
FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

2020-2021
ANNUAL
REPORT

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*Managing fish and wildlife
resources for their long-term
well-being and the benefit of
people.*

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September 10, 2021

Eric Sutton
Executive Director
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
620 S Meridian Street
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Executive Director Sutton,

On behalf of the dedicated employees of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Office of Inspector General (OIG) and in compliance with section 20.055(7)(a) Florida Statutes, I am pleased to submit for your review the FWC OIG Annual Report. The annual report details the audit and investigative activities of the OIG for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.

The OIG prides itself on our commitment to providing the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, along with the involved citizens of the State of Florida, the most thorough, accurate, and timely audits and investigations possible.

I am proud of the entire OIG investigative staff for doing their part with ensuring that we continue to operate by the highest standards possible.

We appreciate all your support and look forward to continuing our excellent relationship.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Troelstrup".

Mike Troelstrup
FWC Inspector General

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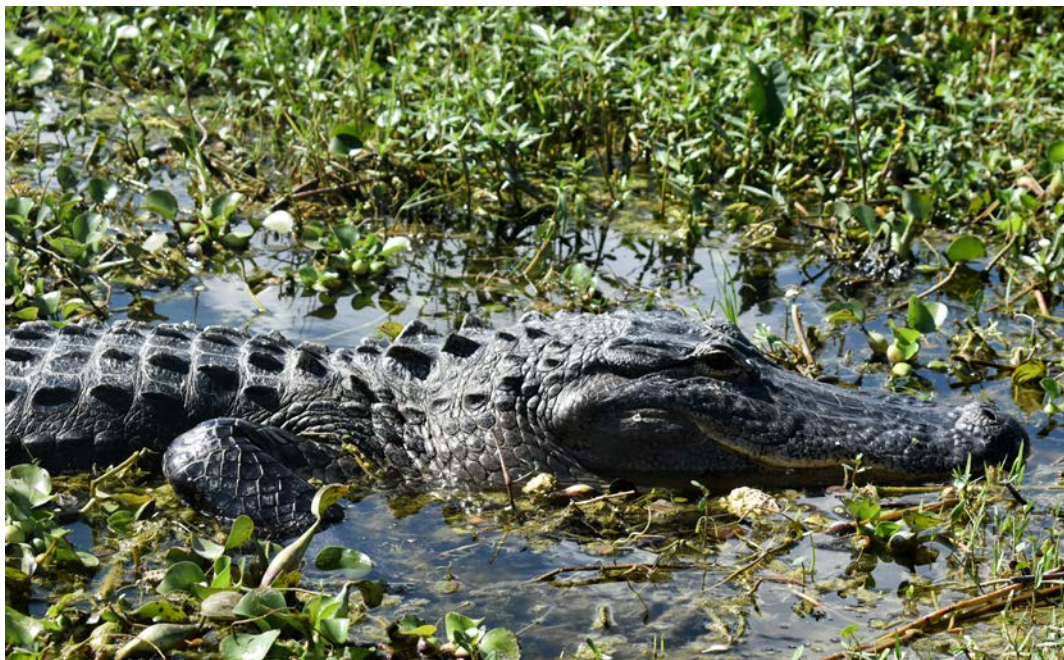
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INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Office of Inspector General is to provide leadership in the promotion of accountability in integrity of state government.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), Office of Inspector General (OIG), is located in the Farris Bryant Building in Tallahassee, Florida. As an independent and impartial office, FWC OIG acts as a central point for coordination of and responsibility for activities that promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency in government. This annual report provides an overview of FWC OIG's investigative and audit activity during the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

