

**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
BUREAU OF LABORATORIES
MANAGEMENT REVIEW
HIG-06-001MR**



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OF THE BUREAU OF LABORATORIES
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Executive Summary**

INTRODUCTION

This review was initiated by Ms. Nancy Humbert, A.R.N.P., M.S.N., Deputy Secretary, to assist in Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) reorganization efforts and to provide strategic information to the new BOL leadership. The methodology involved conducting staff and management interviews at Jacksonville, Lantana, and Miami Laboratories; administering a stakeholder survey; and reviewing personnel and related documents and records. The framework for the management review process was developed using the Sterling Criteria for Organizational Performance Excellence.

Leadership for the three laboratories reviewed was Dr. Ming Chan, Director of Jacksonville Laboratory and former Bureau Chief; Dr. Peter Shih, Acting Director, Miami Laboratory; and Dr. Roberta Lopez, Director, Lantana Laboratory.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Leadership

***Nationally
Recognized
Leadership***

Strengths: BOL has nationally recognized leadership. BOL emphasis on quality services has placed it at the forefront of public health laboratories. Employees perceived Dr. Chan's friendly personality as a strength. Lantana employees felt they had good communications with Dr. Lopez and some supervisors.

***Cannot Access
Budget***

Opportunities: BOL has budget that it cannot access for equipment purchases and maintenance of buildings. Bureau leadership needs to be more accessible throughout the laboratory system and needs to improve bureau-wide communications. There is a perception of favoritism and unfair practices.

***Ineffective
Communications***

Atmosphere at Miami Laboratory was perceived as decidedly punitive. Employees do not feel valued, and feel Miami leadership does not communicate effectively. They feel there is a rivalry between Miami and the other four laboratories.

***Punitive
Atmosphere***

Lantana communications is strained and employees do not feel they always receive needed information. The assistant director is perceived as intimidating and punitive.



Recommendations:

Bureau chief profile recommendations are not included in this summary since they were included in the preliminary report.

- 1. Bureau management should promote teamwork and seamless provision of services throughout the organization.**
- 2. Department management should ensure and monitor the implementation of Sterling organizational excellence principals throughout each of the five laboratories, with emphasis on effective statewide communication strategies that reach every level of the organization.**

Strategic Planning

Sterling Challenge

Lantana Employees Setting Goals

Bureau Planning Excludes Employees

Strengths: BOL has taken the Sterling Challenge and has developed a system-wide strategic plan. Lantana employees liked that they were involved in the planning process by developing and publicly posting their own goals.

Opportunities: BOL employees are interested, but are not included in the planning process. Supervisors are not perceived as being well-informed about planning. Miami employees feel they are overlooked in their local planning process.

Lantana employees have developed personal goals, but feel they have not been included in the BOL planning process.

Recommendation:

- 3. Bureau management should update strategic plans on a regular basis, and include employees in the planning process at every level of the organization.**

Customer and Market Focus

Public Service is Important

No Customer Feedback System

Strengths: Laboratory employees at the three locations enjoyed serving the public and felt their work is important to public health and safety.

Opportunities: BOL does not have a bureau-wide customer feedback system, and has no method of documenting and tracking customer comments.

Recommendation:

- 4. The BOL should develop a standardized system to track customer feedback at all five laboratories to improve BOL operations and document changes resulting from the feedback process.**



Flexible Work and Great Benefits

More Training, Pay, and Recognition

EEO Training and Team Building

Pre-signed and Inaccurate Evaluations

Challenging Work

Emphasis on Quality

Human Resource Focus

Strengths: Laboratory employees liked their flexible work environment and great educational benefits. They enjoyed working with knowledgeable colleagues.

Opportunities: Employees at the three laboratories want more training opportunities, promotions or higher pay, recognition for excellent work, and more effective conflict resolution.

Additionally, Miami employees said they wanted more flexible work hours, EEO training, team building activities, and not to be required by management to pre-sign their performance evaluation forms, which they feel may be resulting in inaccurate evaluations.

Recommendations:

5. Bureau management should assess individual personnel issues at each laboratory based upon the findings of this report, and take the appropriate action to resolve these issues.
6. Bureau management should institute an employee recognition system bureau-wide and task each laboratory director with implementing the employee recognition system at his or her laboratory.
7. Bureau management should review employee evaluation practices, and ensure adherence to the DOH employee performance evaluation process at DOHP 60-22-02.
8. Bureau management should promote innovative and cost effective training opportunities for all BOL employees through the use of technology, and ensure that current staff has been properly trained in all facets of their positions.
9. Bureau management should institute uniform policies for orientation of all new employees to include, but not be limited to, safety policies and practices. Further, bureau management should require annual updates for training on safety policies and practices for all employees.

Process Management

Strengths: Laboratory employees enjoyed the challenging, non-routine nature of their work. The Lantana Laboratory has a strong emphasis on quality, with an extensive Quality Assurance Program.

Opportunities: Employees at Jacksonville and Miami felt their buildings were unsafe and unhealthy. They said mold, water



Mold in Buildings

Late Deliveries

Outdated Billing

Computerized sample tracking

Budget Reserve

National Reputation

No Performance Reporting

Stakeholder Priorities

contamination, and faulty and unclean equipment were negatively impacting their health and their productivity. They said a Safety Officer is badly needed, but the position is currently vacant.

Jacksonville employees said late delivery of specimen samples is a problem, the outdated billing system needs to be replaced, and laboratory workers handling accounting functions takes time away from testing.

Miami employees said they need to be fully computerized to receive and send specimen samples.

Lantana had less of a mold problem, but employees said mold that was present and growing was caused by old, faulty air conditioning units. They said they feel unsafe working alone on weekends. They said late delivery of specimen samples is also a problem for them.

Recommendations:

- 10. DOH and BOL management should identify all available fixed capital outlay and operating capital outlay funding allocated to BOL, and secure the necessary spending authority to access these funds for the purpose of building repair, renovation, mold/mildew eradication, and equipment replacement.
- 11. BOL management should prioritize key process requirements, such as the hiring of a Safety Officer and the acquisition of a new billing system.
- 12. BOL management should resolve the issue of late courier deliveries resulting in delayed specimen testing.

Organizational Performance Results

Strengths: Laboratory employees indicated the BOL provides excellent customer services. Dr. Chan also mentioned that the BOL is fiscally responsible with a budget reserve; BOL is at the forefront of public health laboratories; and BOL has a good national reputation.

Opportunities: BOL does not collect customer feedback data and does not produce an annual report to show performance.

BOL stakeholders held as top priorities the timeliness and accuracy of lab test results, communications with lab personnel, CHD and BOL relations, and up-to-date testing facilities.

Additionally, stakeholders indicated the BOL needs, within the next six months, to update technology and improve



Morale is Poor

Cultural Insensitivity

Outsourcing of Lab Work

infrastructure; focus on organizational development of the present laboratory structure; and emphasize quality of new and continuing management.

Recommendations:

- 13. BOL management should monitor and document performance results.**
- 14. DOH and BOL management should incorporate CHD director and administrator priorities and action items expressed in this report into the BOL strategic and transition plans, and develop strategies to implement the priorities and actions.**

Other

Opportunities: Morale at Jacksonville and Miami is poor. Employees feel undervalued and unappreciated.

Miami employees expressed that management is not culturally sensitive, and there is a lot of distrust and intolerance with management and among co-workers.

Lantana employees said laboratory work is being outsourced to the private sector, directly impacting their bottom-line. They feel the state should use public laboratories and stop sending business to private labs.

Recommendation:

- 15. Bureau management should promote cultural diversity throughout the organization and encourage appropriate activities that do not interfere with laboratory workflow or productivity.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Introduction presents a section on the purpose and scope of this management review of the Bureau of Laboratories, and a section explaining the methodology. Specific issues covered in this report are provided in the scope.

A. Purpose and Scope

Pursuant to Section 20.055, Florida Statutes, the Office of Inspector General (HIG), Department of Health (DOH), is authorized to conduct management reviews of agency programs at the request of management or at the discretion of the Inspector General. A management review solicits employee and management views of workplace conditions and examines how management practices are affecting program operations. The review team is not constrained in the pursuit of information relative to the issues being reviewed. The Sterling Criteria for Organizational Performance Excellence is used to guide the interview and data analysis processes.

This review was initiated by Ms. Nancy Humbert, A.R.N.P., M.S.N., Deputy Secretary, to assist in Bureau of Laboratories (BOL) reorganization efforts and to provide strategic information to the new BOL leadership. Dr. Ming Chan, the former Bureau Chief, had retired before the start of this review, but made himself available to assist the management review team and to answer questions. DOH senior management was also preparing the BOL for the Sterling Challenge, and was considering realignment of the BOL administrative leadership from Jacksonville to Tallahassee.

The operative content of the report may be found in the Findings and Conclusions Section. This report aligns the interview comments and independent research findings into the Sterling categories. The seven categories are Leadership; Strategic Planning; Customer and Market Focus; Human Resource Focus; Process Management; Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; and Organizational Performance Results. Categories where a third or more of employees interviewed did not express concerns may not be covered in the report. A category entitled "Other" is added to allow coverage of issues that did not specifically relate to one of the Sterling categories.

B. Methodology

This review involved conducting interviews in the field; collecting, compiling, and analyzing data from various documents and records; and drafting of a report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The management review team visited the Jacksonville, Lantana, and Miami Laboratories. The period for this review was from February 6, 2006, until March 16, 2006. Division management was given 10 days to respond to report recommendations.

