

OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

Office of Inspector General



Mobile Data Terminal Review

December 2, 2011

CITY OF OAKLAND
Memorandum

To: Chief Howard Jordan
From: Office of Inspector General
Date: December 2, 2011
Subject: **Audit of Mobile Data Terminals**

On November 25, 2011, the Office of Inspector General initiated its eighth 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 auditor reviewed the content of MDT data logs and user generated messages.

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PURPOSE

On November 25, 2011 the Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiated its eighth 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 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 2010 annual audit conducted by OIG found that none of the messages reviewed contained inappropriate language or language that violated policy.

METHODOLOGY

The OIG selected four months in 2011 to review MDT transmissions. The months chosen were April, May, August and October; a total of 122 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 server's database by sequential order and name; this enabled the OIG to confirm that no messages were lost during the audit. There were 33 individual messages transmitted in the 122 days. All 33 messages were reviewed. Messages were reviewed for inappropriate language (i.e., discriminatory or inflammatory words/ statements and profanity) and lengthy conversations not related to work.

FINDINGS

There were 33 individual messages transmitted in the 122 days covered by this audit, with an average of one message every 3.7 days. The number of messages continues to decline on an annual basis. This year there were 0.27 messages per day. Last year there were 0.92 transmissions per day and in 2009 there were 1.21 transmissions per day. It is

unknown why this trend is continuing but it is likely officers are using cell phones to communicate rather than MDT messages.

During this audit period, only 14 members 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.