



# CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

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October 31, 2006

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

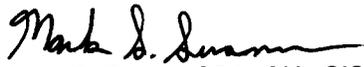
**SUBJECT: San Antonio Police Department Property and Evidence Room Audit**

We are pleased to send you the report and Management responses for an audit requested by Police Chief McManus of the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) Property and Evidence Room. This audit began in June 2006 and concluded with an exit conference with Chief McManus in September 2006.

The SAPD should be commended for their cooperation, assistance, and prompt responses during this audit. The SAPD Action Plan indicates full acceptance of seven of the nine recommendations in our report and partial acceptance of the other two.

The Internal Audit Department appreciates the opportunity to have performed this audit and is available to discuss this material with you individually at your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Mark S. Swann CPA, CIA, CISA  
Interim City Auditor

cc: Leticia Vacek, City Clerk



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO**  
**INTERNAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT**

**San Antonio Police Department  
Property and Evidence Room Audit**



**Project No. AU06-010**

**Issue Date: October 31, 2006**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Overview

This report is the result of a request made by the Chief of Police soon after being hired to review the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) Property and Evidence Storage Detail, Narcotics Unit, and Asset Seizure Detail. These three groups together form the property and evidence room (a.k.a. Property Room) function for the SAPD. The main objectives of this audit were to determine if internal controls were adequate, 'chain of custody' was maintained, and integrity of property and evidence was sufficiently preserved.

This report includes background information to assist the reader in understanding the property room function. The body of the report consists of observations and recommendations and is divided into four sections, General Control Environment, Property and Evidence Storage Detail, Narcotics Unit, and Asset Seizure Detail.

### Results In Brief

The property and evidence room is responsible for the proper intake, recording, safeguarding, storing, and preserving of evidence and found property. The Property Room currently takes in and disposes of tens of thousands of items every year. In this daunting task, the current Property and Evidence Storage Detail Supervisor has made great strides purging items no longer required to be held and organizing the property warehouse. His efforts have resulted in a slowing of the growth of inventory and an increase in operational efficiencies. However, this audit identified additional opportunities to implement best practices, conform to International Association for Property and Evidence (IAPE) standards, modernize processes, enhance controls, increase inventory management efficiencies, and reduce the potential for fraud.

Our recommendations are summarized below. We praise the current Property and Evidence Storage Detail Manager and Staff for already having addressed many of these recommendations.

- The SAPD should procure and install a commercial software application designed specifically for the management of property and evidence. This system should replace the currently used mainframe and ad-hoc database systems, and should include bar-code, security, audit trail, back-up, and tickler-file functionality. (Recommendation A-1, Page 4 and B-1, Page 11)
- The SAPD should assign the property and evidence custodial responsibilities of the Narcotics Unit and Asset Seizure Detail to the Property and Evidence Storage Detail to result in a single integrated property room function that reports directly to SAPD Administration Bureau Management rather than SAPD Operations Bureau Management. (Recommendation A-2, Page 5)
- SAPD Management should thoroughly evaluate the current location, construction, and design of the property and evidence room and its facilities for suitability. A number of changes need to be made to ensure that employees are better protected and property and evidence better safeguarded. (Recommendation A-3, Page 6)
- The SAPD should implement a plan to properly inventory all narcotics in the narcotics vault. All narcotics not legally required to be maintained should be destroyed. (Recommendation C-1, Page 13)
- The SAPD should develop explicit procedures for releasing narcotics evidence in alignment with IAPE standards. (Recommendation C-2, Page 14 )

**Background**

The responsibility for the property room function is actually divided among three separate groups; the Property and Evidence Storage Detail, under the SAPD Administrative Bureau, the Narcotics Unit, under the SAPD Operations Bureau, and the Asset Seizure Detail, also under the SAPD Operations Bureau. All three groups share the same warehouse facility located in the Municipal Courts Building on 401 South Frio Street, but have different reporting lines of authority, procedures, systems, and staff.

The Property Room is collectively responsible for taking in and managing thousands of items of property and evidence every year (see **Exhibit 1**). This function is also responsible for maintaining an accurate chain of custody over evidential items. Chain of custody entails maintaining a documented record of the location and possessor of evidence from its initial intake through potential testing and court use (release), storage, and disposition. The Property Room must ensure that items it takes in remain secure, intact, and free from alteration and contamination in order to preserve the forensic and intrinsic value of the items.

**Exhibit 1 – Number of Property and Evidence Items Taken In by Functional Area**

Calendar Year	Property & Evidence	Narcotics	Asset Seizure	Total
2000	29,033	4,468	4,797	<b>38,298</b>
2001	31,210	5,403	2,949	<b>39,562</b>
2002	33,132	7,172	3,446	<b>43,750</b>
2003	35,708	8,652	1,917	<b>46,277</b>
2004	36,851	8,745	951	<b>46,547</b>
2005	35,966	9,131	1,433	<b>46,530</b>
2006*	37,588	10,676	1,000	<b>49,264</b>
<b>Total</b>	239,488	54,247	16,493	<b>310,228</b>

\* Annualized estimate based on items taken in through June 30, 2006.

**Objectives**

The objectives of this audit were to determine if:

- Internal controls were adequate to ensure that the chain of custody and integrity of property and evidence were adequately preserved.
- Property Room procedures were in compliance with those established by the International Association for Property and Evidence, Inc. (IAPE).

**Scope**

The scope of this audit included property and evidence room operations for the general period October, 2004 through June, 2006, although the scope for some tests was expanded. The audit scope did not include reviewing automobile impound operations or Property Room expenditures.

**Criteria**

This audit was based on International Association for Property & Evidence Inc. (IAPE) standards, Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (Chapter 84) standards, SAPD Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and technology related internal controls. Additionally, we considered best practices for property and evidence room management.

**Methodology**

The audit methodology consisted of collecting information and documentation, conducting interviews with SAPD Management and Staff, observing facilities and processes, performing selected tests and other procedures, and analyzing and evaluating the results of tests performed.

The audit was performed in compliance with generally accepted government auditing standards issued by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO).

### **Conclusion**

The following observations were made during the course of the audit:

- The current processes and related information systems used for tracking property and maintaining an appropriate chain-of-custody are disjointed and lack adequate application controls.
- Custodial responsibility for narcotics evidence and asset seizure property is currently assigned to groups reporting to the SAPD Operations Bureau which results in a conflict of interest.
- Inadequate design and layout of the Property Room has resulted in the potential for personal injury, health problems, security issues, chain of custody problems, and legal liability.
- Property and evidence inventory levels are high and will ultimately result in the necessity for additional storage space and associated resources. Also, firearms and narcotics were not being disposed on a timely basis.
- An excessive number of users have access to mainframe-based property and evidence records.
- Instances were noted where documentation substantiating chain of custody was not available or was inadequate.
- Controls over narcotics processing are weak. Thousands of narcotics evidence items were not being tracked, the Narcases database was not adequately developed, and lab result documentation was found to be easily fabricated.
- Documentation for narcotics released to outside parties such as the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and various Federal Courts is inadequate or missing altogether.
- Instances were noted where documentation supporting the disposition of seized assets was incomplete or missing altogether.