The HIG team interviewed a stratified sample of 72 employees from Jacksonville (41), Lantana (9), and Miami (22). A skip pattern was used to select interview candidates across unit lines, with at least one candidate from each unit. Fieldwork was completed at the Jacksonville Laboratory February 6th through February 8th. Fieldwork was completed at the Miami Laboratory February 27th and 28th. Fieldwork was completed at the Lantana Laboratory March 1st. Interviews were conducted one-on-one in a private office or small conference room, and each interview took approximately 45 minutes to one hour to complete.

HIG also conducted a statewide survey of BOL stakeholders, consisting of County Health Department (CHD) directors and administrators. Eight survey questions addressed issues relating to the BOL. A final open-ended question provided respondents to the survey the opportunity to provide general comments or recommendations. Stakeholders were given a week to respond, from February 20th until February 27th. Of 60 directors or administrators surveyed (representing all 67 CHDs), 45 or 75% responded.

Based upon the common issues from the interviews, the HIG team reviewed and analyzed documents and records collected from all three laboratories. Where practicable and warranted, HIG reviewed a sample of documents provided to show examples of identified issues. For example, the HIG reviewed a sample of training records and wall certificates to document human resource and organizational performance result issues. The HIG team did a complete review and analysis of People's First personnel data.

After all data was collected, the HIG management review team members reviewed individual segments of data and developed analytical drafts documenting methodology, findings, and conclusions. These drafts were used to develop the management review report, which was then reviewed among team members and by management before being finalized. This report aligns employee interview comments, management comments, and independent research findings into Sterling Criteria for Organizational Performance Excellence categories. This enables senior management to align the report findings with other organizational transition initiatives that are in process.

II. BACKGROUND



Jacksonville Laboratory Main Building

The information used in this background section was taken from the BOL Intranet site and from the most recent edition of the DOH Resource Manual. This section will include the BOL Mission, Vision, Goals, and basic program facts.

Mission

The Mission of BOL is to provide diagnostic screening, monitoring, reference, emergency and research public health laboratory services to county health departments and other official agencies, physicians, hospitals and private laboratories.

Vision

The Bureau of Laboratories will be among the foremost public health laboratories in the nation.

Five Primary Service Goals

- Supporting county health departments, other DOH program components, physicians, and hospitals by providing public health diagnostic and reference laboratory services as set forth primarily by the Department of Health Program Office. This includes traditional clinical services, such as sexually transmitted diseases, Tuberculosis, Rabies, and Parasitology.

- Providing laboratory screening of all newborns in the state for several hereditary diseases which, without detection and early treatment, would lead to death or severe mental disabilities.
- Monitoring water, food, and air by microbiological and chemical analyses, and assessing such things as water potability, food poisoning, formaldehyde and other noxious fumes for health hazards to the public.
- Certifying laboratories for microbiological and chemical testing of water by application reviews, performance evaluations and on-site inspections.
- Responding quickly to public health emergencies by providing analytical information as soon as possible for assessing problems and taking remedial action.

The statutory authority for the BOL is found in Chapters 381, 383 and 403, Florida Statutes. The BOL supports county health departments, other DOH programs, physicians, and hospitals by providing population-based diagnostic screening, monitoring, reference, emergency and research laboratory services, and collects epidemiologic demographic information to support the core public health functions. Technical services, based upon evolving community requirements, include screening and confirmation tests for disease outbreak investigations, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, human immunodeficiency virus, mosquito-borne viruses, animal rabies, parasitology, genetic and hereditary diseases. The BOL also provides laboratory screening of all newborns in the state for several hereditary diseases, which, without detection and early treatment, can lead to death or severe mental disabilities.



Miami Laboratory

Accurate and timely laboratory data reports are critical to support informed public health decisions by the DOH Program staff. The BOL also tests potable, environmental, and recreational water sources, pollution spills, suspect foods, and workplace sites for biological and chemical contaminants, and certifies environmental and water testing laboratories for microbiological and chemical testing of water by reviewing applications, performance evaluations and on-site visits. The BOL responds quickly to public health emergencies by providing analytical services and data for assessing problems.

The most recent year for which performance data was available was FY 2004-2005. The BOL served sixty-seven county health departments, all hospitals, clinical or environmental laboratories and other official agencies that choose to use the state's public health laboratories' diagnostic, screening, monitoring or reference services. The laboratory performed 5,429,886 relative workload units in FY 2004-05 on 2,074,339 specimens.

Since the complexity of tests performed on different specimens varies widely, a relative workload unit (RWU) was derived by the Association of Public Health Laboratories Directors and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to provide a common denominator for equating the relative work performed on various analyses. The RWU accounts for time, batch size, skill required, complexity, frequency and degree of automation. These units are used in public health laboratories nationwide for comparing tests and measuring workload.

Additionally, 162 laboratory certification applications were handled. The number of 1,790 laboratory proficiency-testing reports comprised of over 80,000 test results were reviewed. The number of 250 laboratories were surveyed, and 485 laboratories were certified.



Lantana Laboratory

The five laboratories in the statewide system are Jacksonville, Lantana, Miami, Pensacola, and Tampa. The BOL has 305 Full Time Equivalent (FTE), 12 Other Personal Service (OPS), and 14 contracted positions in the five laboratories around the State. Each of the five laboratories is inspected annually under the State Clinical Laboratory Licensure Law, Chapter 483, F.S. and under the Medicaid/Medicare Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (federal Health Care Financing Administration). They are inspected biennially by the federal Environmental Protection Agency for water testing capabilities and accreditation activities.

III. BOL FINDINGS - STRENGTHS

BOL strengths were identified in Leadership, Planning, Customer Focus, Human Resources, Process Management, and Organizational Performance Results. This section includes data from employee interviews and independent research efforts. Employee interview responses will appear first under each Sterling category, followed by the HIG independent review of documents and records.

Employees generally liked their work, their colleagues, and serving the public. Employees stated that the BOL provided quality services to their customers. Each laboratory visited provided documentation of their certifications and other indicators of quality services.

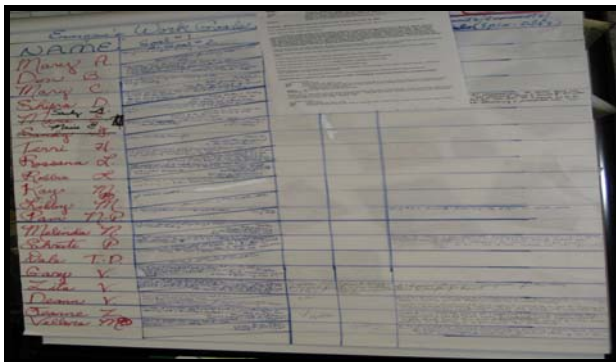
III.A. Leadership

The BOL has nationally recognized and respected leadership. The BOL has an emphasis on quality that has placed it at the forefront of public health laboratory systems.

Jacksonville employees generally stated that the Bureau Chief appeared friendly and personable when they saw him in passing. They liked his personality and hoped the new bureau chief was personable.

Lantana employees liked the good communications with the director and some supervisors.

III.B. Strategic Planning



BOL takes the Sterling Challenge.

Lantana employees set goals.

Achievement of goals tracked and posted.

The BOL has embarked upon a system-wide strategic planning process as part of taking the challenge for the Sterling Award for Organizational Performance Excellence.

Lantana employees participated in planning by developing their own goals and posting them in the laboratory library. They wrote their achievements next to the goals. Some employees participated on goal teams.

III.C. Customer and Market Focus



Lantana knight welcomes visitors.

Employees at all three laboratories enjoy serving the public.

Work is important to public education, health, and safety.

Jacksonville employees feel their work is important and benefits the public.

Lantana employees enjoy serving the public and extend a hardy welcome to their visitors in the form of a knight in shining armor.

Miami employees enjoy serving the public and feel their work is important to public health and safety.

Miami employees like educating the public, and said information dissemination about diseases is helpful to the public.

III.D. Human Resource Focus



Flexible Work Environment.

Expertise of colleagues.

Enjoyed working with colleagues.

Great educational benefits.

Jacksonville employees enjoyed the flexibility of the work environment. They felt there was a sense of family among co-workers.

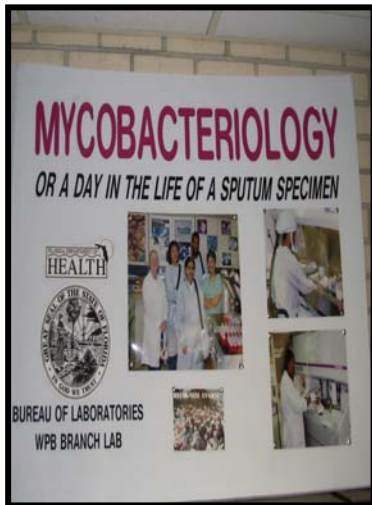
Miami employees enjoyed working with their colleagues and most feel they get along well with their co-workers.

Miami employees liked the educational benefits. They said the Bureau will pay for their higher education.

Lantana employees liked the teamwork atmosphere and friendly co-workers. They liked colleagues assisting one another.

The former Bureau Chief said the BOL has good people in place who are knowledgeable about their disciplines.

III.E. Process Management



Challenging, non-routine work.

Extensive Quality Assurance Program.

Compliance with guidelines and requirements.

Employees at the three Laboratories visited enjoy the challenging, non-routine nature of their work.

