

**Performance Audit 16-05:
Police Firearm Training Audit**

December 2016

City Auditor

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OFFICE OF INTERNAL AUDIT

Stan Sewell, City Auditor

December 28, 2016

To: Mayor Andy Berke
City Council Members

Subject: Police Firearm Training Audit (Report #16-05)

Dear Mayor Berke and City Council Members:

The attached report contains the results of our audit of the Police firearm training process. Our audit found not all officers completed their weapons qualifications and training and some CPD policies need updating to clarify requirements and ensure compliance. In order to address the noted areas for improvement, we recommended actions to design a process to ensure officers complete their required weapons qualifications and training.

We thank the management and staff of the Police Training Division for their cooperation and assistance during this audit.

Sincerely,

Stan Sewell, CPA, CGFM, CFE
City Auditor

Attachment

cc: Audit Committee Members
Stacy Richardson, Chief of Staff
Maura Sullivan, Chief Operating Officer
Fred Fletcher, Chief of Police

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AUDIT PURPOSE

This audit was conducted in accordance with the Office of Internal Audit's 2016 Audit Agenda. The objectives of this audit were to determine if:

- CPD Officers have passed their firearms training and qualifications requirements for 2015; and,
- CPD has a process to ensure all officers have completed their required firearm training and qualifications.

BACKGROUND

The Tennessee Peace Officer Standards Training Commission (P.O.S.T) is responsible for developing and enforcing standards and training for police officers. All full time certified officers must meet the P.O.S.T. requirements of attending 40 hours of in-service training each calendar year. The training includes eight hours of firearms training¹ and an annual shooting qualification. The Chattanooga Police Department (CPD) follows the P.O.S.T. standards. This training is offered between January and May. In addition, their policy requires officers re-qualify with all weapons a second time, typically in October or November.

P.O.S.T 1110-04-12 requires officers to pass a written test with a minimum score of 75. CPD policies states to successfully qualify with a pistol, the officer must obtain a shooting score of at least 80% for day and 75% for night. To qualify with a shotgun or rifle, the officer must obtain a daytime shooting score of 80% and 90%, respectively.²

It is the responsibility of the CPD Training Division to coordinate training programs, ensure attendance, track compliance, maintain training records, perform weapon inspections and maintain an inventory of all approved weapons. The CPD staff reports to P.O.S.T. the officer's completion of annual in-service training and weapons qualification. Upon successful completion, officers are awarded a salary supplement.

¹ T.C.A. 39-17-1315 authorizes "any" law enforcement officer to carry handguns at all times, when authorized to do so by written directive of the chief law enforcement officer of the jurisdiction. This authorization also depends upon such officers completing and continuing to complete annually an eight-hour firearms training course.

² CPD OPS-13.III.E.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CPD needs to ensure officers are completing weapons qualifications and training.

The Divisions' primary goals are to ensure all officers are properly trained and to make certain P.O.S.T reporting requirements are met. Meeting these objectives involves the consolidation of information from multiple sources. These sources include in-service training sign in sheets, in-service testing scores from PowerDMS, and weapons qualification scores from the Tactical Management database.

The PowerDMS system stores training material, testing scores and the department's operation and policy standards. Officers are required to complete in-service training exams via this system. Once tests are completed, the system records the officers' test score. Each week, the test scores are forwarded to the Administrative Assistant to document the scoring on the P.O.S.T. report.

The Tactical Management database is used to track each officer's weapon qualification score, weapon type and serial number. All officers are assigned a duty pistol. Officers have the option to carry additional weapons including a rifle or shotgun. When an officer completes the shooting test(s), the Range Master documents their score(s) on a paper card. The scores are then manually entered into the database to provide weekly reports to the Administrative Assistant.

The Administrative Assistant compiles the information in an excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet includes separate tabs for each week of in-service training. Each tab includes officer's name, a field that indicates training attendance, written test scores and a field that indicates in-service training weapons qualification.

In early fall, the training staff will notify officers, via email, that the second weapons qualification is needed. The email includes allotted dates and times available to report to the Range Master. The supervisor coordinates scheduling for officers under his command. After completion of the test, the Range Master records the qualification scores in the Tactical Management database.

