

**TAMPA FIRE RESCUE  
AIRPORT DIVISION  
AUDIT 21-15  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2021**



# City of Tampa

*Jane Castor, Mayor*

## Internal Audit Department

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

September 17, 2021

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

RE: Tampa Fire Rescue – Airport Division, Audit 21-15

Dear Mayor Castor:

Attached is the Internal Audit Department's report on the Tampa Fire Rescue – Airport Division. Tampa Fire Rescue (TFR) employees have already taken positive actions in response to our recommendation. We thank the management and staff of TFR for their support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

/s/ Christine Glover

Christine Glover  
Internal Audit Director

cc: John Bennett, Chief of Staff  
Dennis Rogero, Chief Financial Officer  
Barbara Tripp, Fire Chief  
Oren Hanson, Airport Fire Chief  
Brian Morrison, Assistant City Attorney

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*/s/ Vivian N Walker*

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Senior Auditor

*/s/ Christine Glover*

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Audit Director

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**BACKGROUND**

The Hillsborough County Aviation Authority (HCAA) is required by federal regulation to provide Aircraft Rescue Firefighting (ARFF) on its premises as one of the conditions for certification. To comply with this requirement for certification, HCAA has an agreement, with the City of Tampa (City), to provide these services through its Airport Division (Division).

The original agreement with the HCAA was dated June 1990, amended in June 1998 and revised as of July 2021. All versions of the agreement require the City to provide the manpower for operating the fire station located on the grounds of the Tampa International Airport. Additionally, the 2021 version requires the HCAA to not only reimburse the City for salaries and other related benefits, but to also provide or reimburse the City for supplies and equipment.

The Division is required to comply with Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) regulations and City of Tampa policies and procedures. There is an annual FAA inspection.

**STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES**

This audit was conducted in accordance with the Internal Audit Department's FY 2021 Audit Agenda. The objectives of this audit were to ensure that:

1. The system of internal controls related to controlled substances are adequate.
2. Both the HCAA and City complied with the required actions in the 1998 agreement as it relates to:
  - a. Staffing levels.
  - b. Vehicles per shift and properly equipping the vehicles.
  - c. Budget approval by both agencies.
  - d. Equipment for operating the station.

Note: at the time of the audit, the 2021 agreement had not been approved.

3. Performance metrics are accurate, consistent, relevant, and verifiable.

**STATEMENT OF SCOPE**

The audit period covered ARFF activity that occurred from April 2020 to March 2021. The internal controls related to the chain of custody for controlled substances were reviewed. Tampa Fire Rescue uses software known as CAD and Digital Logbook to record vehicle inspections and other station activities. CAD was previously assessed during Audit 20-04 of the Rescue Division and deemed reliable. Digital Logbook was evaluated, and the data was deemed reliable.

Tests were performed to determine whether the Airport Division personnel were fulfilling their

stated duties and responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner. Original records as well as copies were used as evidence and verified through observation and physical examination.

### **STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY**

The following steps were taken to determine compliance with the objectives:

1. Reviewed inspection records for the ARFF trucks.
2. Discussed the budget approval process with City management.
3. Observed controls related to controlled substances.

The following steps were performed in order to determine if the accuracy, consistency, and relevance of metrics reported:

1. Identified source/system for metrics reported.
2. Reviewed data reliability testing for system generated data.

### **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.

### **AUDIT CONCLUSIONS**

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

1. The system of internal controls related to controlled substances are adequate.
2. Both the HCAA and City complied with the required actions in the 1998 agreement as it relates to:
  - a. Staffing levels.
  - b. Vehicles per shift and properly equipping the vehicles.
  - c. Budget plan approved by both agencies.
  - d. Equipment for operating the station.
3. The accuracy of performance metrics can be improved.

## **TAMPA FIRE RESCUE AIRPORT METRICS**

**STATEMENT OF CONDITION:** Tampa Fire Rescue (TFR) Airport Division (Division) publishes its performance metrics on the dashboard on the City’s public website. We reviewed three of those metrics, namely number of fire-related calls, number of medical-related calls, and working fires to which the Division responded in calendar years 2019 and 2020. In five of the six performance data points, dashboard metrics did not match TFR’s internal data, as shown below.

<b>Performance Metric</b>	<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b># of Responses per Internal Records</b>	<b># of Responses on Dashboard</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Does Dashboard and Internal Data Match? YES (✓) / NO (✗)</b>
Fire-Related Calls	2019	279	151	128	✗
	2020	275	137	138	✗
Medical-Related Calls	2019	2,928	2,287	641	✗
	2020	1,494	1,184	310	✗
Working Fires by Area	2019	1	1	0	✓
	2020	2	0	2	✗

*Source: TFR provided internal data and dashboard data was retrieved from the City website.*

**CRITERIA:** Being a source of information for residents of Tampa and the general public, dashboard metrics should be accurate and reliable.

**CAUSE:** The process to create metrics involves generation of data in TFR’s Computer-Aided Dispatch system. That data are then transferred to a spreadsheet where T&I accesses them to create dashboard metrics. The process does not have a quality control component to verify that, before being posted, metrics are accurate and consistent with internal data.

**EFFECT OF CONDITION:** Information disseminated to residents and the public may be inaccurate and could erode public trust.

**RECOMMENDATION:** TFR and T&I management should consider implementing a quality control process that involves the departments working together to review accuracy of metrics before they are published on the dashboard.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:** We agree with the findings and we have begun implementing quality control measures for performance metrics. Dialogue between T&I and the Airport Chief has already taken place to ensure the numbers posted on the website are consistent with TFR data.

**TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE:** October 18, 2021