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CABINET SECRETARY

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
PURCHASING DIVISION
2019 WASHINGTON STREET, EAST
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305-0130

W. MICHAEL SHEETS
DIRECTOR

December 7, 2020

Cheryl Ranson, Director
West Virginia Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 812
201 Brooks Street
Charleston, WV 25323-0812

Dear Director Ranson,

This is to transmit the final copy of the Purchasing Review of the West Virginia Public Service Commission. Should you feel a response is warranted; your comments will become part of the Inspection Report file.

A Corrective Action Plan Request will follow requesting your response to a selection of the compliance issues identified in this report as a **pattern of findings**.

Thank you for your cooperation and that of your staff during this review.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Michael Sheets".

W. Michael Sheets, CPPO
Director
West Virginia Purchasing Division

Enclosure:

cc: Malena Harding, Senior Procurement Specialist, West Virginia Public Service Commission
Sandy Mitchell, Financial Manager, West Virginia Public Service Commission

WV PURCHASING DIVISION INSPECTION REPORT

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

West Virginia Public Service Commission

FISCAL YEAR
2020

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INTRODUCTION

The Purchasing Division is broadly charged with the development and oversight of the procurement functions of state spending units under its authority. That authority is found in Chapter 5A, Article 3 of the West Virginia Code, and Title 148, Series 1, of the West Virginia Code of State Rules. That mandate requires that the Purchasing Division “appoint inspectors to review and audit spending unit requests and purchases and other transactions and performance.” W. Va. CSR § 148-1-4.14. The Purchasing Division’s Inspection Services Unit performs this function by regularly conducting inspections of all spending units subject to Purchasing Division oversight.

The Purchasing Division Inspection Services Unit conducted a remote inspection of the West Virginia Public Service Commission for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Notice of the inspection was provided on August 12, 2020, and the inspection commenced on September 14, 2020. The results of the inspection are contained within this report.

SCOPE

The scope of the inspection was focused on determining whether the West Virginia Public Service Commission's procurement transactions for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 were, in all material respects, in compliance with applicable provisions of the West Virginia Code, the Code of State Rules and the Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook in effect during that time period.

Inspectors utilized spending unit payment transactions to identify potential violations with a primary focus on those transactions processed at the spending unit level without Purchasing Division involvement. Those transactions included, but were not limited to, agency delegated procurements, Section 9 procurements, agency delivery orders, General Accounting Expenditure ("GAX") payments, and P-Card payments. Notwithstanding this general focus, however, Inspectors can review any transaction or internal procurement operating procedures that they deem relevant.

As noted above, the transaction review was conducted to ensure compliance with applicable provisions of the West Virginia Code, the Code of State Rules and the Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook. More specifically, the scope of the inspection included, but was not limited to, an examination to determine if any of the following infractions had been committed:

- (1) Failure to bid at central level (Stringing)[Required to be reported to the Legislature twice annually]
- (2) Internal resources not utilized,
- (3) Statewide contract not utilized,
- (4) Failure to bid at delegated level,
- (5) Vendor registration unverified and wrong vendor fee exemption code utilized
- (6) Failure to verify compliance checks
 - a. Unemployment
 - b. Workers' compensation
 - c. Vendor status with Secretary of State's office
 - d. Debarred vendor list
- (7) Failure to include notarized Purchasing Affidavit,
- (8) Failure to issue wvOASIS procurement award document,
- (9) Lack of compliance with fixed asset requirements (asset tags),
- (10) Failure to include Certification of Non-Conflict of Interest form,
- (11) Miscellaneous Issues
 - a. Improper award (Unjustified award to other than lowest responsible bidder meeting specifications),
 - b. Leases exceeding six months not processed centrally
 - c. Other as needed

SUMMARY

During the period under review, the spending unit processed 2,556 procurement transactions with a value of \$1,899,218.00. (These amounts are approximate, subject to reporting limitations from wvOASIS (including possible data entry error) and errors caused by elimination of duplicate results). Of those transactions, the Inspector selected 104 for review which represents approximately 4% of the total. This inspection of 104 selected transactions yielded 6 findings associated with 6 of the selected transactions. This means that approximately 6% of the transactions reviewed had one or more instances of noncompliance with applicable provisions of the West Virginia Code, the Code of State Rules and the Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook. The findings are further illustrated in the attached Findings Grid and Grading Sheet.

The inspection also revealed that on 0 occasions, the spending unit failed to obtain competitive bids as required by the applicable dollar level of spend. That number is comprised of 0 instances of failing to bid at the central level (also known as stringing), and 0 instances of failing to bid at the delegated level. Any instances of failure to bid at the central level will be reported to the Legislature as required by the West Virginia Code.