BOL Lantana has an extensive 25 point Quality Assurance Program complying with guidelines and requirements from Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA), Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), and National Environmental Laboratories Accreditation (NELAP). The list covers key areas including Staff Training, Proficiency Tests, Preventive Maintenance on major equipment, Licensure of Clinical Laboratory/Technical Laboratory Staff, Periodic Competency Checks, and coverage for personal work goals for staff.

III.F. Organizational Performance Results



Excellent customer services.

Fiscal responsibility with reserve fund.

Forefront of public health laboratories.

Good national reputation.

Employees at every Laboratory location felt the BOL provided excellent customer services and Laboratory customers were very happy with those services.

The former Bureau Chief stated that the BOL has been able to effectively manage its funds, and has maintained a budget reserve every year. He added Florida has a good reputation around the nation. The State is on the forefront in terms of organization, budget, and people.

III.F.1. Independent Review of Records and Documents

The HIG identified various certifications and awards that demonstrate BOL's commitment to quality. The following presentations are samples of BOL's efforts to provide quality services and good performance to customers. These presentations do not reflect the total documentation available to demonstrate good customer service.

III.F.1.1. Jacksonville Laboratory

Laboratory Certification: BOL management in Jacksonville provided a copy of the last Clinical Laboratory Inspection Report, dated December 9, 2004, and the BOL Corrective Action Response, dated December 22, 2004 ^{Exhibit 1}. BOL management also provided a copy of the Agency for Health Care Administration Certification No. 800000296, showing that the certification was awarded and is effective from December 4, 2005, until December 3, 2007 ^{Exhibit 1}.

Laboratory Award: On February 7, 2006, the BOL was awarded the Mission Possible Award by the Northwest Florida Division of the March of Dimes for the new statewide expansion of newborn screening ^{Exhibit 2}. Deputy Secretary Joseph J. Chiaro, M.D., Children's Medical Services, and Dr. Ming Chan, BOL Chief, accepted the award. Dr. Chiaro stated "...the new program, which

exceeds the national standards in newborn screening, provides parents with opportunity to plan and evaluate treatment options, if necessary.”

III.F.1.2. Miami Laboratory

Laboratory Certifications: The Miami Laboratory has a number of certifications to operate and to show quality control efforts. The Miami Laboratory is certified as a Clinical Laboratory. The State of Florida, Agency for Health Care Administration, Division of Health Quality Assurance, Certification No. 800000352 is effective from October 1, 2005, until September 30, 2007 ^{Exhibit 3}. This certificate enables the Laboratory to operate certain the specialties and subspecialties of Bacteriology, Diagnostic Immunology, Parasitology, and Routine Chemistry.

The State of Florida, Agency for Health Care Administration, Division of Managed Care and Health Quality has licensed the Miami Laboratory under Certificate No. 28356 ^{Exhibit 3}. The Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, found the Miami Laboratory to be in compliance with State and Federal regulations and issued the Laboratory a Certificate of Compliance, effective from October 14, 2005, until October 13, 2007 ^{Exhibit 3}. The American Association of Bioanalysis, Proficiency Testing Service, certified for 2006 that the Miami Laboratory is a participant in a continuous program of quality control for laboratory testing. The Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) Proficiency Testing Program certified that the Miami Laboratory was enrolled in 2005 in the program to ensure laboratory quality ^{Exhibit 3}.



Miami Certificates and Awards

Customer Satisfaction: One anecdotal indicator of customer satisfaction was a letter from the Pompano Beach Fire Rescue Fire Chief, dated February 3, 2003 ^{Exhibit 4}. The letter thanked the Miami Laboratory for its Terrorism Rapid

Response Unit for invaluable assistance following the aftermath of September 11, 2001.

III.F.1.3. Lantana Laboratory

Annual Report: According to the 2004 Annual Report, the Lantana Laboratory's Organizational Performance Results were mixed ^{Exhibit 5}. The Lantana Laboratory overall production dropped by 8% over the previous year. Lantana tested 190,837 specimen in 2004, compared to 207,571 specimen in 2003. Turnaround times for tests were not reported based upon annual comparisons. The average turnaround time for Rabies was 0.66 days, which was two days faster than Lantana's performance indicator. The other turnaround times were expressed in percentages, but were not compared to benchmarks as was the time for Rabies. Proficiency testing was the last measure examined in the report. Lantana proficiency test results for Rabies were 100% correct and for Clinical were 99.6% correct.

Laboratory Certification: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services granted the Lantana Laboratory a Certificate of Compliance for Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments, effective from May 12, 2005, until May 11, 2007 ^{Exhibit 6}. This certificate allows the laboratory to accept human specimens for the purposes of performing laboratory examinations or procedures.



Lantana Certificates and Awards

The State of Florida, Agency for Health Care Administration, awarded the Lantana Laboratory a Clinical Laboratory Certificate ^{Exhibit 6}. This certificate is effective from October 1, 2005, until September 30, 2007. This certificate enables the Laboratory to operate certain specialties and subspecialties, such as Bacteriology, Diagnostic Immunology, Routine Chemistry, and other areas of testing.

III.H. Selected Bureau Accomplishments ^{Exhibit 7}

Fiscal Year	Accomplishments
FY 2003-2004	<p>Jacksonville Laboratory joined Miami and Tampa Laboratories in providing Biowatch sample testing.</p>
	<p>BOL implemented HIV Genotyping drug resistance testing as a routine test offering.</p>
	<p>BOL initiated a 6-day work week for the Genetic and Newborn Screening Program to decrease turnaround time for test results.</p>
	<p>BOL used the PCR procedure for rapid detection of Influenza A and B in throat swab specimens.</p>
	<p>BOL adopted the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) standards as the basis for environmental laboratory certification.</p>
FY 2004-2005	<p>BOL initiated a program in cooperation with some of the county health departments to provide amplified screening tests for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia at little to no cost to the CHDs.</p>
	<p>BOL initiated expanded newborn screening panel from 6 orders to cover 30 disorders using tandem mass spectrometry technology.</p>
	<p>BOL identified first two cases of HIV-2 infection in Florida.</p>
	<p>Miami Laboratory took over the 3rd floor space of the building from the county health department and began renovation works to convert the office space into laboratory space.</p>
	<p>Lantana Laboratory completed renovation of the BSL-3 suite and is applying for the LRN laboratory approval.</p>
	<p>Pensacola Laboratory completed renovation of the BSL-3 suite, approved as LRN laboratory and began accepting suspected bioterrorism specimens in May, 2005 from the Domestic Security Task Force Region 1 area.</p>

IV. BOL FINDINGS - OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Section IV will focus on opportunities the Bureau has to build a stronger, more customer-focused organization, and to promote quality services and workplace excellence. The section is also organized into the Sterling Categories, and includes data from employee interviews and independent research efforts. Employee interview responses will appear first under each Sterling category, followed by management comments, HIG independent review of documents and records, and HIG recommendations.

IV.A. Leadership



Section IV.A. will include profile information about the new bureau chief from employees and stakeholders. This information was provided to DOH management as a separate preliminary report ^{Exhibit 8}. The section will also include other management issues that employees expressed as concerns.

IV.A.1. Characteristics of a New Bureau Chief

The HIG found that both employees and stakeholders want a new Bureau Chief with knowledge, experience, and strong leadership skills. Employees also want the new Chief to be approachable, accessible, engaged, fair, and culturally aware.

Employee Interviews: Employees generally want a new Bureau Chief who is knowledgeable and experienced with public health laboratories; who has strong leadership and management skills; who can effectively address competing branch demands; who is accessible, approachable, and willing to see what employees do firsthand; and who is fair, unbiased, and culturally sensitive toward a diverse workforce. Table 1 outlines these characteristics.

**Table 1: BOL Bureau Chief Characteristics
Employee Perspective**

<p>Knowledge and Experience</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A public health laboratory veteran. 2. A respected and credentialed professional. 3. A national leader in public health. 4. Someone who is familiar with current public health issues, such as bio-terrorism and homeland security.
<p><i>Strong Leadership</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sets goals and follows through. 2. Effectively advocates in the budgeting process and resource acquisition. 3. Effectively deals with personnel issues and competing branch demands. 4. Sees the “big picture” and forges a seamless laboratory system statewide.
<p><i>Approachable and Accessible</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Includes employees in planning activities. 2. Will travel around the state to meet employees and learn what they do. 3. Will listen to employees to understand their needs. 4. Effectively and timely communicates important issues throughout the organization.
<p><i>Culturally Sensitive</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciates and promotes cultural diversity. 2. Allows for customs and traditions that do not interfere with work performance or disrupt office operations. 3. Applies fair and equitable personnel policies and practices. 4. Willing to make hard, yet fair personnel decisions. 5. Encourages employees and respects employee input.

Stakeholder Survey: CHD directors and administrators emphasized a new bureau chief with a professional background and strong leadership skills. They want someone who is knowledgeable and experienced, with strong leadership, management, and communication skills. The top five choices of CHD directors and administrators are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: BOL Bureau Chief Characteristics Stakeholder Perspective

Ranking	Responses	Trait
1	34	Knowledge and expertise
2	24	Accessible and approachable
3	23	Strong leadership
4	22	Effective communicator
5	21	Strong manager



IV.A.2. Jacksonville Laboratory Leadership

Budget: Employees stated that the Bureau has millions of dollars allocated to it, but does not have the budget authority to spend the money. Accessing this funding would enable the Bureau to make needed repairs and renovations to its Jacksonville buildings and to replace outdated equipment.

Communications and Accessibility: Employees expressed concerns that communications coming from the Bureau Chief were poor because he was very busy and did not hold meetings with the rank and file staff. They said in the last 12 months, the Bureau Chief and his senior management team have only met with employees twice, even though there is an auditorium on the second floor that could accommodate all employees.

