

INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES

REPORT REF No S.016.19

(February 2019)

**Loch Lomond and The Trossachs
National Park Authority
Ranger Deployment 2018 Season
Audit Report**

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Personnel referred to in this report :

Jaki Carnegie: Director of Corporate Services (Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority)

Simon Jones: Director of Conservation and Visitor Operation (Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority)

Leigh Hamilton: Ranger Service Manager (on secondment) (Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority)

Auditor: Lutfun Rahman: Internal Auditor (West Dunbartonshire Council)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General

An audit was conducted on Ranger Deployment and we are pleased to report that the systems examined are generally working effectively.

The review highlighted that opportunities exist to strengthen internal controls and enhance the service provided, as listed below;

- The audit highlighted that all duty Ranger Team Leaders (RTLs) use a separate generic Windows log in and password details which have been created specifically for rangers' deployment and shift cover. This log in details is shared with the seasonal RTLs who are hired for one season. The log in details was created in 2017 and has not been changed since then. This poses a risk of unauthorised access to the IT systems and deployment information.

The audit also highlighted areas of good practice as follows:

- There is a robust deployment model in place that helps the Ranger Service Manager (RSM) and RTLs to carry out their day to day overall rangers' deployment and enforce the byelaws requirements;
- There is a number of policy and procedures documents in place indicating effective governance;
- The Rota spreadsheet has been updated over the last few years to take into account of the changes in the work pattern, shift changes and the requirements of the camping management byelaws;
- Extensive training is provided to RSM, RTLs, rangers, seasonal rangers and bank rangers.

Full details of these opportunities and any other points that arose during the audit are included in the Action Plan, which forms Section 3 of this report.

2. MAIN REPORT

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 An audit was carried out on Ranger Deployment as part of the Internal Audit's Planned Programme of Audits for 2018/19.

2.2 Scope and Objectives

2.2.1 The audit launch meeting was held by the Auditor with Jaki Carnegie, Simon Jones, Leigh Hamilton to agree the scope and objectives of the audit.

2.2.2 In relation to the Ranger Deployment audit the following areas were included within the scope:

- Review policies and procedures;
- Review and discuss the Rota shift pattern; and
- Review post busy season deployment review.

2.2.3 The detailed work undertaken as part of the Ranger Deployment audit included:

- Review the operational deployment ranger service briefing notes, duty Ranger Team Leader (RTL) manual, and deployment prioritisation matrix.
- Review the Excel spreadsheet for the Rota, discuss the preparation of the Rota, changes made to it, security around the Rota spreadsheet such as shared login, password, back-ups, integrity of the spreadsheet and the budget associated with the Rota.
- Ascertain training arrangements for the Rangers and review ranger training plan 2019, induction training documents, conflict and resolution training slides.
- Review post busy season deployment review 2018 document that details the assessment of lesson learned going forward.
- Various discussions with the RSM and RTLs as appropriate were held.