Although the agency received a score of 95.4% A on the inspection, there was a pattern of findings. The first step must be the completion of a Corrective Action Plan, a request for which will be provided to you after this inspection is finalized.

Grading Sheet

West Virginia Public Service Commission FY2020 Statistics

Transactions Reviewed	104
Non-Conformance Rate (See Summary Page)	6.0%
Conformance Rate	94.0%

Findings Summary				
Finding Category	Number of Findings	Finding Percentage	Points possible	Points Received
Failure to Bid at Central Level (Stringing)	0	0.00%	30	30
Internal Resources not utilized	0	0.00%	15	15
Statewide Contract not utilized	4	3.85%	15	12
Failure to Bid at Delegated Level	0	0.00%	15	15
Vendor Registration unverified/wrong fee code	0	0.00%	5	5
Failure to verify Compliance Checks	0	0.00%	5	5
Purchasing Affidavit Not Included	0	0.00%	5	5
Wvoasis Award Document Not Issued	0	0.00%	3	3
Asset Tag/Number not affixed	0	0.00%	3	3
Certification of Non-Conflict of Interest not included	0	0.00%	3	3
Miscellaneous Issue	2	1.92%	1	0.8
Total	6		100	96.8

Overall Agency Score	
Non-Conformance & Findings Average	Overall Letter Grade
95.4%	A

Scale (See Weight Application*)
91.66 -- 100 = A
83.33 -- 91.66 = B
75 -- 83.33 = C
66.66 -- 75 = D
<66.66 = F

The Finding Summary and Number of Findings does not directly correlate with the Transactions Reviewed and Non-Conformance Rate because each transaction can yield multiple findings, and findings like stringing can include multiple transactions in a single finding.

EXHIBIT A: DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

Issue 1: Failure to bid at central level (Stringing)

Authority: W. Va. Code § 5A-3-10; Procedures Handbook Section 6

Explanation: State law mandates that the Purchasing Division competitively bid for the purchase of commodities and services estimated to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars. The law also prohibits a spending unit from issuing a series of requisitions or divide or plan procurements to circumvent this twenty-five thousand dollar threshold. The transactions listed below violated this legal mandate and will be reported to the West Virginia Legislature as required by law.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit establish central contracts through the Purchasing Division for each of the items included above and any other commodities or services that will exceed \$25,000 in a rolling 12 month period.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit utilize wvOASIS to create reports that will allow the spending unit to track spend and determine when spending is closing to exceeding the \$25,000 limit.
3. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit forecast future needs for its commodities and services to determine in advance what should be procured at the central level.
4. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 2: Internal Resource Not Utilized

Authority: W. Va. Code §§ 25-7-5 and 5A-3-10; Procedures Handbook Section 3.6.1

Explanation: State law mandates that certain social welfare programs be utilized prior to a spending unit obtaining commodities and services in the open market. Those programs include the Sheltered Workshops established to assist disabled individuals in finding employment, and the Correctional Industries program that provides prison inmates with meaningful work. The transactions listed below should have been obtained from one of these programs, or a waiver should have been obtained. The inspection revealed that the transactions were outside of the internal programs and no waiver was granted.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit personnel become familiar with what is available from internal sources and either procure those commodities and services from internal sources or obtain a waiver from the Purchasing Division.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 3: Statewide Contract Not Utilized

Authority: W. Va. CSR § 148-1-7.4.c.; Procedures Handbook Section 3.6.2

Explanation: The Purchasing Division has authority to establish contracts at a statewide level to secure economies of scale that would not be possible on an agency by agency basis. Once established, the Purchasing Division can mandate that spending units utilize those statewide contracts. For the transactions listed below, the spending unit has obtained the commodity or service in question outside of an available statewide contract without a valid waiver.

Transactions in Violation: (4 Instances)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Invoice</u>	<u>SW Contract</u>
02/10/2020	Boots	Chas. Dept St	\$169.98	PRCC,PC20106696	FASTENAL
02/10/2020	LCD Rack/Tower	Provantage	\$1,526.55	PRCC,PC20106696	OFFICE
12/17/2019	Printer	Staples Direct	\$249.99	PRCC,PC20095532	OFFICE
09/25/2019	Refrigerators	Lowes	\$860.64	PRCC,PC20048878	FASTENAL

Additional Detail: The transactions listed above must be purchased from the Statewide Contacts indicated.