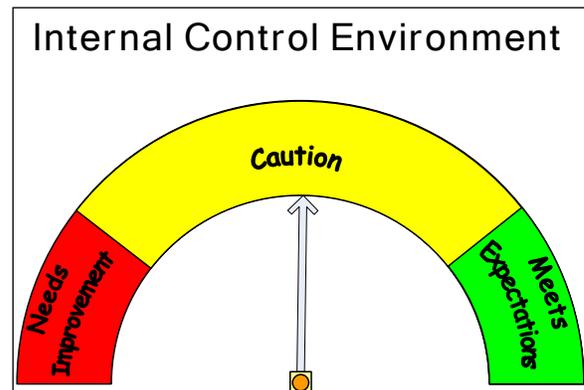
### **Risk Assessment Capability**

In performing this audit, five risk management capabilities were considered for purposes of determining key risks to the City. The capabilities include strategies, processes, people, technology, and information. A more detailed description of the capability stages has been included as **Attachment A**. Of the five risk management capabilities, technology, processes, and people were deemed the most applicable to this audit. Each matrix is organized into five recognized capability maturity/development stages. Most entities achieve a *managed* stage while fewer achieve an *optimized* stage.

Based on the Enterprise Risk Assessment Capability Matrix included as **Attachment A**, it was determined that the maturity level of the Property Room's **Technology Capabilities** were at the *repeatable* stage since systems and technology are generally not interfaced and they trail the needs of the organization.

Using the Enterprise Risk Assessment Capability Matrix for **Process Capabilities**, we believe Property Room processes were at the *defined* stage since some procedures are not well documented or regularly updated to reflect changing needs.

Using the Enterprise Risk Assessment Capability Matrix for **People Capabilities**, we believe Property Room personnel were at the *repeatable* stage since there are competent personnel in most areas, but they lack professional training. Also, the property and evidence room function in general appears to be under-resourced.



## DETAILED OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. General Control Environment

Control comprises those elements of an organization including its resources, systems, processes, structure and tasks that, taken together, support people in the achievement of the organization's objectives. IAPE standards and best practices for property room controls formed the framework for this review. The observations and recommendations in this report are predicated on this framework.

#### A.1 Information Systems and Associated Processes

##### Observation

The current process for tracking property and evidence items and maintaining an appropriate chain-of-custody (e.g. tracking temporary releases) is disjointed. The process requires the use of an outdated mainframe application, various paper documents, and at least five internally developed Microsoft Access databases. These systems aren't connected and their use results in an inefficient process that is subject to error and potential lapses in documentation.

The Narcotics Unit and Asset Seizure Detail exclusively utilize internally developed Microsoft Access databases which lack proper application controls. These databases have no built-in security (i.e. no logon password is required) and changes to property records, including deletions, can be made at-will by anyone with physical or logical access. No audit trail (i.e. history file) functionality was programmed into these databases so there is no automated documentation (e.g. user ID, date, time) of record additions, changes, or deletions. Furthermore, the databases were not backed up on a regular basis.

Auditors noted missing values in many fields in these Access database records indicating that they were not programmed with sufficient data entry controls, and were not maintained or updated on a consistent basis.

It was noted that the process for evidence booking required the same information to be entered multiple times in some instances resulting in duplicated efforts that are inherently error-prone. For example, the case officer initially enters all evidence items into a Word document. The officer then re-enters the same information onto a paper K-Tag card in the Property Room. Finally, a Property Room attendant re-enters the K-Tag information into the mainframe application. The result of this process is that the same information has been recorded three times.

SAPD internal reviews dating back to 2003 resulted in similar observations including inadequate computer systems, redundant entering of information, and inefficient manual processes.

##### Risk

Inefficient and outdated processes and systems result in duplication of efforts, excessive paper documentation, and a potential lapse in the chain of custody over evidence items. Also, internally developed ad-hoc databases that lack proper controls are prone to data integrity problems.

##### Recommendation

The SAPD should procure and install a commercial software application designed specifically for the management of property and evidence as soon as possible. This system should replace the current mainframe and ad-hoc database systems currently being used. The new system should include a bar-code module to reduce errors and increase efficiencies in inventory management. The system should be flexible to accommodate Narcotics and Asset Seizure processes and should include adequate security, audit trail, and back-up functionality.

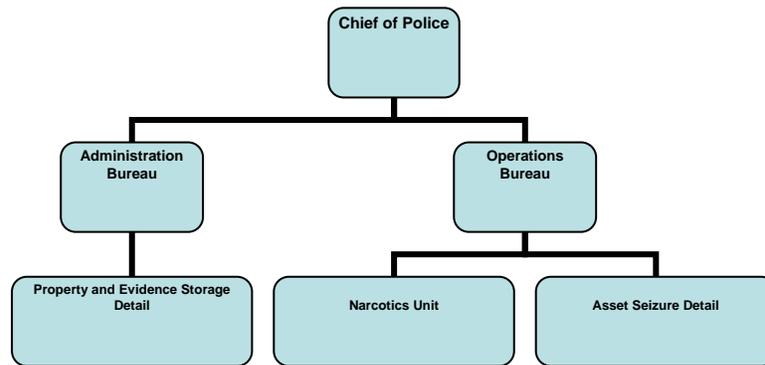
Also, kiosks outfitted with computers that are linked to the new system should be provided in the holding room for detectives and officers to book (enter) their own property and evidence. This would eliminate the need for K-Tags and alleviate Property Room attendants from having to re-enter the same data.

## A.2 Organizational Placement

### **Observation**

Currently, custodial responsibility for narcotics and asset seizure property and evidence is assigned to groups reporting to the SAPD Operations Bureau which results in a conflict of interest. The property room is divided among three separate groups; the Property and Evidence Storage Detail, the Narcotics Unit, and the Asset Seizure Detail. **Exhibit 2** shows the placement of each group within the SAPD organizational structure. The Operations Bureau includes patrol and investigative personnel.

**Exhibit 2 - Organizational Placement of Property and Evidence Functions**



Source: SAPD

IAPE Standard #1 states in part that, "...the [property and evidence] unit should be organizationally separate from the patrol and investigation functions." This standard further explains that separation of duties is paramount to maintaining organizational independence and integrity of the property room function. Centralizing the property room function and staffing it with personnel who are not involved in SAPD operations (e.g. arrests, investigations, seizing of evidence, etc.) will simplify property room management and enhance integrity.

### **Risk**

Not separating the patrol and investigative functions from the property room function can result in the impairment of independence and/or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Additional risks include loss of operational efficiencies, duplication of efforts, multiple disparate systems, varying levels of SOPs, and separate staff.

### **Recommendation**

SAPD Management should assign the property and evidence custodial responsibilities of the Narcotics Unit and Asset Seizure Detail to the Property and Evidence Storage Detail to result in a single integrated property room function that reports directly to Administration Bureau Management.

