



Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Kevin Donnellan
Acting Director

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

100 NORTH FIFTEENTH AVENUE • SUITE 261
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

(602) 542-5482

FINAL REPORT ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE INQUIRY

May 12, 2015

BACKGROUND

On April 30, 2015 the Arizona Game and Fish Department Human Resources Branch Chief, Diana Shaffer requested that the Arizona Department of Administration, Human Resources Division, conduct an administrative inquiry into allegations made by Game and Fish employees at the Clay Target Center involving supervisory staff. A variety of allegations were made related to the leadership and misconduct of Dan Twitchell, Clay Target Center Manager, and Mark Platt, Range Master.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A pattern of poor leadership practices, abuse of authority, lack of procedures related to administrative and financial tracking and cash handling, favoritism, inappropriate and unprofessional behavior and communications between Mr. Twitchell and his staff and a lack of judgment in speaking about staff in front of customers by Mr. Twitchell was corroborated. Mr. Platt's threatening and abusive comments towards both male and female staff were also corroborated. Additional findings not originally presented as part of this investigation have been added based on in-person interviews with ten staff from the Center.

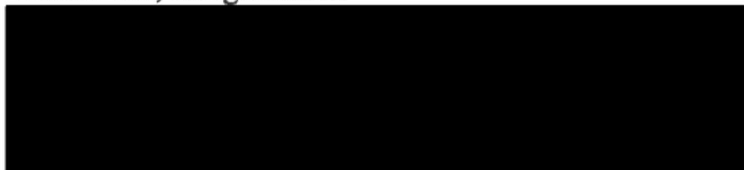
WITNESSES

The following Game and Fish staff was interviewed as part of this inquiry:

Dan Twitchell, Clay Target Center Manager



Mark Platt, Range Master



ALLEGATIONS AND FINDINGS

1. Allegation:

Non-exempt staff is not taking lunch breaks.

Findings:

Numerous staff indicated that, particularly during the winter months, a fixed lunch break is not available. Staff indicated that they were required to "eat while working" or driving around the facility, saying a sit-down lunch period was "rare." Mr. Twitchell indicated he expected staff to take lunch during "down time," whenever that may occur. He also stated sometimes a group will eat lunch together. When questioned about overtime, no staff indicated they were required to report in early and not record their hours, although that was apparently problematic in the past. Compensatory time is given as required, or overtime is approved. One witness indicated that his timesheet had been altered by Dan but that incident was two years ago and it had not happened since.

2. Allegation:

An area called the "Tiki Bar" is set up outside the trailer of a part-time, seasonal worker by the name of [REDACTED] and certain staff gathers there to drink after work.

Findings:

Numerous witnesses, including Mr. Platt and Mr. Twitchell, knew what I was referring to when I asked them if they were aware of what the "Tiki Bar" was. Three witnesses indicated that they did not go to the location after work but that the "A Team," "in group," or "Giggle Crew," meaning "Dan, Mark, [REDACTED]" did. An additional witness stated that this group is like a "high school clique" that the rest of the staff is left out of. Mr. Platt indicated that Tiki Bar gatherings only occurred about once a month, or after large events. Mr. Twitchell stated that he did go to this location on occasion after work hours and also goes to customer's RV's after work periodically for a beer in the interest of relationship building. A witness sent a picture of the location which is part of this investigation file. Two witnesses stated that [REDACTED] sleeps in the Game and Fish trailer after drinking and brings his niece and nephew out to the trailer on the weekends to stay, although this practice was not pursued with other witnesses.

3. Allegation:

Mr. Twitchell asks staff to double book RV spaces that are currently rented when customers leave the property for a weekend or short-term absence.

Findings:

Three customer service personnel and a Range Master indicated that they had been asked by Mr. Twitchell to contact customers who had rented spaces for a longer-term contract, such as a month or for winter season, to determine when the customer was coming back so they could re-rent the space when the customer left for more than a few days. Staff reported feeling very uncomfortable about this. One witness stated that a customer asked her if he would be getting a refund if they rented the space out when he was gone. Another witness felt so uncomfortable, but feared for her job, so she lied to Mr. Twitchell and said she could not get a hold of the customers. "After we called some customers and got yelled at we stopped," she added. When one of the CSR's spoke to her supervisor about the situation, she said she was told by Mr.

Twitchell, "You need to understand who the real boss around here is," referring to himself. Mr. Twitchell freely admitted that double booking RV spaces is a "good business practice" because his job is to bring revenue into the Center. He added, however, that he primarily does it when customers tell him they are going to be gone and it's ok to rent their space out in their absence, although this contradicted other witness statements. Mr. Twitchell, when asked if there was a policy related to this practice, stated, "I believe policy is doing the right thing at the right time – I'm very flexible."

