

**TAMPA CONVENTION CENTER  
OPERATIONS  
AUDIT 25-02  
JANUARY 9, 2025**



# City of Tampa

*Jane Castor, Mayor*

## Internal Audit Department

315 E. Kennedy Boulevard  
Tampa, Florida 33602  
Office (813) 274-7159

January 9, 2025

Honorable Jane Castor  
Mayor, City of Tampa  
1 City Hall Plaza  
Tampa, Florida

RE: Tampa Convention Center - Operations, Audit 25-02

Dear Mayor Castor:

Attached is the Internal Audit Department's report on Tampa Convention Center - Operations.

The Operations and Security Divisions (Divisions) have already taken positive actions in response to our recommendations. We thank the management and staff of both Divisions for their cooperation and assistance during this audit.

Sincerely,

/s/ Christine Glover

Christine Glover  
Internal Audit Director

cc: John Bennett, Chief of Staff  
Abbye Feeley, Administrator for Development and Economic Opportunity  
Dennis Rogero, Chief Financial Officer  
David Ingram, Executive Director of Tampa Convention Center  
Jim Olachea, Facility Operations Manager, Tampa Convention Center  
Chase Finch, Facility Security Manager  
Megan Birnholz-Couture, Assistant City Attorney

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/s/ Angela Mitchell

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Auditor

/s/ Vivian Walker

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Lead Senior Auditor

/s/ Christine Glover

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Audit Director

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**BACKGROUND**

Tampa Convention Center (TCC) Operations and Security Divisions are vital in ensuring the smooth and secure functioning of a variety of events, from corporate meetings to trade shows, and community gatherings. The Operations Division is responsible for managing day-to-day activities, including the setup and breakdown of event spaces, coordinating with vendors, maintaining the facility, and overseeing the guest experience. They ensure all technical and logistical needs are met to support a wide range of events from corporate conferences to entertainment shows.

The TCC Security Division focuses on protecting guest, staff, and assets by implementing safety protocols, conducting risk assessments, and monitoring access points. The Security Division is trained to handle emergencies, respond to incidents, and enforce safety measures to create a secure environment for all attendees. Together, these Divisions form a cohesive support system that enables TCC to deliver high quality, safe, and enjoyable experiences for their guests.

**STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

This audit was conducted in accordance with the Internal Audit Department's FY 2025 Audit Agenda. The objectives of this audit were to ensure that:

1. The system of internal controls related to TCC Operations is adequate.
2. Practices, related to TCC Operations' work order process, are in compliance with the current standard operating procedures (SOP).
3. To determine if TCC Security is adequate.

**STATEMENT OF SCOPE**

The audit period covered TCC Operations activity that occurred from October 1, 2023, to September 30, 2024. Tests were performed to determine whether personnel were fulfilling their stated duties and responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner. The information, generated by the WebTMA7 software, was assessed during this audit and deemed to be reliable. Work order samples were selected using an Excel generated random number generator and the criteria of 90% confidence and 10% error rate. Original records as well as copies were used as evidence and verified through observation and physical examination.

The subject matter of certain information covered in this audit is confidential in nature, and thus specific details of certain deficiencies are not disclosed. This exemption from Florida Statute (F.S.) Chapter 119, Public Records, is addressed under F.S. 281.301 (Statute), Security systems; records and meetings exempt from public access or disclosure. These confidential matters have been reported to Management.

## **STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY**

The following steps were performed to accomplish our audit objectives:

1. Engaged with supervisors and staff involved in the work order process to understand their roles and perspective on operational efficiency.
2. Reviewed work order relevant documentation and the technology system used in managing daily operations to assess compliance with established protocols.
3. Observed the end-to-end work order operational process from request initiation to completion to evaluate workflow, prioritization, and communication between departments.
4. Engaged with Security staff to understand operational challenges and to gain insight into daily processes and existing procedures.
5. Conducted an assessment of access control systems and security camera operations, verifying placement and functionality.
6. Examined security logs, access control records, and maintenance documentation to assess compliance with established protocols.
7. Performed physical walkthroughs of sensitive and key areas of the facility to evaluate access control points and the effectiveness of surveillance coverage.
8. Ascertained that there are no relevant performance metrics being reported by Management.