### **A.3 Property Room Construction, Layout, and Storage Methods**

#### **Conditions**

The following Property Room construction, layout, and storage method observations were made:

#### **Main Floor (Holding and Staging Rooms, Property Room Offices, Public Access Window):**

- Police officers and detectives (i.e. non Property Room employees) are allowed access to all areas of the Property Room on the main-floor during business hours. This allows them access to evidence being processed in the staging room.
- Evidence lockers for temporary overnight storage lack proper locking mechanisms and are not sturdy enough to prevent theft of contents.
- There appears to be a shortage of lockers of sufficient size and shape to accommodate current property and evidence needs. This shortage results in officers and detectives occasionally leaving evidence unsecured on the preparation table and floor of the holding room overnight instead of properly securing it in lockers.
- Due to the positioning of the public service window, the public has a clear view of the holding room's contents, security, and officers (some under-cover) booking evidence.
- The holding room has only one small 3' x 6' table that has to facilitate packaging supplies and officers trying to fill out property tags and other documentation. Sometimes evidence is left on this table, further reducing workable space.
- There is no dedicated evidence viewing area. Currently, detectives and attorneys have to view evidence in an office inside the staging area (from which they should be restricted) or in the holding room which is observable by the public and crowded at times.
- Public access to the Property Room was not designed with sufficient employee safety features. At the public service window, only a sheet of Plexiglas separates Property Room employees from the public. The Plexiglas should be replaced with bullet resistant glass as recommended in IAPE Standard #7.
- There is no 'pass-through' mechanism to allow Property Room attendants to safely release property items back to their owners. Currently, attendants must allow the public inside the property holding room or alternatively carry property out to them. In either case, the only door separating the public from the Property Room must be opened allowing easy ingress.

#### **Second Floor (Property Storage Warehouse, Narcotics Vault):**

- Lack of sufficient shelving and warehousing structures impede the maximization of space (e.g. wasted air space above bicycles and old homicide case items) and the orderly and efficient storage of certain types of evidence such as rape-kits and firearms.
- The Property Room warehouse floor may not be structurally sound enough to support a substantial amount of additional weight. The structural limits (weight bearing load) of the warehouse floor should be ascertained by an engineer.
- No environmental testing has been performed in the Narcotics Vault to identify potential health hazards. The Narcotics Vault may not be properly ventilated to maintain an Aspergillious free environment. Aspergillious is a type of mold associated with marijuana and is known to cause health problems in humans.
- There are no "eye-wash" stations in the Property Room. It is essential that employees who work with items such as blood-soaked clothes or narcotics have quick access to eye-wash facilities.

#### **Risk**

Inadequate design of the Property Room can result in personal injury, health problems, security issues, chain of custody problems, and potential legal action against the City.

#### **Recommendation**

SAPD Management should thoroughly evaluate the current location, construction, layout, and design of the Property Room and its facilities for suitability. All of the conditions mentioned above should be addressed to ensure that employees are sufficiently protected and property and evidence effectively safeguarded.

#### A.4 Inventory Management

##### **Observation – Inventory Buildup**

Property Room Inventory levels are high and the storage room is running out of space. Property Room standards suggest that inventory levels remain constant from year to year. That is to say that purging should keep pace with intake. SAPD SOP's specify that firearms and narcotics be disposed of no later than six months after the date-of-authorization for destruction. An analysis of Property Room inventory items received and released from 2000-2006 indicates that while the trend has improved substantially, many more items were taken in than purged during that period. The average purge ratio from 2000 to 2004 was 63 percent, although this ratio increased to 95 percent in 2005 under the new Property Room Supervisor (see **Exhibit 3**).

**Exhibit 3 – Items Purged Versus Items Taken In 2000 – 2006**

Calendar Year	Items Taken In	Items Purged	Inventory Increase	Ratio of Purged Items to Items Taken In
2000	29,033	21,287	7,746	73%
2001	31,210	20,058	11,152	64%
2002	33,132	19,190	13,942	58%
2003	35,708	21,888	13,820	61%
2004	36,851	22,620	14,231	61%
2005	35,966	34,202	1,764	95%
2006 (Through 6/30)	18,794	17,777	1,017	95%

Source: Summary Reports (ITSD Report C761701)

##### **Observation – Delay in the Destruction of Firearms**

The Property and Evidence Storage Detail is tasked with destroying firearms classified as 'evidence' after they have been approved for destruction by a court order or SAPD detective. Property Disposition Authorization forms (PDA's) are distributed to follow-up units assigned to each case. The detective in-charge is responsible for completing and returning the PDA form, which gives direction to Property Room personnel to either hold a firearm or destroy it.

Firearms classified as 'personal' or 'found' property can be destroyed only after a mandatory 120-day holding period. If the owner has not come to claim the firearm within 120 days of it being booked into the Property Room, it may be destroyed.

Auditors selected 30 firearms classified as 'destroyed' for testing to determine if they had been processed properly. Test work showed that 22 out of the 30 firearms had not been destroyed in a timely manner. Thirteen of the firearms had not been destroyed until more than five years after they had been authorized for destruction via PDA (see **Exhibit 4**).

**Exhibit 4 – Destroyed Firearms**

Type of Property	Number of Firearms Destroyed			
	Less Than One Year After 120 Day Hold	Greater Than One Year After 120 Day Hold	Less Than One Year After PDA Authorization Date	Greater Than Five Years After PDA Authorization Date
Personal/Found	2	5	N/A	N/A
Evidence	N/A	N/A	2	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>

Source: Manual firearm logs, PDA's

**Observation – Delay in Making Cash Deposits**

PDA's are also required to deposit cash held as evidence into a City bank account. We tested cash deposits for timeliness and we found that there was an average of approximately nine months from the authorization date on the PDA to date of deposit.

**Observation – Delay in the Destruction of Narcotics**

Narcotics Unit SOP's state that research should be performed to determine if narcotics cases have been adjudicated in order to facilitate a timely purging of inventory. Until recently, if the case had been adjudicated, explicit authorization was needed from the District Attorney (DA) before the associated narcotics could be destroyed. Historically, obtaining the required authorization from the DA's office was problematic. This bottleneck in the process coupled with a lack of personnel resources in the Narcotics Unit resulted in a significant build-up of narcotics which date back to 1991. According to APE Standard #13, all efforts need to be made to remove and destroy narcotics as quickly as possible after the associated case has been adjudicated.

**Observation – Inefficient Use of Personnel During Weekends**

The Property Room is open to the public 365 days per year from 7:45 am to 4:30 pm. Historical figures show that the average number of customers served at the public window on weekdays is 38 and the number served on weekend days is 14. The average number of customer phone calls received on weekdays is 56 and the number received on weekend days is 26.

Being open to the public 365 days each year requires Property Room staff to be dedicated to the service window every day. This practice results in Property Room attendants not having sufficient time to perform duties associated with purging inventory.

