

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Inspector General

Inspector General



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONCERNING AN
INVESTIGATION INTO MISCONDUCT
VIOLATIONS BY AN EMPLOYEE OF THE
D.C. FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

2013- 0273-2 (S)

INVESTIGATIVE SYNOPSIS

The District of Columbia Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has completed a District of Columbia council member's request to examine excessive overtime during fiscal year (FY) 2012 by D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) mechanics. The OIG concluded that a Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic, Fleet Management Division (FMD), FEMS, abused time and attendance, including overtime hours, to receive pay from the District of Columbia to which the FEMS mechanic was not entitled.

During the investigation, OIG investigators reviewed vehicle registration records from the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) for the FEMS mechanic's vehicle and License Plate Recognition (LPR)¹ records obtained from the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). OIG investigators reviewed the Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic's PeopleSoft payroll time and attendance records from the Office of Pay and Retirement Services, Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO). OIG investigators also interviewed a former FEMS FMD foreman and the FEMS mechanic.

The investigation revealed that for FY 2012, the Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic earned \$97,852 in overtime.² OIG investigators interviewed the FEMS mechanic on two occasions. During the FEMS mechanic's first interview, the mechanic stated that s/he never falsified a pay request for overtime. The FEMS mechanic explained that s/he worked the day shift in 2012, from 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. and a lot of overtime, but that s/he was always honest about the hours worked. The FEMS mechanic elaborated that all of her/his regular pay and overtime payment requests went through and were approved by her/his supervisor. The FEMS mechanic told investigators that s/he never left the FMD during a work shift unless s/he was on an official road call.

After the interview, investigators obtained registration information for the Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic's personal vehicle. The information revealed that MVA assigned a Maryland tag number, expiration date July 16, 2014, to the FEMS mechanic. Using the

¹ LPR is a surveillance method that reads vehicle license plates via closed-circuit television or traffic enforcement cameras.

² As a mechanic, the FEMS employee's annual salary was \$57,740.

FEMS mechanic's Maryland tag number, OIG investigators obtained LPR records for the FEMS mechanic's vehicle from MPD. Investigators cross-referenced the LPR records with the FEMS mechanic's payroll records and determined that the mechanic's vehicle was spotted at various locations throughout the District of Columbia instead of the FEMS mechanic's Southwest, D.C. duty station during periods of claimed overtime work. The chart below indicates five dates where identified discrepancies required further explanation from the FEMS mechanic.

Table: Results of LPR and PeopleSoft Data Cross-Referencing

DATE	TIME	LPR	PeopleSoft
April 15, 2012 (Sunday)	9:58 p.m.	Suitland Pkwy/Firth Sterling, S.E. East Bound	Claimed 16 hours of overtime from 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
September 29, 2012 (Saturday)	10:06 p.m.	Suitland Pkwy/Firth Sterling, S.E. East Bound	Claimed 8 hours of overtime from 3:19 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.
October 13, 2012 (Saturday)	3:16 p.m.	Suitland Pkwy/Firth Sterling, S.E. East Bound	Claimed 16 hours of overtime from 6:45 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
	10:09 p.m.	Suitland Pkwy/Firth Sterling, S.E. East Bound	
October 19, 2012 (Friday)	3:22 p.m.	Suitland Pkwy/Firth Sterling, S.E. East Bound	Claimed 8 hours of overtime from 3:00 pm – 11:00 p.m.
	4:49 p.m.	E. Capitol Street/Benning Road, N.E. West Bound	
	5:58 p.m.	E. Capitol Street/Texas Avenue, S.E. East Bound	

DATE	TIME	LPR	PeopleSoft
November 28, 2012 (Wednesday)	4:57 p.m.	Suitland Pkwy/Firth Sterling, S.E. East Bound	Claimed 8 hours of overtime from 3:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.
	6:33 p.m.	Branch and Alabama Avenue, S.E. North Bound	
	6:40 p.m.	Pennsylvania Avenue at Minnesota Ave., S.E. West Bound	
	8:48 p.m.	North Capitol Street at H Street, N.W. South Bound	
	8:54 p.m.	2500 Benning Road, N.E. East Bound	