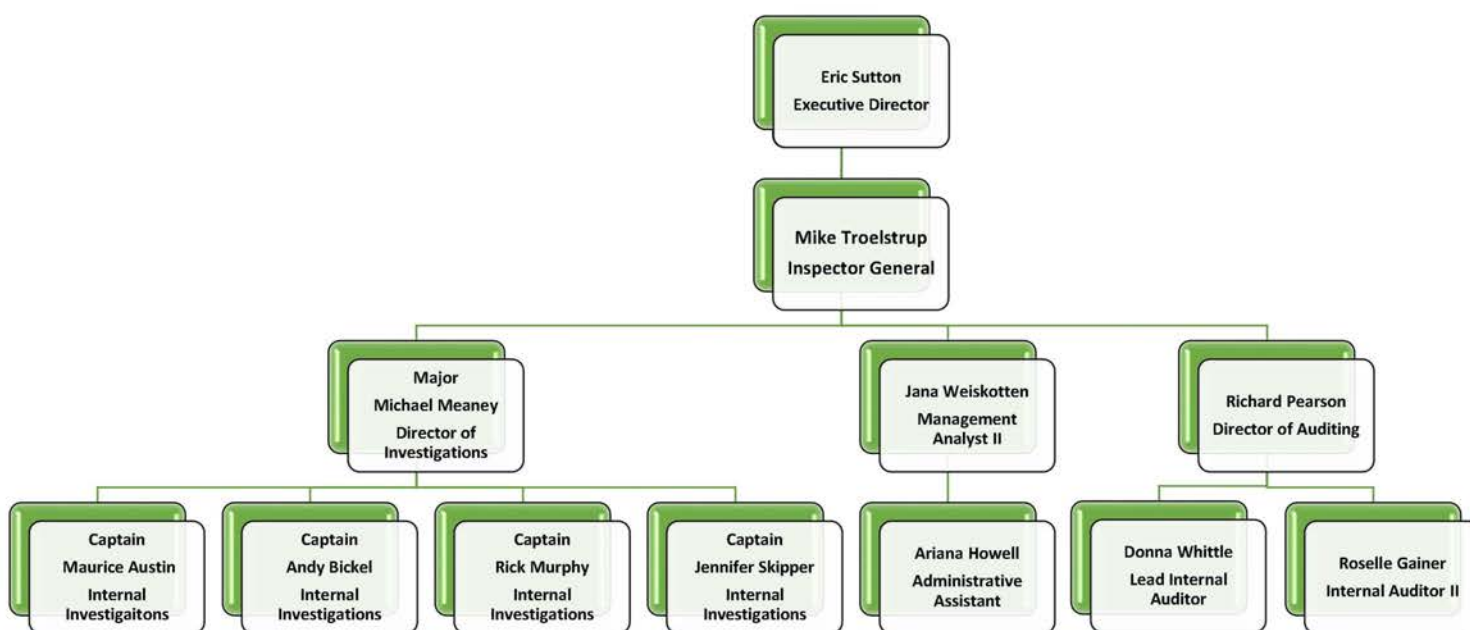
Goals:

- Detect and deter fraud, waste, and abuse
- Identify trends
- Create ethical awareness within the Agency
- Improve accountability
- Ensure fair, thorough, and impartial investigations
- Ensure audits add value to the Agency
- Reduce Agency liability and risk
- Ensure reliability and validity to Agency Performance Measures

The vision of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission is to enhance public trust in government through a tireless commitment to accountability and transparency.

PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

The FWC OIG prides itself on maintaining a highly trained and motivated staff. The professional staff of the OIG includes the Inspector General, Director of Investigations (Law Enforcement Major), four investigative law enforcement Captains, a Management Analyst, the Director of Auditing, a Lead Internal Auditor, 1 half-time Internal Auditor II and an Administrative Assistant. One hundred percent of the ten full-time positions in the OIG possess college degrees from an accredited college or university, and two of those possess post-graduate degrees as well.



Note: Some of these certifications are mandated by Florida law in order to be employed in the OIG. Virtually all certifications require regular mandatory training courses, such as annual in-service training for law enforcement officers. For the fiscal year 2020-2021, the OIG staff completed 463 hours of training.