**Risk**

Unchecked inventory growth will ultimately result in requirements for additional storage space and associated resources such as personnel, shelving, and security. Also, leaving firearms and narcotics in the Property Room longer than legally necessary exposes the City to a greater risk of theft, loss, or other misappropriation.

**Recommendation**

SAPD Management should dedicate sufficient resources to the activities involved in purging inventory. To that end, SAPD Management should consider closing the public service window on weekends and holidays and reallocating the associated work hours to purging activities.

**A.5 Access to Mainframe Information**

**Observation**

There are an excessive number of users who have access to mainframe-based property and evidence records. Currently there are 9,420 unique user accounts with access to the mainframe-based Property Room application. Of those, 4,618 accounts have full 'execute' access, and 4,802 have 'read-only' access. The following was found relative to the 4,618 accounts with full access:

- 568 users could not be identified as current City employees. Using SAP Human Resource information, it was not possible to determine if these users had ever been City employees. Furthermore, many of these 568 users had recently accessed the mainframe.
- 57 user accounts were identified as belonging to terminated employees.
- 852 user accounts were associated with users who had multiple accounts.
- 448 user accounts were identified as ITSD miscellaneous or utility accounts.
- 2,693 unique user accounts were identified as belonging to City-employed users; 766 of these users have multiple accounts which are included in the 852 mentioned above. **Exhibit 5** shows the breakdown of these 2,693 City users by City area.

**Exhibit 5 - Full-Access User Accounts by Area**

Personnel Area	Area Description	Total Accounts	Active Accounts
500	City Manager	2	0
700	Finance	1	0
900	ITSD	28	21
1000	Human Resources	46	32
1300	Fire and Police Pension	63	4
1700	Police	2,506	1,830
2000	Fire/EMS	19	16
2300	Public Works	1	0
2600	Parks and Recreation	1	0
3000	Code Compliance	2	0
3300	Aviation	17	14
3600	SA Metro Health District	2	0
3800	Community Initiatives	2	2
4300	Convention and Visitors Bureau	1	0
5000	Planning	1	0
6100	Neighborhood Action	1	0
Total		2,693	1,919

Source: ACF2 Access Control List – Police Property File, and SAP

**Risk**

Allowing access to sensitive information to those who don't have a legitimate need increases the risk of data loss, corruption, manipulation, disclosure, and misuse.

**Recommendation**

The SAPD should thoroughly review all current mainframe accounts that have access to property and evidence records and request ITSD remove access for all those without an appropriate need. No users should be given access unless they have proper authorization from the Property and Evidence Storage Detail Supervisor.

## B. Property and Evidence Storage Detail

### Background

The Property and Evidence Storage Detail receives all property into the Property Room except narcotics and seized assets. As items of property and evidence are inventoried in the mainframe system, they are classified as cash, firearms, articles, license plates, or miscellaneous. Articles are those items that have a serial number (other than firearms) such as electronic devices and power tools. Miscellaneous items consist of all items that are not cash, firearms, articles or license plates.

Currently, officers and detectives use paper cards called 'K-Tags' to document the specifics of each property and evidence item submitted for storage. K-Tag information includes the item's description, case number, and submitting officer's name and badge number. Property Room attendants enter information from the K-Tag into the mainframe system, assign a bin location for each item, and store the item in the assigned bin.

Each license plate, firearm and article is documented with its own K-Tag card. However, multiple 'miscellaneous' items can be documented on a single K-Tag card. Miscellaneous items make up the majority of the total items in inventory. As of May 31, 2006, 136,607 K-Tags were in use documenting many thousands more items. **Exhibit 6** shows the breakdown of K-Tags into the five categories mentioned above.

**Exhibit 6 – Property and Evidence Inventory**

Classification	Number of K-Tags	Value
Cash	4,058	\$1,392,152
Firearms	11,535	N/A
Articles	7,786	N/A
Plates	1,644	N/A
Miscellaneous	111,584	N/A
Total	<b>136,607</b>	<b>\$1,392,152</b>
Source: SAPD Mainframe System		

Each property and evidence item is also assigned a two-part computer tag or 'property card'. One copy of the property card is attached to the property item prior to storing it, and the other copy is filed in a cabinet.

Cash is stored in a walk-in 'vault' inside the Property Room. Firearms are stored in a 'gun cage' which is located in the property warehouse on the second floor. Periodically, evidence items are temporarily released from the Property Room for viewing by detectives and attorneys, crime lab testing, or for court proceedings. Finally, property items are permanently released from the Property Room after it is no longer legally necessary to keep them. Property may be destroyed, auctioned, donated to charity, or converted to SAPD use.

## B.1 Property and Evidence Storage Detail Documentation

### **Observations**

Instances were noted where documentation substantiating chain of custody was not available or was inadequate. The following is a summary of these instances:

- As of June 30, 2006, approximately 1,500 items were shown in the temporarily-released-property database as being out on temporary release; some items dating back as far as 1986. SAPD Form 113-3, *Temporary Release of Property*, states that the property is due back within seven days of release. However the database shows that the average 'temporary' release lasted 60 days for items returned in 2005, and 37 days for items returned in 2006 (as of June 30).
- The Access database used to track temporarily released property was not always properly updated with return dates, property attendant notes, and other information.
- Documents for five out of 35 cash items we tested did not agree; i.e. the K-Tag, property card and auditor count did not agree. The discrepancies were minor; however they indicate that the original counts by officers and/or Property Room attendants were not accurate.
- There was no K-Tag on file for three out of 60 firearms tested.
- One out of 136 miscellaneous items tested could not be located in its assigned bin.
- Mainframe property and evidence records are updated to reflect that a firearm has been destroyed prior to it actually being destroyed. As firearms are removed from bins for destruction, the system is updated to indicate that they are destroyed, when in fact, the destruction may not occur until months later. This can lead to confusion as to the true disposition of the firearm. The commentary to IAPE's *Standard #12 Firearms Handling* states; "Under no circumstances should the [property] record be changed to reflect "Destroyed" until the actual destruction takes place."
- Current procedures for documenting firearm destructions are lacking. A manual log is maintained to track firearms that are pulled from the shelves for destruction. As soon as enough firearms have been accumulated, usually about 400, their destruction is scheduled. The manual log is the only record available that documents destroyed firearms. Historically, only personnel from the Property and Evidence Storage and Asset Seizure Details participated in firearm destructions. Also, current procedures only require noting the serial number of the firearms being destroyed and the names of those who participated. However, these individuals are not required to formally attest to the details of the destruction. The IAPE recommends that an independent witness verify serial numbers and the actual destruction of weapons. Ironically, procedures for destroying firearms are not nearly as stringent as those for destroying alcohol for which a signed notarized statement is required.

### **Risk**

Inadequate or missing documentation could potentially invalidate an item's chain of custody for legal purposes. Also, misappropriation of property and evidence is more likely to occur in the absence of proper documentation.

