Washington State Auditor's Office

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Accountability Audit Report

Port of Tacoma

Pierce County

For the period January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015

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Washington State Auditor's Office

July 5, 2016

Board of Commissioners
Port of Tacoma
Tacoma, Washington

Report on Accountability

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The State Auditor's Office takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for Port operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

The attached comprises our report on the Port's compliance and safeguarding of public resources. Our independent audit report describes the overall results and conclusions for areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and we value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

JAN M. JUTTE, CPA, CGFM

DEPUTY STATE AUDITOR

OLYMPIA, WA

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AUDIT SUMMARY

Results in brief

In the areas we audited, Port operations complied with applicable requirements and provided adequate safeguarding of public resources. The Port also complied with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures in the areas we examined.

About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the Port of Tacoma from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

Our audit involved performing procedures to obtain evidence about the Port's uses of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity or area. Instead, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. The following areas were examined during this audit period:

- Billings/receivables
- Tools inventory
- Gas and diesel inventory
- On-call contracts/agreements
- Payroll investigation
- Payments/expenditures
- Employee purchase cards
- Surplus property
- Insurance/risk management
- Open public meeting minutes

INFORMATION ABOUT THE PORT

The Port of Tacoma (the Port) is a major center for container cargo, bulk, breakbulk, autos and heavy-lift cargo. It is a top 10 U. S. container port and one of the top 50 in the world. The Port is located on Commencement Bay, a natural deep-water harbor in South Puget Sound and encompasses about 2,400 acres of land on the Tacoma Tideflats.

An elected, five-member Board of Commissioners governs the Port. The Board appoints a Chief Executive Officer to oversee the Port's operations and its approximately 218 employees. For fiscal year 2015, the Port processed 2.1 million 20-foot equivalent units of containers, 183,000 automobiles and 224,000 short tons of breakbulk cargo, which resulted in revenues of $143.9 million, operating income of $39.3 million and net income of $18.5 million.

Contact information related to this report

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Information current as of report publish date.

Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for the Port of Tacoma at http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch.

ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the state's Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the citizens of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with our audit clients and citizens to achieve our vision of government that works for citizens, by helping governments work better, cost less, deliver higher value, and earn greater public trust.

In fulfilling our mission to hold state and local governments accountable for the use of public resources, we also hold ourselves accountable by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency and developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an elected agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits and investigations. Our audits are designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state, and local laws.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with state, federal and local laws on the part of all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits of state agencies and local governments as well as fraud, state whistleblower and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are widely distributed through a variety of reports, which are available on our website and through our free, electronic subscription service.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously, and provide training and technical assistance to governments, and have an extensive quality assurance program.

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