



GEORGIA BUILDING AUTHORITY

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June 11, 2007

Elizabeth P. Archer
State Inspector General
Office of the Inspector General
1102 West Tower
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, NW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Re: 07-003

Dear Ms. Archer:

The Georgia Building Authority ("GBA") has reviewed the investigative report and recommendations regarding the misuse of state property, mismanagement, and abuse of state time and attendance. We concur with your recommendations and our specific response to each recommendation is noted below in italics:

OIG Recommendations and GBA Responses

1. GBA should develop and implement a policy to address the use of handheld wireless devices, such as a Blackberry. If said policy is implemented, GBA employees should be required to sign a statement acknowledging their understanding of the terms of appropriate usage.

The GBA is currently developing a Blackberry/radio usage policy. Such policy will detail for all employees the proper usage of these devices, as well as let employees know their use will be monitored by their supervisors and GBA IT staff. The policy will be incorporated into GBA's new employee orientation program. Additionally, the policy will require written acknowledgement by all current GBA employees and new hires. GBA anticipates this policy to be completed and implemented by no later than June 15, 2007.

2. GBA supervisors should periodically review Blackberry records for excessive personal use and unusual usage patterns.

As stated above in response to recommendation #1, GBA supervisors, as well as GBA IT, will be responsible for monitoring employee use of Blackberry's/radios by reviewing the detailed bills received from its wireless service provider(s) to ensure proper use of the equipment. The GBA IT department will provide a detailed monthly report of the wireless telecom bill to all supervisors and managers; the report will be broken down by program area. This report will be in an electronic format to facilitate further analysis, if necessary. The importance of actively monitoring employee Blackberry/radio use will be reiterated to supervisors in periodic staff meetings.

With regard to the broader responsibility of supervisors to monitor and manage their subordinate employees, GBA is in the process of training its supervisors on "The Manager's Tool Kit." This training consists of five modules and is designed to build interpersonal and technical leadership skills for GBA's supervisors. Specifically, the training targets skills such as commitment, conflict resolution, teamwork, goal setting and performance management. GBA supervisors completed the first three modules of the tool kit in October, November and December of 2006. The training on the fourth and fifth modules is anticipated to be in mid-August and mid-September, 2007.

3. GBA should evaluate Blackberry assignments based on the employees' job descriptions to determine if need is warranted and/or cost effective.

GBA IT is coordinating with each division or program area supervisor to evaluate all Blackberry assignments and ensure that all assignments are warranted in accordance with job duties and responsibilities. This evaluation shall be completed by July 30, 2007.

4. GBA should evaluate Blackberry usage plans agency wide to insure that the current plan is cost-effective.

In order to eliminate individual overages, GBA recently switched to a wireless plan which utilizes the "pool of minutes" methodology. Additionally, GBA recently switched to an electronic billing format to allow for detailed analysis of the monthly wireless telecom bills to identify other areas of potential savings. Moreover, GBA is investigating the use of a telecom expense management company to assist in finding the best and most cost effective usage plans for the agency.

5. GBA supervisors should ensure that employees are properly documenting leave/compensatory usage through established leave forms.

GBA currently has in place a policy with regard to use and documentation of leave. GBA requires all employees to complete leave (sick, annual, and compensatory) requests prior to taking leave. Additionally, supervisors are required to review and sign all leave requests. All GBA employees receive training on this policy at new employee orientation, as well as annually in GBA Policy review sessions.

6. GBA supervisors should be required to periodically review the motor pool logs for excessive personal use, excessive mileage and unusual driving patterns.

GBA has developed and implemented a new Motor Pool Log application for recording of vehicle activity. The new application handles assignments of Motor Pool vehicles while capturing employee and manager data, as well as automatically calculating mileage out and total miles traveled. The system creates a monthly log/report of all vehicle assignments and activity. GBA supervisors and managers will be provided with copies of such reports, as well as with access to the electronic log so that they may review an individual employee's vehicle use, or otherwise analyze the information.

Additionally, GBA is participating in the new, statewide citizen watch program called "Report My Driving". This program includes the placement of bumper stickers on all GBA vehicles; the bumper stickers will display the program logo and a website for the public to report the misuse of vehicles. GBA expects this program to aid the management of vehicle use, as well as significantly reduce vehicle misuse by GBA employees.

7. GBA should periodically review Employees' Labor Detail Reports to assist them in monitoring and tracking productivity.

All GBA supervisors are responsible for tracking employee productivity. At weekly staff meetings, supervisors will reiterate to employees the importance of entering information into Maximo on a timely basis to ensure the detail reports accurately reflect work records for each week. Additionally, over the next fiscal year, GBA will develop and implement improvements to data collection and reporting tools in order to better monitor and track productivity. GBA believes that these improvements will better position GBA to increase productivity, assign accountability and monitor compliance at the employee and work unit levels.

8. GBA should pursue training opportunities in the area of Workers' Comp for increased knowledge and understanding of the process. It is imperative that these training efforts extend to supervisors, division directors, human resources, legal staff, and all employees.

GBA Human Resources is currently coordinating with the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) to hone and update its current Workers' Comp procedures. Additionally, DOAS is providing assistance with the development of a Workers' Comp training module for GBA employees. It is anticipated that the training sessions will take place in July 2007.

9. Human Resources should be more diligent in communicating with Workers' Comp staff, as well as with the injured employee, throughout the duration of a Workers' Comp claim. In addition, Human Resources should be diligent in documenting any initial communications with the injured employee regarding their Workers' Comp claim.

GBA agrees with this recommendation and is committed to improving its internal and external communications regarding Workers' Comp claims.

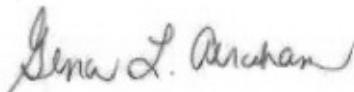
Additionally, the Director and staff of GBA Human Resources have developed a spreadsheet to track the status and communications of all open Workers' Comp claims. Continued improvement with regard to Workers' Comp communications is expected upon the provision of the additional training mentioned in the response to recommendation #8.

10. GBA should consider instituting a written practice where an "Implementation Team" consisting of supervisors, safety officials, Legal, Human Resources, and others in identified key roles within the agency, would be required to sign a form acknowledging that an employee has been placed in a restricted duty position. These concerned parties should act in unison while reviewing all aspects of the employee's job and responsibilities and make necessary adjustments to prevent further accident and limit liability.

For all injuries (both work & non-work related injuries that impair an employee's ability to perform their job), the GBA will follow the DOAS "Return to Work" policy in which a Transition Team (i.e. an "Implementation Team") is utilized to coordinate and monitor when an employee is placed on restricted duty. However, with regard to all non-injury related duty restrictions the GBA's Human Resources Director and the employee's supervisor will work together to develop and document such restrictions. These temporary restrictions will be communicated in writing to GBA leadership and other appropriate personnel. This process and procedure will be included as part of the training mentioned in the response to recommendation #8.

The above responses highlight the internal policies, procedures and controls that have been or shall be implemented at the GBA. Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at the number provided above. I sincerely appreciate the time taken by you and your staff during this review. It has provided the GBA with an opportunity to significantly improve its operational processes.

Best Regards,



Gena L. Abraham