

STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

RANDALL J. MEYER, INSPECTOR GENERAL

**REPORT OF
INVESTIGATION**



**AGENCY: OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
FILE ID NO.: 2012-CA00061
DATE OF REPORT: DECEMBER 13, 2013**

The Office of the Ohio Inspector General ... The State Watchdog

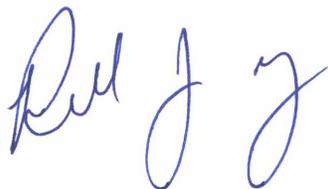
“Safeguarding integrity in state government”

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Statutory authority for conducting such investigations is defined in *Ohio Revised Code §121.41* through *121.50*. A *Report of Investigation* is issued based on the findings of the Office, and copies are delivered to the Governor of Ohio and the director of the agency subject to the investigation. At the discretion of the Inspector General, copies of the report may also be forwarded to law enforcement agencies or other state agencies responsible for investigating, auditing, reviewing, or evaluating the management and operation of state agencies. The *Report of Investigation* by the Ohio Inspector General is a public record under *Ohio Revised Code §149.43* and related sections of *Chapter 149*. It is available to the public for a fee that does not exceed the cost of reproducing and delivering the report.

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The Inspector General’s Office remains dedicated to the principle that no public servant, regardless of rank or position, is above the law, and the strength of our government is built on the solid character of the individuals who hold the public trust.



Randall J. Meyer
Ohio Inspector General



STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

RANDALL J. MEYER, INSPECTOR GENERAL

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

FILE ID NUMBER: 2012-CA00061

SUBJECT NAME: Wildlife Officers

POSITION: Wildlife Officers

AGENCY: Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife

BASIS FOR INVESTIGATION: Inspector General Initiative

ALLEGATIONS: Operating a business or private interest on state time

INITIATED: May 9, 2012

DATE OF REPORT: December 13, 2013

INITIAL ALLEGATION AND COMPLAINT SUMMARY

In February 2012, The Office of the Ohio Inspector General received a photograph of two Ohio Department of Natural Resources' (ODNR), Division of Wildlife officers posing among other hunters with several dead deer. The two wildlife officers appeared to be in their uniforms. The complainant alleged the wildlife officers may have been hunting on duty. The Office of the Ohio Inspector General conducted an investigation,¹ concluding that the two wildlife officers, identified as Wildlife Officer Allan Wright and Wildlife Supervisor David Warner, did in fact, harvest deer while on duty in Brown County. The hunting on duty identified by the photograph occurred in 2008.

The Office of the Ohio Inspector General reviewed the harvest records and payroll records for Wildlife Officer Allan Wright and Wildlife Supervisor David Warner for the 2009 – 2010 deer hunting season and found that the two officers harvested deer while on duty in those years as well. Also, Wildlife Officer Matthew Roberts harvested a deer while on duty in 2010 in Brown County.²

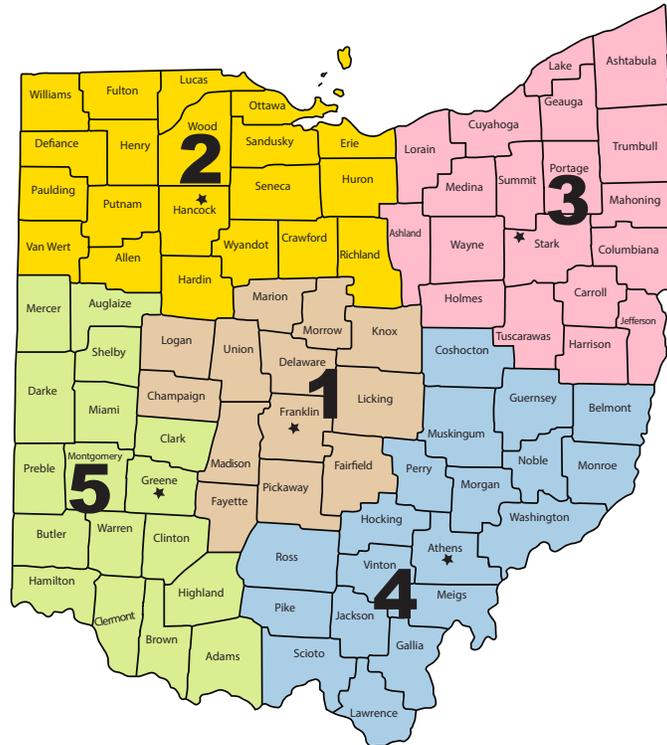
As a result of the previous investigation, the Office of the Ohio Inspector General initiated this investigation to determine if the hunting on duty violations were isolated to Brown County or were common occurrences in other parts of the state.