STAFF MEMBERS ARE ACTIVE IN PROFESSIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING:

- Florida Association of Inspector General
- National Association of Inspector General
- Institute of Internal Auditors
- Tallahassee Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
- Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation
- FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association
- State Law Enforcement Chief's Association



**ASSOCIATION OF
INSPECTORS GENERAL**

Advancing Professionalism, Accountability & Integrity

STAFF MEMBERS ALSO POSSESS THE
FOLLOWING PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS:

- State of Florida Sworn Law Enforcement Officer
- Certified Inspector General Investigator
- Certified Inspector General Auditor
- Certified Inspector General
- Certified Fraud Examiner
- Certified Internal Auditor
- Notary Public



STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Section 20.055, F.S., requires that each state agency Office of Inspector General submit an annual report of significant activities during the preceding state fiscal year to the agency head. The report must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A description of significant abuses and deficiencies relating to the administration of programs and operations of the agency disclosed by investigations, audits, reviews, or other activities during the reporting period.
- A description of recommendations for corrective action made by the Inspector General during the reporting period with respect to problems, abuses, or deficiencies identified.
- The identification of each significant recommendation described in previous annual reports on which corrective action has not been completed.
- A summary of each audit and investigation completed during the reporting period.



INTERNAL AUDIT GENERAL INFORMATION

The role of internal auditing is to provide an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the organization's operations. The FWC OIG Internal Audit Section assists the Agency in accomplishing its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes. We provide assurances to senior management that all reviewed operations are working in a manner that is consistent with established organizational objectives, policies, and procedures.

Our internal audits and reviews are conducted in conformance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and the Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General and are generally carried out in accordance with an annual work plan approved by the Executive Director.



The OIG Internal Audit Section consists of two full-time employees, the Director of Auditing and a Lead Internal Auditor; and one half-time Other Personal Services (OPS) Internal Auditor II.

In fiscal year 2020/2021, the OIG Internal Audit Section completed four audits, seven audit follow-ups, one management review, and provided audit assistance to the OIG Investigations Section. At the close of the fiscal year, two audits remained open. A summary of each completed audit project is as follows:

REVIEW OF AUDIT ACTIVITIES

IA-2014 Parker Manatee Aquarium Grant Audit

OIG conducted a grant compliance audit of FWC Agreement Number 16301. FWC Agreement Number 16301 (Agreement) was for repairs and upgrades to the Parker Manatee Aquarium at the Bishop Museum of Science and Nature (BMSN). The Agreement with BMSN was administered by the FWC Fish & Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI).

Overall, our audit determined grant costs were supported and in compliance with applicable state laws, rules and regulations, and Agency policies and procedures regarding the Agreement from July 11, 2017 through February 12, 2020.

Additionally, OIG determined that both revisions to the Agreement were properly approved, reasonable, and in compliance with relevant state laws, rules and regulations, and Agency policies and procedures.

Six areas of non-compliance were identified and are discussed in the individual Findings. The audit also identified twelve opportunities for improvement.

OIG also noted two grant Agreement monitoring best practices used by FWRI. OIG will conduct a Follow-up Review with FWRI management in six months to check on the status of the six non-compliance issues.



IA-2018 Clay County Derelict Vessel Removal Audit

OIG conducted an audit of FWC Agreement No. 18213 (Agreement). The Agreement was for the removal of one derelict vessel from the public waters of the State of Florida within the jurisdiction of Clay County.

This Agreement with the Clay County Board of County Commissioners was monitored by the FWC Division of Law Enforcement (DLE) Derelict Vessel Program Administrator (DVPA).

OIG determined that overall, the DVPA effectively monitored the Agreement, with the exception of three non-conformity issues. OIG also noted three grant monitoring best practices.

OIG will conduct a Follow-up Review with DLE Derelict Vessel Program management in six months to check on the status of the three non-conformity issues.



IA-2101 Florida Single Audit Act (FSAA)

OIG reviewed financial packages for Single Audit eligibility for fiscal year 2020/2021. None of the city or county financial packages that we received indicated the eligibility threshold for a Single Audit was met.

IA-2102 Auditor General Report 2020-058 Follow-Up Advisory Memorandum

OIG sent an Advisory Memorandum to the State of Florida Auditor General (AG) on July 1, 2020.

This Advisory Memorandum stated OIG has not been assigned nor has it completed any initial six-month AG follow-up reviews since AG Report #2020-058 was issued in November 2019.

IA-2103 2018-INV-0030 Prescribed Burn Program Review Third Follow-Up

OIG determined FWC's Division of Habitat and Species Conservation management has taken adequate and effective actions in response to nine of the ten OIG findings; the remaining finding is in the process of being closed.

OIG will conduct an additional follow-up review in March 2021.

IA-2104 Office of Human Resources Operational Audit

OIG conducted an operational audit of the FWC Office of Human Resources (HR).

