements and profanity) and lengthy conversations that were not work-related.

Finally, the MDSM and ITU staff member responsible for MDT transmissions were interviewed.

FINDINGS

There were 84 individual messages transmitted in the 91 days covered by this audit, with an average of less than one (0.92) transmission per day. The number of daily transmissions was lower than the number found in the 2009 audit, which was 1.21 transmissions per day.

During this audit period, only 56 members/employees transmitted car-to-car messages. None of the messages reviewed were found to contain inappropriate language, wording that constitutes a policy violation, or lengthy conversations unrelated to work.

The MDSM, with the assistance of the ITU staff, is responsible for monitoring and archiving MDT transmissions. The ITU downloads MDT transmission reports monthly to the secure “MDT” shared drive, which can only be accessed by authorized personnel. The MDSM utilizes the “MDT” shared drive to review the monthly reports and takes appropriate action if necessary. On completion of the monthly review, the MDSM sends an email memorandum to the OIG documenting the date of review and findings. The ITU retains the reports on the “MDT” shared drive for a period of five years.