### **Recommendation**

The SAPD should implement the following:

- As recommended in section 'A' above, all ad-hoc databases should be replaced with a fully integrated information system that includes bar code functionality. The system should be able to accommodate a tickler file that electronically notifies officers and detectives when released items are due to be returned to the Property Room.
- A two-person cash count rule should be applied without exception to ensure electronic records match actual cash.
- The property and evidence record status for firearms should not be changed to "Destroyed" until the actual date of destruction to avoid confusion regarding actual disposition.
- A witness, independent of the property room function, should formally attest to firearm destructions via a notarized statement showing the date and serial numbers of all firearms destroyed.

## C. Narcotics Unit

### **Background**

The Narcotics Unit is charged with the enforcement of the Texas Controlled Substance Act as it pertains to the manufacture, distribution, and dispensing of legally and illegally produced substances. The Unit is responsible for the initiation of investigations, case preparation, and presentation to prosecutors.

Officers and detectives bring narcotics evidence to the Property Room to be booked and stored. They manually log or 'book' their evidence in a paper narcotics log book. Then, they fill out paper cards called 'E-Tags' to document the specifics of each narcotic item being submitted for storage. Information required on the E-Tag includes: alleged narcotic type (e.g. marijuana, heroin, and cocaine), narcotic weight, defendant's name, case number, and submitting officer's name and badge number. The E-Tag is then attached to a paper bag or envelope containing the narcotics and dropped into a temporary vault.

Narcotics Evidence Custodians working in the property room collect the bags and envelopes from the temporary vault and re-weigh the narcotics contained therein. These custodians enter the 'unofficial' weight and information from the E-Tag into an internally developed Microsoft Access database called 'Narcases'. The custodians also enter an estimated street value for the narcotics being booked based on the *Los Angeles County Regional Criminal Information Clearinghouse Drug Price List*.

The custodian then generates documents necessary for evidence testing at the Bexar County Forensic Science Center Criminal Investigation Laboratory, and case filing with the Bexar County Court system. After the evidence is tested and retrieved from the Bexar County lab, custodians file the test results and store the narcotics in a vault located in the Property Room. The narcotics are stored in the vault until they are permanently released or destroyed by the SAPD. Internal Audit estimates the street value of the narcotics currently stored in the narcotics vault to be between \$80 and \$110 million.

Occasionally evidence is temporarily or permanently released to a court or outside agency such as the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Narcotics are scheduled for destruction upon notification from the assigned case officer that they are no longer needed for legal purposes.

## **C.1 Audit Trail and Inventory Management**

### **Observations**

We found that controls over the processing of narcotics are weak. Thousands of narcotics evidence items are not being tracked, the Narcases database was not adequately developed, and lab result documentation can be easily fabricated.

- Many narcotics items are recorded in the Narcases Access database for which there is no identifiable location or disposition. Specifically, there were 1,862 items with an estimated street value of \$72,362 that showed a storage location as 'A-1', an unknown location. Most of these items were associated with marijuana taken in during 1999. There were an additional 193 items with an estimated street value of \$75,938 for which the assigned location in the Narcases database was left blank. Most of these items were taken in during April 1999, just after the roll-out of Narcases. The Narcotics Unit staff did not know the storage location of these items, but presumed they were mixed in with older case narcotics dated 1991 to 1999 (see the following bullet).
- There are an estimated 64 'banker' boxes of narcotics associated with cases filed between January 1991 and April 1999 which have not been entered into the Narcases database, inventoried, or tracked in any system. These narcotics are associated with as many as 10,000 cases over the nine year period involved. We estimate the street value of these narcotics to be between \$3 and \$25 million. Narcotics evidence taken in after April 1999 was entered into the Narcases database but no effort was made to retroactively inventory "older" narcotics evidence. It appears that no electronic means of tracking narcotics evidence had been used prior to the roll out of the internally developed Narcases database in 1999. Additionally, these older narcotics take up significant space in the narcotics vault that has been filled to capacity to the extent that boxes of narcotics line some of the vault aisles and work space areas. Given the age of the associated cases, most of these narcotics probably have no evidentiary value.
- The internally developed Narcases database was not developed with sufficient controls to track user actions. Narcotics Unit Custodians have the ability to add, modify, or delete any record in the Narcases database at any time without an audit trail documenting such actions. Furthermore, edit checks were not programmed into the database which result in missing (blank fields) and erroneous data.
- Results of narcotics testing from the Bexar County lab are printed on regular white paper rather than on an official Bexar County letterhead. Consequently, test results could easily be fabricated on any print paper and substituted for the original to cover up narcotics pilferage, theft, or evidence tampering.

### **Risk**

Narcotics are at risk of being lost, stolen, or tampered with if adequate controls are not in place to properly inventory, document, store, release, and destroy them.

### **Recommendations**

The SAPD should perform the following:

- As recommended in section 'A' above, the SAPD should procure and install a commercial software application designed for the management of property and evidence. The new system should meet the needs of narcotics processing and replace the existing Narcases database. The new system should include proper database controls including a history file that documents all record additions, modifications, and deletions with a time stamp and user ID.
- Implement a plan to properly inventory all narcotics in the narcotics vault. Pre-1999 cases should be researched with the goal of destroying any narcotics that are not legally required to be maintained in storage.
- Request the Bexar County lab to document all narcotics test results using official Bexar County security watermarked paper.

## **C.2 Narcotics Released to Outside Agencies**

### **Observation**

Documentation for narcotics released to outside agencies such as the DEA and various Federal Courts is inadequate or missing altogether. There is no written policy that addresses proper documentation procedures for releasing narcotics.

Narcotics release documentation was found to be sparse, illegible, inconsistent, or missing altogether. For two out of 12 'releases' tested, no release forms could be found to confirm to whom the narcotics were given. According to the Narcases records, the two items in question were released to the DEA. One of the releases was for three kilos of cocaine having a street value of \$271 thousand; the other was for one kilo of cocaine with a street value of \$96 thousand. Furthermore, none of the parties in the sample of 12 items tested could be clearly identified due to illegible signatures.

SAPD form 113, used for documenting released evidence, is not properly designed to require the person taking possession of the evidence to clearly print his/her name resulting in illegible names and an obscured audit trail.

### **Risk**

Narcotics are at risk of being lost or stolen if adequate controls are not in place to document their release.

### **Recommendation**

The SAPD should develop explicit and thorough procedures for releasing narcotics evidence in alignment with IAPE standards and best practices as follows:

- A copy of the subpoena should be required for items which are being assigned to court.
- The recipient should be required to legibly print his/her name and sign the release.
- If possible, a photocopy of the recipient's government ID should be taken as recommended by the IAPE. At a minimum, the recipient's printed name and physical features should be matched to his/her government ID. No narcotics should be released unless the recipient presents a proper government ID.
- The release form should be properly authorized by the SAPD case officer responsible for the narcotics. The release form should also require the officer's legibly written name and badge number.
- The transfer of narcotics should be witnessed, and release form signed, by a Narcotics Unit Custodian.