BACKGROUND

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is comprised of 10 divisions and is responsible for the development and wise use of natural resources in the state of Ohio. The ODNR Division of Wildlife is the law enforcement branch of the department charged with enforcing the hunting, fishing, and trapping laws in Ohio. The division also issues and regulates licenses and permits for the hunting, fishing, and trapping of all legal game in Ohio. For the purpose of management and administration, the Division of Wildlife has divided the state into five districts, as shown in the map below:

¹ OIG Report of Investigation 2012-CA00009.

² Allan Wright, David Warner, and Matthew Roberts were not included in this investigation since they were included in Report of Investigation 2012-CA00009.



Source: Derived from Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources website.

Everyone who kills a deer must immediately complete a temporary tag, specifying the name and address of the hunter and the date and time of the kill. The temporary tag is part of the deer permit and must be tied to the deer. The deer must then be taken to an official deer check station for permanent tagging. The check stations also generate a deer harvest report, which records the hunter’s personal identifying information, characteristics of the deer, description of the weapon used, permit type, tag number, date, time, county of harvest, and location of the check station and check county. Wildlife officers may also check in deer for permanent tagging. When wildlife officers check in deer and complete a harvest report form, each officer is required to enter their particular unit number in the field entitled “check station location.” Completed harvest reports are then returned to the ODNR Division of Wildlife for statistical review in order to adjust hunting seasons, estimate herd population, and assess the geographical movement of game.

ODNR Form #58 is the form used to collect deer harvest information. This form is completed by the check station personnel or wildlife officers. At the end of hunting season, all of these harvest report forms are sent to the Division of Wildlife’s Athens office, where the information is

transferred to a Division of Wildlife deer harvest database. The original forms are then sent back to the district office from where they originated.³

Time and Attendance Requirements

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services requires all state agencies, in order to comply with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, to maintain records of hours worked for each day worked by their employees.

Additionally, there is also a state requirement for employers to keep certain records on behalf of their employees. Under Article II, section 34(a) of the Ohio Constitution and section 4111.14 of the Revised Code, employers in the State of Ohio are required to maintain records of the hours worked for each day worked for at least three years following the last date the employee was employed. ([Exhibit 1](#))

To comply with both the Fair Labor Standards Act and state requirements, the following is a list of timekeeping information that each agency is required to record:

- Time of day the employee begins and ends work on any given day;
- Hours employee worked each day;
- Total hours employee worked each work week.

No one particular method of maintaining these records is required, so employers have some flexibility in meeting these requirements, either by time clock, “sign-in sheet,” employee submission of hours worked, or some other verifiable method of recordkeeping.

ODNR Voice Radio and Mobile Data Communications Directive

ODNR’s voice radio and mobile data communications directive addresses time recordkeeping for wildlife officers who are equipped with radios and/or mobile data computers. Mobile data-equipped officers will sign in using the mobile data computer when beginning a work period and will keep mobile status updated for the duration of the work period. At a minimum, mobile data-equipped officers will use mobile data to update their status hourly and/or when their work

³ This check-in procedure changed in the 2011 hunting season to an online system, eliminating the physical check in.

status, facility, or geographical jurisdiction changes when the officer is in the vehicle or vessel. Mobile data-equipped officers will sign off using the mobile data computer when ending a work period. During events of mobile coverage outage, officers should request the Communication Center sign them off using the voice radio. ([Exhibit 2](#))

Other employees not equipped with radios or mobile data computers or assigned to a report-in location use the sign-in/sign-out log to record work hours.