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit personnel become familiar with what is available from statewide contracts and either procure those commodities and services from statewide contracts or obtain a waiver from the Purchasing Division.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 4: Failure to bid at delegated level

Authority: W. Va. Code § 5A-3-11(a); W. Va. CSR § 148-1-7.2; Procedures Handbook Section 5

Explanation: The Purchasing Division has established competitive bidding requirements that spending units must follow when procuring commodities and services below \$25,000.01, and above \$2,500.00. For those transactions listed below, the spending unit has failed to obtain and document competitive bids as required.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit follow the requirements associated with each delegated spending limit.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit utilize wvOASIS to create reports that will allow the spending unit to track spend and determine when spending is closing to exceeding spending limits.
3. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit forecast future needs for its commodities and services to determine in advance what should be competitively bid at delegated verbal and written bid levels.
4. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 5: Vendor Registration Unverified/Wrong Vendor Fee Exemption Code Utilized

Authority: W. Va. CSR § 148-1-6.1; Procedures Handbook Section 4

Explanation: The agency must verify that the vendor is registered, and the registration fee paid, if applicable. The registration process includes having the proper disclosure of information in the wvOASIS vendor/customer account. Certain vendors are exempted from paying the vendor registration fee mandated by the authority referenced above. wvOASIS has created fee exemption codes that allow the spending unit to designate the appropriate exemption code on a transactional basis.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchase Division recommends that the spending unit only utilize vendor fee exemption codes for transactions that would allow a vendor to avoid paying the vendor registration fee.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.
3. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit contact the Vendor Registration section within the Purchasing Division if there is uncertainty about when and how to apply a vendor fee exemption code.

Issue 6: Failure to Verify Compliance Checks

(Workers Comp, Unemployment, Sec. of State, Debarment)

Authority: W. Va. CSR § 148-1-6.1.e.; Procedures Handbook Section 5.3.1.6.

Explanation: The authority cited above requires that a vendor be licensed and in good standing in accordance with all state and local laws and requirements by any state or local agency of West Virginia, including, but not limited to, the West Virginia Secretary of State's Office, the West Virginia Tax Department, West Virginia Insurance Commission, or other state agencies or political subdivisions prior to being awarded a contract. The mandated compliance checks were not included in the transactions listed below.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit perform all compliance checks mandated by the Handbook and properly document those compliance checks in the contract file.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 7: Purchasing Affidavit Not Included

Authority: W. Va. Code §§ 5A-3-10a and 5-22-1; Procedures Handbook Section 5.3.1.6.

Explanation: West Virginia law has several restrictions against awarding a contract to a vendor that owes a debt to the State or its political subdivisions. The Purchasing Affidavit must be signed by the vendor prior to contract award to obtain assurance that the vendor is in compliance with the statutory mandates.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit obtain a properly completed Purchasing Affidavit and maintain a copy in the contract file for all transactions exceeding \$10,000.00 (the threshold for obtaining written bids).
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 8: wvOASIS Award Document Not Issued

Authority: Procedures Handbook Section 5.2.2

Explanation: The Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook requires that a procurement award document be issued for all purchases exceeding \$2,500 in value. This requirement ensures that the transaction is recorded in wvOASIS in a way that allows it to be easily identified and tracked and helps to prevent spending in violation of procurement laws, rules, and procedures.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit issue a purchase order through wvOASIS and maintain a copy in the contract file for all transactions exceeding \$2,500.00.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 9: Asset Tag Not Affixed

Authority: W. Va. Code § 5A-3-34; Surplus Property Operations Manual, Part II, Section 1.4

Explanation: The Surplus Property Operations Manual requires that all reportable assets must have a numbered identification tag affixed to the asset. Agencies are responsible for obtaining and placing the proper tags on the assets. This method of tagging assets helps to easily identify state assets during physical inspection and to guard against asset theft.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit obtain a properly affix asset tags to all reportable assets. In conjunction with this, the spending unit must maintain accurate inventory records in wvOASIS.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 10: Cert. of Non-Conflict Not Included

Authority: W. Va. Code §§ 5A-3-31 and 6B-2-5; Procedures Handbook Section 3.7.7.

Explanation: The Purchasing Division requires all evaluators, advisors, and the agency procurement officer, despite the type of transaction, to sign a Certification of Non-Conflict of Interest form prior to contract award to ensure compliance with W. Va. Code § 5A-3-31 and § 6B-2-5 by affirming that they do not have a conflict of interest and did not communicate with the vendor during the solicitation, evaluation, and award period.