Employees said important policy information often did not reach the front lines, was not timely to allow them to make the necessary changes and adjustments before being held

accountable, or was not correctly communicated through the chain of command. Employees stated that their supervisors were also not well-informed, directly impacting their day to day performance. Employees cited examples of not knowing about the Sterling Challenge or about management realignment issues.

Employees stated that the Bureau Chief needed to be more accessible and needed to visit the various laboratories and offices in the buildings to understand what they do. They said his physical presence in the laboratory was limited; that he was often traveling to Tallahassee, or with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL). They said his absences have resulted in confusion and a lack of direction.

Favoritism and Fairness: Employees stated managers in the Chemistry Division appeared to favor certain employees over other employees. They said favored employees were allowed to do less work without repercussions, and were rewarded when pay increases and promotions became available.

Employees stated managers in the Microbiology Division were not always fair and did not effectively interact with them. They said managers talked to them in rough tones of voice, and were sometimes condescending and impolite.

IV.A.3. Miami Laboratory Leadership

Management Style: Employees expressed concerns that local management did not value their services and did not appear to be engaged in their work activities. They said the current atmosphere was decidedly punitive, but did not always used to be that way. They said the previous leadership was respected as someone who instilled order and discipline at the Miami Laboratory. They said the previous leadership managed, but did not micro-manage. They said the previous leadership held frequent recognition ceremonies, and kept employees informed of policy issues. They said efforts to create a positive work environment are currently lacking.

Communications: Employees feel Dr. Peter Shih does not communicate effectively with them. They said he does not take the time to understand their needs. They feel Dr. Shih is watching them at all times. For example, employees said Dr. Shih requires them to sign in and out of work at the front desk. They get penalized for being 5 or 10 minutes late, but have to fight traffic every day. They want to get off at 4:30 p.m. to get ahead of traffic, but they said Dr. Shih will not consider it.

Employees said they rarely see Dr. Chan. They said over the last 12 months, they have only seen him once or twice. When he does come, they said he is very approachable and takes time with them. Employees feel it is very important for the Bureau Chief to communicate directly with the supervisors. Important policy information is lost through the chain of command.

Inter-Laboratory Relations: Employees feel there is a problem with inter-laboratory rivalry. Employees stated other laboratories do not treat Miami Laboratory fairly.

Miami Laboratory wants a full micro-biology section because of the demand in the South Florida area. Miami has a greater demand for micro-biology testing than any other area in the state. It has been difficult convincing other laboratories to support this. Currently, only Jacksonville and Tampa Laboratories have full micro-biology sections.

IV.A.4. Lantana Laboratory Leadership

Communications: Employees said management communication was not very good. They stated they did not know about Dr. Chan's retiring. They were aware of the administrative move to Tallahassee, but did not have complete information.

Employees expressed concerns that the assistant director micromanages, and is not held accountable by the director. Employees fear retaliation for speaking out about the assistant director.

Employees stated that management makes changes without warning, and that the director is not accessible to employees who have concerns. They stated they receive "trickle down" information from the director. They said the assistant director will hold unscheduled meetings, which interrupts laboratory operations and causes experiment delays.

In an example of what employees find most offensive, there was a large sign posted in the laboratory that was called the Burger King Directive. The sign read, "This is not Burger King. You don't get it your way. You take it my way, or you don't get it at all!" Employees stated the Burger King directive is in the Serology laboratory that is supervised by the Assistant Director. Employees report the Burger King sign has been in place over 10 years and they feel it is condoned by the director.

Management Intimidation: Employees feel they are unable to express opinions freely without retaliation. They feel the assistant director is confrontational.

IV.A.5. Management Comments

Dr. Ming Chan ^{Exhibit 9}: Dr. Ming Chan stated he was extremely busy and, while he would like to spend more time with the employees, he preferred working through the chain of command. He said he did not have bureau-wide staff meetings. He communicated policy and other issues to employees through the chain of command. He said he wore many hats, including bureau chief, laboratory director, administrator, interagency liaison with the county health departments, policy advocate, officer in the national professional association, and team player with administration in Tallahassee.

Dr. Chan said he held weekly teleconferences with his laboratory directors and senior managers, during which they discussed policy, purchasing needs, and budget issues. He said he visited the laboratories every three months and held an annual meeting with laboratory directors in Jacksonville. He said Tallahassee officials were invited to the annual meeting, and the next annual meeting was planned for Summer of 2006.

Dr. Chan said the new bureau chief should focus on several leadership issues within the first 30 days of assuming the position. He said the new chief should fill position vacancies first, which includes the Safety Officer position, a position that is critical to BOL operations. He said the new chief should seek more spending authority and have a budget retreat with the laboratory directors. He also said the new chief should develop a full customer feedback mechanism for the entire bureau.

Dr. Peter Shih ^{Exhibit 10}: Dr. Peter Shih said communications and cooperation between the five laboratories was fair to good. He said the other laboratories feel there is no need for a Biology lab at Miami. He said it is difficult to share protocols with the other laboratories. He said the Jacksonville laboratory has more clout because it was changed from a branch laboratory to the Bureau of Laboratories. Jacksonville is much bigger than the other laboratories, which can be intimidating.

Dr. Shih said the new bureau chief should focus on salary adjustments in South Florida to be more competitive. He said SES employees should be compensated for overtime. He said career service employees already have compensation for overtime. He said more communication and trust is needed between the new chief and the Miami Laboratory.

Dr. Roberta Lopez ^{Exhibit 11}: Dr. Roberta Lopez said she brought in more measures to communicate effectively. She said everyone has a mail box; there is a white board in the library where messages can be posted; there are more telephones throughout the laboratory; and there are a health board, a continuing education unit board, and a bio-preparedness board. She said she communicates a lot with staff through email and she copies employees on communications going out of the laboratory.

Dr. Lopez said she does not have regular meetings because she prefers having something to say at meetings. She admitted that she could hold more laboratory personnel meetings.

Dr. Lopez said relations among the five laboratories are very good. She said relations have improved over what it used to be because the laboratory directors are meeting in sessions with Blackwood leadership consulting services. Also, the directors are involved in strategic planning activities in Tallahassee, and they meet every Monday on a teleconference call.

Dr. Lopez said each laboratory needs to be more knowledgeable of what other laboratories are doing. They used to have annual meetings where they would rotate among laboratories. She said there also should be more cross-fertilization, where supervisors from the Jacksonville laboratory would come down to the Lantana laboratory to see what we are doing. She said cross-fertilization should be a major goal and could improve communications.

Dr. Lopez said in terms of one laboratory doing procedures better than another laboratory, all laboratories have minimum procedures they must do. She said a given laboratory may do extra if they have the budget and resources, and that laboratory's management may perceive the extra as better.

Dr. Lopez said the new bureau chief should be a laboratorian and that moving the chief to Tallahassee is a mistake. She said she understands being in Tallahassee, the new administration could give balance to all the laboratories. But, she said the bureau chief needs to be where the laboratory work takes place.

Dr. Lopez said the new bureau chief should institute a public information officer (PIO) to improve BOL's image. She said she wrote a position description for a PIO, but there was no budget for the position. She said alternatively, Doc Kokol in the Communications Office could assign a staff person to cover the labs.

Dr. Lopez said the new chief should visit each laboratory to see and know what is going on. She said a personal visit will be very important to laboratory personnel, and important for the new chief to truly understand laboratory operations.

Dr. Lopez said the bureau should be upgraded to division level. She said BOL has 300 employees and should be equal with other divisions.

IV.A.6. Independent Review of Documents and Records

Leadership Meetings: According to documentation the HIG obtained from the Jacksonville Laboratory, management meetings are held every Monday. The HIG obtained email notices of the Bureau of Laboratories Lunch Time Teleconference for January 30, 2006, and February 6, 2006 ^{Exhibit 12}. These notices contained meeting agenda and appeared to be sent to only senior and middle managers. The notices also appeared to be sent immediately before the meetings (One hour for one notice and 15 minutes for the other notice).

The meeting agendas appeared to cover program, planning, and training issues. Agenda items included a CDC Test, Team Building Workshops, Miami Laboratory Capacity Issue, and the Sterling Process.

IV.A.7. Recommendations

- 1. Bureau management should promote teamwork and seamless provision of services throughout the organization.**
- 2. Department management should ensure and monitor the implementation of Sterling organizational excellence principals throughout each of the five laboratories, with emphasis on effective statewide communication strategies that reach every level of the organization.**

IV.B. Strategic Planning

Employees generally felt they were not included in the planning process, but they wanted to be included. The exception was Lantana Laboratory, where all employees participated in planning at some level.

IV.B.1 Jacksonville Laboratory Planning

Employees indicated they are not included in the planning process and are not aware of the BOL's strategic plan and how it affects them. They feel their opinions are not valued. They said their supervisors do not know what is going on. They were aware that the Bureau was participating in the Sterling process, but had not seen the Bureau profile or its mission, vision, and values. Employees stated they would like to be included in the planning process. Employees stated they perceive there is a continuous breakdown in planning, resulting in nothing being completed.

IV.B.2. Miami Laboratory Planning

Employees feel they are overlooked in the planning process. Some employees did not know about the Sterling Challenge and the administration moving to Tallahassee. They said they were not included in developing the BOL mission, goals, or objectives. They indicated they would like to be involved in the planning process.