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

On May 9, 2012, the Office of the Ohio Inspector General requested ODNR provide all deer harvest records for the 2009 – 2010 deer hunting season. Also requested was a list of Ohio Division of Wildlife employee names and identifying information. The deer harvest records for the 2009 – 2010 deer hunting season consisted of 500,967 deer harvest records. The Ohio Division of Wildlife employee list totaled 490 employees. This Division of Wildlife employee list was narrowed down to focus on employees who do not have a report-in location.⁴ This brought the list of employees who potentially harvested deer on days they claimed work hours to 122 in either 2009 or 2010. The deer harvest records and the list of wildlife employees were combined into one list and labeled as Master Deer Data. State payroll records were searched for the names of the 122 employees who harvested deer on dates these employees claimed work hours. Employees who claimed some form of permissible leave on days they harvested deer were removed from the list. This narrowed the list to 79 Division of Wildlife employees who potentially harvested deer on days in which they claimed either regular time or overtime worked; or they claimed a type of leave time (i.e., holiday, sick, disability) used during that period.

The list was further reduced to 26 employees identified as potentially harvesting and or checking in deer while on duty. The 26 employees were sent letters requesting they contact the Office of the Ohio Inspector General to be interviewed regarding these matters. Only eight responded and none of those employees agreed to be interviewed. Of the 26 employees, 8 were removed from

⁴ The wildlife employee list included wildlife officers, supervisors, technicians, investigators, managers, and administrators.

the list because the Division of Wildlife was unable to locate the original harvest reports that were needed to confirm the identities of the wildlife employees.

The Office of the Ohio Inspector General then requested from ODNR the starting and ending times of the employees identified to determine if the deer were harvested during the employees' paid hours. This brought the number of employees who potentially harvested deer or checked in deer during on-duty hours to 18 individuals in 18 different counties.

The majority of these employees are equipped with voice radios and mobile data computers, which are intended for them to remain in contact with the Communications Center. The employees' starting and ending times were retrieved from the Division of Wildlife Communication Center. The starting and ending times of those employees were then compared to the deer harvest times recorded on the harvest reports kept by the Division of Wildlife.

The result of this comparison was mixed. Some employees were shown to have harvested a deer during the time they were marked on duty. Some employees were shown to have harvested a deer, when they were marked in on duty, then later marked themselves off duty; however, the time these employees were marked as being on duty did not total up to the number of hours they claimed to have worked. Using the employees' reported ending times and the total amount of time they claimed would produce an assumed starting time, which put the harvest time during their on-duty hours. In these instances, either the employee harvested a deer while on duty, or falsified his/her time sheet (i.e., deer harvested at 10 a.m., on duty at 12 p.m., off duty at 4 p.m., claims eight hours.)

As a result of previous investigations, it has been determined that many wildlife officers did not follow the ODNR communication policy of marking on duty at the beginning of their shift, off duty at the end of their shift, or provide hourly updates of their status. Also, the Ohio Division of Wildlife does not audit or compare the number of hours claimed against the hours marked as being on duty.

The following is a summary of events based on records kept by the Ohio Division of Wildlife of each employee identified for possibly falsifying his or her time sheet, or harvesting deer while on duty, listed by county and in alphabetical order. Some clearly harvested deer or checked deer in during hours the employees were marked as being on duty. Some employees harvested deer or checked deer in during the employees' on-duty hours if they worked the number of hours they claimed to be working. Many of these employees' on-duty hours do not match the number of hours they claimed to have worked.

ADAMS COUNTY

David Gilkey claimed eight hours regular pay for both January 21, 2011, and January 22, 2011. Gilkey harvested a deer on January 21, 2011, at 5:59 p.m. in Adams County and checked it in at 12:56 p.m. on January 22, 2011. Gilkey's unit history log⁵ for January 21 shows he signed on duty at 11:56 a.m. and off duty at 1:45 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log on January 21 is 1.82 hours. Assuming Gilkey worked eight hours continuously, he would have worked until 7:56 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty. Gilkey's unit history log for January 22 shows he signed on duty at 12:16 p.m. and off duty at 2:50 p.m. Although Gilkey claimed eight hours of pay on January 22, 2011, his unit history log only accounts for 2.57 hours of activity. According to Gilkey's unit history log for January 22, he checked in the deer while on duty.

