

Electra Theodorides-Bustle
Executive Director

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May 20, 2009

Ms. Electra Theodorides Bustle, Executive Director
Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
2900 Apalachee Parkway B443
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0500

Re: Auditor General Report No. 2009-050
Horse Country Specialty License Plate Survey Compliance Audit

Dear Ms. Theodorides-Bustle:

In accordance with Section 20.055(5)(h), Florida Statutes, we are providing an assessment of the implementation or current status of the recommendation in the Auditor General's Report No. 2009-050. If you need additional information, please contact me at 617-3104.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurence W. Noda".

Laurence W. Noda, CPA
Inspector General

c: Ms. Kathy Dubose, Staff Director
Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

Attachment

Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
Horse Country Specialty License Plate Survey
Compliance Audit

Finding No. 1: Survey Reliability

APPENDIX A provides a chronology of the Horse Country specialty license plate survey process. As shown by APPENDIX A, on June 6, 2008, after verification of survey data, the Department submitted survey results to its Contractor for statistical analysis. The Contractor indicated on June 10, 2008, that a minimum of 30,000 vehicle registrants in Florida intended to purchase the plate. The Department then submitted its evaluation of the survey results to the Auditor General on June 11, 2008.

We applied various audit procedures to the survey results and other documentation provided to us by the Department and, as a part of these procedures, we sent confirmation letters to 700 (24 percent) of the 2,877 respondents listed in the survey results. Table 1 presents a summary of the confirmation replies received through October 7, 2008.

Table 1
Summary of Confirmation Replies Received

Response	Did you participate in the Survey?	Percent of Total
Yes	69	27%
No	149	58%
Unsure	37	15%
Totals	255	100%

As shown by Table 1, a total of 149 (58 percent) of the respondents indicated that they did not participate in the survey and another 37 respondents (15 percent) indicated that they were unsure whether they had participated or not. Given these results, we were unable to satisfy ourselves as to the reliability of the survey. Because of the uncertainty regarding the reliability of the survey, we were unable to verify that the submitted survey met the requirements of Section 320.08053(1)(b), Florida Statutes, and related Department procedures.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Department consult with the requesting organization concerning the steps to be taken to provide a verifiable scientific survey meeting the specifications of Department procedure.

Response:

The Department has been in contact with the sponsoring organization for the Horse Country Specialty License Plate. The sponsoring organization has changed to a different survey company and agreed to conduct a new survey.

Six-Month Response:

The sponsoring organization conducted a new survey and in Report No. 2009-130 the Auditor General determined that the Horse Country specialty license plate survey submitted on February 12, 2009, met the requirements of Section 320.08053(1)(b), Florida Statutes, and relevant Department procedures related to the conduct of scientific sample surveys of Florida motor vehicle owners.