



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

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Items from Drug Seizures Stolen and Misused in 24th Judicial District

Officials charged with overseeing a cache of drugs, cash, weapons and other items confiscated during drug cases in the 24th Judicial District failed to provide adequate oversight, leading to some of the items being stolen or misused, a report by the Comptroller's Division of County Audit has revealed. The report was released today following a review conducted with assistance from the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

The report indicates that the board of directors for the 24th Judicial District Drug Task Force was lax in reviewing the task force's operations. Also, the Drug Task Force staff did not follow adequate record-keeping or inventory management practices. Those conditions created an environment in which a number of other issues arose, including:

- District Attorney General Hansel McCadams occasionally used equipment confiscated by the Drug Task Force, including a BMW Z-3 car, a Harley Davidson motorcycle, a golf cart, a go-cart, a four-wheeler and a trailer for his personal use. He also flew on Drug Task Force airplanes and a helicopter for purposes that were not related to official Task Force business. He maintained a handgun, two assault rifles, three heat-imaging devices and a projector from the Drug Task Force at his personal residence.
- District Attorney General McCadams also allowed the Drug Task Force helicopter to transport dignitaries to Henry County High School football games.
- Henry County Sheriff Monte Belew also drove the BMW Z-3 at ceremonial events and for his personal use.
- The administrative assistant for the Drug Task Force and her ex-husband admitted to taking drugs and other seized items, including utility trailers and a flat-screen television, from the task force. The administrative assistant also obtained handguns, four-wheelers and other Drug Task Force property for her personal use.
- A group of jail trustees on a work detail had access to seized items without sufficient supervision. As a result, some of the trustees gained access to drug case files, smoked crack

cocaine and marijuana while at the Drug Task Force headquarters and stole cash, old coins and other equipment.

To view the report online, go to:

<http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/repository/CA/2010/24DASpecialReport.pdf>

“It is always important to follow proper procedures when handling and storing money,” Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. “Those procedures are as important, if not more important, when weapons, drugs and other valuable and potentially dangerous items are being stored in addition to cash. I hope this case will serve as a reminder to other drug task forces around the state about the importance of maintaining effective inventory controls.”

Below are images of items related to this release. Clicking on an image will direct you to a larger version.





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