IV.B.3. Lantana Laboratory Planning

Employees stated that they have developed personal goals and have posted these goals in the Laboratory Library. They said they also posted the status of their goal achievement. If they share common goals with other employees, they work in teams to accomplish the goals together.

Employees acknowledged their role in fulfilling the overall mission and vision of the BOL. While employees developed personal goals, they stated they did not participate in the formulation of the BOL mission or vision statements. They expressed that they would have liked to participate in developing the mission and vision statements.

IV.B.4. Management Comments

Dr. Ming Chan ^{Exhibit 9}: Dr. Chan stated the BOL had a strategic planning process. He said that administrators and supervisors were involved with planning, but not rank and file employees. He said the BOL had an organization profile that was developed last month or so.

Dr. Chan said becoming a unified team is a challenge because of the competing priorities and differences of the five laboratory directors. He said BOL planned to have a team building session in Tallahassee to address the issues of competing priorities and differences among the laboratory directors.

Dr. Chan stated there is a need to reorganize the Jacksonville laboratory. He said there should be a director and an assistant director. He said the five sections (Microbiology, Immunology, Newborn Screening, Inorganic Chemistry, and Organic Chemistry) should report to the assistant director. He said this will be a more linear reporting structure, with only laboratory support, administration, and IT reporting directly to the director.

Dr. Chan said he supports the CDC model for a Tallahassee office, which he said should be a liaison office instead of an administrative office. He said the Bureau Chief should remain in Jacksonville to be close to the laboratory. Otherwise, he said qualified candidates may be dissuaded from pursuing the job because they would want to be at the main laboratory location to do their job.

Dr. Chan said the move to Tallahassee would cost \$150,000 right away. He said the Bureau does not have these funds. He said the Bureau must juggle budget to handle its requirements.

Dr. Chan said there was no budget retreat this year. He said a budget retreat with the laboratory directors helps with planning and identifying strategic resource needs for all five laboratories.

Dr. Peter Shih ^{Exhibit 10}: Dr. Shih said his supervisors participate in planning activities, but not other employees. He said supervisors attend a BOL Monday conference call with Dr. Chan. He said he does not meet with supervisors on planning outside of the BOL call.

Dr. Shih said in the next 12 months, he plans to get the Biology lab up and running. He also plans to finish construction on the 3rd Floor.

Dr. Roberta Lopez ^{Exhibit 11}: Dr. Lopez said for years, the Lantana Laboratory had goals for each section and supervisors worked with their employees to come up with the goals. She said now, through the Blackwood leadership workshop, she started December of 2005 to institute individual employee goals. The employee goals must be challenging, realistic, and measurable. She puts the goals up on the board in the library. She said some goals were individualized and some were shared with others. She has put together goal groups, which meet every two weeks. She said she does not know how to award employees for achieving their goals, but may give out certificates.

IV.B.5. Independent Review of Documents and Records

The HIG identified two current bureau-wide planning efforts. The Laboratory Administration Realignment involves moving the director and the key administrative functions from Jacksonville to Tallahassee, and elevating the bureau to division status. The Sterling Challenge application involves preparing the bureau to compete for the prestigious Sterling Award for Organizational Performance Excellence.

The Sterling Challenge: The BOL has established a strategic plan as part of the Sterling process ^{Exhibit 13}. This plan serves as the Sterling required Organizational Profile, and includes the BOL Mission; Vision; Values; Products, Services, and Delivery Mechanisms; Identification of Customers, Stakeholders, and Suppliers; Customer Requirements; Regulatory Environment; Employee Profile; Communication Mechanisms; Performance Measures; Strategic Challenges; and 2005-2006 Strategic Objectives. HIG notes Strategic Objective #3 identifies and implements a customer feedback mechanism; and Strategic Objective #4 promotes employee satisfaction

through training, recognition, and communication. These were two focal issues during the HIG employee interviews.

The BOL has also created goals for each of the seven Sterling Categories of Leadership; Strategic Planning; Customer and Market Focus; Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management; Human Resource Focus; Process Management; and Organizational Performance Results ^{Exhibit 13}. The HIG notes that Goal #1, Leadership, focuses on organizational communications and motivation of employees. Goal #3, Customer and Market Focus, emphasizes internal and external customer expectations, needs, requirements, and satisfaction. Goal #5, Human Resource Focus, emphasizes recruiting, motivating, training, and retaining qualified employees. These goals addressed focal issues expressed during the employee interviews.

The BOL has conducted a management and employee survey to capture data for key satisfaction indicators ^{Exhibit 14}. This survey covered the Sterling Categories and is attached as an exhibit to the HIG report.

A planning tool available to BOL is the Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS) for years 1999, 2002, and 2004 ^{Exhibit 15}. This survey is professionally conducted by DWB & Associates. The survey was distributed to all BOL employees for the indicated three years. Data was compiled, analyzed, and reported through the Office of Performance Improvement. Several of the ESS categories were partially aligned with Sterling, including Leadership, Human Resource Focus (Employee Treatment, Reward and Recognition, and Team Work), and Customer Focus. BOL management referenced the ESS survey as a source of information used in their planning efforts. However, the ESS results from 1999, referenced in a document dated June 4, 2001, showed among the five laboratory locations DOH Image, Job Satisfaction, and Supervisory Relations were strengths. These issues remain strengths today. Opportunities for improvements were Reward and Recognition, Treatment of Employees, Teamwork, and Current Leadership. These issues remain as problems today. The only issue that changed from a strength to an opportunity for improvement was Work Conditions. The HIG notes that unhealthy and unsafe building conditions in Jacksonville and Miami were cited as a significant problem.

The Administration Realignment: BOL leadership, including the Bureau Chief, Division Directors, and Branch Directors have established Strategic Objectives #1 (Administration Relocation) and #2 (Bureau to Division) ^{Exhibit 16}. HIG obtained a copy of a meeting notice, dated August 10, 2005, with PowerPoint Presentation; and minutes from the August 24, 2005, meeting and the August 31, 2005, meeting ^{Exhibit 16}. The August 24th minutes focused on identifying positions to go to Tallahassee, identifying space and logistical arrangements in Tallahassee, and legal issues with the relocation. The August 31st minutes focused on salary and rate, Jacksonville vacancies, and placement of displaced staff.

Lantana Planning Innovation: The HIG team observed that employee goals and achievement status are publicly posted in the Lantana Laboratory Library for everyone to see. Team goals are posted there as well. The HIG also observed the Lantana

Library houses a large volume of reference materials. Various information boards are displayed there, and the room has enough seating for staff meetings.

IV.B.6. Recommendation

- 3. Bureau management should update strategic plans on a regular basis, and include employees in the planning process at every level of the organization.**

IV.C. Customer and Market Focus

The BOL does not have a bureau-wide customer feedback mechanism. Employees expressed that, presently, customer feedback is obtained verbally and is not tracked or documented.

IV.C.1 Jacksonville Laboratory Customer Focus

The Bureau does not have a customer feedback mechanism for the bureau as a whole. Employees said the Division of Administration has recently instituted a customer survey process. Employees said, otherwise, customers provide feedback by word of mouth.

IV.C.2. Miami Laboratory Customer Focus

Employees said there is no customer feedback process. They feel customers are generally satisfied with BOL-Miami services due to word of mouth.

When customer complaints do come in, complaints go directly to the employees or their supervisors. No one is tracking the complaints.

IV.C.3. Lantana Laboratory Customer Focus

Employees stated there was no customer feedback mechanism. They said customers will let them know verbally if something is wrong. Employees work to correct problems or refer problems to supervisory personnel as needed. Employees said they do not often receive complaints.

IV.C.4. Independent Review of Documents and Records

The Administrative Services Office recently instituted a customer evaluation mechanism and is gathering data for the Environmental Laboratory Certification Program ^{Exhibit 17}. After a laboratory inspection is completed, an evaluation is sent out with the inspection report. The evaluation is returned to staff within the Administrative Services Office.

IV.C.5. Recommendations

- 4. The BOL should develop a standardized system to track customer feedback at all five laboratories to improve BOL operations and document changes resulting from feedback process.**

IV.D. Human Resource Focus



Human resource issues focused on training, promotions and pay actions, recognition, evaluations, and conflict resolution. Employees at the three laboratories said they were underpaid as compared to the federal and private sectors, they were not recognized for excellent performance by management, and employee conflicts were usually left unresolved. Employees at the Miami Laboratory were extremely concerned that they were directed to sign blank evaluations and were afraid their completed evaluations would not reflect their true job performance.

IV.D.1. Jacksonville Laboratory Human Resource Focus

Training: Employees stated they wanted more training, specifically in the area of personnel policies and practices. They said they would like an independent human resource person to conduct this training and assist with employee personnel issues.

Employees listed as their training priorities 1) proper program training in all aspects of employees' positions; 2) technology training, including Microsoft certification class; 3) hands on molecular training; 4) better access to training from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or National Laboratory Training Network (NLTN); 5) National Incident Management System (NIMS) training/Emergencies; 6) PCR Testing procedures as needed; 7) practical training mycology specific outside of the BOL; and 8) management and supervisory training on professionalism and effective communications.

Promotions and Pay Increases: Employees stated they are overlooked for promotions and pay increases. They said management prefers outside degreed individuals over internal employees who are certified and have years of experience. The outside people may not be certified, but management does not appear to care. Also, employees said some positions appear to be pre-selected. They said internal employees can apply, but the candidate appears to be already chosen.

Employees stated pay increases are non-existent. Management always states pay increases are not possible because of the budget and the lack of rate. Employees stated they are frustrated about the salary scale because they are hired at or near the base salary. They are told they can apply for another position at a higher salary rate,

but they would be classified as a new hire. This would result in the status as an original appointment and new employee probation.