OIG investigators interviewed the Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic a second time. The FEMS mechanic acknowledged that in 2012, s/he owned a vehicle that was registered with MVA and bore a MD tag number. Investigators gave the FEMS mechanic an opportunity to

respond to records that indicated the mechanic's vehicle was spotted at locations throughout the District of Columbia area when payroll records indicated that the mechanic should have been on official duty at FMD. The FEMS mechanic initially denied any wrongdoing; however, the mechanic ultimately admitted that her/his then supervisor³ told the FEMS mechanic that while working an overtime shift, the mechanic could leave once s/he finished the repair job the mechanic was assigned and still claim 8 hours of overtime. The FEMS mechanic stated that her/his supervisor told her/him to keep this agreement between the two of them.

The Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic stated that there were times when s/he presented her/his supervisor with a Certificate of Overtime form that indicated less than 8 hours; however, the supervisor told the FEMS mechanic to claim 8 hours of overtime instead. Although the FEMS mechanic reportedly continued to ask her/his supervisor whether this practice was acceptable, the supervisor would always tell the FEMS mechanic to claim the entire 8 hours as overtime. The FEMS mechanic advised that after a few occasions, s/he just began providing the supervisor with overtime forms indicating that s/he worked 8 hours of overtime.

The Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic stated that there were times when s/he actually worked 8 hours of overtime. However, there were times when the mechanic left FMD anywhere from 2-5 hours before her/his overtime shift was scheduled to end. Also, the FEMS mechanic stated that s/he occasionally left FMD an hour prior to the end of her/his overtime shift because on those days, s/he did not take a meal break. The FEMS mechanic could not quantify the number of times during 2012 that s/he left FMD without working 8 hours of overtime. Finally, the FEMS mechanic stated that s/he knew it was wrong because s/he did not always work 8 hours of overtime, but her/his supervisor authorized the mechanic to do it.

OIG investigators interviewed the mechanic's supervisor on two occasions. During the supervisor's first interview, the supervisor stated that s/he did not know of any mechanic that falsified overtime requests, including overtime requests that the FEMS mechanic submitted. During the supervisor's second interview, the supervisor recalled that s/he would occasionally allow a mechanic to leave early if the mechanic did not take a lunch break. The supervisor also admitted that s/he would occasionally permit the FEMS mechanic to leave an hour or two before the shift ended. However, the supervisor asserted that s/he would not have allowed the FEMS mechanic to leave more than 2 hours prior to a shift ending. The supervisor stated that s/he could not account for her/his employees. Upon reflection, the supervisor wished that s/he had done things differently, and stated that s/he was not certain what overtime her/his employees worked during times s/he was not there.

CONCLUSION

The OIG has concluded that the Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic abused time and attendance, including overtime, to receive payment from the District of Columbia to which

³ The investigation determined that the mechanic's supervisor retired from FEMS on January 31, 2014.

the FEMS mechanic was not entitled. Investigators compared the LPR and payroll records and determined that on at least five occasions the FEMS mechanic's vehicle was spotted at District of Columbia locations other than the mechanic's official duty station in Southwest, D.C. In addition, during the FEMS mechanics' second interview, the FEMS mechanic admitted to investigators that there were times when the s/he completed a job assignment and left 2-5 hours early, yet claimed 8 hours of overtime on FEMS' Certificate of Overtime forms. Even though the FEMS mechanic claimed that her/his supervisor authorized and approved the manner in which the FEMS mechanic accounted for her/his overtime hours, the mechanic knew that claiming overtime pay for hours that s/he did not work was wrong. As a result, the FEMS employee abused time and attendance, including overtime hours, to receive pay from the District of Columbia to which the FEMS mechanic was not entitled.

Accordingly, this investigation has **SUBSTANTIATED** that the FEMS mechanic violated DPM §§ 1803.1 (a)(1) (Using public office for private gain) and (a)(6) (Affecting adversely the confidence of the public in the integrity of government).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this investigation, the OIG recommends that FEMS:

- Address the FEMS mechanic's conduct with appropriate administrative action;
- Ensure that all FEMS employees are trained appropriately regarding the District's standards of conduct; and
- Strengthen internal controls over the availability and monitoring of overtime hours worked and paid.

May 15, 2014