



## BROWARD OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2017

#### ***Gross Mismanagement of the City of Hollywood Police Department Property and Evidence Unit***

Broward Inspector General John W. Scott announced today that the Broward Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has issued a [final report](#) finding that Hollywood Police Department (HPD) officials grossly mismanaged the operation of the Property and Evidence Unit (PEU). HPD officials failed to institute protocols consistent with industry standards and their failure to ensure the unit's compliance with protocols already established by the department facilitated an environment where the theft of \$137,609 in currency and 1,096 pills from the evidence room went undetected.

In sum, the OIG found that the theft was facilitated by a lack of controls limiting access into the PEU. Evidence required to prosecute the culprit(s) was unavailable because the HPD had failed to institute security measures to document access, such as security cameras. While many issues remain, the HPD has made significant progress in remediating years of mismanagement. The HPD also instituted a number of control measures requiring two persons to participate in the opening of cash and narcotic safes, rather than merely being present, and other security measures to document access. The process of purging and organizing evidence has improved, but remains an on-going issue.

In his response on behalf of the HPD, Chief Tomas Sanchez provided this Office with a summarized list of additional actions and steps taken by the HPD since March 28, 2016—the date the HPD provided us with an initial report of all the corrective action the department had taken between January 2012 and March 2016 in response to the OIG's investigation. Some of those continued improvements include the purchase of a drug terminator device which so far has facilitated the destruction of over 140 pounds of drugs, continued purging, and a change in protocol in efforts to reduce paperwork being submitted to the property unit. The OIG is encouraged by the HPD's ongoing efforts to address the deficiencies raised in the final report but has requested that we be provided with a status report in 90 days, or by May 23, 2017, regarding the PEU's progress and any further improvements.

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John W. Scott, *Inspector General*

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