BELMONT COUNTY

Brian Baker claimed eight hours regular pay for January 23, 2010. Baker harvested a deer at 5:05 p.m. in Belmont County and checked it in at 7:00 p.m. Baker's unit history log shows he signed on duty at 11:04 a.m. and off duty at 12:19 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 1.25 hours. Assuming Baker worked eight hours continuously, he would have worked until 7:04 p.m. and would have harvested and checked in the deer while on duty. NOTE: ODNR could not locate Baker's deer harvest report.

Brian Baker also harvested and checked in a deer on November 13, 2010. On November 13, 2010, Baker claimed eight hours regular pay. Baker harvested a deer at 5:10 p.m. in Belmont

⁵ A "unit history log" is an individual communication log.

County and checked the deer in at 6:30 p.m. Baker's unit history log shows he signed on duty at 3:37 p.m. and off duty at 5:37 p.m.; then back on duty at 7:17 p.m. and off at 9:29 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 4.2 hours. Assuming Baker worked eight continuous hours, he would have worked until 1:20 a.m. According to the unit history log, Baker harvested a deer while on duty.

BUTLER COUNTY

Joshua Zientek claimed 14 hours regular pay for December 20, 2009. Zientek harvested a deer on December 20, 2009, at 5:35 p.m. in Butler County and checked the deer in at 9:11 a.m. on January 1, 2010. Zientek's unit history log for December 20 shows he signed on duty at 7:43 a.m. and then off duty at 3:42 p.m.; then back on duty at 3:54 p.m. and off duty at 7:07 p.m. According to Zientek's unit history log, he harvested a deer while on duty. Zientek did not check his deer until January 1, 2010 – and used eight hours holiday leave that day.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

Jeffrey Tipton claimed 10 hours regular pay for January 9, 2010, and four hours regular pay for January 12, 2010. Tipton harvested a deer on January 9, 2010, at 4:55 p.m. in Champaign County and checked the deer in at 9:00 p.m. on January 12, 2010. Tipton's unit history log for January 9 shows he signed on duty at 8:15 a.m. and off duty at 8:22 p.m. Tipton's unit history log for January 12 shows he signed on duty at 9:11 a.m. and off duty at 12:16 p.m. According to Tipton's unit history log, he harvested a deer while on duty.

COLUMBIANA COUNTY

David Brown claimed eight hours regular pay and two hours of overtime for December 4, 2009. Brown harvested a deer at 10:30 a.m. in Columbiana County and checked the deer in at 12:00 p.m. Brown's unit history log shows he signed on duty at 11:21 a.m. and off duty at 6:59 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 7.55 hours. Assuming Brown worked 10 hours continuously, he would have worked until 9:21 p.m. Brown checked the deer in while on duty.

David Brown claimed six hours regular pay for November 19, 2010, and claimed 10 hours regular pay for November 20, 2010. Brown harvested a deer at 4:09 p.m. on November 19 in Columbiana County and checked the deer in at 12:00 p.m. on November 20, 2010. Brown's unit history log for November 19 shows he signed on duty at 7:59 p.m. and off duty at 1:14 a.m. on November 20. As evident from these reported times, Brown did not harvest the deer while on duty. Brown's unit history log for November 20 shows he signed on at 6:35 a.m. and off duty at 2:19 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log for November 29 is 7.73 hours. Assuming Brown worked 10 hours continuously, he would have worked until 4:35 p.m. and would have checked the deer in while on duty.

Nicholas Turner claimed 10 hours regular pay for October 1, 2009. Turner harvested a deer at 5:35 p.m. in Columbiana County and checked the deer in at 6:35 p.m. Turner's unit history log for October 1 shows he signed on duty at 8:20 a.m. and off duty at 10:46 a.m.; then back on duty at 11:32 a.m. and off duty at 5:15 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 8.15 hours. Assuming Turner worked 10 hours continuously, he would have worked until either 6:20 p.m. (without a 45-minute break) or until 7:05 p.m. (with a 45-minute break from 10:46 a.m. to 11:32 a.m.). Assuming Turner worked 10 hours, he harvested the deer on duty.