Employees feel they do not get promoted because they are needed too much where they currently are. They stated that not many higher level positions become available. When available, employees perceive these positions are not given to the best qualified employees.

Recognition: Employees stated they are not recognized for excellent work or getting the job done timely, and they would like some form of recognition. They said the Bureau Chief and senior managers could tell them they are doing a good job, but never do.

HIG notes on February 7, 2006, the March of Dimes awarded the Bureau the Mission Possible Award for the new statewide expansion of newborn screening. This is an example of the many accolades the Bureau gets and the rank and file employees doing the work may not hear about it.

Employees stated management does not recognize them even when they are recognized on the outside. They said Jacksonville BOL staff received the Davis Productivity Award in 2004, saving the state of Florida over \$300,000.00 by training state personnel. They said they were nominated by the Tampa BOL staff, and that upper management did not even recognize this contribution. The employees said they were not notified when they won and did not attend the awards ceremony. They said they did not receive a certificate of their excellent work. Additionally, employees said senior management did not acknowledge employee work in 2001, when the first case of Anthrax was confirmed at the Jacksonville Laboratory.

Conflict Resolution: Employees stated that management does not resolve conflict effectively. Employees said they will not complain because they are afraid of retaliation. They said conflict does not get to Dr. Chan's level because employees feel they may be retaliated against. They have seen good employees quit or be fired. They have been told that if you do not like something, then quit and move on. They also stated that management does not respond to complaints, or responds with inappropriate measures.

When employees bring issues to management, they said they never see a remedy. They said the issues slowly go away without any action taken for correction.

IV.D.2. Miami Laboratory Human Resource Focus

Training: Employees want training locally, even if it is by satellite television. Employees feel they do not receive adequate training and would like to keep up with changing trends in their field. When they do attend training, they must use their own time and pay for the training themselves.

Employees expressed an interest in equal employment opportunity (EEO) training and team building for the Laboratory. They said there are cultural diversity issues that badly need to be resolved at the Laboratory.

Leave and Attendance: Employees expressed that they needed their work hours to be more flexible to allow for crowded traffic conditions in the Miami area. They said colleagues have offered to cover work areas so that the Laboratory will be functional from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Some employees live close to the Laboratory and traffic is not a problem for them. Local management has refused to listen to employee requests for flex time.

Pay Increases: Employees feel they are not paid enough. They feel the state is not competitive with federal and private laboratory pay levels, and even with some state pay levels.

Employees also expressed frustration about the salary scale, and their inability to advance within the current scheme. Employees advised that most, if not all, employees are hired at, or near base salary.

Employee Recognition: Employees feel they do not get recognized for excellent work. They said they would at least like a thank you from their managers, but get nothing. They said they were previously recognized, but not now.

Employees related that under the current scheme, only employees at the Jacksonville Laboratory appear to be acknowledged for outstanding work. They feel that management perceives Miami and Lantana either as non-existent, or that the two laboratories function in a back-up or support role to Jacksonville.

Employees related that previous recognition initiatives have been stopped. They said Employee of the Month stopped years ago, the suggestion box is gone, recognition meetings have stopped, and even monthly birthday celebrations have stopped.

Employee Evaluations: Employees said evaluations are usually late. Some have not received evaluations in over two years. Employees said they are told to sign blank evaluation forms and do not get to see their evaluation ratings when they are actually done. They feel the evaluation will be completed later without their knowledge and may not be accurate. They said this situation is further complicated by cultural barriers, such as language.

Conflict Resolution: Employees stated conflicts get dealt with, but NOT resolved. They said local management will penalize the entire office for the mistakes of a few. They said local management never deals with the real issues and prefers to focus on process changes. They said people get moved around without cause or need. They said local management is blame-oriented and does not focus on problem solving.

Employees also perceived management favoritism toward some employees, making the work environment difficult for the other employees. They feel that some employees are not disciplined and allowed to violate personnel policies, such as the attendance policy. These employees do not appear to be penalized for coming late or leaving early. Employees also feel management will hear one side of a story without hearing all sides, then will make a decision based on the one side.

Employees expressed that there is a real need for team building within the Miami Laboratory. Older employees appeared set in their ways and new employees want change. An effort to bridge the gap between employees and build real teams is currently lacking. Employees stated that an independent human resource person could help resolve some of the long-standing issues and perpetual conflict that exists in the Miami Laboratory.

IV.D.3. Lantana Human Resource Focus

Training: Employees desire to participate in training, but are not able to do so. While cross-training is being done in most laboratories, employees in one laboratory are not able to benefit from cross-training. The practice of some employees being cross-trained and not others appears unfair.

Employees have requested Molecular Testing training, but have not been approved to receive training. A supervisor has expressed willingness to conduct the training, but management has not cleared the supervisor to do so. Employees feel this is unfair.

Pay Increases: Employees want higher pay. They stated it is expensive to live in Palm Beach County. They often have to take on two jobs or live with roommates. Employees expressed frustration about the salary scale, and the inability to advance within the current scheme.

Employee Recognition: Employees feel they do not get recognized for excellent work. They said they would like written recognition, bonuses, or some type of encouragement. They said they currently receive recognition for years of service, birthdays, and anniversaries. They said only senior management receive bonus and rewards. They only receive verbal encouragement from supervisors only.

Bureau-wide, employees related that under the current scheme, only employees at the Miami Laboratory are acknowledged. Employee perception is that Lantana is either a branch of Miami or attached to A.G. Holley. Under either scenario, they lack an identity and typically fail to receive appropriate recognition.

Conflict Resolution: Employees described an environment in which management ignores complaints and conflict, and does not listen to all sides of a dispute. They stated that members of the management team can be confrontational and that the Director is aware of this problem. They stated Dr. Shipra Dutta is trying to implement positive change at the Laboratory, but does not appear to be supported by the Director. They feel an encouraging and supportive atmosphere is much needed at the Laboratory, and Dr. Dutta wants to create this type of atmosphere.

IV.D.4. Management Comments

Dr. Ming Chan ^{Exhibit 9}: Dr. Chan said he cannot spend money because spending authority is not there. He said he has to juggle funds. He said he wants to pay new people a little more for what the market will bear.

Dr. Chan said he cannot upgrade current employees because of no money. He is mostly limited by rate and appropriation each year.

Dr. Peter Shih ^{Exhibit 10}: Dr. Shih, Director of the Miami Laboratory, said to recognize employees, he gives job well done statements and verbal acknowledgements. He said there is a PAR process through the BOL. He said one or two employees are nominated for a lump sum of money. He works through the supervisors for the nominations. He also goes through supervisors to get names for certificates.

Dr. Shih said more professional development is needed for employees. He said now, employees must pay for their own continuing education units (CEUs).

Dr. Shih said he needs more money for salaries to make the laboratory more competitive to the industry. Laboratory salaries are lower than the private sector and the federal agencies, such as CDC.

Dr. Shih said personnel issues go to the office in Jacksonville. He said Miami had a problem with attendance and falsifying time. He said he instituted a sign in and out log since the Anthrax event. He said employees were not entering time correctly. He said he went back a year to check time from the log to determine how employees were entering time. He said eight employees were not entering time correctly.

Dr. Roberta Lopez ^{Exhibit 11}: Dr. Lopez said she attempted to get lab staff high risk duty pay and status because the work they do with A.G. Holley patients. She said she was not successful because the risk was not deemed high enough.

Dr. Lopez said a couple of years ago, Dr. Chan developed a PAR Committee to decide pay increases. The committee faded away, but is now being resurrected. She said last year, Dr. Chan said the laboratory could give one person a merit increase. She got two nominations on Ms. Mary Cook and no one else. She said Ms. Cook received the merit raise.

Dr. Lopez said peer evaluations were done for merit pay based upon legislative mandate. Employees who scored highest on the peer evaluations got raises.

Dr. Lopez said she has also made other efforts to recognize employees. She has given out certificates to employees for good work and years of service. She said they have parties every two months, and, occasionally, they have cultural activities with food, and other things. She said they put recognition on the board for different staff.

Dr. Lopez said she and Ms. Zita Vankus, her administrative assistant, handle employee complaints. She said the employee is requested to write the incident down and explain what happened. She said if needed, she refers the employee complaint back to the immediate supervisor, or she may meet with the employee and supervisor. Also, she will contact Linda Boutwell, the BOL personnel officer in Jacksonville.

Dr. Lopez said there will never be total contentment. Employees are not as happy as they could be. For internal promotions, she said she posts positions on the board in the library. She said many of the higher positions do not have personnel leaving. The positions that turn over are lower paying and employees would not be interested in these lower positions.

IV.D.5. Independent Review of Documents and Records

Attendance and Leave: According to a policy memorandum from Dr. Ming Chan to all BOL employees, dated September 1, 2005, tardiness is considered arriving anytime after the beginning of the work schedule and employees are subject to discipline for failure to follow established work schedules ^{Exhibit 18}. The memorandum states further that employees cannot be charged for the tardiness unless they are eight or more minutes late. Time is charged in the State Personnel System in increments of 15 minutes and is rounded to the nearest quarter hour. Therefore, employees who are seven minutes or less tardy do not have to charge the time to their timesheets. This is called the “Seven Minute Rule.”

