

SAN DIEGO COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

CHARTER FOR THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR

Purpose and Mission

The purpose of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority's (Authority) Office of the Chief Auditor is to provide independent objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the Authority's operations. The Mission of the Office of the Chief Auditor is to enhance and protect organizational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice, and insight. The Office of the Chief Auditor helps the Authority accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and control processes.

Authority

The Chief Auditor shall be accountable to the Board of Directors (hereinafter "the Board") under Public Utilities Code §170026, and pursuant to the Chief Auditor's employment agreement.

The Chief Auditor will report directly to the Board through the Audit Committee.

To establish, maintain, and assure that the Office of the Chief Auditor has sufficient authority to fulfill its duties, the Audit Committee will:

- Review, and forward to the Board for approval, the Office of the Chief Auditor Charter.
- Review, and forward to the Board for approval, the risk-based Internal Audit Plan.
- Review, and forward to the Board for approval, the Office of the Chief Auditor's budget and resource plan.
- Receive communication from the Chief Auditor on the Office of the Chief Auditor's performance relative to its Audit Plan and other matters.
- Provide recommendations to the Board regarding the appointment and removal of the Chief Auditor.
- Make appropriate inquiries of Authority management and the Chief Auditor to determine whether there is inappropriate or scope limitations pertaining to the Chief Auditor's Office.

The Chief Auditor will have unrestricted access to, and communicate and interact directly with the Audit Committee, including private meetings without management present.

The Audit Committee authorizes the Office of the Chief Auditor to:

- Have full, free, and unrestricted access to all functions, records, property, and personnel pertinent to carrying out any engagement except for legally privileged and/or legally confidential information. All contracts with outside contractors and subcontractors shall provide for auditor access to all relevant personnel, financial and performance-related records, property, and equipment where Authority funds were expended or Authority facilities were used.
- Allocate resources, set frequencies, select subjects, determine scopes of work, apply techniques required to accomplish audit objectives, and issue reports.
- Obtain assistance from the necessary personnel of the Authority, as well as other specialized services from within or outside the Authority, in order to complete the audit engagement, subject to budget limitations and the contracting policies of the Authority. A contractor performing an audit should have no financial or other interests in the affairs of the Authority, any member of the Board, or its officers.

Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing

The Office of the Chief Auditor will govern itself by adherence to the mandatory elements of The Institute of Internal Auditors' International Professional Practices Framework, including the Core Principles for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, the Code of Ethics, the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*, and the Definition of Internal Auditing. The Chief Auditor will report periodically to the Authority's Audit Committee and executive management regarding the Office of the Chief Auditor's conformance to the Code of Ethics and the *Standards*.

Independence of the Chief Auditor

The Chief Auditor will ensure that the Office of the Chief Auditor remains free from all conditions that threaten the ability of internal auditors to carry out their responsibilities in an unbiased manner, including matters of audit selection, scope, procedures, frequency, timing, and report content. If the Chief Auditor determines that independence or objectivity may be impaired, in fact or appearance, the details of the impairment will be disclosed to appropriate parties.

Internal Auditors will maintain an unbiased mental attitude that allows them to perform engagements objectivity, and in such a manner that they believe in their work product, that no quality compromises are made, and that they do not subordinate their judgement matters to others.

The Office of the Chief Auditor will have no direct operational responsibility or authority over any of the activities audited. Accordingly, the Office of the Chief Auditor will not implement internal controls, develop procedures, install systems, prepare records, or engage in any other activity that may impair an auditor's judgement, including:

- Assessing specific operations for which they had responsibility within the previous year.
- Performing any operational duties.
- Initiating or approving transaction(s) external to the Office of the Chief Auditor.
- Directing the activities of any Authority employee not employed by the Office of the Chief Auditor, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to auditing teams or to otherwise assist internal auditors.

Where the Office of the Chief Auditor has or is expected to have roles and/or responsibilities that fall outside of internal auditing, safeguards will be established to limit impairments to independence or objectivity. Internal Auditors will:

- Disclose any impairment of independence or objectivity, in fact or appearance, to appropriate parties.
- Exhibit professional objectivity in gathering, evaluating, and communicating information about the activity or process being examined.
- Make balanced assessments of all available and relevant facts and circumstances.
- Take necessary precautions to avoid being unduly influenced by their own interests or by others in forming judgements.

The Chief Auditor will confirm to the Audit Committee, at least annually, the organizational independence of the Office of the Chief Auditor.

The Chief Auditor will disclose to the Audit Committee any interference and related implications in determining the scope of internal auditing, performing work, and/or communicating results.

Scope of Internal Audit Activities

The scope of internal audit activities encompasses, but is not limited to, objective examinations of evidence for the purpose of providing independent assessments to the Audit Committee, management, and outside parties on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management, and control processes for the Authority. Internal audit assessments include evaluating whether:

CHARTER FOR THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR

- Risks relating to the achievement of the Authority's strategic objectives are appropriately identified and managed.
- The actions of the Authority's officers, directors, employees and contractors are in compliance with Authority policies, procedures and applicable laws, regulations, and governance standards.
- The results of operations or programs are consistent with established goals and objectives.
- Operations or programs are being carried out effectively and efficiently.
- Established processes and systems enable compliance with the policies, procedures, laws, and regulations that could significantly impact the Authority.
- Information and the means used to identify, measure, analyze, classify, and report such information are reliable and have credibility.
- Resources and assets are acquired economically, used efficiently, and protected adequately.

