



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Law Enforcement

AUDITS, INSPECTIONS, AND ACCREDITATION MANAGEMENT

GENERAL ORDER	EFFECTIVE DATE	RESCINDS/AMENDS	APPLICABILITY
25	August 7, 2026	May 16, 2022	All Members

References

S. 943.125, F.S.; GO 16, GO 40, CFA 10.03M, 10.18

1 POLICY

- A** It is the policy of the Division to provide for an audit and inspections program for evaluating the quality of the Division's operations, ensuring goals and objectives are being pursued, identifying the need for any additional resources, and ensuring that uniformity is maintained throughout the Division. Audits and/or inspections shall be conducted to ensure effective operations and in support of the Division's accreditation program.
- B** The Division commits itself to an efficient, effective, and economical use of resources, to continuous improvement through rigorous self-assessment, and to meet and exceed best practices in law enforcement by being an accredited agency. Furthermore, all Division members shall adhere to established policies, directives, standards and procedures as provided by the Division's General Orders, The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Internal Management Policies and Procedures (IMPP) and all applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations. In order to accomplish these goals and objectives, the Division maintains an inspections program and an accreditation management program within the Law Enforcement Program Section.
- C** It is the policy of the Division to support an accreditation management program that ensures reports, reviews, and other activities mandated by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA) and North American Wildlife Law Enforcement Accreditation (NAWLEA) standards are completed in a timely manner. The Division is committed to the accreditation process and places the highest priority on achieving the goal of accreditation, ultimately enhancing the Division's level of professionalism and service to the community.
- D** It is the policy of the Division to ensure that all members are familiar with the concept and process of accreditation. New Division members shall receive an overview of the accreditation standards and process as part of their new employee orientation.
- E Definitions**
- (1) Accreditation** – Accreditation is the certification by an independent reviewing authority that an entity has met specific requirements and prescribed standards.
 - (2) Accreditation Manager** – A member of the Division who is responsible for the successful management of the Division's accreditation program.
 - (3) Accreditation Standards and Compliance** – Law Enforcement agencies seeking accreditation

are required to comply with all applicable CFA and NAWLEA accreditation standards. Standards are intended to provide direction based on best practices regarding what an agency should be doing, not by dictating how the agency should accomplish those tasks.

- (4) **Audit** – The examination of records and activities to ensure compliance with established controls, policies, and operational procedures, and to recommend any indicated changes.
- (5) **Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA)** – The Florida Legislature created a voluntary law enforcement accreditation program in section 943.125, Florida Statutes. The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation was created subsequently to administer Florida's accreditation program and operates under direct oversight from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). The CFA is responsible for the oversight of the accreditation program, accredited agencies and the rigorous review process to include assignment of CFA onsite assessors.
- (6) **Inspection** – An announced or unannounced inspection conducted by personnel designated by the Division Director or designee. The inspection is a quality control management tool designed to objectively review the Division's organizational units. Inspections involve the examination of an area or program in the Division for efficiency, effectiveness, policy compliance and adequacy of management controls. The results of inspections are prepared specifically for presentation to the Division Director and the affected Deputy Director.
- (7) **Mock Assessment** – The mock assessment assists the Division to prepare for the official onsite assessment. During the mock assessment, which occurs on a separate three-year cycle for each accreditation program and approximately three months prior to the onsite assessment, CFA and/or NAWLEA certified assessors, chosen by the Division, examine the Division's proofs of compliance and make recommendations to improve assessment files and Division processes prior to the onsite assessment.
- (8) **North American Wildlife Law Enforcement Accreditation (NAWLEA)** - The North American Wildlife Law Enforcement Accreditation Program (NAWLEA) is an accreditation program created in 2022 by field experts that approves and recognizes the significance of the specialized aspects of natural resources law enforcement. The program offers accreditation that ensures agencies meet the highest standards in wildlife law enforcement.
- (9) **Onsite Assessment** – During the onsite assessment, which occurs on a separate three-year cycle for each accreditation program, CFA and/or NAWLEA certified and assigned assessors examine all proofs of compliance contained in the accreditation assessment files, interview members of the Division regarding policies and practices, observe the Division's equipment, and solicit feedback from the public on Division operations.
- (10) **Operational Review** - Review conducted by personnel who do not have control of the persons, facilities, or procedures being reviewed. An operational review will focus on compliance with the accreditation standards defined by CFA and/or NAWLEA. Operational reviews are not equivalent to and do not have the same reporting requirements as an inspection. The conduct and emphasis of an operational review may be dictated by the needs of the Division.
- (11) **Self-Assessment** – The object of the self-assessment is to ensure that Division members are adequately prepared to meet the requirements of accreditation. This includes the collection of necessary documentation to prove compliance, implementation of required audit procedures, and a review and interpretation of standards.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

A Law Enforcement Program Section

- (1) The Chief of Staff is responsible for audits, inspections, and the accreditation management program, and assists all levels of management in the effective discharge of their responsibilities by furnishing them with timely analyses, appraisals, recommendations and pertinent information.