#### D. Asset Seizure Detail

##### **Background**

The Legal Asset Seizure Detail (Asset Seizure) was established in February 1989, and is responsible for enforcing State forfeiture laws and assisting in the Federal forfeiture process. The authority to seize assets is granted to the SAPD under Chapter 59 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. Asset Seizure also maintains custody of seized property which is generally stored in the Property Room. Exceptions to this include seized vehicles and other large assets (e.g. boats, recreational vehicles) which are stored at the Growden Road Vehicle Impound yard.

As of May 31, 2006, seized assets from 63 cases dated 2001 to 2006 occupied approximately 100 bins inside the Property Room. **Exhibit 7** shows the number of cases initiated by Asset Seizure from 2004-2006.

**Exhibit 7 – Asset Seizure Cases from 2004-2006**

Year	Cases Filed	Cases Not Filed	Status Unknown	Total	Number of Seized Vehicles
2004	158	299	2	459	369
2005	209	329	3	541	464
2006 (Through 6/30)	103	195	28	326	255

Source: Asset Seizure Cases Database

When courts adjudicate asset seizure cases, physical assets may be awarded to the State. If assets are awarded to the State, they are either auctioned or converted to agency use. Asset Seizure holds a public auction every several months. Around 50 to 100 items are auctioned at each public auction which usually nets Asset Seizure between \$10 thousand and \$25 thousand. From 2004 through May 2006, approximately 150 awarded assets had been converted to agency use. Most of the converted items were electronic equipment and tools.

## **D.1 Asset Seizure Documentation**

### **Observation**

Documentation supporting the disposition of many seized assets is incomplete or missing altogether. A summary of those issues follows:

- Two forms are required before assets can be released or 'converted' to SAPD use; (1) a Property Request Form (SAPD Form 113-FPR) that requires a statement of intended purpose and four ranking officer approvals, and (2) a Property Release Form (SAPD Form 113-2R) used to document disposition, date, recipient, etc. Of 89 converted assets in our test sample, 37 (or 41%) were missing Form 113-FPR, and one was missing both Forms 113-FPR and 113-2R.
- In February 2004, 24 items were released to an SAPD detective for agency use. Among the items were Sony PlayStations, Microsoft Xbox's, video games, controllers, and DVDs. Property Release forms were provided for each of the 24 items, but no request forms showing intended purpose and approvals could be found. Four of the items were ultimately returned and sold at auction, but the status of the remaining 20 items is unknown. The Sergeant in charge of the Asset Seizure Detail indicated that these 24 items were used in a sting operation.
- A review of almost 300 State-awarded and auctioned assets revealed that adequate information documenting the final disposition was lacking for 32 items (about 10 percent). The disposition of these items could not be traced to either a specific auction or a converted asset document; i.e. their disposition is unknown. Also, 15 items had been auctioned without supporting court documentation showing that they had been awarded to the State.

### **Risk**

Inadequate documentation of asset dispositions could signify misappropriation of assets or the appearance of wrong doing.

### **Recommendation**

The SAPD should ensure that all required forms and approvals are obtained prior to converting assets for its own use. The SAPD should require that assets requested to be converted be supported with proper documentation including intended purpose. The disposition of all assets, whether auctioned or converted to SAPD use, should be tracked.

Also, as recommended in section 'A' of this report, a commercial property and evidence information system should be installed. This system should be tailored for Asset Seizure needs to facilitate all pertinent details of asset dispositions. The new system should include the ability to attach scanned copies of Property Request and Property Release forms to electronic records in order to properly document disposition.

**ATTACHMENT A**

**ENTERPRISE RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX**

**Technology Capabilities**

Stage	Integration	Enhancements	Security
Ad Hoc	Limited, <i>stand-alone</i> systems and technology.	System and technology <i>enhancements</i> are rarely done unless they crash or are proven to be obsolete.	Lax to nonexistent technology infrastructure throughout the company for physical and logical <i>security</i> .
<b>Repeatable</b>	<b>Viabile, but <i>non-interfacing</i> systems and technology.</b>	<b>System and technology <i>enhancements</i> consistently trail business needs.</b>	<b>Limited technology infrastructure, resulting in inconsistent application of physical and logical <i>security</i> across the company.</b>
Defined	Systems and technology are adequate to meet most of the company's current business needs, but most do not <i>interface</i> .	System and technology <i>enhancements</i> are typically reactive to business changes, but are implemented timely.	A formal technology infrastructure exists company-wide, but some physical and logical <i>security</i> exposures exist in certain areas.
Managed	Systems and technology are mostly <i>integrated</i> , effectively meeting most current business needs, and should be adequate in the near-term.	System and technology <i>enhancements</i> are planned to be proactive, and are generally implemented effectively.	A sound and formal technology infrastructure exists, and physical and logical <i>security</i> is generally effective throughout the company.
Optimized	Fully <i>integrated</i> systems and technology effectively enable the business and are generally considered a competitive advantage.	Systems and technology are <i>continuously improved</i> to maintain the competitive advantage.	A strong technology infrastructure exists, with best practice physical and logical <i>security</i> procedures operating throughout the company.

Source: Auditor's Risk Management Guide: Integrating Auditing and ERM by Paul J. Sobel, CPA, CIA

**Process Capabilities**

Stage	Procedures	Controls and Process Improvements	Metrics
Ad Hoc	No formal <i>procedures</i> exist.	<i>Controls</i> are either non-existent, or are primarily reactionary after a "surprise" within the company.	There are no <i>metrics</i> or monitoring of performance.
Repeatable	Some standard <i>procedures</i> exist.	Detective <i>controls</i> are relied upon throughout the company.	Few performance <i>metrics</i> exist, thus there is infrequent monitoring of performance.
<b>Defined</b>	<b><i>Procedures</i> are well documented, but are not regularly updated to reflect changing business needs.</b>	<b>Both preventive and detective <i>controls</i> are employed throughout the company.</b>	<b>Some <i>metrics</i> are used, but monitoring of performance is primarily manual.</b>
Managed	<i>Procedures</i> and <i>controls</i> are well documented and kept current.	Best practices and benchmarking are used to <i>improve</i> process in certain areas of the company.	Many <i>metrics</i> are used, with a blend of automated and manual monitoring of performance.
Optimized	<i>Processes</i> and <i>controls</i> are continuously reviewed and <i>improved</i> .	Extensive use of best practices and benchmarking throughout the company helps to continuously <i>improve</i> processes.	Comprehensive, defined performance <i>metrics</i> exist, with extensive automated monitoring of performance employed.

