



OFFICE OF THE
STATE AUDITOR

February 1, 2017

Reginald Williams,

Dear Mr. Williams:

This letter is in response to your GRAMA request dated January 19, 2017 in which you requested the following records:

“recent audits on the Unified Fire Dept. and Utah Attorney General’s Office.”

We currently have one record that is responsive to your request. I have included with this letter a copy of our recent Special Project Report No. SSVF-17-SPa on the Unified Fire Authority.

We have not issued a report pertaining to the Attorney General’s Office for 3 years and, therefore, do not have any records responsive to that request. The Office of the Legislative Auditor General issued the following reports in 2015, which may be the reports to which you are referring, although they would not be considered recent either:

Summary of Report 2015-05: A Performance Audit of the Office of the Utah Attorney General

This report addresses numerous issues, many of which were areas of concern mutually agreed-upon with the newly elected Attorney General (AG). We found that the Office of the Utah Attorney General (OAG) needs improved performance management for increased accountability, both internally and externally. While the OAG tracks many measures, they are not used to determine its divisions’ success or track the agency’s progress toward established priorities. The OAG also does not produce annual reports addressing performance as many of its peer offices do. We believe such reports should be required to increase the transparency of the office’s performance management. Further, the OAG’s current ethics policy lacks sufficient whistleblower provisions to adequately address internal employee misconduct. In addition, inconsistent implementation of the office’s employee evaluation system needs to be addressed. Finally, the lack of an office-wide electronic case management system has contributed to dropped cases, missed deadlines, and unnecessary time spent searching through paper documents. The newly elected AG has been working to address many of these concerns since the start of this audit.

Summary of Report 2015-06: An In-Depth Budget Review of the Office of the Attorney General

The Office of the Utah Attorney General (OAG) lacks adequate processes to contract, fund, and track legal services to state agencies. Payments for services, a third of the OAG’s budget, are appropriated as dedicated credits. The OAG’s longstanding practice of using such payments as dedicated credits, inherited by the newly elected Attorney General, is inconsistent with statute and reduces transparency. Contracts with state agencies lack uniformity and consistency. The current process for providing legal services could place certain federal funds at risk and also makes it difficult to implement legislative compensation increases. Building block appropriations expenditures generally appear to meet their stated purposes, although reporting and oversight of other funds and some building block appropriations are needed. Attorney compensation is on the low end of compensation of similar peers, but some recent legislative increases could not be included in our calculations. However, the OAG’s turnover rates compare favorably to peer groups. Finally, settlement costs and large highway projects have inflated contract attorney costs, but the OAG appears to have adequate controls in place to monitor the quality of contracted attorney services.

You would need to contact the Office of the Legislative Auditor General at W315 State Capitol Complex, Salt Lake City, UT 84114 to obtain copies of their reports.

Please be aware that all GRAMA requests are posted on our website as a matter of office practice (with personal information, such as address, redacted). We do this to provide transparency and accountability to the public at large.

Sincerely,

Linda Siebenhaar
Records Officer