Overall, OIG was unable to determine if HR ensured compliance by Agency divisions/offices with employment background screening requirements described in Section 435.04, F.S. OIG was able to determine what happens if a required FWC employee does not have a criminal background screening completed or renewed; or fingerprint results indicate an Agency applicant has a criminal history. However, HR does not have formal written policies and procedures.

OIG will conduct a Follow-up Review with HR management in six months to check on the status of the four non-conformity issues.

OIG uncovered four areas of non-compliance (Findings) and identified seven opportunities for improvement (Recommendations). OIG also noted two HR best practices.

IA-2105 DMFM Hurricane Irma Fisheries Disaster Assistance Internal Controls Audit

OIG conducted an internal control audit of the FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management (DMFM), Hurricane Irma Fishery Disaster Assistance (HIFDA), Direct Payouts to Charter License Holders Program (DPCLHP).

OIG determined that overall, the DMFM HIFDA management team established effective internal controls for the DPCLHP, with the exception of three non-conformity issues. OIG also noted two DMFM HIFDA management team internal control best practices.

OIG will conduct a Follow-up Review with DMFM HIFDA management in six months to check on the status of the three non-conformity issues.

IA-2106 FWC OIG P-Card Audit Fourth Follow-Up Advisory Memorandum

OIG sent an Advisory Memorandum to the FWC Executive Director on August 25, 2020.

This Advisory Memorandum stated the FWC Finance and Budget Office (FBO) is currently undergoing an operational audit that was initiated by the Florida Auditor General's Office in January 2020. This AG operational audit includes an examination of the FWC FBO's P-Card program.

Given that the AG is already reviewing the P-Card program as part of this operational audit, OIG will reevaluate the need for a fourth follow-up review after reviewing the final AG report.

IA-2107 Twin Dolphin Marina Audit Follow-Up

OIG sent an Advisory Memorandum to the FWC Executive Director on October 20, 2020.

This Advisory Memorandum stated that OIG has determined FWC DLE Boating Access Grant Unit's management took adequate, effective and timely actions to address the three issues identified in the IA-2010 Twin Dolphin Marina (TDM) Audit Report.

OIG considers the IA-2010 TDM audit engagement closed.

IA-2108 FWC OLP/DHSMV MOU Data Security
Management Review

OIG completed a Management Review of FWC Office of Licensing and Permitting's (OLP) internal controls for safeguarding confidential Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) driver's license and/or motor vehicle records.

OIG determined after testing selected OLP data protection internal controls that sufficient safeguards are in place to adequately protect the confidential data supplied by FLHSMV to OLP via electronic data exchange.

IA-2111 Aquatic Plant Management Program Audit
Follow-Up

OIG sent an Advisory Memorandum to the FWC Executive Director on February 12, 2020.

This Advisory Memorandum stated that OIG has determined FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation's Invasive Plant Management Program (IPM) took adequate, effective, and timely actions in response to three of the ten OIG recommendations. The remaining corrective actions are associated with a new contract being developed that IPM anticipates completing by May 31, 2021.

OIG will conduct a follow-up review of the seven remaining recommendations in six months.

IA-2114 Performance Measures Review

The purpose of this memorandum was to report the results of the OIG's review of Agency Performance Measures pursuant to Section 20.055(2), Florida Statutes.

Assessment of Agency Performance Measures is a component of the OIG's annual work plan. Our review consisted of assessing the validity and reliability of three 2019/2020 fiscal year performance measures included in the Agency's Long-Range Program Plan for 2020/2021 through 2024/2025.



IA-2115 Clay County Derelict Vessel Removal Audit Follow-Up

OIG sent an Advisory Memorandum to the FWC Executive Director on March 5, 2021.

This Advisory Memorandum stated that OIG has determined FWC DLE Derelict Vessel Program management took adequate, effective, and timely actions to address the three issues identified in the IA-2018 Clay County Derelict Vessel Removal (CCDVR) Audit Report.

OIG considers the IA-2018 CCDVR audit engagement closed.

IA-2116 2018-INV-0030 Prescribed Burn Program Review Fourth Follow-Up

OIG determined FWC's Division of Habitat and Species Conservation management has taken adequate and effective actions in response to the remaining OIG finding.

