



NEWS RELEASE

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For further information, contact:

Paula Hunt, Acting Public Information Coordinator, at 541.682.5197, or
Melinda McLaughlin, APR, Public Information Director, at 541.682.5124

EPD Rebuilds Property Control Unit in Wake of Audit

Eugene Police Department is rebuilding its Property Control Unit (PCU) **following** findings from an audit it commissioned to look into problems flagged by a new PCU supervisor.

EPD Property Control Unit receives, logs, stores and disposes of many types of evidence and of property to include that which is found, lost, stolen and abandoned. Management of the intake, preservation and disposal of what is more than 90,000 independent and unique items onsite on any given day is an enormous and complex task.

In 2011 we re-organized our Forensic Evidence and Property Control Units, placing our Forensic Evidence Unit supervisor in charge of both and ultimately adding personnel to the Property Control Unit. Upon his recommendation, Eugene Police hired Evidence Control Systems, a nationally-recognized property control expert and auditor, to evaluate and survey the PCU against recognized property and evidence standards and best practices. ECS found that the unit was not meeting trade standards, and the problems were longstanding, some going back many years.

"It is disappointing to see these shortcomings in one of our critical functions," said Eugene Police Chief Pete Kerns. "We were fortunate that a professional supervisor brought his concerns to our attention and that he made process and policy improvements immediately. We hired a nationally recognized evidence unit expert and auditor and studied his recommendations. We placed an expanded team onsite with a tenured sergeant to make improvements and to implement the audit's recommendations. Our long term goal is an accredited evidence unit. We will keep the public informed as we progress."

The audit was initiated in April 2012 and delivered to EPD in August 2012. Both during the audit process and after receiving the ECS report, Eugene Police staff began to implement corrective measures, write new policies, and create new standard operating procedures. By September 2012, the department was building a list of priority issues to address. The next month, EPD hired a part



time forfeiture and quality assurance analyst. Her job was to help with required audits and inventories and to create and edit policies and procedures. EPD also developed plans to increase staffing and to appoint a strong, experienced supervisor.

In January 2013, EPD placed a tenured full-time supervising sergeant at the unit to focus on understanding the findings and implementing the recommendations. EPD increased staffing in PCU from five employees to 10.

As part of addressing the PCU operations, EPD initiated an Internal Affairs investigation to determine if policy was violated and asked the Oregon State Police to conduct an independent criminal investigation to ensure no laws have been broken.

Eugene Police is making copies of the Executive Summary available, and EPD is working towards having the full audit available next week. Because of the type of material stored in the PCU, it is important that security measures are not made public, so there are redactions. When language related to facility security is redacted, the audit will be provided to media.

PCU assists with documenting/collecting property and evidence when search warrants are served; copies audio and video tapes.

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