Source: Auditor's Risk Management Guide: Integrating Auditing and ERM by Paul J. Sobel, CPA, CIA

ATTACHMENT A (cont'd)

ENTERPRISE RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

People Capabilities

Stage	Experience and Competence	Direction and Development	Authority and Accountability
Ad Hoc	<i>Inexperienced</i> personnel in most areas; no formal training programs are followed.	In most areas of the company there is little job guidance or other formal <i>direction</i> .	Vague or conflicting <i>authority and accountability</i> across business areas throughout the company.
<b>Repeatable</b>	<b>Competent</b> personnel in most areas; limited training; many functions tend to be under or over-resourced.	<b>Some understanding of the basic job requirements in most areas, but still not much formal direction from management.</b>	<b>Lack of clear authority and accountability across business areas throughout the company.</b>
Defined	<i>Experienced</i> personnel in most areas, but limited bench strength.	Job responsibilities and skill requirements are defined for all areas, but career <i>development</i> focus is lacking.	<i>Authority and accountability</i> are defined across the company, but not broadly or consistently understood by all affected areas.
Managed	<i>Strong</i> team in place with adequate bench strength in most areas.	A formal <i>development</i> program exists company-wide, with focus on both enhancing existing skills and developing new skills.	Clear articulation of <i>authority and accountability</i> , and consistent understanding among all affected areas.
Optimized	Formal succession planning and integrated resourcing program ensure <i>multiple sourcing options</i> for all key positions throughout the company.	Cross-training programs provide <i>job enrichment</i> opportunities for all employees and <i>multiple sourcing options</i> for all key positions.	A culture of empowerment engages employees throughout the company in exercising the <i>authority and accountability</i> they have been granted.

Source: Auditor's Risk Management Guide: Integrating Auditing and ERM by Paul J. Sobel, CPA, CIA



# CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

P. O. BOX 839966

SAN ANTONIO TEXAS 78283-3966

September 19, 2006

City Auditor  
San Antonio, Texas

RE: Management's Corrective Action Plan for the SAPD Property and Evidence Room Audit

City Management and the San Antonio Police Department have reviewed the audit report and have developed Corrective Action Plans below corresponding to report recommendations.

Recommendation					
#	Description	Audit Report Page	Accept, Partially Accept, Decline	Responsible Person's Name/Title	Completion Date
<b>Detail Report</b>					
<b>A.1</b>	<b>Information Systems and Associated Processes</b> The SAPD should procure and install a commercial software application designed specifically for the management of property and evidence as soon as possible. This system should replace the current mainframe and ad-hoc database systems currently being used. The new system should include a bar-code module to reduce errors and increase efficiencies in inventory management. The system should be flexible to accommodate Narcotics and Asset Seizure processes and should include adequate security, audit trail, and back-up functionality.  Also, kiosks outfitted with computers that are linked to the new system should be provided in the holding room for detectives and officers to book (enter) their own property and evidence. This would eliminate the need for K-Tags and alleviate Property Room attendants from having to re-enter the same data.	<b>4</b>	Accept	Darrell Allen Supervisor Property and Evidence Storage Office	July 2007
<b>Action plan:</b> Preliminary research has been conducted by Darrell Allen and Sgt. Ken Albrecht on several systems currently marketed for Property Room Management. Initial cost estimates range from \$80,000 to \$130,000 with annual recurring expenses of \$5,000 to \$7,000. A committee will be formed by November 2006 to evaluate available systems and make recommendations for purchase by February 2007. Installation targeted for July 2007.					

**A.2 Organizational Placement**

5

SAPD Management should assign the property and evidence custodial responsibilities of the Narcotics Unit and Asset Seizure Detail to the Property and Evidence Storage Detail to result in a single integrated property room function that reports directly to Administration Bureau Management.

Accept

Darrell Allen  
Supervisor  
Property and  
Evidence  
Storage Office

To be Determined

**Action plan:**

The custodial responsibilities of the Narcotics Unit and Asset Seizure Detail will be assumed by the Property and Evidence Storage Office. The civilian staff assigned to these functions in the Narcotics Detail will be transferred to the Property and Evidence Storage Office and continue with their presently assigned duties.

The concerns of the District Attorney's office regarding inadvertently released property will be addressed by ensuring that Property Room staff will not release any Asset Seizure property without prior written approval from the Asset Seizure Detail. No personnel from the Asset Seizure Detail will be transferred to the Property and Evidence Storage Office. The Asset Seizure property will continue to remain segregated from other Property Room inventory.

The property already in Narcotics Unit and Asset Seizure Detail inventories will be entered into the Property Room system and assigned the appropriate inventory control designations.

**A.3 Property Room Construction, Layout, and Storage Methods**

6

SAPD Management should thoroughly evaluate the current location, construction, layout, and design of the Property Room and its facilities for suitability. All of the conditions mentioned above (page 6 bullets) should be addressed to ensure that employees are sufficiently protected and property and evidence effectively safeguarded.

Accept

Darrell Allen  
Supervisor  
Property and  
Evidence  
Storage Office

June 2007

**Action plan:**

- There is a possibility that the Property Room will be moved in the near future. The issue of access by non-property room personnel will be addressed at that time. Should the move not occur, a gate/counter will be installed in the current location.
- In the event the Property Room is relocated, new lockers of appropriate sizes and designs will be installed in the new facility. Should the move not occur, these lockers will be installed to replace the existing locker system.
- Reminders will be published in the daily bulletin restating General Procedure 606.08A "All property classified as evidence that is impounded into the Property Room will not be left unsecured in the holding area." Continued incidents of noncompliance will result in a written notice to the officer in violation and his/her unit commander.
- A partition has been constructed to prevent the public from viewing any activity within the staging room.
- In addition to the partition, separate work stations have been constructed to allow ample work and packaging space.
- A dedicated viewing area has been established on the second floor with appropriate space and accommodations. The Property and Evidence SOP has been rewritten to state that all viewings will take place in the designated area.
- We are in the process of obtaining an estimate for the installation "bullet resistant glass."
- An estimate will be obtained for the installation of a "pass through door." This solution will accommodate items that fit through a 3'x3' window. All larger items will be released in a direct contact scenario.

**Action plan (continued):**

- Due to questions regarding load limits of the facilities second floor, additional shelving cannot be acquired at this time. Should the load limits indicate that additional shelving cannot be added, additional warehouse space will be needed to store long term Homicide and Sexual Assault evidence as required by law.
- Documents will be provided indicating specific load limits of the second floor.
- The narcotics vault ventilation system was inspected by Mr. Tom Ramos (Facility Maintenance) and found to be in working order. Mr. Clifton Valley (San Antonio Metropolitan Health District) will conduct a particulate culture study to determine current working conditions within the narcotics vault. This will be completed by December 2006.
- Eyewash stations will be installed in strategic locations.