4. Allegation:

Certain employees are allowed to bring their dogs to work.

Findings:

Apparently this practice was pervasive in the past but has stopped since a directive was issued from Game and Fish headquarters. One exception, noted by multiple witnesses, occurred several weeks ago, after the headquarters directive was issued, that [REDACTED] dogs were in the Pavilion office; a picture of the dog in the building is submitted with this report and was provided following the interviews via email by one of the witnesses, although it is not dated. Two witnesses also stated that Mr. Twitchell was overheard laughing and saying that same day, "Oh by the way – [REDACTED] mother adopted these dogs – they're not hers," since customers are allowed to bring their dogs into the office and [REDACTED] mother is a customer. Staff believed this was in direct defiance of the headquarters directive. When questioned about this incident, Mr. Twitchell stated he could not recall if it occurred or not. Additional witnesses indicated that in the past they had brought their dogs in to work and were told they could not, but [REDACTED] was allowed to. They also stated they were required to clean up the feces her dogs made both inside and outside on numerous occasions. Another witness said that when "Marty's memo (regarding not bringing dogs to work) was received Dan read it out loud in front of a few staff and made fun of it."

5. Allegation:

Mr. Twitchell became angry with [REDACTED] in the office over the tracking of RV spaces. Mr. Twitchell kicked a metal desk and slammed a laptop computer top down within the earshot of customers.

Findings:

Two witnesses directly observed this incident which occurred on or about March 7, 2015. Mr. Twitchell and [REDACTED] allegedly started arguing over RV space tracking when Mr. Twitchell became very agitated and kicked a metal desk, slammed the top of the computer down, and walked out of the building. One witness described it as very "weird – more like a domestic violence type of incident between the two." She stated Mr. Twitchell kept saying to [REDACTED] "You *will* listen to me." Another witness stated that customers were in the adjacent area and "became totally quiet" when the incident unfolded, as if trying to hear what was going on. A witness described a large boot mark on the desk after Mr. Twitchell kicked it that he cleaned off. When Mr. Twitchell was asked if he ever became angry in the workplace he responded, "Everyone becomes angry." [REDACTED] had difficulty recalling the incident but did finally say that she remembered him "raising his voice that day and his foot tapped the desk" as he was exiting the building.

6. Allegation:

Manager Dan Twitchell talks negatively about staff and leadership in front of customers.

Findings:

Numerous witnesses corroborated that Mr. Twitchell speaks negatively about certain staff in front of other staff or in front of customers. One Range Master stated that a customer asked him, "Why does Dan rip on you guys like that?" after hearing negative comments from Mr. Twitchell. A CSR stated she heard Mr. Twitchell yelling at one of the staff, "Shut up – it doesn't matter." Numerous staff characterized Mr. Twitchell as a manager who "likes to throw his authority around." Others stated, "It's Dan's way or the highway." Another indicated, "Dan is a loose cannon. He thinks he's invincible. He brags about the 'idiots in the big house,' referring to headquarters management, that either they are doing things his way or he's leaving." Other employees described the culture of the workplace as "wrapped around Dan, [REDACTED] and Mark." "It feels like a school rivalry," stated one new staff member, and a supervisor added, "This range is Dan's kingdom and fiefdom. If something isn't done I'm leaving – I've seen too many good people leave over him." Mr. Twitchell denied talking about staff in front of others and added, "If it's pure insubordination, I take them inside." One Range Master alleged that Mr. Platt told him, "Dan is the boss around here and if you're not careful you could end up in the desert." Numerous witnesses said they kept quiet over the years regarding Mr. Twitchell's behavior because they were scared of retribution or losing their job.

7. Allegation:

[REDACTED]

Findings:

[REDACTED]

8. Allegation:

Staff has worked on [REDACTED] personal vehicle at the Center with State tools and on company time.

Findings:

One of the witnesses provided undated photos (see attached) that he states are of [REDACTED] vehicle, showing staff working on it with company tools in the outbuilding at the Center. That same witness stated that on or about March 20th, 2015 Mr. Twitchell allowed employees to drop off/pick up [REDACTED] car from a tire shop for repair, which occurred while the employees were on the clock. This witness overheard Mr. Twitchell speaking with Fletcher's Tire Shop and paying for the new tire over the phone. This was corroborated by another witness.

