Office of Inspector General
OIG

Scanning Unit Quality Assurance Program
Audit Report 201920-25

June 4, 2021

Executive Summary

The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (Department), Bureau of Records, Records and Data Management Section (Section) is responsible for receiving, processing, scanning, and reviewing title documentation within the Florida Real-Time Vehicle Information System (FRVIS). The Department's title documentation procedures must adhere to Section 320.833, Florida Statutes (F.S.). Thus, this Section has a scanning team whose goal is to ensure records are correctly, accurately, and legibly uploaded into FRVIS, along with a quality assurance process to review unsuccessful scans.

The purpose of this audit was to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the Section's scanning quality assurance process and compliance with applicable laws, Department policy, and procedure. We reviewed relevant documentation including completed title and document scans, supervisory evaluations, and scanning equipment maintenance logs, as well as interviewed Section members.

Overall, the Section's scanning quality assurance process is sufficient and complies with applicable laws and Department policy. However, we noted two key areas in which improvements could be made to strengthen controls.

Our review determined updating procedures would enhance the quality assurance process and improve management oversight. Current processes in both the Image Review Unit (IRU) and High-Speed Scanning Unit (HSSU) have improved management oversight and accountability; however, they are not documented in written procedures, nor have they been applied consistently. We recommend reviewing and updating procedures pertaining to both units to reflect current practices and implementing a process to periodically review and update procedures.

Our review also determined establishing preventative maintenance procedures for scanners would enhance oversight of scanning equipment maintenance. Although, due to the coronavirus pandemic, preventative maintenance schedules were modified, we determined some scanners did not receive the necessary preventative maintenance checks during the review period. We further noted a lack of consistency and missing and illegible entries on preventative maintenance logs. We recommend formalizing preventative maintenance procedures to enhance oversight of scanning equipment and ensuring documentation is thoroughly completed and maintained to support preventative maintenance activities.

Management agreed with the findings and recommendations and has begun implementing corrective actions.

Background and Introduction

Pursuant to Section 319.17, F.S., the Department must maintain a record of all motor vehicle titles. All electronic record of titles and notices must be made public record. Section 320.833, F.S., states that electronic copies of any records have the same force and effect as their paper predecessors. Therefore, all electronic records must be handled and retained in accordance with the schedules of their paper predecessors, per Chapter 1B-24, F.A.C.

The Section, in coordination with Florida tax collectors, is responsible for collecting, connecting, scanning, and disposing of paper title documentation. The Section has two core subunits, and three major processes: the IRU, which is responsible for processing title documentation received via mail and reviewing Missing Image Reports (MIR); and the HSSU, which is responsible for ensuring paper records are scanned into FRVIS.

At no specific frequency, tax collectors send boxes of title-related documents to the Section. The Section scans and uploads these documents into FRVIS. The goal of the Section is to ensure every title record within FRVIS has an associated image and every image is connected to the correct customer record. A single box received from a tax collector office typically takes two business days to fully process, from box preparations to original title documents being destroyed. On average, the Section processes sixty boxes each day.

IRU – Mail Processing

The IRU's primary duties are to process mail and find and upload transactions which were missed during the scanning process. Currently, the IRU has nine full-time and two part-time positions, with both part-time positions being vacant, along with three full-time vacancies. Each day, IRU members are given up to two daily assignments, which could include processing mail, working the Key and Review station, and/or reviewing MIR transactions.

Members assigned to processing mail are expected to open all boxes received and sort the documents within each box, grouping by county/agency number and report date and number. As members sort, they set aside all Transaction Summary Reports (TSR) found. This report acts as a cover sheet to each batch of work and details what documents should be in the box. Marking as they go, members confirm the transaction documents listed on the TSR are indeed in the box. With a barcode at the top of the TSR, this sheet is scanned and used to create a digital box in FRVIS.

A "batch" of work is from the same county/agency and lists the same report number. Each batch has several transactions related to motor vehicle titles. Therefore, if all documents in a box are from the same county/agency and report number, then only one TSR would be in the box; however, if a county/agency sent documents related to a variety of report numbers, then a TSR would be present for each unique report number.

Some specific, title-related documents must be given to other sections within the Division and anything else found within the box is discarded. After a single box has been sorted, all TSR's are scanned via barcode and four identical box sheets are created. Box sheets list and link all TSR's from a single physical box to a single digital box in FRVIS. Additionally, a box sheet details the staff member and completion date for each of the four stops a box encounters: mail, prep, scan, and review.