Transactions in Violation: (0 Instances)

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit include a properly completed Certification of Non-Conflict of Interest form prior to contract award for all transactions exceeding \$2,500.00 and maintain a copy in the contract file.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends that the spending unit's procurement officer participate in training on this topic offered by the Purchasing Division and ensure that all procurement staff understand how to comply with this requirement moving forward.

Issue 11: Miscellaneous (Not following Statewide Contract Ordering Requirements)

Authority: Procedures Handbook Section 3.7.1.2.1

Explanation: Agencies should always refer to the ordering instructions, if present, on all open-end or statewide contracts for proper instructions prior to attempting to issue a delivery order.

Transactions in Violation: (2 Instances)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Invoice</u>
11/19/2019	New Tires	Mr. Tire	\$632.00	PRCC,PC20080216
11/07/2019	New Tires	Tri County Tire	\$537.76	PRCC,PC20062127

Additional Detail: Although it was noted that the agency paid Mr. Tire & Tri County Tire directly between contract renewals, an ADO was created in wvOASIS for the Authorized Dealer Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. Therefore, the contract was still active. Agencies must pay Goodyear directly. The agency must not pay the authorized dealer at any time.

Purchasing Division Recommendation:

1. The Purchasing Division recommends that the agency should always refer to the ordering instructions, if present, on all open-end or statewide contracts for proper instructions prior to attempting to issue a delivery order.
2. The Purchasing Division recommends the agency process an Agency Delivery Order (ADO) directly to the vendor to obtain goods or services in the amount of \$250,000 or less from these contracts, unless ordering instructions contained in the contract require Purchasing Division approval.

EXHIBIT B: COMPARISON WITH PRIOR INSPECTIONS

A previous inspection of the West Virginia Public Service Commission was conducted in December of 2018. The review consisted of 99 selected transactions from an approximate 2,487 total transactions from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. This review resulted in 6 findings associated with 3 of the selected transactions. This indicated that 3% of the transactions reviewed during the inspection had one or more problems of potential nonconformity with Purchasing Division laws, rules, and/or regulations. When comparing the statistics from 2018 to the current 2020 inspection, below is a summary of the issues identified during the 2018 inspection, as compared to the findings from the current inspection.

Summary of Problem Transactions		
<i>Findings</i>	2018	2020
Failure to Bid at Central Level (Stringing)	0	0
Internal Resources not utilized	0	0
Statewide Contract not utilized	1	4
Failure to Bid at Delegated Level	0	0
Vendor Registration unverified/wrong Fee Code	0	0
Failure to verify Compliance Checks	1	0
Purchasing Affidavit not included	1	0
wvOasis Award Document not issued	2	0
Asset Tag/Number not affixed	0	0
Cert. of Non-Conflict of Interest not included	1	0
Miscellaneous Issue	0	2
<i>Total</i>	6	6

There are multiple training resources available from the Purchasing Division in-house training program, as well as, through on-line training modules. These training resources would assist in educating procurement staff in purchasing procedures/requirements. Additional information can be obtained by contacting Samantha Knapp, Staff Development Specialist, at (304) 558-7022 or by visiting the Purchasing Division's website <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/training/default.html>.

EXHIBIT C: AGENCY TRAINING REPORT

Importance of Training: The Purchasing Division has found that training in procurement significantly improves the ability of the spending unit to comply with applicable provisions of the West Virginia Code, the Code of State Rules and the Purchasing Division Procedures Handbook.

Statutory Requirements:

- W. Va. Code § 5A-3-60 requires that All executive department secretaries, commissioners, deputy commissioners, assistant commissioners, directors, deputy directors, assistant directors, department heads, deputy department heads and assistant department heads are hereby required to take two hours of training on purchasing procedures and purchasing cards annually.
- W. Va. CSR § 148-1-3.2 mandates that all designated procurement officers receive 10 hours of procurement training annually.

Available Training: The Purchasing Division has implemented a very robust training program that is available to all procurement officers subject to Purchasing Division oversight. That training includes:

- Online Modules
- Webinars
- Live Training Sessions
- Annual conferences
- Basic and Advanced Procurement Certification Programs
- Agency Specific Targeted Training

Training: The Purchasing Division records indicate that during the inspection period the following individuals within the spending unit have obtained training at our annual Purchasing Conference as shown below:

Malena Harding: attended 9 workshops (11 available)

Sandy Mitchell: attended 10 workshops (11 available)

Purchasing Division Recommendations:

The Purchasing Division recommends that all procurement officers, regardless of their status as designated or undelegated, participate in at least 10 hours of training annually and that all officials subject to the training requirements in W. Va. Code § 5A-3-60 take the required 2 hours of Purchasing and P-Card Training.