The Chief Auditor will report periodically to the Audit Committee and Authority executive management regarding:

- The Office of the Chief Auditor's purpose, authority, and responsibility.
- The Office of the Chief Auditor's Audit Plan and performance relative to its Audit Plan.
- The Office of the Chief Auditor's conformance with the Institute of Internal Auditor's Code of Ethics and *Standards*, and action plans to address any significant conformance issues.
- Significant risk exposures and control issues, including fraud risks, governance issues, and other matters requiring the attention of, or requested by, the Audit Committee.
- Results of audits, consulting services, or other activities.
- Resource requirements.
- Any response to risk by management that may be unacceptable by the Authority.

The Chief Auditor also coordinates activities, where possible, and considers relying upon the work of other internal and external assurance and consulting service providers as needed.

The Chief Auditor will assist the Audit Committee to ensure its responsibilities listed in the Charter of the Audit Committee are met.

The Office of the Chief Auditor may perform advisory and related client service activities, the nature and scope of which will be agreed with the client, provided the Office of the Chief Auditor does not assume management responsibility.

Opportunities for improving the efficiency of governance, risk management, and control processes may be identified during audits or consulting engagements. These opportunities will be communicated to the appropriate level of management.

Responsibility

The Chief Auditor has the responsibility to:

- Submit, at least annually, a risk-based internal Audit Plan for review to Authority executive management. The risk-based internal Audit Plan will also be submitted to the Audit Committee for review and forwarded to the Board for approval.
- Communicate to the Audit Committee and Authority executive management the impact of resource limitations on the Audit Plan, if applicable.
- Communicate any fraud or illegal acts that the Chief Auditor becomes aware of that could affect the Authority. The process for a confidential, anonymous submission of complaints including, but not limited to, fraud, accounting, auditing, ethics, and code of conduct matters shall be carried out through the Office of the Chief Auditor.
- Review and adjust the nature of the internal Audit Plan, as necessary, in response to changes in the Authority's business risks, operations, programs, systems, and controls.
- The Audit Plan may be adjusted to accommodate for special requests by the Audit Committee or Authority management.
- Changes to the Audit Plan will occur after consultation with the Chair of the Audit Committee. Changes to the Audit Plan will be presented to the Audit Committee for review and forwarded to the Board for approval.
- Communicate to the Audit Committee and Authority executive management any significant interim changes to the Audit Plan.
- Ensure that each engagement contained in the Audit Plan is executed, including the establishment of objectives and scope, the assignment of appropriate and adequately supervised resources, the documentation of work programs and testing results, and the communication of recommendation(s) to appropriate parties.
- Follow up on audit engagement findings and the corrective actions taken, and report periodically to the Audit Committee and Authority executive management any corrective actions not effectively implemented.

CHARTER FOR THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR

- Ensure the principles of integrity, objectivity, confidentiality, and competency are applied and upheld.
- Ensure that the Office of the Chief Auditor collectively possesses or obtains the knowledge, skills, and other competencies needed to meet the requirements in the Charter for the Office of the Chief Auditor.
- Ensure trends and emerging issues that could impact the Authority are considered and communicated to the Audit Committee and Authority executive management as appropriate.
- Ensure emerging trends and successful practices in internal auditing are considered.
- Establish and ensure adherence to the Office of the Chief Auditor's Policies and Procedures / Office Manual designed to guide the Office of the Chief Auditor.
- Ensure adherence to the Authority's relevant policies and procedures, unless such policies conflict with the Charter for the Office of the Chief Auditor.
- Ensure conformance with the IIA *Standards*.

Quality Assurance and Improvement Program

The Office of the Chief Auditor will maintain a quality assurance and improvement program that covers all aspects of the Office of the Chief Auditor. The program will include an evaluation of the Office of the Chief Auditor's conformance with the IIA *Standards* and an evaluation of whether internal auditors apply The Institute of Internal Auditor's Code of Ethics in their conduct. The program will also assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the Office of the Chief Auditor and identify opportunities for improvement.

The Office of the Chief Auditor will communicate to executive management and the Audit Committee on the Office of the Chief Auditor's quality assurance and improvement program, including results of internal assessments (both ongoing and periodic) and external assessments conducted at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside the Authority.

CHARTER FOR THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AUDITOR

[Amended by Resolution No. 2023-0086 dated October 5, 2023]

[Amended by Resolution No. 2021-0109 dated October 7, 2021]

[Amended by Resolution No. 2020-0098 dated October 1, 2020]

[Amended by Resolution No. 2018-0117 dated October 4, 2018]

[Amended by Resolution No. 2014-0089 dated September 4, 2014]

[Amended by Resolution No. 2010-0022R dated March 4, 2010]

[Adopted by Resolution No. 2003-062 dated October 2, 2003]