HSSU – Scanning

The core responsibility of the HSSU is to ensure each document is scanned into FRVIS, with no obstruction to full document visibility. The HSSU has thirteen full-time positions and three part-time positions. Two of the full-time positions and two of the part-time positions are currently vacant.

Once box sheets are created, an HSSU staff member prepares the documents for seamless scanning. First, confirmation that all work listed on the box sheet is still in the box must be done. If work is found in the box but not named on the box sheet, the HSSU member revises the box sheet, adding the work by batches. Then, all staples are removed, any tears are taped, crumbled paperwork is unfolded, and proper resizing of documents that are too big or small for the scanners to recognize is completed.

After this is accomplished, a FRVIS box process screen is reached, the box is marked as "prepared". The prepared box is given to two more HSSU staff members, stationed at a scanner. The first member is tasked with doing a final check for staples, tears, holes, and folded documents, loading the feeder tray batch by batch and creating yellow sheets. Yellow sheets are important because they display a barcode and/or number that separates and numerically organizes each batch of work. Equally, barcode visibility is vital for documents to be connected to the correct FRVIS box.

Once a batch is loaded into the feeder tray, the second member starts the scanner, observing the scanner's monitor for skewed or faded scans. The scanners can detect errors such as pages being stuck together, or staples still attached and will halt operation if errors are encountered. The scanners, however, cannot detect poor image quality or faded barcodes. Post successful scanning, the box is marked in FRVIS as "scanned" and is set in a designated space for the IRU to review.

IRU members assigned to the Key and Review station are responsible for correcting errors found by the scanning system. These errors are caught prior to the documents being uploaded into FRVIS and corrections must be made prior to rescanning and uploading to FRVIS. Examples of these errors include a form being read incorrectly or too many pages being attached to a document.

IRU – Missing Image Reports

Scanned boxes are reviewed by the IRU the next morning. Overnight, FRVIS refreshes and an MIR is printed for each box that was processed the previous day. The MIR is a query run in FRVIS and highlights any scanned transactions that do not have an associated image.

MIR lists are distributed to IRU members. Procedures vary based on the transaction type, but overall, members find, match, and verify images to transactions that were missed. Once all missing images are found, the documents are rescanned to the proper FRVIS box. Once all transactions and associated images have been verified, the box is marked in FRVIS as "reviewed" and "destroyed", and all documents are discarded.

Scanners

In total, the Section has eight high-speed scanners. The HSSU has five – three BancTec and two IBML scanners. The IRU has three OPEX scanners. At the time of our review, the HSSU used only two scanners per day while the OPEX scanners were only used to conduct rescans. The HSSU intends to utilize all five scanners once staffing gaps are filled.

The BancTec scanners are the Section's oldest scanners and often require maintenance due to parts needing to be replaced. The IBML scanners are the newest scanners and are faster, more efficient in detecting errors, and need less maintenance. At the time of our review, one IBML scanner was out of operation. The three BancTec scanners are rotated daily to prevent burnout. The HSSU's informal, monthly preventive maintenance schedule applies for the BancTec and IBML scanners, although it has been modified due to the coronavirus pandemic. The IRU's OPEX scanners are on an informal, two-week preventive maintenance schedule.

Findings and Recommendations

Overall, our review determined the Section has adequate processes; however, we noted the following areas in which improvements could be made.

Outdated Procedures

Finding No. 1: Updating procedures would enhance the quality assurance process and improve management oversight.

The *Reviewing Boxes Process and Procedure Guide* details how IRU members should review, verify, and reprint forms for MIR transactions. The *Reviewing Work for Missing 82041 Transactions* section of the guide requires IRU members to notify the supervisor of images that need to be deleted.

The *Scan Team Procedures* applies to the HSSU, and details how to prep boxes, which documents to discard, which to keep and provides examples of document elements that are important for successful scanning.

Department Policy 11.12, Management Control, explains internal controls must be established at the Department. Managers are responsible for identifying and evaluating the risks that relate to their particular scope of operations; specifying and establishing policies, plans, operating standards, procedures, systems and other disciplines to be used to avoid, minimize, mitigate and/or limit the risks associated with the exposures identified; establishing practical controlling processes that require and encourage members to carry out their duties and responsibilities in a manner which fosters a favorable control environment; and maintaining the effectiveness of the controlling processes that have been established and foster continuous improvement to these processes.

