

**CITY OF HAMILTON  
INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2013-17  
PUBLIC WORKS – TRAFFIC INVENTORY**

#	OBSERVATIONS OF EXISTING SYSTEM	RECOMMENDATION FOR STRENGTHENING SYSTEM	MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN
1.	<p><u>Inventory Management</u> Traffic Operations have a stockroom containing the parts and materials needed by staff. The parts and materials removed from stock by staff are not tracked by the Inventory Clerks. Therefore, it is not possible to reconcile the parts and materials obtained from the stockroom to the parts and materials reported as having been used on the Daily Activity Sheets (DAS) that are completed by staff. These daily records are used to maintain the inventory records in Hansen.</p>	<p>That Traffic Operations management develop a system to track parts and materials taken from the stockroom by staff in order that accurate inventory records are maintained.</p>	<p>Agreed. Traffic will develop revised practices and procedures to ensure the inventory is tracked through streamlined processes to ensure the inventory records are accurately maintained.</p> <p>Improvements in parts and materials tracking will require segregation of inventory in a closed off stock room to limit access to inventory. Some additional construction costs will be required to segregate the stock room.</p> <p>The timeline for completion of the recommendation is December 2015.</p>
2.	<p><u>Parts and Materials Orders</u> A minimum re-order quantity has not been set for any of the parts and materials in inventory. Management has stated that, generally, three months worth of supplies are maintained. The Inventory Clerks rely on physical observation and experience to gauge re-order timing.</p> <p>However, due to the large number of parts and materials in the stockroom, the risk exists that some needed parts and materials could run too low before the shortage would be noticed. This could delay some of the work performed by Traffic Operations.</p>	<p>That management set minimum re-order quantities for the frequently used parts and materials deemed critical to Traffic Operations.</p> <p>That the Inventory Clerks re-order parts and materials using the minimum re-order quantity levels set above.</p>	<p>Agreed. Traffic Staff have already commenced the implementation of the minimum re-order quantities for all parts.</p> <p>Agreed. Inventory Clerks will re-order parts and materials using the minimum re-order quantity levels established in the Hansen system.</p> <p>The implementation of the minimum re-order point will commence no later than September 2014.</p>

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3.	<p><u>Parts and Materials - Segregation of Duties</u> The Inventory Clerk that orders the parts and materials also takes receipt of the order, places it in stock and records it in Hansen. The current process and poor segregation of duties does not mitigate the risk of fraudulent activity.</p>	<p>That the Inventory Clerk that places and receives an inventory order be different from the Clerk responsible for stocking and recording the delivery in Hansen.</p>	<p>Agreed. Traffic is working in conjunction with the Finance group to change the workflow system to establish a more defined segregation of duties.</p> <p>This process will be completed by December 2014.</p>
4.	<p><u>Inventory Manufactured In-House</u> The type and quantity of the materials obtained from the stockroom for the in-house manufacture of signs are recorded on a form called the Material Transfer Sheet. The quantities actually used when manufacturing the signs are tracked on a DAS. The amount transferred from the stockroom typically exceeds the amount actually used. Management does not monitor this difference in quantities. The risk is that material may be wasted or the excess misappropriated.</p> <p>A table that is used to calculate the total cost (including labour, materials and overhead) of various traffic signs that are manufactured in-house has been developed and used to value signs inventory. This table has not been updated since January 2009. Costs have increased over the past five years but are not reflected in the table, resulting in undervaluation of in-house manufactured signs.</p>	<p>That management perform periodic reviews to compare the quantities of materials transferred from the stockroom to the in-house sign shop and the quantities of materials tracked on the DAS. Evidence of such reviews should be maintained.</p> <p>That Traffic Operations management annually update the table used in costing signs manufactured in-house.</p>	<p>Agreed. Traffic Operations has commenced a review of our current practices for the consumption of materials used in in-house manufacturing in order to accurately track materials.</p> <p>Agreed. Traffic Operations management will up-date costs on an annual basis beginning in 2014.</p> <p>This process will be completed by December 2014.</p>

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5.	<p><u>Stock – Year-end Inventory</u> Periodic cycle counts have not been performed on fast moving or high value parts and materials as required by internal procedures. Cycle counts can reduce the effort required during the year-end inventory count and identify discrepancies earlier in the year.</p>	<p>That management perform cycle counts as required by the internal procedures.</p>	<p>Agreed. Upon the completion of item #1 – Inventory Management (December 2015), cycle counts as required by internal procedures will commence.</p>
6.	<p><u>Physical Inventory Count</u> A physical inventory count is conducted in order to verify the existence of inventory items and adjust corresponding records to match the subsequent valuation of those items.</p> <p>A physical inventory count was conducted in November, 2013. The count information gathered was manually loaded into a spreadsheet and valued. Comparison of data with records maintained in Hansen originally produced a variance of almost \$127,000 worth of inventory (representing 6.8% of the total Traffic inventory). Further investigation by staff provided instances of errors made in the physical count and in the Hansen records, reducing the variance to approximately \$102,000.</p> <p>Year end valuation in Hansen produced another value for the inventory and the general ledger was adjusted to match, resulting in a final variance of over \$111,000 (5.5%) from the original updated physical count. Management has indicated that variances of 5% are acceptable.</p> <p>The effectiveness of a physical count as a sound inventory control is lost when the inventory records are not adjusted to the actual count. Differences are carried forward year over year without resolution.</p>	<p>That physical inventory taking instructions be reinforced with individuals conducting the counts. Management should ensure the accuracy and completeness of the counts by spot checking count information to/from the item in inventory.</p> <p>That Hansen records be adjusted to match the physical count details as at the time of the count.</p>	<p>Upon the implementation of Item #1 – Inventory Management (December 2015), the physical inventory count process and cycle count process will be revised to ensure accuracy and completeness of the counts.</p> <p>Agreed. Hansen records will be adjusted to match the physical count details as at the time of count. This process will be completed by December 2015.</p>