A review of a Miami Laboratory Interoffice Memorandum, dated September 17, 2004, disclosed that thirty three employees acknowledged the intent of the tardiness policy by signing and dating the letter ^{Exhibit 19}. Employees were put on notice that tardiness of seven minutes or greater would require the employee to count the time as leave. Additionally, the employee would be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Training: A random sample of 25 training records in BOL were reviewed ^{Exhibit 20}. Two of the records were missing required DOH HIPAA training documentation, and six records were missing the mandatory workplace violence training. Laboratory safety training documentation could also not be found and there was no evidence provided that a safety training plan had been developed and instituted. BOL currently does not have a Safety Officer, whose responsibility would include tracking and maintaining a record of all employee training. Files are currently being maintained by an OPS employee.

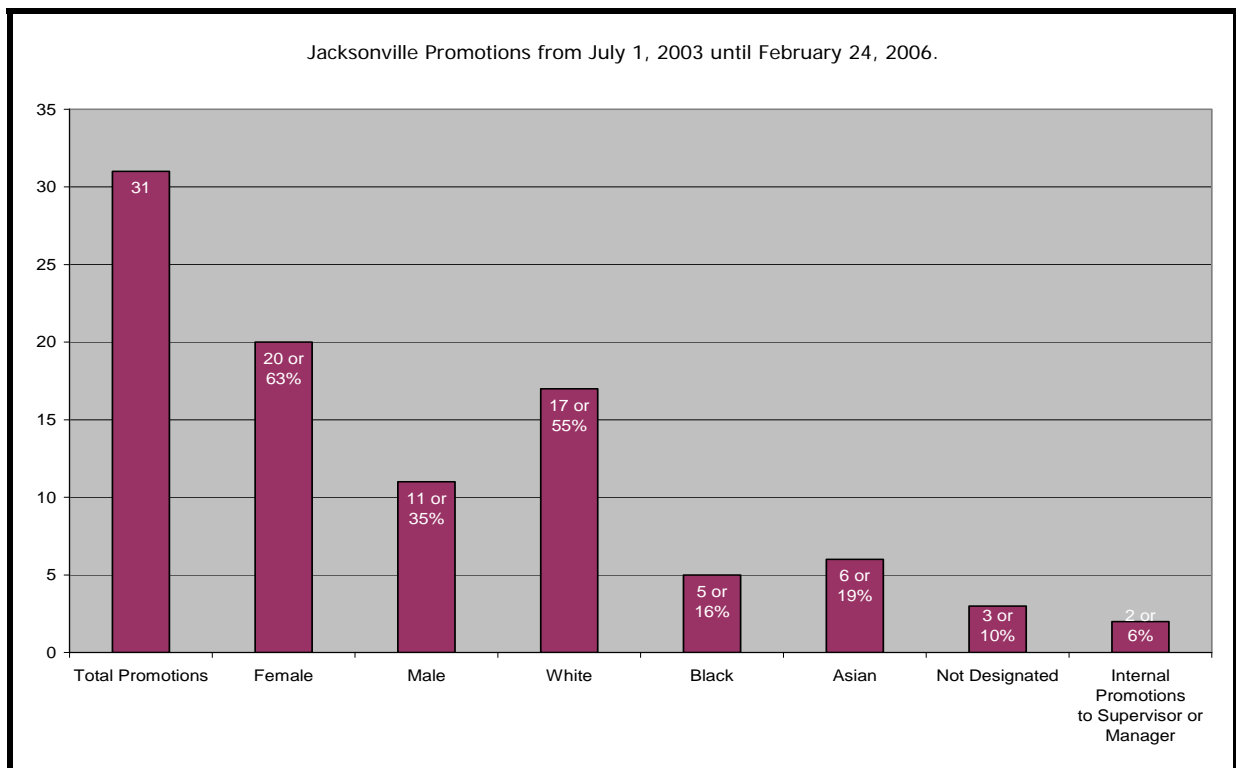
The BOL OPS employee provided a list showing travel expenses for scientific meetings and training ^{Exhibit 21}. Thirty-three employees were listed as attending scientific meetings and 29 employees were listed as attending training. Of employees attending scientific meetings, 14 were supervisory or management based upon the BOL Organization Tables. Of employees attending training, nine were supervisory or management based upon the BOL Organization Tables. The Tables were updated February 1, 2006.

In Lantana, employee certifications and copies of on-going continuing education courses were included in most of the personnel files reviewed ^{Exhibit 22}. However, the majority of these certifications and courses dated back to 2004.

Promotional Opportunities: Based upon position vacancy information obtained from the current BOL Organization Tables, provided by BOL management, HIG found there were a total of 31 vacant positions in the Jacksonville Laboratory ^{Exhibit 23}. Of these 31 positions, 20 positions could be considered promotional opportunities because they

represented higher steps in a class (Medical Laboratory Scientist II and III, and Chemist II) or positions of responsibility at higher pay levels (QA Officers, Biological Administrator IIIs, and Safety Officer). Management indicated some positions required certifications that some current employees would need to obtain before they could be considered.

HIG reviewed personnel data from the headquarter Bureau of Human Resource Management ^{Exhibit 24}. This data was for all BOL at Jacksonville employees, dating from FY 2003-2004 to February 24, 2006. The data showed gender diversity and some race diversity. The data showed that internal promotions to management are rare and almost non-existent. The HIG found a total of 32 promotions. Twenty of these promotions were to females. In terms of race, 17 went to whites, six went to Asians, and five went to blacks. Two employees received an internal promotion to a supervisor or manager. The following chart illustrates this data.

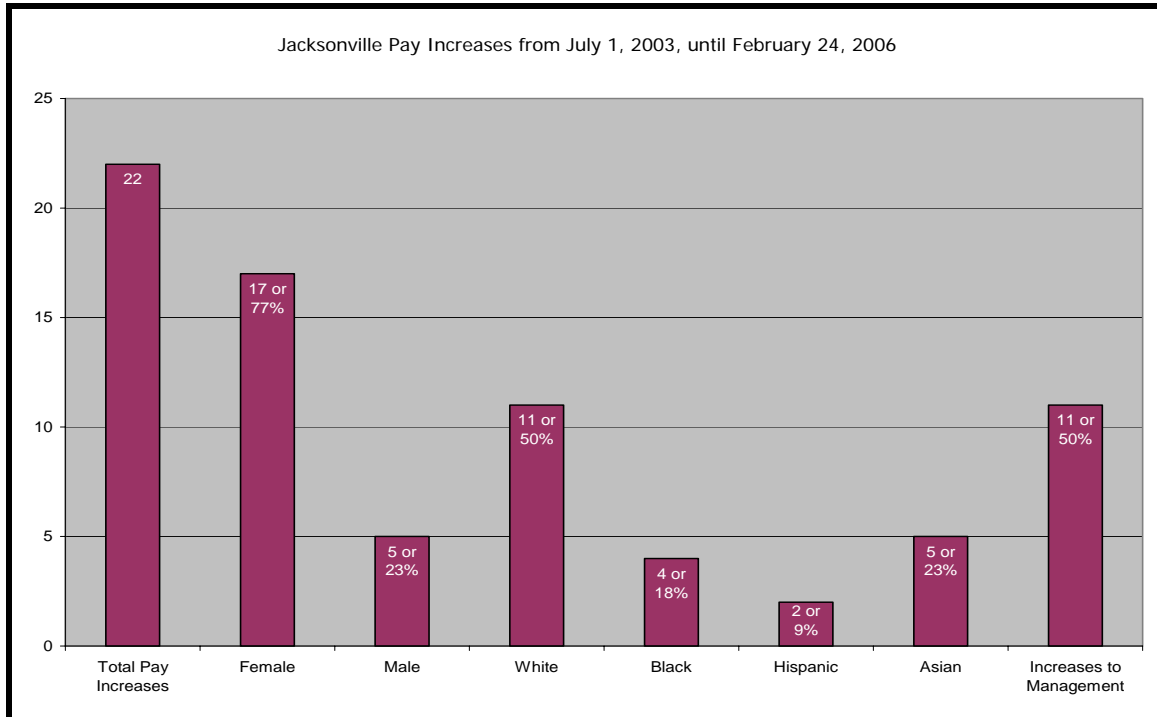


Pay Increases: According to documentation about the Personnel Action Request (PAR) Committee, BOL had a process for determining pay increases ^{Exhibit 25}. Supervisors and managers would nominate employees for reclassifications (CY 2000), superior proficiency (CY 2001), pay equity adjustments (CY 2002), lump sum bonuses (CY 2004), and position upgrades and pay adjustments (CY 2004).

More recent actions were done through email. An email, dated May 11, 2005, showed BOL having \$22,000 for pay increases and the Bureau Chief instructing the Administrative Services Director to ask each Laboratory Director to nominate someone for an increase ^{Exhibit 26}. An email from Regina Taylor, Administrative Services Director, dated February 2, 2006, requested managers to submit nominations for pay increases

Exhibit 26. Jacksonville managers were requested to submit 15 nominations, Lantana 1 nomination, Miami 2 nominations, Pensacola 1 nomination, and Tampa 2 nominations. The email instructed the managers to include justification for the increases and when to process the PAR.

The HIG reviewed personnel data for pay increases for the period of FY 2003 – 2004 until February 24, 2006 **Exhibit 24.** This data showed half of all raises went to management. The data reflected gender diversity, and some race and ethnic diversity. The following chart illustrates this data.



Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Complaints and Grievances: The HIG found four complaints of discrimination filed with the EEO Office **Exhibit 27.** Three of the complaints were filed in 2004. One was filed in 2005. Three of the complaints failed due to complainant not filing a lawsuit or not meeting the 15 day time limit after Division of Administrative Hearing (DOAH) Dismissal Final Order. One of the cases was dismissed due to finding of “No Reasonable Cause.”