DEFIANCE COUNTY

Matthew Smith claimed eight hours regular pay for November 22, 2009. Smith harvested a deer at 5:32 p.m. in Defiance County and checked the deer in at 8:00 p.m. Smith's unit history log shows he signed on duty at 9:59 a.m. and off duty at 2:04 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 4.08 hours. Assuming Smith worked eight hours continuously, he would have worked until 5:59 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty.

FAYETTE COUNTY

Roy Rucker claimed nine hours of regular pay for October 29, 2009. Rucker harvested a deer on October 29, 2009, at 6:32 p.m. in Fayette County and checked the deer in on October 30 (no time of check on harvest report). Rucker's unit history log shows that on October 29, 2009, he

signed on duty at 9:28 a.m. and off duty at 1:26 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 3.97 hours. Assuming Rucker worked nine continuous hours starting at 9:28 a.m., he would have worked until 6:28 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty. On the following day, October 30, when he checked the deer in, Rucker claimed eight hours of regular pay. NOTE: ODNR could not locate the harvest report. However, Rucker's Time and Activity Report put him in Fayette County.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Brad Kiger claimed seven hours regular pay for January 27, 2011. Kiger harvested a deer at 5:50 p.m. in Franklin County and checked the deer in at 6:55 p.m. Kiger's unit history log shows he signed on duty at 11:19 a.m. and off duty at 3:22 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 4.05 hours. Assuming Kiger worked seven hours continuously, he would have worked until 6:19 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty. In reviewing the harvest reports, it was noted that Kiger checked in his own deer.

GALLIA COUNTY

Roy Rucker claimed four hours regular pay for November 5, 2010, and claimed eight hours of regular pay for the following day, November 6, 2010. Rucker harvested a deer at 6:30 p.m. on November 5 in Gallia County and checked the deer in at 9:00 a.m. on November 6, 2010. Rucker's unit history log shows he worked an overnight shift on November 5, 2010, as he signed on duty at 3:18 p.m. and off duty the following morning at 2:22 a.m. (November 6). This accounts for approximately 11 hours of work, whereas Rucker only claimed four hours. However, according to Rucker's unit history log, he harvested the deer during work hours. Rucker's unit history log shows that on November 6, 2010, he signed back on duty at 8:17 a.m. and his last incident was at 1:36 p.m. (There was no sign-off time on the unit history log.) Although the unit history log only accounts for 5.32 hours of work on November 6, according to activity captured on Rucker's unit history log for that day, he also checked the deer in during work hours.

GEAUGA COUNTY

Scott Denamen claimed eight hours regular pay for October 15, 2010, and claimed 12 hours regular pay for October 16, 2010. Denamen harvested a deer on October 15, 2010, at 6:45 p.m. in Geauga County and checked it in at 1:30 p.m. on October 16, 2010. Denamen's unit history log shows that on October 15 he signed on duty at 8:23 a.m. and off duty at 11:48 a.m.; then back on duty again at 11:50 a.m. and off at 8:28 p.m. Although Denamen claimed eight hours regular pay, his unit log accounts for just over 12 hours. According to Denamen's unit history log, he harvested a deer on state time.

Denamen's unit history log for October 16, 2010, shows that he signed on duty at 6:24 a.m. and off duty at 12:34 p.m.; then back on duty at 1:00 p.m. and off at 1:13 p.m.; and again on duty at 3:16 p.m. and off for the day at 7:32 p.m. The unit history log accounts for 10.9 hours of activity. However, Denamen claimed 12 hours. Assuming he worked a continuous 12-hour shift beginning at 6:24 a.m., Denamen also checked his deer on state time.

HIGHLAND COUNTY

James Carnes claimed eight hours of regular pay and four hours of overtime for November 30, 2009. Carnes harvested a deer at 3:30 p.m. in Highland County and checked the deer in at 9:30 p.m. Carnes' unit history log shows he signed on duty at 6:50 a.m. and off duty at 11:25 a.m.; then back on duty at 12:38 p.m. and off at 5:36 p.m.; and again back on duty at 6:42 p.m. and off for the day at 7:25 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 10.27 hours. According to Carnes' unit history log, he harvested a deer during state time.