<b>A.4</b>	<b>Inventory Management</b> SAPD Management should dedicate sufficient resources to the activities involved in purging inventory. To that end, SAPD Management should consider closing the public service window on weekends and holidays and reallocating the associated work hours to purging activities.	7	Accept	Darrell Allen Supervisor Property and Evidence Storage Office	November 2006
<b><u>Action plan:</u></b> A revised schedule has been submitted for approval. This schedule should allow for 1) a limited window of time to service the public during weekend hours of operation, 2) minimal weekend and holiday staff to process incoming property and 3) maximized man hours for the purge process.					
<b>A.5</b>	<b>Access to Mainframe Information</b> The SAPD should thoroughly review all current mainframe accounts that have access to property and evidence records and request ITSD remove access for all those without an appropriate need. No users should be given access unless they have proper authorization from the Property and Evidence Storage Detail Supervisor.	9	Accept	Darrell Allen Supervisor Property and Evidence Storage Office	December 2006
<b><u>Action plan:</u></b> ITSD has removed accessibility by all non-police personnel. The PPIR (file initiation) function has been limited to Property room personnel only. The ability to limit update access by those individuals having need, is still in process.					
<b>B.1</b>	<b>Property and Evidence Storage Detail Documentation</b> The SAPD should implement the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As recommended in section 'A' above, all ad-hoc databases should be replaced with a fully integrated information system that includes bar code functionality. The system should be able to accommodate a tickler file that electronically notifies officers and detectives when released items are due to be returned to the Property Room.</li><li>• A two-person cash count rule should be applied without exception to ensure electronic records match actual cash.</li></ul>	11	Accept	Darrell Allen Supervisor Property and Evidence Storage Office	" "

- The property and evidence record status for firearms should not be changed to "Destroyed" until the actual date of destruction to avoid confusion regarding actual disposition. Accept
- A witness, independent of the property room function, should formally attest to firearm destructions via a notarized statement showing the date and serial numbers of all firearms destroyed. Accept " December 2006

**Action plan:**

- **The Property Room Management systems under consideration have barcode capability and the ability to automatically track property that is out on a temporary release. The systems can generate letters of notification as well.**
- **A two person count rule was put in place several years ago. This includes a signed count sheet which is sealed with the money at the time it is inventoried.**
- **The SOP will be amended to reflect that the disposition of firearms to be destroyed will not be changed in the system until the time of action.**
- **The SOP will be amended to reflect that all firearm destructions will be witnessed by an individual independent of the Property Room function and documented on a notarized letter to include the serial numbers of the weapons destroyed.**

**C.1 Audit Trail and Inventory Management 13**

The SAPD should perform the following:

- As recommended in section 'A' above, the SAPD should procure and install a commercial software application designed for the management of property and evidence. The new system should meet the needs of narcotics processing and replace the existing Narcases database. The new system should include proper database controls including a history file that documents all record additions, modifications, and deletions with a time stamp and user ID. Accept Sgt. Kenneth Albrecht #3021 ICN July 2007
- Implement a plan to properly inventory all narcotics in the narcotics vault. Pre-1999 cases should be researched with the goal of destroying any narcotics that are not legally required to be maintained in storage. Accept Sgt. Kenneth Albrecht #3021 ICN January 2008
- Request the Bexar County lab to document all narcotics test results using official Bexar County security watermarked paper. Decline See justification below

**Action plan:**

- **Preliminary research has been conducted by Darrell Allen and Sgt. Ken Albrecht on several systems currently marketed for Property Room Management. Initial cost estimates range from \$80,000 to \$130,000 with annual recurring expenses of \$5,000 to \$7,000. A committee will be formed by November 2006 to evaluate available systems and make recommendations for purchase by February 2007. Installation targeted for July 2007.**

**Action plan (Continued):**

- Old narcotics cases are being researched and cataloged for likely destruction. Drug evidence burns are planned for late 2006 and throughout 2007 to help reduce inventory that is no longer needed.
- Under the provisions of the current contract with the Bexar County Crime Lab, a “certified copy” will not be provided. The narcotics Detail is exploring the possibilities of having the test results delivered in a locked PDF format that could be stored electronically in the new inventory database.

**C.2 Narcotics Released to Outside Agencies 14**

The SAPD should develop explicit and thorough procedures for releasing narcotics evidence in alignment with IAPE standards and best practices as follows:

- |  |                  |                             |                         |
|--|------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| • A copy of the subpoena should be required for items which are being assigned to court.   | Accept           | Sgt. Kenneth Albrecht #3021 | Complete                |
| • The recipient should be required to legibly print his/her name and sign the release.   | Accept           | Resource Management         | November 2006           |
| • If possible, a photocopy of the recipient's government ID should be taken as recommended by the IAPE. At a minimum, the recipient's printed name and physical features should be matched to his/her government ID. No narcotics should be released unless the recipient presents a proper government ID. | Partially Accept | Sgt. Kenneth Albrecht #3021 | Complete                |
| • The release form should be properly authorized by the SAPD case officer responsible for the narcotics. The release form should also require the officer's legibly written name and badge number.   | Decline          |                             | See Justification below |
| • The transfer of narcotics should be witnessed, and release form signed, by a Narcotics Unit Custodian.   | Accept           | Sgt. Kenneth Albrecht #3021 | Complete                |

**Action plan:**

- This recommendation is already in place in SAPD General Manual Procedure 606.15.B.2. Staff members have been directed to request and make copies of subpoenas.
- Narcotic evidence is most often checked out on Temporary Release (form 113-3). This form will be modified by Resource Management to provide space for the printed name as well as the signature of the officer checking out the evidence.
- We agree that government law enforcement ID should be presented when the identity of the officer is not known or when evidence is being checked out by another agency however, making photo copies of law enforcement credentials is not an acceptable practice. Accounting for these copies would present issues relating to the security of law enforcement credentials.
- This recommendation is not necessary given current practices in checking out evidence. Narcotic evidence is most likely to be requested for court by the case officer or the officer who originally booked the evidence. Request for evidence by officers not assigned to the case are referred to the Narcotics Sergeant over seeing vault operations for approval.
- Property Release forms provide a space for “released by” to indicate which evidence custodian is releasing the property. Our staff has been directed to complete all required blocks on the forms.

<p><b>D.1 Asset Seizure Documentation</b></p> <p>The SAPD should ensure that all required forms and approvals are obtained prior to converting assets for its own use. The SAPD should require that assets requested to be converted be supported with proper documentation including intended purpose. The disposition of all assets, whether auctioned or converted to SAPD use, should be tracked.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>Sgt. James Smith #3109 IAS</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p>Also, as recommended in section 'A' of this report, a commercial property and evidence information system should be installed. This system should be tailored for Asset Seizure needs to facilitate all pertinent details of asset dispositions. The new system should include the ability to attach scanned copies of Property Request and Property Release forms to electronic records in order to properly document disposition.</p>		<p>Accept</p>	<p>Sgt. James Smith #3109 IAS</p>	<p>July 2007</p>
<p><b><u>Action plan:</u></b></p> <p><b>Property receipts were completed and they tracked the disposition of converted property. The disposition of seized, auctioned, and converted property is accounted for in the Asset Seizure data base which serves as the master inventory list. Asset Seizure Standard Operating Procedures will be reviewed to look at more efficient ways of converting awarded property. Changes will be made with the District Attorney's office in how items are listed when they are awarded to the "State". This will assist in eliminating clerical errors.</b></p> <p><b>Written notification of all conversions will be sent to the Chief of Police, or his designee, for approval, as he is responsible for all converted property. This notification will also be sent for all property room conversions conducted by the Property Room.</b></p>				

We are committed to addressing the recommendations in the audit report and the plan of actions presented above.

Sincerely,

  
 William McManus  
 Chief of Police