OIG considers the 2018-INV-0030 Prescribed Burn Program Review closed.

IA 2119 Parker Manatee Aquarium Grant Audit Follow Up

OIG sent an Advisory Memorandum to the FWC Executive Director on May 4, 2021.

This Advisory Memorandum stated that OIG has determined FWC FWRI management took adequate, effective and timely actions in response to all twelve OIG recommendations identified in the IA 2014 Parker Manatee Aquarium (PMA) Audit Report.

OIG considers the IA 2014 PMA Audit engagement closed.

Notes:

In June of 2021, the OIG Audit Section prepared a risk assessment and audit plan (IA 2113) for fiscal year 2021/2022, and a long term audit plan for fiscal years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. The main purpose and benefit of conducting this assessment was to plan audit activities (through a risk based process) to provide the most effective audit coverage of the FWC's programs given the resources allocated.

The following audit projects are ongoing and incomplete as of June 30, 2021: IA 2109 and IA 2117.

INVESTIGATIONS

Background Information

The Investigations Section of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigates allegations of misconduct by Commission employees, monitors field investigations, and reviews the Division of Law Enforcement's Use of Force Reports.

The OIG also investigates alleged violations of Florida's Whistle-Blower Act and serves as the Commission's Ombudsman to address concerns of employees that cannot be resolved through the normal chain of command.

The OIG Investigations Section received initial Accreditation from the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc. (CFA) in 2013 and was Re-Accredited in June 2016 and again in June 2019.

Minor Complaints

The OIG will decide the appropriate level of investigation based on established criteria. Minor misconduct complaints include allegations of rudeness, use of obscene or profane language, personal appearance, improper operation of a state vehicle or vessel; a citizen complaint that can be resolved in the initial contact; and routine disciplinary action by a supervisor which results in an oral or written reprimand. The originating Division/Office (DO) can conduct the field investigation of a minor complaint after notifying the OIG of the complaint. The OIG will provide supervisory investigative assistance to the DO throughout the investigation and completion of the investigative report.

Major Complaints

The OIG Investigations Section will conduct investigations of all major complaints. Major complaints are allegations of criminal misconduct by an employee, misconduct that will result in suspension or dismissal, violation of Florida's Whistle-Blower Act, misconduct that crosses DO lines, Sexual Harassment; or if the Commission's Executive Director or Inspector General determines that an investigation is warranted.

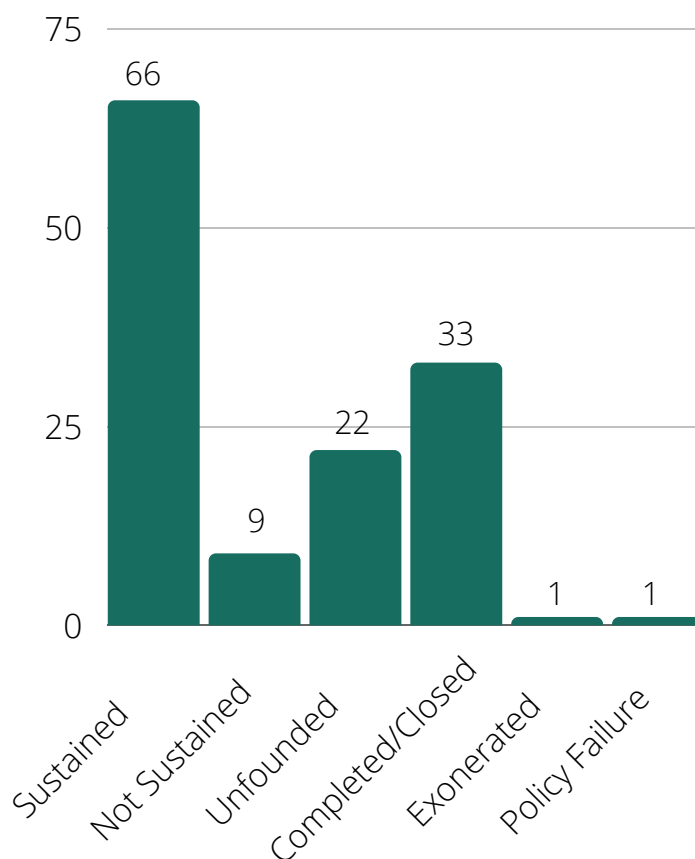
Inquiries

Inquiry case numbers are designated with a "Q." These complaints are reviewed when there is not enough information provided to determine if an investigation is warranted. The inquiry is limited to obtaining enough information to make an informed decision as to how to designate the complaint.