- (2) The Chief of Staff or designee may conduct inspections commensurate with the accreditation cycle, based on priorities established by the Division Director. This does not preclude the initiation of audits and/or inspections based on operational needs or at the direction of the Division Director.
- (3) Pursuant to General Order 16, *Collection, Preservation and Documentation of Evidence and Property*, annual audits of the Division's evidence and property tracking system shall be conducted by the accreditation manager or designee of the Law Enforcement Program Section.
 - (a) The accreditation manager may coordinate operational reviews in conjunction with the annual evidence audits.
 - (b) Information developed during the course of the audits shall be submitted in MEMO format to the Regional Commander with the cc to the Professional Standards Captain.
- (4) The Professional Standards Captain or designee is responsible for conducting a quarterly internal audit of the Division's Evidence and Information Fund and submit a report of expenditures to the Division Director or designee as required by General Order 40, *Confidential Informants, Files and Funds*.

B Accreditation Manager

- (1) The accreditation manager reports to the Professional Standards Captain in the Law Enforcement Program Section and is responsible for the successful management of the Division's accreditation program.
- (2) The accreditation manager is responsible for ensuring that current information is provided for familiarization with accreditation standards and the accreditation process. This information shall be provided to the PowerDMS Administrator for assignment to new Division members upon employment, and periodically to all members of the Division.
- (3) The accreditation manager shall coordinate all accreditation and inspection activities, via the chain of command, with the applicable Deputy Directors and Regional Commanders, exceptions are noted in the Procedures Section of this General Order.
- (4) The accreditation manager is responsible for tracking, collecting, and organizing all documents related to maintaining the Divisions accredited status.
- (5) The accreditation manager shall develop or assist with the development of written directives relating to accreditation standards.

C Regional Commanders and Section Leaders

- (1) It is the responsibility of all Regional Commanders and Section Leaders to achieve and ensure continued compliance with all accreditation standards applicable to their region or section. The accreditation manager will assist all Division components (regions, sections, units, etc.) in achieving and maintaining compliance.
- (2) Pursuant to General Order 16, *Collection, Preservation and Documentation of Evidence and Property*, an annual unannounced inspection shall be conducted of all law enforcement evidence facilities to include found and seized property. An annual 100% inventory is also required of each evidence facility to include found and seized property.

D Division Members

- (1) All members are responsible for providing any information requested as part of an audit or inspection to the Law Enforcement Program Section in a timely manner.
- (2) All members are responsible for aiding and supporting the Division's accreditation program and for being familiar with related accreditation standards and the concept and process of accreditation.

- (3) All members shall provide proofs of compliance in a timely manner when requested by the accreditation manager or designee. The specific nature of the proof of compliance is defined by the accreditation manager in accordance with applicable accreditation standards.

3 PROCEDURES

A Accreditation

- (1) Prior to or within a year of appointment, the Accreditation Manager shall complete specialized accreditation manager's training to include information on the essential components of the accreditation process, the standards manual, and file maintenance.
- (2) The accreditation manager may contact any member of the Division or Commission, via the chain of command, whose expertise or authority may be needed for the successful management of the accreditation process.
- (3) The accreditation manager may have access to all Division facilities and records in order to collect or verify proofs of compliance and perform the inspections required by CFA and NAWLEA standards.
 - (a) Records pertaining to active and/or open investigations are not subject to collection or verification by the accreditation manager other than to verify the security of the records.

B Preparing and Conducting Inspections

- (1) Inspections may be announced or unannounced, dependent upon circumstances and at the direction of the Division's Director or Deputy Directors.
- (2) Each inspection shall be guided by an approved project work plan describing the scope of the planned inspection, the goals of the inspection, and the proposed methodological approach for the inspection. Announced inspections shall utilize input from Command Staff and the affected Regional Commanders and/or Section Leaders to identify operational areas to be evaluated.
- (3) The basic process of an inspection consists of, but is not limited to the following steps:
 - (a) Research and identification of appropriate and applicable legal authorities (statutes, rules, policies, procedures, accreditation standards, etc.).
 - (b) Conduct an entrance conference with the unit to be inspected and all appropriate personnel.
 - (c) Conduct interviews of a sample of informed or affected members and collects other pertinent information.
 - (d) Analysis of all information and identification of findings.
 - (e) Development of recommendations.
 - (f) Preparation of a preliminary inspection report which describes the inspection's purpose, objectives, methodology, findings, and recommendations.
 - (g) Conduct an exit conference with each inspected unit and other appropriate members.
 - (h) Presentation of the findings and recommendations to each inspected unit by copy of the preliminary inspection report.
 - (i) The inspected unit will respond to the Chief of Staff or designee via the appropriate Deputy Director in writing within 30 days regarding any adverse findings, related recommendations identified in the preliminary inspection report, and any corrective actions planned with an anticipated date of completion.

C Final Inspection Report

- (1) The written response of the inspected unit shall be incorporated in the final inspection report which is forwarded to the Division Director.

- (2) The Director may meet with the Chief of Staff or designee, the inspected unit, the appropriate Deputy Director or others as necessary for discussion before approving the final report.
- (3) Upon approval, the final inspection report shall be distributed to the inspected unit, the Division's command staff, accreditation manager, and any other individual, group, or entity that is deemed appropriate.
- (4) Final reports shall be numbered and consistent in format. Original reports shall be maintained by the Chief of Staff or designee.

D Follow-Up Activities

- (1) The Chief of Staff or designee shall monitor corrective actions based on the recommendations.
- (2) The inspected unit shall be required to provide a written status report of all corrective action to the Chief of Staff or designee via the appropriate Deputy Director within 90 calendar days after the final inspection report is issued.
- (3) A corrective action follow-up report shall become part of the working documents of the original inspection. All involved parties shall be informed of the final corrective actions completed.

4 FORMS

FORM NUMBER	FORM TITLE
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