

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE
Performance Evaluation and Research Division

Building 1, Room W-314
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0610
(304) 347-4890
(304) 347-4939 FAX



Antonio E. Jones, Ph.D.
Director

January 11, 1999

Colonel Gary L. Edgell, Superintendent
West Virginia State Police
725 Jefferson Road
South Charleston, West Virginia 25309-1698

Dear Colonel Edgell:

The Legislative Auditor's Office conducted a limited scope preliminary performance review of weapons inventory control of the West Virginia State Police. This preliminary review was conducted in accordance with *West Virginia Sunset Law*, Chapter 4, Article 10, Section 11 of the *West Virginia Code*, as amended. Auditors sampled 54 from an inventory of 1,685 weapons under your authority. All weapons in the sample were accounted for, but due to a breakdown in reassignment procedure, we are reporting the explanation of the problem to the Joint Committee on Government Operations on Tuesday, January 12, 1999, via this management letter.

Breakdown of Procedures in Reassignment of Weapons:

During the audit test there was one M-14 rifle that was not at its reported location. The Auditors performing the equipment trace were told the weapon may be at the Troop 1 Headquarters in Shinnston, West Virginia due to a reassignment. Troop 1 Headquarters informed the Legislative Auditor that the weapon was not there and 17 other M-14 rifles that were reported to be there were not. The rifles were originally assigned to Troop 1 Headquarters for familiarization training and were then reassigned to the various detachments throughout Troop 1 in the northern portion of the state. The necessary documentation, Property Receipt (Form #157), to report this reassignment was either not prepared, or not sent to the Procurement Section in the South Charleston Headquarters to update the inventory list. This was an apparent breakdown in procedures to maintain an accurate inventory list. The rifles have all been located by the West Virginia State Police.

The State Police Deputy Chief of Staff has acknowledged the breakdowns in their controls regarding reassignments and has provided us with revisions to their existing procedures. The revision requires that transfers of weapons be restricted to those personnel assigned to the Procurement Section. In a letter from Major Powers to the Legislative Auditor, the revision states

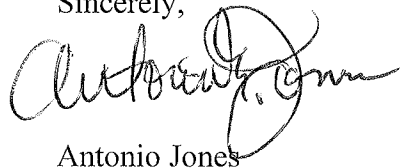
“change of assignment will only occur when and if the weapon is physically in their possession, with the appropriate documentation being signed when the recipient is physically present to accept the weapon and sign the appropriate documents.”

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the West Virginia State Police conduct physical inventory counts of all weaponry at least annually to assure the procedures currently in place for assignments and reassignments are being followed. Further, it is recommended that the State Police Procurement Section advise all detachments immediately of the revised procedure.

We are providing our finding to this limited scope review by this management letter, and urge your adoption of our recommendation. Thank you for your cooperation during the review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Antonio Jones", written in a cursive style.

Antonio Jones