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2.3 Findings

- 2.3.1 The findings are based upon evidence obtained from sampling/substantive testing.
- 2.3.2 The audit was conducted in conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).
- 2.3.3 This report details all points arising during the audit review, full details of which are included in the Action plan contained within Section 3 of this report. We stress that these are the points arising via the planned programme of work and are not necessarily all of the issues that may exist.
- 2.3.4 The factual accuracy of this report has been verified by the officers involved in the audit.
- 2.3.5 March 2017 was the start of the camping management byelaws being in operation covering 41 permit areas over 700 sq. kilometres lands across the National Park (NP) geographical area. To enforce the requirements of the byelaws effectively there are 20 permanent rangers including four RTLs and one RSM. However, for the busy period seasonal rangers and bank staff are employed.
- 2.3.6 The main season runs from 1 March to 30 September each year when seasonal rangers and bank rangers are employed to ensure there is adequate cover to deal with the demands of the busy season. There are various policies and procedures in place to support RTLs and rangers to effectively plan the deployment of rangers. The Deployment Matrix is used by the duty RTL to make informed decision when deploying rangers to incidents or reports. It covers the four Camping management zones and permit sites and a traffic light system highlight the priorities along with the key considerations for undertaking the deployment.
- 2.3.7 The Deployment Model is reviewed each year and defines the number of rangers to be deployed at any given time for patrolling during the shift period which enables Rota planning. The Rota has been prepared using an Excel spreadsheet, and since the first preparation of the Rota, it has been modified and updated in the last few years. Scheduling of Rangers is done as part of the Rota, but budget for the seasonal and bank rangers dictates how the shift and number of hours are worked. At the same time the requirements of the byelaws makes the scheduling very challenging as all four camping management zones are to be covered along with the private land where campers are allowed to camp in Scotland. The seasonal rangers are on contracts with various different hours and bank rangers are on a zero hours contract.
- 2.3.8 Over the last few years the Rota spreadsheet has been adjusted with updated working patterns and shifts to accommodate the requirements of the byelaws and budget pressures. The current working shift pattern from 1 April to 30 September is 7days/3days/7days/3days and 2 days off in between this shift pattern. From 1 October to 31 March the work shift pattern is 3days/5days/7days and 2 days off in between this shift pattern. The rangers work 7.4 hours a day in one of the shifts. The Rota for the season 2018 is

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recorded in a very large spreadsheet with both weeks and months of scheduling to plan and RTLs have to spend a large proportion of their working hours examining, updating and reviewing the Rota to schedule these shifts so as to ensure adequate cover within the budget. The spreadsheet contains three different worksheet tabs – Budget, Rota and Contracts which gives the RSM the ability to oversee and manage the entire seasonal budget. The third tab (Contracts) allows the breakdown of when current and previous budget starts and ends. The byelaw requirements begin in March and so there is a cross over for two financial years. As the Rota tab contains a large volume of data, scheduling rangers, it would be more users friendly if some of the financial analysis is moved into a new tab or into the budget tab, see recommendation in the Action Plan.

- 2.3.9 The NP has consulted other national parks both in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK in an effort to make scheduling easier. However, no other parks have to plan and schedule in the same level of depth because of NP's enforcement of byelaws requirements being different and also NP requires cover during the weekend as well as weekdays. Internal Audit (IA) has discussed this issue with the RSM and RTLs and suggested that various option appraisals could be carried out, one of these being to consult with Police Scotland as their system would be similar in terms of law enforcement, shift working, scheduling, and weekend working. IA suggests that considering Rota Software may be an alternative option. IA has also advised that WDC's Homecare uses a system that does scheduling for the shift working of home carers amongst various other things. In determining scheduling of work, the WDC Homecare system takes into account various variables including, where a home carer lives, their level of experience and whether the employee drives or not before allocating the carer to a client. A similar system appraisal may be an option going forward in order to have a more effective scheduling system.
- 2.3.10 The Rota is saved in the NP's shared drive area and can be viewed by the whole organisation. The read and write access to the spreadsheet is set by the NP's IT function and only the 4 RTLs and the RSM can make changes to the Rota. Seasonal RTL also get access to make changes to the Rota too. The Rota is backed up by IT every night. When any significant changes are made to the Rota by the RTL, the new version is saved and the old version is archived.
- 2.3.11 The audit highlighted that all duty RTLs use a separate generic Windows log in and password details which have been created specifically for rangers' deployment and shift cover. This log in detail is shared with the seasonal RTLs who are hired for one season. The logs in details were created in 2017 and have not been changed since then. This poses a risk of unauthorised access to the IT systems and deployment information. The password for this log in must be changed immediately, also after each season is finished as the seasonal RTL is employed for only one season, see the recommendation in the Action Plan.
- 2.3.12 The audit established that there is suitable training in place for the RSM, RTLs and rangers. They go through various in house training sessions such as

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Conflict & Resolution, Notebook Training, Scenario and the Refresher Training every year. They also have received specific training on the Camping Management Byelaws.