Through interviewing IRU members and observing the quality assurance review process, we noted the *Reviewing Boxes Process and Procedure Guide* specifies processes the IRU no longer use, such as the process of notifying the supervisor of images that need to be deleted and uploading daily reports to SharePoint. Further, the guide lists positions and responsibilities by member name, rather than title.

We also interviewed HSSU members, observed scanning operations, and reviewed a sample of successful scans to determine compliance with applicable laws and policies and to determine whether the scans were legible, accurate, and free of scanning errors. During our review, we determined the current HSSU procedures lack controls on multiple topics. Specifically:

- There were no written procedures concerning the expectations for monitoring scan quality during scanning.

- There were no standards establishing the acceptable threshold of image quality. In reviewing a sample of 100 successful scans to determine if images were legible, accurate, and complete, we noted that while all images were legible, 54 of 100 (54%) scanned documents had issues with the image quality; however, there was no guidance regarding acceptable image quality and whether documents were required to be reviewed or rescanned to improve quality.

- There were no written procedures addressing creating and using yellow sheets, which help to numerically organize scans, signifying the start and end of a single batch with barcodes and/or numbers.

A lack of strong, formal procedures that match actual practices can cause reduced accountability. Current processes in both the IRU and HSSU have improved management oversight and accountability; however, they are not documented in written procedures, nor have they been applied consistently.

Recommendations

We recommend the Records and Data Management Section review and update procedures pertaining to the IRU and HSSU including:

- specifying authority for deleting images;

- detailing the process and expectations for submitting daily reports;

- expectations for monitoring scan quality during scanning;

- establishing standards for image quality;

- creating and using yellow sheets;

- listing responsibilities by position title rather than member name.

We also recommend the Records and Data Management Section implement a process to periodically review procedures and make changes as necessary.

Management Response

The Records and Data Management Section will update written procedures to include:

- specifying who has authority for deleting images in the vehicle records system;

- instructions for submitting daily reports;

- standards for image quality and instructions for monitoring image quality;

- production and use of yellow sheets;

- position titles rather than member names.

The section will add the requirement for submitting daily reports to the Senior Clerks' performance expectations as well.

The Records and Data Management Section will also review procedures annually to make changes as necessary.

Preventative Maintenance

Finding No. 2: Establishing preventative maintenance procedures for scanners would enhance oversight of scanning equipment maintenance.

The *U.S. Department of Energy's Operations and Maintenance Best Practices Guide* provides tips on increasing office safety via properly maintained equipment, as well as ensuring life expectancy of equipment is achieved. Additionally, the Guide encourages a commitment to tracking maintenance activities.

During our review, we noted there were no procedures or guidelines documenting the expectations or frequency for conducting preventative maintenance activities. The Section has a self-imposed, monthly preventative maintenance schedule for the BancTec and IBML scanners, and a bi-weekly preventative maintenance schedule for the OPEX scanners. We reviewed maintenance logs for eight scanners to determine whether the expected preventive maintenance was conducted for the months of January 2020 through April 2020. Our review determined all IBML and BancTec scanners received preventive maintenance checks for the months of January 2020 through April 2020. However:

- For OPEX Scanner S10, three out of eight (37.5%) biweekly preventive maintenance checks did not occur;

- OPEX Scanners S20 and S30 did not receive two out of eight (25%) of their biweekly preventive maintenance checks;

We additionally noted a lack of consistency regarding how preventive maintenance logs were kept:

- The BancTec scanners preventative maintenance log was maintained in paper form and had seven detail columns;

- The OPEX scanners preventative maintenance log was maintained in an Excel spreadsheet and had nine detail columns, including an "Average Hours Down" column; and

- The IBML scanners preventative maintenance log was maintained in an Excel spreadsheet and had four detail columns.

We further noted illegible entries on the paper logs and incomplete data fields on the excel spreadsheet logs. Details varied from log to log and often, columns that should be filled at the conclusion of preventive maintenance were left blank. Overlooking these factors could contribute to greater loss of resources, such as machine downtime, extra repair costs, or premature end of a machine's lifecycle.

