



PICKETT COUNTY AMBULANCE SERVICE

Comptroller's Investigative Report
October 8, 2018

Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller





JUSTIN P. WILSON
Comptroller

JASON E. MUMPOWER
Chief of Staff

October 8, 2018

Pickett County Ambulance Service
8817 TN-111
Byrdstown, TN 38549

Gentlemen:

The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury conducted an investigation of selected records of the Pickett County Ambulance Service, and the results are presented herein. The findings and recommendations have been reviewed with the district attorney general for the Thirteenth Judicial District.

Copies of this report are being forwarded to Governor Bill Haslam, the State Attorney General, the District Attorney General, certain state legislators, and various other interested parties. A copy is available for public inspection in our office and may be viewed at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin P. Wilson", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Justin P. Wilson
Comptroller of the Treasury

JPW/RAD

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

PICKETT COUNTY AMBULANCE SERVICE



We conducted an investigation of the Pickett County Ambulance Service (ambulance service) for the period July 1, 2016 through May 31, 2018. Findings and recommendations, as a result of our investigation, are presented in this report. These findings and recommendations have been reviewed with management. Also, these findings and recommendations have been reviewed with the district attorney general for the Thirteenth Judicial District.

BACKGROUND

The ambulance service is based in Byrdstown, Tennessee, and is a department of Pickett County Government. The ambulance service is the only emergency medical transport provider in the county and employs approximately 13 full-time emergency medical technicians and paramedics as well as other part-time staff.

INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDING 1: A wireless device assigned to the director had questionable amounts of usage

The ambulance service has six Verizon jetpacks issued by the county. A jetpack is a device that creates an internet connection that can be shared with other devices. The director advised us that he kept his assigned device at home and hardly ever used it; however, we determined that the director's device/jetpack had the most data usage of the six devices. The average data usage for the director's device over 10 months through May 2018, was 13.9 gigabytes (GB). The next highest average data usage for the devices was 1.6 GB for the same period. The director advised us that if the device showed data usage then his children were the ones using it without his knowledge. The devices are on an unlimited data plan; therefore, the usage is not costing the county; however, the director's device is not being used for its intended governmental purpose.

RECOMMENDATION:

The ambulance service should monitor its jetpacks usage for reasonableness, and the director should ensure his assigned device is used only for county business.

FINDING 2: The ambulance service did not comply with Pickett County’s personnel policy regarding compensatory time

Pickett County’s personnel policy permits employees to accumulate a maximum of 80 hours of compensatory time, and the policy does not allow the transfer of accumulated compensatory time between employees. We noted that an ambulance service employee received compensatory time that was donated from the director’s accumulated leave balance. This violation of policy was addressed by the Pickett County Executive who issued a written warning stating that the incident was a misunderstanding of policy and has since been corrected.

RECOMMENDATION:

The ambulance service should follow Pickett County’s personnel policy for compensatory time. Pickett County’s payroll department should review all ambulance service leave activity to ensure compliance with county policy.

MANAGEMENT’S RESPONSE: Pickett County Ambulance Service Director Tom Storie

Jetpack – The director provided Verizon documentation that two devices/lines ending in 3001 and 3002 were disconnected on August 3, 2018. One of the devices listed on the documentation pertains to the device in Finding 1 above.

MANAGEMENT’S RESPONSE: Pickett County Executive Richard Daniel

Compensatory Time – We were provided documentation that shows management dealt with compensatory time when it first became a known issue. We were also informed that compensatory time requires prior approval and accumulated compensatory time must be taken within a reasonable time.