- 2.3.13 A post season Deployment Review for the 2018 season is being carried out. The document is at draft stage and has a detailed analysis of challenges faced in geographical areas deployment, support provided by both permanent and seasonal staff and challenges faced during the recruiting process and various other issues are also discussed in this document. The document is to be submitted to NP management for approval in the near future.
- 2.3.14 The Auditor would like to thank all staff involved in the audit process for their time and assistance.

3. Action Plan: Ranger Deployment S.016.19						
Ref. No.	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comment	Manager Responsible	Date to be Completed
1.	<p><u>Duty RTLs Deployment Log in and Password</u></p> <p>The audit highlighted that all duty Ranger Team Leaders (RTLs) use a separate generic Windows log in and password details which have been created specifically for rangers' deployment and shift cover. This log in details is shared with the seasonal RTLs who are hired for one season. The log in details was created in 2017 and has not been changed since then. This poses a risk of unauthorised access to the IT systems and deployment information.</p>	<p>It is recommended that the password for this log in is changed immediately and also after each season is finished as the seasonal RTL's are employed for only one season.</p>	Medium Risk	<p>The Ranger Service Manager will change the password immediately and will review the solutions available with the ICT team in relation to logins, e-mail management and phone call management for Ranger Team Leaders.</p>	Ranger Service Manager	<p>15 February 2019 for password change and 30 April 2019 for the longer-term solution</p>
2.	<p><u>Rota Spread sheet</u></p> <p>The Rota spreadsheet 2018 contains three different worksheets – Budget, Rota and Contracts which gives the management the ability to oversee and manage the entire seasonal budget. The third tab allows the breakdown of when current and previous budget starts and ends. As the Rota tab contains a large volume of data, for scheduling rangers, it would be more user friendly if some of the financial analysis is moved into a new tab or in the budget tab</p>	<p>It is recommended that the financial analysis information in the Rota tab in the spreadsheet is moved into a fourth tab to make the information more users friendly.</p>	Low Risk	<p>Agreed if necessary, however the Rota spreadsheet for the 2019 season does not contain this section, therefore this action may not be required. If this information is required, in future then it will be set up on a separate tab.</p>	Ranger Service Manager	<p>30 June 2019</p>

Appendix 1. Priority Levels

Recommendations have timescales for completion in line with the following priorities.

Priority	Expected Implementation Timescale
<u>High Risk:</u> Material observations requiring immediate action. These require to be added to the risk register of a service. (Council context)	Generally, implementation of recommendations should start immediately and be fully completed within three months of action plan being agreed.
<u>Medium Risk:</u> Significant observations requiring reasonably urgent action.	Generally, complete implementation of recommendations within six months of action plan being agreed.
<u>Low Risk:</u> Minor observations which require action to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of operations or which otherwise require to be brought to the attention of senior management.	Generally, complete implementation of recommendations within twelve months of action plan being agreed.

Note: About this report

This Report has been prepared on the basis set out in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the National Park Authority as the Client and West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) as the provider of Internal Audit services. Nothing in this report constitutes a valuation or legal advice. We have not verified the reliability or accuracy of any information obtained in the course of our work, other than in the limited circumstances set out in the MOU. This Report has been prepared for the benefit of the Client only. This Report has not been designed to be of benefit to anyone except the Client. In preparing this Report we have not taken into account the interests, needs or circumstances of anyone apart from the Client, even though we may have been aware that others might read this Report. This Report is not suitable to be relied on by any party wishing to acquire rights against WDC, other than the Client for any purpose or in any context. Any party other than the Client that obtains access to this Report or a copy (under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 through the Client's Publication Scheme or otherwise) and chooses to rely on this Report (or any part of it) does so at its own risk. To the fullest extent permitted by law, WDC does not assume any responsibility and will not accept any liability in respect of this Report to any party other than the Client. In particular, and without limiting the general statement above, since we have prepared this Report for the benefit of the Client alone, this Report has not been prepared for the benefit of any other public sector body nor for any other person or organisation who might have an interest in the matters discussed in this Report, including for example those who work in the public sector or those who provide goods or services to those who operate in the public sector.