



DEBRA K. DAVENPORT, CPA
AUDITOR GENERAL

STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE
AUDITOR GENERAL

WILLIAM THOMSON
DEPUTY AUDITOR GENERAL

August 15, 2007

The Honorable Robert Blendu, Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

The Honorable John Nelson, Vice Chair
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

Dear Senator Blendu and Representative Nelson:

Our Office has recently completed an 18-month followup of the Department of Economic Security—Division of Children, Youth and Families—Child Protective Services—Timeliness and Thoroughness of Investigations regarding the implementation status of the 10 audit recommendations (including sub-parts of the recommendations) presented in the performance audit report released in December 2005 (Auditor General Report No. CPS-0502). As the attached grid indicates:

- All 10 recommendations have been implemented.

Unless otherwise directed by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee, this report concludes our follow-up work on the Department's efforts to implement the recommendations from the December 2005 performance audit report.

Sincerely,

Melanie M. Chesney, Director
Performance Audit Division

MMC:Sjb
Attachment

cc: Tracy Wareing, Director
Department of Economic Security

Ken Deibert, Deputy Director
Department of Economic Security, Division of Children, Youth and Families

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY
DIVISION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES—
CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES—TIMELINESS AND THOROUGHNESS OF INVESTIGATIONS
18-Month Follow-Up Report To
Auditor General Report No. CPS-0502**

FINDING 1: Investigations need to be improved to better ensure children’s safety

Recommendation	Status of Implementing Recommendation	Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented
1. To ensure the Division’s reported investigation rate accurately reflects investigated reports, the Division should base the rate on the number of CPS reports received that have findings for all allegations and for which the supervisor has reviewed and approved the findings. This will require a modification to the automated case management system to capture supervisor approval of each of the allegation findings.	Implemented at 18 Months	
2. To ensure the Division can effectively monitor investigation timeliness, it needs to take the following actions to better ensure accurate data on initial response time:		
a. Add edits to the automated case management system to prevent invalid dates being input.	Implemented at 12 Months	
b. Clarify policy to clearly indicate that it is the CPS investigator’s response time that must be recorded in the automated case management system, even if emergency personnel are also involved.	Implemented at 6 Months	

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FINDING 1: Investigations need to be improved to better ensure children’s safety (cont’d)

c. Modify the automated case management system to allow the recording of the assignment of a report with an unknown family surname and then later merge it with any prior cases once the family surname becomes known.	Implemented at 12 Months	
3. To better ensure the safety and well-being of child victims of abuse and neglect, the Division should investigate 100 percent of reports requiring CPS investigation.	Implemented at 18 Months	
4. To improve the usefulness of the investigation closing summary documentation, the Division should ensure that investigators document consistent and comprehensive information.	Implemented at 18 Months	
5. To better ensure investigative performance is timely and thorough, the Division should:		
a. Establish three to five priorities that are most important to the investigative function and would demonstrate that the Division is performing efficiently and focus on these areas.	Implemented at 18 Months	

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FINDING 1: Investigations need to be improved to better ensure children’s safety (concl’d)

Recommendation	Status of Implementing Recommendation	Explanation for Recommendations That Have Not Been Implemented
b. Develop and use additional management reports or other mechanisms to keep division administration apprised of investigative performance in the established priority areas so that timely corrective action can be taken if needed.	Implemented at 18 Months	
c. Hold staff accountable for achieving the Division’s priorities and expectations by requiring the Division’s personnel unit to implement a centralized tracking system to record when staff evaluations are due and conducted and each person’s overall performance rating so that management can readily identify those workers in need of corrective action.	Implemented at 18 Months	
6. Because of the negative impact that untimely, inaccurate, and incomplete documentation can have on a child’s continued safety and well-being, as well as an investigator’s ability to investigate CPS reports and substantiate allegations of abuse and neglect where appropriate, division management should communicate to staff the importance of recording timely, accurate, and complete documentation in the automated case management system.	Implemented at 18 Months	