DEFINITION OF INVESTIGATION FINDINGS

Classifications of Closed Cases: Investigative findings about the allegations based upon investigative activities.

- **Exonerated** – The alleged conduct occurred, but was lawful and proper.
- **Unfounded** – There was no evidence identified in the Investigation to support the allegation in the complaint.
- **Not Sustained** – There was insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.
- **Sustained** – The allegation was supported by proper and sufficient evidence.
- **Policy Failure** – The alleged actions occurred but were not addressed by agency policy.
- **Complete** – Used for instances where no specific wrongdoing was discovered and Unfounded does not apply.



Note: Several cases had multiple findings for various policies. Multiple policies with a single finding are counted once.

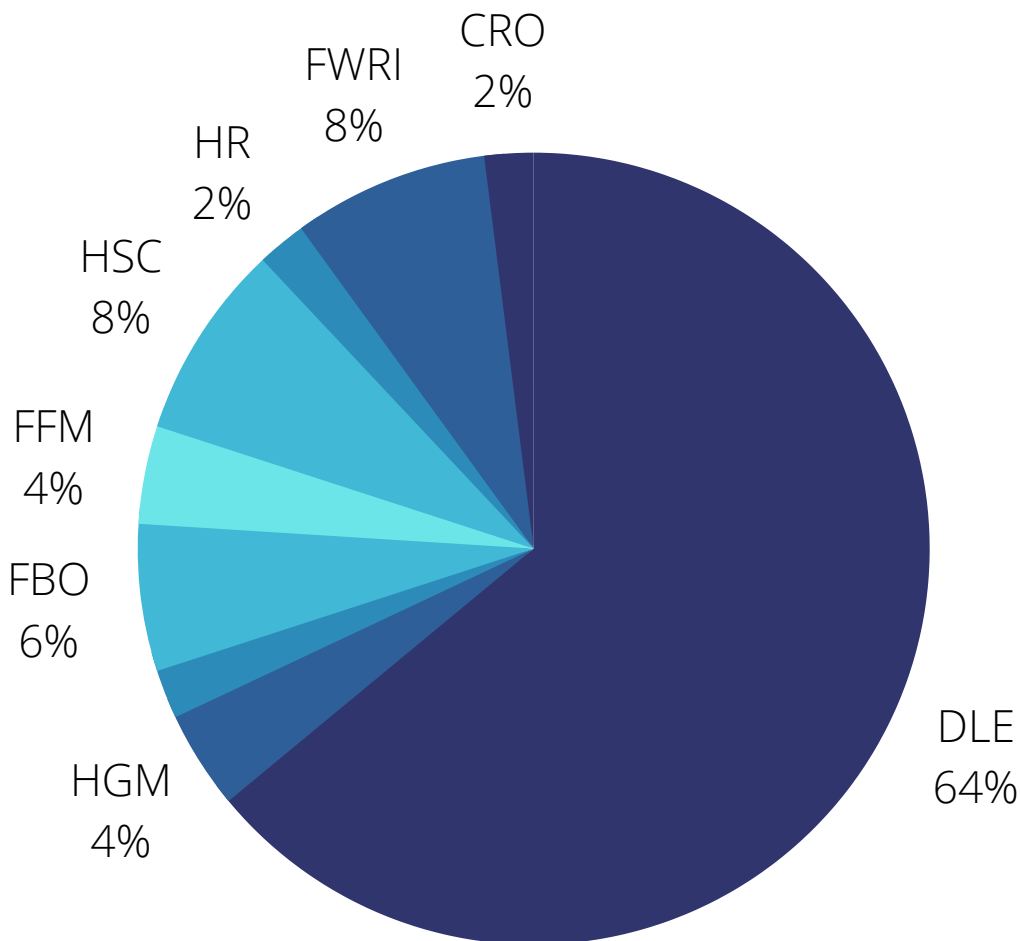
INVESTIGATIONS BY DIVISION/OFFICE

Office of Inspector General conducted a total of fifty internal investigations and inquiries in the 2020/2021 fiscal year. Major complaints are assigned investigation complaint numbers and investigated by OIG investigators. Field inquiries into minor complaints may be conducted by the division office (DO) in conjunction with the OIG prior to a complaint's designation as an investigation. After the issuance of a case number, OIG investigators conduct an administrative or criminal investigation focused on determining whether the alleged conduct occurred. At the conclusion of the investigation, findings are issued based on all evidence gathered. The closed investigation is then provided to the originating DO to determine the appropriate disciplinary action, if any.



INVESTIGATIONS BY DIVISION/OFFICE

In the 2020/2021 fiscal year, the OIG completed thirty-two investigations on employees within the Division of Law Enforcement (DLE), four within the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation (HSC), zero within the Office of Licensing and Permitting (OLP), four within the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI), three within the Finance and Budget Office (FBO), zero within the Office of Inspector General (OIG), zero within the Office of General Counsel (OGC), zero within the Office of Executive Director (OED), two within the Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management (FFM), zero within Division of Marine Fisheries Management (MFM), one within the Community Relations Office (CRO), one within the Office of Human Resource (HR), two within the Division of Hunting and Game Management (HGM), and one investigation was conducted pursuant to a special request from the Florida Department of Corrections.



Note: Some investigations have multiple findings and may involve multiple different Divisions or Offices.

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARIES

Case No.	Allegations
2021-INQ-0020	An inquiry was conducted into an allegation of misuse of state equipment, theft, and falsification of timesheets in Division of Habitat and Species Conservation.