James Carnes claimed 12 hours of overtime for December 5, 2009. Carnes harvested a deer at 4:30 p.m. in Highland County and checked the deer in at 7:52 p.m. Carnes' unit history log shows he signed on duty at 8:19 a.m. and off duty at 5:14 p.m.; then back on duty at 5:34 p.m. and off for the day at 5:45 p.m. According to Carnes' unit history log, he harvested a deer during state time. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 9.1 hours. Assuming Carnes worked an additional 2.9 hours, he would have worked until 8:39 p.m. and would have checked in the deer while on duty.

James Carnes claimed four hours regular pay for January 11, 2011. Carnes harvested a deer at 1:00 p.m. in Highland County and checked it in at 6:15 p.m. Carnes' unit history log shows he signed on duty at 10:30 a.m. and off duty at 12:30 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 2.0 hours. Assuming Carnes worked four hours continuously, he would have worked until 2:30 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty.

HOCKING COUNTY

Troy Reimund claimed eight hours regular pay for November 5, 2009. Reimund harvested a deer at 5:20 p.m. in Hocking County and checked the deer in at 9:00 p.m. Reimund's unit history log for November 5 shows he signed off duty at 4:26 a.m. as he was completing an overnight shift. Reimund was back on duty at 1:23 p.m. and off duty at 3:23 p.m.; back on duty at 3:27 p.m. and off duty at 5:27 p.m. According to Reimund's unit history report, he harvested the deer while on duty. NOTE: ODNR could not locate Reimund's harvest report.

HOLMES COUNTY

Jeremy Carter claimed nine hours of regular pay for January 12, 2010. Carter harvested a deer at 4:30 p.m. in Holmes County and checked the deer in at 4:30 p.m. Carter's unit history log shows he signed on duty at 9:49 a.m. and off duty at 5:29 p.m. Carter's unit log only accounts for 7.67 hours. However, within the period of time for which records were provided, Carter harvested and checked in the deer while on state time. NOTE: ODNR provided the Office of the Ohio Inspector General with a harvest report of a different individual, but citing the same metal tag number as reported by Carter.

MERCER COUNTY

Ryan Garrison claimed eight hours regular pay for November 9, 2009. Garrison harvested a deer at 10:45 a.m. in Mercer County and checked the deer in at 1:00 p.m. Garrison's unit history log and AVL⁶ records both show he signed on duty at 3:12 p.m. and off duty at 6:45 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 3.55 hours. Assuming Garrison

⁶ AVL—An Automatic Vehicle Locator is a GPS function that tracks the vehicle location, speed, direction, and altitude.

worked eight hours continuously until 6:45 p.m., he would have begun working at 10:45 a.m., and would have harvested and checked in the deer while on duty.

SANDUSKY COUNTY

Brian Bury claimed 10 hours regular pay for January 24, 2011, and claimed nine hours of regular pay for January 25, 2011. Bury harvested a deer on January 24, 2011, at 5:35 p.m. in Sandusky County and checked the deer in at 6:00 p.m. on January 25, 2011. Bury's unit history log shows that on January 24, Bury signed on duty at 9:44 a.m. and off duty at 3:21 p.m.; on duty again at 7:30 p.m. and off for the day at 9:09 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 7.5 hours. Assuming Bury worked 10 hours continuously beginning at 9:44 a.m., he would have worked until 7:44 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty.

Bury's unit history log for January 25, 2011, shows he signed on duty at 10:26 a.m. and off duty at 6:05 p.m. According to Bury's unit history log, he checked in the deer while on duty. Furthermore, the total activity substantiated by unit history logs for January 25 is 7.65 hours, leaving 1.35 hours of unaccounted time.

STARK COUNTY

Brett Barnes claimed nine hours regular pay for January 9, 2011. Barnes harvested a deer at 5:00 p.m. in Stark County and checked the deer in at 10:51 a.m. on January 10, 2011. Barnes' unit history log for January 9 shows he signed on duty at 8:50 a.m. and off duty at 4:29 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit history log is 7.65 hours. Assuming Barnes worked nine hours continuously, he would have worked until 5:50 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty. Barnes claimed no hours on January 10, 2011.