9. Allegation:

Mark Platt speaks in a threatening and demeaning way to staff.

Findings:

Numerous witnesses corroborated this allegation noting, however, that "Mark has been an angel since Dan [REDACTED]" One witness stated, "Mark Platt is very, very mean to [REDACTED] He threatened to 'cut her hands off' if she didn't open the boxes of ammunition right," which was corroborated by another witness, who said the incident occurred in February 2015. A supervisor said she has "to keep telling Mark to be nice" in the workplace. This same witness has observed Mr. Platt yelling at another female staff member until she started crying. Another witness stated he has heard Mr. Platt say very violent things about shooters and staff. This witness stated that Mr. Platt told him to, "Just say 'yes, sir' to Dan" about anything." Mr. Platt was unable to maintain eye contact with the investigator throughout his interview. He entered the interview room and said over and over, "I don't know what this about" and got out a tape recorder. The investigator asked him not to tape record the interview. Mr. Platt objected but when the investigator told him this would be a policy violation and he could leave and talk with Ms. Diana Shaffer, Human Resources Branch Chief for Game and Fish, he complied and turned the recorder off.

One of the other Range Masters stated he had observed an incident where he said he saw Mr. Platt go up to a shooter and poke his finger into his chest and yell at him, kicking him off the grounds. The witness stated he heard the customer yell back, "Don't touch me." Mr. Platt recalls the incident and stated he never touched the customer but merely pointed his finger at him. He stated he then did ask the customer to leave because he was being inappropriate and antagonistic.

10. Allegation:

Money bags come up short from time to time. Money is used from the coffee fund that customers contribute to when money bags are short.

Findings:

The Customer Service Representative Supervisor stated that in March 2015 she went to the bank towards the end of a shift. When she returned she gave one of the CSR's \$100 to verify and place in the safe. The \$100 came up missing and no one ever found out where the funds went. Mr. Twitchell accused [REDACTED] of taking it, and then the supervisor heard him tell another staff member that [REDACTED] took it. Mr. Twitchell denied ever taking money from the coffee fund but stated he believes [REDACTED] is doing a very poor job of cash management and that he has heard of this happening in the past. He also stated [REDACTED] goes to headquarters for assistance instead of to him, which he does not like.

Allegation:

Dan Twitchell alleged that [REDACTED] "is a dictator."

Findings:

Mr. Twitchell indicated early on in his interview that he believed [REDACTED] was a "dictator." He also stated, "I hate it when someone tells me how to do my job." Mr. Twitchell produced an email from [REDACTED] dated March 3, 2015. In the email [REDACTED] gave comments that he wished to have added to [REDACTED] performance appraisal since [REDACTED] is the up line manager to [REDACTED]. The investigator shared with Mr. Twitchell that providing input

into the performance appraisal of a two-down staff member is a part of the MAP process. Mr. Twitchell then produced documentation emails he had written to his own staff giving directives. One of the emails, written on March 26, 2015 to [REDACTED] ended with the statement, "Until I am no longer the Manager here I expect all of my wishes and instructions to be followed." Another email he voluntarily produced, written to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] ended with, "I know we haven't worked together much but you will find that when I give you or your staff a directive I expect it to be done." Other witnesses brought up numerous complaints, some recorded earlier in this report, about Mr. Twitchell saying disparaging remarks about his manager and management in general at the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Additional Allegations:

- One of the Range Masters submitted a photograph of Mr. Platt loading what looked to be ammunition into a truck. The Range Master said he believed this was ammunition that Mr. Platt was selling on his own to customers of the Center at a reduced cost from what the customer could purchase it from Game and Fish. This allegation was not substantiated. However, Mr. Platt became very nervous when questioned about this and spent an inordinate amount of time telling the investigator about the connections he had with ammunition suppliers around the country and how he used to work in this field.
- Noted by one staff member was that "housekeeping around the Center is lacking. Dan is a collector. Tools come up missing. It is dangerous out there due to the volume of items lying around."
- An allegation regarding Mr. Twitchell calling the construction contractors "hacks" and "wood butchers," causing them to complain to their superior, was discussed. The witness stated he was pulled aside in front of the contractors by Mr. Twitchell and asked, "Do you see this crap work?" The witness stated that later on that day the contractor approached him and said he had reported Mr. Twitchell's unprofessional behavior to his supervisor. This investigator believes that this issue has already been handled separately by Game and Fish leadership, per the witness.

Prepared by:
Jan M. Plank
Human Resources Manager III
ADOA – Human Resources Division
May 12, 2015