2021-INV-0016	An investigation into an allegation of misconduct against an FWC Duty Officer who was negligent and gave false statements.
2021-INQ-0015	An inquiry was conducted into an allegation of theft from the Bryant Building.
2021-INV-0014	On November 16, 2020, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Inspector General Mike Troelstrup was asked to conduct an administrative investigation into potential policy violations stemming from an incident that occurred at the Madison Correctional Institution on January 1, 2019, involving Florida Department of Corrections Canine Drug Interdiction Unit.
2021-INQ-0013	An inquiry was conducted into an allegation of animal cruelty by an unknown alligator trapper in, the Division of Hunting and Game Management.
2021-INQ-0011	An inquiry into an allegation of misconduct the Division of Law Enforcement.
2021-INQ-0010	An inquiry into an allegation of assault in Division of Law Enforcement.
2021-INV-0009	An investigation into an allegation of violation of FWC residency policy.
2021-INV-0006	An investigation into an allegation of battery and conduct unbecoming in Community Relations Office.
2021-INV-0005	An investigation into an allegation of conflict of interest and unreported dual employment in the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute.
2021-INV-0004	A Division of Law Enforcement officer was investigated regarding allegations of an arrest for disorderly conduct, intoxication, and resisting arrest.
2021-INV-0003	An investigation into an allegation of trespassing onto private property.
2021-INV-0002	Allegation of misconduct while off-duty against an FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer.
2021-INV-0001	An investigation into allegation of misconduct against an FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer falsifying details. Issues of negligence while causing damage to an FWC truck and falsifying details in the accident report.
2020-INV-0050	An investigation regarding an FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation Biologist who reportedly gave his daughter the access code to an FWC Facility. His daughter allegedly entered after-hours with her boyfriend to engage in sexual relations.
2020-INV-0049	An investigation into an allegation of misconduct against an FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation Fish and Wildlife technician and Biological Scientist who sexually harassed coworkers.
2020-INQ-0047	Misuse of Agency Databases for "Background Check" for Complainant's Fiancé's Mother.
2020-INV-0046	An allegation of misconduct against an FWC Division of Law Enforcement Lieutenant who was involved an incident in her neighborhood stemming from a "Black Lives Matter" sign in her neighbors' yard. The word "black" on the sign was crossed out and replaced with the word "blue."
2020-INV-0045	An investigation into an allegation of creating and submitting a fake invoice for payment in DLE.