VINTON COUNTY

Travis Abele claimed 12 hours regular pay for November 3, 2009. Abele harvested a deer at 6:00 p.m. on November 3 in Vinton County and checked the deer in at 7:30 p.m. on November 4. Abele's unit history log shows he signed on duty at 10:57 a.m.; signed off at 7:43 p.m.; signed back on duty at 9:18 p.m., and then off duty at 9:58 p.m. on November 3. On November 4,

Abele claimed eight hours regular pay. However, no sign-in or sign-out logs were available. Therefore, it is not possible to determine whether Abele checked his deer during work hours. Abele's unit history log shows that he harvested the deer during work hours. NOTE: ODNR could not locate Abele's harvest report.

WYANDOT COUNTY

Brad Baaske claimed eight hours regular pay for November 15, 2010. Baaske harvested a deer at 5:35 p.m. in Wyandot County and checked the deer in at 11:30 a.m. on November 16, 2010. Baaske's unit history log for November 15 shows Baaske signed on duty at 2:28 a.m. and off duty at 3:16 a.m.; then back on duty again at 11:10 a.m. and off duty at 4:15 p.m. The total number of hours accounted for in the unit log is 5.88 hours. Assuming Baaske worked eight hours continuously from 11:10 a.m. on, he would have worked until 6:22 p.m. and would have harvested the deer while on duty.

Baaske claimed eight hours of regular pay on November 16, 2010. Baaske's unit log for November 16 shows that he signed on duty at 2:05 p.m. and off duty at 10:44 p.m., totaling 8.65 hours of unit activity. As Baaske checked his deer at 11:30 a.m., he did not check his deer while on duty.

CONCLUSION

Federal and state laws and the Ohio Department of Administrative Services require state agencies to record employees starting and ending times for each day worked. To comply with these federal and state laws, as well as to ensure officer safety and accountability, ODNR requires all law enforcement officers mark on duty at the beginning of their shift, mark off duty at the end of their shift, and to give hourly status updates through their mobile data computer or radio.

Comparing the Ohio Division of Wildlife deer harvest records to the wildlife officers who harvested deer on a day they claimed working hours reveals 11 employees clearly harvested deer during their on-duty hours. Also, 12 employees harvested deer during their on-duty hours, if

they worked the number of hours they claimed.⁷ The total number of deer harvesting instances would be 23.

This second group did not follow the ODNR communication policy. Of the initial 26 employees identified, 25 of them claimed hours that did not match the number of on-duty hours recorded by the communication center. No one in the Ohio Division of Wildlife compares or audits the hours wildlife officers claim against the hours recorded through the communication center. Wildlife officers are home based and do not have a report-in location. The recording of their start, end, and hourly status through the communication center is the only record the Division of Wildlife has to comply with federal and state law. This lack of accountability and supervision along with the failure of wildlife officers' compliance with the communication policy is also an officer safety issue.

Accordingly, the Office of the Ohio Inspector General finds reasonable cause to believe wrongful acts or omissions occurred in these instances.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Office of the Ohio Inspector General makes the following recommendations and asks the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to respond within 60 days with a plan detailing how the recommendations will be implemented. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources should:

1. Review the actions of all employees involved to determine whether their conduct warrants further administrative action or training.
2. Review the Ohio Department of Administrative Services' time and attendance policy, ODNR communication policy, and state of Ohio ethics laws with all personnel.

⁷ Three wildlife officers had multiple harvests. This list of wildlife officers harvested deer in 18 different counties. One wildlife officer harvested deer in two different counties.

3. Require supervisors audit work hours claimed by wildlife officers to assure accuracy and compliance with laws and policy.

REFERRALS

The Office of the Ohio Inspector General will forward this report of investigation for consideration to each of the 18 prosecuting attorneys for the counties named in this report.

[\(Click here for Exhibits 1 – 2 combined\)](#)



STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

RANDALL J. MEYER, INSPECTOR GENERAL

NAME OF REPORT: Ohio Department of Natural Resources

FILE ID #: 2012-CA00061

KEEPER OF RECORDS CERTIFICATION

This is a true and correct copy of the report which is required to be prepared by the Office of the Ohio Inspector General pursuant to Section 121.42 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Jill Jones
KEEPER OF RECORDS

CERTIFIED
December 13, 2013

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