Recommendations

We recommend the Records and Data Management Section formalize preventative maintenance procedures to enhance oversight of scanning equipment and ensure scanners are maintained in optimal working conditions.

We also recommend the Records and Data Management Section ensure documentation is thoroughly completed and maintained to support preventative maintenance activities.

Management Response

The Records and Data Management Section will draft written preventative maintenance procedures. The procedures will include maintenance schedules, positions responsible for maintenance, and a log for recording maintenance dates, which will provide a consistent, formalized process for maintenance and help ensure maintenance is conducted according to schedule and tracked correctly.

Additionally, the Records and Data Management Section will establish a procedure to ensure that logs are reviewed within the timeframe designated by the Operations Manager to ensure the maintenance activities are completed as scheduled.

Purpose, Scope, and Methodology

The objective of this audit was to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the Records and Data Management's scanning quality assurance process and compliance with applicable laws, Department policy, and procedure.

The scope of this audit included all Records and Data Management Section documentation from July 1, 2019 to April 30, 2020.

The methodology included:

- Reviewing applicable Florida Statutes and Administrative Code;

- Reviewing applicable Department policies and procedures;

- Reviewing a sample of completed scans;

- Reviewing a sample of supervisory evaluations of IRU member QA reviews;

- Reviewing a sample of scanning equipment maintenance logs;

- Interviewing various Records and Data Management Section members; and

- Observing a sample of IRU members conducting box preparations and quality assurance reviews.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the Bureau of Records personnel who provided assistance during the audit and express our appreciation for their cooperation during the course of our examination.

Distribution, Statement of Accordance, and Project Team

Distribution

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Statement of Accordance

Section 20.055, Florida Statutes, requires the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' Inspector General to review, evaluate, and report on policies, plans, procedures, accounting, financial, and other operations of the Department and to recommend improvements. This audit engagement was conducted in accordance with applicable *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* published by the Institute of Internal Auditors and *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General* published by the Association of Inspectors General.

Project Team

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Under the supervision of:
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Approved by:

Mike Stacy, Inspector General

ATTACHMENT - Management Response

Terry L. Rhodes
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 3, 2021

TO: Erin Mook, Audit Director
          Office of the Inspector General

FROM: Robert R. Kynoch, Director   *RRK*
          Division of Motorist Services

VIA: Richie C. Frederick, Bureau Chief
          Division of Motorist Services

SUBJECT: Management Response to Scanning Unit QA Process Audit (201920-25)

The following is our response to the findings and recommendations presented in the report.

Finding 1: *Outdated Procedures*

Updating procedures would enhance the quality assurance process and improve management oversight.

Recommendation

We recommend the Records and Data Management Section review and update procedures pertaining to the IRU and HSSU including:

- specifying authority for deleting images;
- detailing the process and expectations for submitting daily reports;
- expectations for monitoring scan quality during scanning;
- establishing standards for image quality;
- creating and using yellow sheets;
- listing responsibilities by position title rather than member name.

We also recommend the Records and Data Management Section implement a process to periodically review procedures and make changes as necessary.

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Management Response

The Records and Data Management Section will update written procedures to include:

- specifying who has authority for deleting images in the vehicle records system;
- instructions for submitting daily reports;
- standards for image quality and instructions for monitoring image quality;
- production and use of yellow sheets;
- position titles rather than member names.

The section will add the requirement for submitting daily reports to the Senior Clerks' performance expectations as well.

The Records and Data Management Section will also review procedures annually and make changes as necessary.

Finding 2: *Preventative Maintenance*

Establishing preventative maintenance procedures for scanners would enhance oversight of scanning equipment maintenance.

Recommendation

We recommend the Records and Data Management Section formalize preventative maintenance procedures to enhance oversight of scanning equipment and ensure scanners are maintained in optimal working conditions.

We also recommend the Records and Data Management Section ensure documentation is thoroughly completed and maintained to support preventative maintenance activities.

Management Response

The Records and Data Management Section will draft written preventative maintenance procedures. The procedures will include maintenance schedules, positions responsible for maintenance, and a log for recording maintenance dates, which will provide a consistent, formalized process for maintenance and help ensure maintenance is conducted according to schedule and tracked correctly.

Additionally, the Records and Data Management Section will establish a procedure to ensure that logs are reviewed within the timeframe designated by the Operations Manager to ensure the maintenance activities are be completed as scheduled.