To determine if CPD complied with stated policies, we verified each officer had reported for and successfully completed their weapons qualifications in 2015. We also determined if all active duty officers had completed and passed the required written test. As shown in Exhibit 1 below, the majority of officers have successfully complied with policies.

Exhibit 1: Summary of Qualification Compliance - 2015

	Pistol	Rifle	Shotgun
Failed to report for weapons qualification	3	14	11
Failed to qualify twice with weapon	26	40	n/a
Qualified with weapon(s) as required	380	260	22
Number of Officers required to Qualify	409	314	33

Source: Compiled by Auditor

While 93% of officers completed the pistol qualification only 67% qualified with their shotguns. In addition, we found four officers didn't take the in-service test and one officer failed the test. To enhance safety and limit liability risks, the Department should strive to obtain 100% compliance.

Based on our review of the process, we found CPD doesn't have mechanisms in place to verify:

1. All officers have completed and successfully passed the in-service training test;
2. All authorized weapons are documented and assigned to the officer (e.g. city-issued pistol, city-issued rifle, personal weapon); and,
3. All officers have completed and successfully passed the required qualifications for each authorized weapon.

We identified several possible factors that may have contributed to officer's noncompliance. For example, the officer forgot to bring all authorized weapons for qualification; an officer plans to retire during the year; the officer had scheduling conflicts; and/or the officer has no incentive to report for the second qualification.

Weapons training is a key to an officer's safety and the safety of the public. An officer in a hostile/stressful situation may be less likely to handle their weapon properly and/or may make an inappropriate decision with regard to use of force. This could result in unnecessary injury and/or create liability for the City, if the officer is involved in a shooting.

Recommendation 1:

We recommend CPD design and implement a process to ensure officers are completing their weapons qualifications and training. A well-designed process will include inventory tracking, reporting and management oversight. The process could be implemented with a basic spreadsheet or database software. Possibly, the current

PowerDMS system may have the functionality to support a quality review process. However, the best solution may involve purchasing a new weapon qualifications tracking software.

***Auditee Response:** We concur with the audit finding and recommendation.*

CPD policies need to be updated to ensure weapons qualifications are completed.

Policies should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure they meet the department's objectives and goals. Our review of policies found some CPD policies contradict current practices. For example, OPS-13.III.F.1 states firearms qualifications for **all weapons** shall be done at least twice during each calendar year [Emphasis added].

Per staff, the customary practice is to qualify twice with a pistol and rifle and once with a shotgun or any other non-department weapon. We also found they no longer use a tactical training course. In addition, the policies reference the POST requirements but fail to detail the score needed to meet the testing requirement.

On December 18, 2015, CPD updated the policy, in part, to reflect current practices. The new policy specifies that officers must qualify with pistols and rifles bi-annually. Qualifications occur once during annual in-service training and again during fall qualifications (typically, October and November). The new policy also specifies that "all other weapons" require an annual qualification. Typically these are performed during in-service training.

Recommendation 2:

We recommend CPD review and update their policies regarding weapons qualifications, testing, and tracking. The new policies should include language addressing officers who fail to comply with the yearly qualification requirements.

***Auditee Response:** We concur with the audit finding and recommendation.*

APPENDIX A: SCOPE, METHODOLOGY AND STANDARDS

Based on the work performed during the preliminary survey and the assessment of risk, the audit covers CPD weapons qualifications and training from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015. When appropriate, the scope was expanded to meet the audit objectives. Source documentation was obtained from CPD Training Division, Fire Police Pension Board and the Oracle system. Original records as well as copies were used as evidence and verified through physical examination.

Data reliability testing was performed on the Tactical Management software used by the CPD. This system houses the officer's qualification scores for 2015. We found the data entered into the system was reliable but incomplete (qualifications were missing). If an officer was missing a qualification, we examined his file to determine if a score card was present.

To achieve the audit's objectives, the officers' permanent files as well as the 2015 In-Service training files were reviewed. The Oracle system was used to determine which officers were active during 2015. These names were compared against data from the Fire and Police Pension Board to ensure accuracy. The 2015 weapons qualifications data was compared to the active sworn officers to determine if each officer completed their required qualifications. Finally, CPD's PowerDMS system was used to retrieve officer's In-Service test scores. The test data was compared to the list of active sworn officers to ensure each successfully completed the test in 2015.

We conducted this performance audit from July 2016 to November 21, 2016 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.

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