## **STATEMENT OF AUDITING STANDARDS**

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

## **NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

TCC won gold in the 2024 Northstar Stella Awards for Best Convention Center of the Southeast, United States Region for the second consecutive year. The Northstar Stella Awards recognizes and honors excellence in the meeting industry, highlighting achievements in food, sustainability, and event experience.

## **AUDIT CONCLUSIONS**

Based upon the test work performed and the audit findings noted below, we conclude that:

1. The system of internal controls related to TCC Operations could be improved.

2. Practices, related to TCC Operations' work order process, are in compliance with the current SOP.
3. TCC Security could be improved.

## **INVENTORY SPECIALIST POSITION (REPEAT FINDING)**

**STATEMENT OF CONDITION:** The inventory and its records are not being regularly maintained to ensure accuracy and operational efficiency. TCC Operations Division (Division) does not have a dedicated Inventory Specialist (IS) to oversee and manage the inventory processes and system related to inventory management. The Division lacks a consistent process for managing inventory once equipment, tools, parts, or other instruments are purchased and received.

Currently, seven Supervisors have purchase cards, allowing them to procure products for their technicians. However, there are no written procedures in place to track how these items are stored, used, or returned. This makes it difficult to determine whether a Technician has used a part, had to return it, or kept excess parts elsewhere.

**CRITERIA:** The Division should have a designated IS to fulfill inventory management obligations. According to the SOP, Inventory/Stock Management, states, “Inventory is procured and managed by the IS using the Facility Dude (FD) Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS).” The IS job description states “The role oversees and/or performs activities involving the receipt, verification, inventory, issuance, and delivery of various supplies, parts, materials, instruments, tools, and equipment; maintains inventories and requisitions materials as needed.”

**CAUSE:** In the past, the Division has had the IS position filled, but due to retirement, turnover, and other unforeseen circumstances that took priority, the position has been vacant for an extended period. Additionally, there may have been insufficient prioritization of inventory management within Operations.

**EFFECT OF CONDITION:** Not having a dedicated IS to manage the inventory process effectively can lead to accountability issues, disrupt operations, and service delivery. Without standardized processes, inventory handling is prone to errors, which could result in difficulty and inaccurate tracking of inventory, potential misplaced, and unaccounted for items leading to stock level discrepancies.

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Management should ensure the hiring process continues and consider back-up cover by implementing cross-training to staff to provide service of inventory management if the primary IS is unavailable. In the interim, Management should consider hiring a temporary IS to manage inventory processes during transitional phases. Also, Management should ensure the SOP is updated to include new inventory tracking, processes, and system utilization. The inventory management processes should be standardized, accurate, and meet organizational needs.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:** Facility Dude Computerized Maintenance System has been replaced recently with the City of Tampa (COT) preferred WebTMA (Computerized Maintenance System). Implementation began on October 1, 2024. This new Work Order system will be a large portion of our new inventory management program by adding parts used for each work order. It has a listing of our inventory and Bar Coding and other Inventory

protocols will be available through it. We advertised for the Inventory Specialist and received over 180 qualified candidates. We had to go through HR to send out an additional questionnaire to narrow the field for interviews, and we got the list narrowed down to 83. We then put specific information onto a spreadsheet and using scoring sheet, narrowed the list down to 19. Then we sent out an email with additional questions (approved by HR) and narrowed it down to 9 for in-person interviews. After 1<sup>st</sup> round interviews, we narrowed our list down to 3 candidates by using a scoring system. We completed 2<sup>nd</sup> round interviews this week. We will be contacting some of the references and hope to make a choice very soon.

TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE: June 30, 2025