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARIES

2020-INV-0044	An inquiry into an allegation of trespassing and other crimes committed by multiple law enforcement officers.
2020-INV-0043	An investigation into an allegation of Law Enforcement Officer who improperly identified himself as an FWC Officer, was rude, and unprofessional.
2020-INV-0042	An investigation into an allegation that a Law Enforcement Officer made false and misleading statements for worker's compensation and insubordination.
2020-INV-0041	An investigation into the discharge of a firearm on Tyndall Air Force Base property and causing property damage.
2020-INV-0040	An investigation into trespassing onto private property and off-duty hunting violations.
2020-INV-0039	An investigation into an allegation of misconduct against a FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer. An allegation of sexual harassment made by an FWC employee. As well as conduct unbecoming and violation of Agency IT Policy.
2020-INV-0038	An investigation into a Fish and Wildlife Research Institute Biological Scientist who allegedly failed to report arrest and stole from FWC.
2020-INV-0037	An investigation into an allegation of misconduct against a Division of Law Enforcement Officer who was insubordinate when he refused an oral directive to take over a case.
2020-INV-0036	An investigation into a Wildlife Technician who was allegedly stealing from state funds for his personal gain by making purchases using his agency issued purchasing card (P-card). P-Card Fraud.
2020-INV-0035	An investigation into a FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer who failed to follow the instructions of the Captain who requested for the officer to report to duty. Also, insubordination and lying.
2020-INV-0034	An inquiry was conducted into a Division of Law Enforcement Officer regarding integrity issues, incompetence, and illegal actions.
2020-INV-0033	An inquiry was conducted into a discrimination allegation.
2020-INV-0032	An investigation into falsification of a document.
2020-INV-0031	An investigation concerning an FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer regarding numerous off-duty violations; Falsification of timesheets.
2020-INV-0030	An investigation against a Division of Law Enforcement Officer who allegedly was driving in a careless manner, then harassed the complainant, and tried to run him off the road.
2020-INV-0029	An inquiry into an allegation of misconduct against a FWC Division of Freshwater Fisheries Management Staff Assistant's misuse of Tax Exemption.
2020-INV-0028	An investigation into a FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer whose vehicle backed into another vehicle in a parking lot at a local business and then departed the scene without exchanging information with the other party.
2020-INV-0027	An investigation into an allegation of misconduct against a FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation Biological Scientist who was unprofessional and made inappropriate comments on her Facebook page, which is open to the public, and identifies her as an FWC employee.
2020-INV-0026	An allegation of misconduct against a FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer failed to follow the instructions of his supervisor by engaging in extra-duty employment while suspended.

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARIES

2020-INV-0024	An investigation into alcohol misuse, loafing, failure to report misconduct, sexual harassment, and conduct unbecoming in Division of Law Enforcement.
2020-INV-0023	An investigation into a Wildlife technician that reportedly stole a game camera from a Wildlife Management Area.
2020-INV-0022	An investigation into misconduct by a FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer who texted nude photos of child on personal phone. Investigative and evidence procedures violations.
2020-INV-0021	An investigation into misconduct against a FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer who gave improper authorization of activity which resulted in a unlawful arrest.
2020-INV-0019	An allegation of misconduct against a Freshwater Fisheries Management Biological Scientist who made inappropriate comments toward and unwantedly touched another FWC employee.
2020-INV-0018	An inquiry into concerns regarding management of Northwest Region
2020-INV-0017	An allegation of misconduct against an FWC Division of Law Enforcement Officer who had an off-duty arrest and was charged with DUI.
2020-INV-0016	An investigation into misconduct by a Division of Law Enforcement Officer sending a threatening text message after being involved in a neighbor dispute regarding loud music.
2020-INV-0011	An investigation regarding FWC Finance and Budget office employees who were arrested while employed and failed to report the arrest to the Office of Inspector General.
2020-INV-0008	An investigation into Human Resources employee who gave incorrect guidance to employees.
2020-INV-0005	An investigation into an allegation of a Biological Scientist who misused a FWC vessel while electrofishing.
2020-INV-0002	An Investigation into gross mismanagement, sexual harassment, and unauthorized travel in the Division of Finance and Budget Office.





**Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
Office of Inspector General**

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