A written rebuttal letter from the Miami Laboratory director to Dr. Chan, the Equal Opportunity and Minority Health Office, and the Risk Management Officer, dated February 25, 2005, addressed the fact that the Miami location does not have a trained, dedicated Human Resources person **Exhibit 28.** The letter indicated that an individual assigned to the Jacksonville Laboratory is the designated point of contact.

The HIG found three employee grievances, all filed in 2003 **Exhibit 29.** Two grievances involved requests for pay increases. One grievance involved a request for reversal of personnel disciplinary action. Since 2003, no grievance complaints have been filed at

BOL Jacksonville. The HIG notes that grievances have been filed at the Miami and Lantana locations since 2003, and that employees at Jacksonville expressed during the interviews that they are afraid to file grievances because they feel management will retaliate against them.

Employee Recognition: No current BOL awards program documentation was found. The HIG did find documentation of previous awards programs that could be utilized in developing a current awards program. The DOH Image Awards rewarded behaviors and work efforts on a point rating scale ^{Exhibit 30}. Employees received points for perfect attendance, volunteerism, and work unit productivity. An awards nomination form was completed and submitted to the Rewards and Recognition Committee. The HIG identified an email message, dated March 5, 2001, documenting this process ^{Exhibit 30}.

The HIG identified an old Employee of the Month form, which was used to solicit monthly nominations at the Jacksonville Laboratory ^{Exhibit 31}. This form had to be turned in the 25th of each month, and featured the employee's name, the nominator's position number, and a brief description to support the employee's nomination.

In Lantana, management provided a document on the Meritorious Service Awards Program ^{Exhibit 32}. This award was granted to Ms. Mary King, Assistant Director. Additionally, in the random sample of employee files, the HIG viewed three files that had employee recognition. Of the three employees recognized, one was a certificate from 2000, one was a merit increase for 2003, and the last certificate was for 14 Years of Service given in 2005 ^{Exhibit 33}.

Performance Evaluations: A review of Miami Laboratory personnel folders disclosed that an employee was briefed and informed of their performance expectations ^{Exhibit 34}. The file did not contain any subsequent required annual evaluations. To date, the employee appears to not have any break in service.

A review of a signed Miami Laboratory Performance and Evaluation Review Form (PER) disclosed that the employee signed and dated the form in the Final Evaluation Section. Another PER, signed and dated three months prior to the employee's signature date, by a supervisor, indicated that an actual performance evaluation took place. The employee received one "Meets Expectations." The remainder of the ratings indicated that the employee needed improvement or performed below expectations ^{Exhibit 34}.

Another Miami Laboratory employee file denoted that the PER was correctly signed by the employee in the planning section. However, there does not appear to have been any follow-up evaluation ^{Exhibit 34}.

The last Miami Laboratory employee file reviewed denoted a blank PER dated for the current evaluation period. The planning section contained the employee's signature but did not contain a supervisor's signature ^{Exhibit 34}.

In Lantana, HIG staff pulled a sample of employee personnel files ^{Exhibit 35}. These files revealed that performance evaluations for employees are substantially behind.

Approximately 90% of files reflected evaluations were overdue from 6 months to 2 years. Also, 90% of files were missing employee work plans.

IV.D.5. Recommendations

5. **Bureau management should assess individual personnel issues at each laboratory based upon the findings of this report, and take the appropriate action to resolve these issues.**
6. **Bureau management should institute an employee recognition system bureau-wide and task each laboratory director with implementing the employee recognition system at his or her laboratory.**
7. **Bureau management should review employee evaluation practices, and ensure adherence to the DOH employee performance evaluation process at DOHP 60-22-02.**
8. **Bureau management should promote innovative and cost effective training opportunities for all BOL employees through the use of technology, and ensure that current staff has been properly trained in all facets of their positions.**
9. **Bureau management should institute uniform policies for orientation of all new employees to include, but not be limited to, safety policies and practices. Further, bureau management should require annual updates for training on safety policies and practices for all employees.**

IV.E. Process Management

Employees expressed that there is a lack of uniformity in how each laboratory performed its work. Employees also expressed concerns about how unhealthy and unsafe conditions in the Jacksonville and Miami Laboratories are impacting work flow and employee productivity.

IV.E.1. Jacksonville Laboratory Process Management

Policy and Procedure: Employees expressed that there is a lack of uniformity with policy and standards in all laboratories. They said accounting functions are being handled by laboratory personnel who have to take time away from their regular duties. They said the laboratory functions in crisis management mode, and the laboratory is not proactive to the issues.

Employees expressed that there is no policy to assist a new employee to understand laboratory functions. Also, there is no uniformity among laboratories with new employee orientation.

Employees stated a new billing system is needed. They said the current system is old and needs to be replaced. They said management found a new billing system, but BOL has no funds to buy it.

Employees stated work is routinely assigned to an individual without the necessary job skills to successfully complete the task. They said projects are not assigned based on skill and knowledge.

Employees stated there is no one in place to monitor new employee requirements in meeting the vaccine program. There is also no one in place to ensure new employees understand safety procedures.

Employees said management is not addressing the courier service delivering specimen samples late. They said deliveries after 10:00 a.m. result in a one day delay in processing specimen samples because the testing must begin before 10:00 a.m. to be successfully completed the same day.

Health and Equipment: Employees stated the buildings have mold, dampness, deteriorating walls and ceilings, and poor heating. The Hardy building and the first floor of the Hanson building have mold problems and water leaking into the buildings through the ceiling. Exposed ceiling areas where tiles have fallen are numerous. A large trash can stays in a walkway to collect water coming from the ceiling. Ceiling tiles will drop due to wetness or deterioration onto laboratory areas spilling contaminated water onto equipment, causing the need to replace damaged items. Mold is growing from electrical sockets, falling from air vents, and spreading on the interior brick wall on the 2nd Floor of the Hardy Building.

Additionally, employees stated mold was previously found on the ceiling on the 1st floor of the Hanson building. All of the moldy ceiling tiles in Hanson were removed. However, the ceiling was never replaced and remained exposed during the HIG site visit the week of February 6, 2006. Many puddles of water were found on the first floor laboratory of the Hanson Building, causing wood rot in walls and rust on the floor.

Building Problems and Absence of a Safety Officer: There were several other problems with the buildings that employees identified. They stated the third floor is uncomfortably cold. The Maintenance Office is understaffed, and does not resolve the many maintenance related problems throughout the buildings. Employees indicated they had respiratory problems and some were on medication. They said some areas have broken equipment. In Environmental Chemistry, a walk-in cooler on the 4th floor has remained broken for over a year, making it necessary to carry carts of samples down to the 3rd floor walk-in cooler that is already overcrowded. This transporting happens several times a day, and adds to the processing of the samples. The elevator in the Porter building is broken, requiring a handicapped employee to be carried in and out of the building on occasion. There is no emergency plan in place to assist this employee. Power to the buildings routinely goes off in good weather. Climate control is lacking, resulting in some areas being very hot and others areas being too cold. Employees speculate the temperature extremes may be the cause of the large amounts of mold. There is no Safety Officer in place to help address some of the identified problems. The position was vacant during the February 6th HIG site visit.

IV.E.2. Miami Laboratory Process Management

Process Flow: Employees expressed the Miami Laboratory needs to be fully computerized to receive and send samples. They said most laboratories currently utilize automation to handle their sample orders.

Unhealthy Work Environment: Employees stated the building is under construction and dust becomes a problem from time to time. Recently, all employees had to evacuate the building because an alarm went off due to construction dust. Construction has been going on for two years.

Other building problems include missing ceiling tiles, patchy mold in some places, and no hot water in the Winter. Employees said there are intermittent maintenance problems with the air-conditioning unit. They said the lunch room is directly next to the Gonorrhea and Syphilis laboratory area, causing employees to worry about the lunch room area becoming contaminated. They said the key to the AIDS file cabinet is left on top of the cabinet at night, posing potential patient privacy concerns. They said the Rabies table and tools are 34 years old. The Rabies table is stained with dried blood and is perceived as an unsafe environment to work in. They said the solution to the blood stained table is to use metal or plastic table tops for the testing, instead of porous wood that absorbs blood.

IV.E.3. Lantana Laboratory Process Management

Work Process Issues: Employees stated the normal standard at the laboratory is to process everything that comes in that day. They said some specimen samples cannot be tested after 10 a.m. The delivery service will sometimes bring specimen samples late after 10 a.m. and testing is delayed until the next day. They said late delivery is a problem and should be handled by management.

Employees expressed a desire to be better utilized at the laboratory based upon their skills and abilities, but employees indicated management has not been receptive to this type of professional growth. Employees stated there is a fear of retribution for speaking up regarding their concerns. They said that administration was not open to new concepts and ideas on laboratory procedures.

Employees reported the TB Unit is using cardboard boxes to hold specimens because they do not have the necessary proper containers while they wait for possible growth. They use boxes in which other supplies come packaged.

Employees stated only the Assistant Director can fix IT issues at the Laboratory. If she is out, employees cannot input laboratory work. Alternatively, employees said they must contact Jacksonville for assistance.

Building and Safety Issues: Employees stated the boilers are old, outdated, rusted, and patched routinely. They said the air-conditioning units were taken from an older building in Tampa and the units were not large enough when installed. They said the Lantana Laboratory needs new units installed to adequately cool the building, and to control the mold that is actively growing in the building. Employees also said the roof has numerous patches and needs to be replaced to keep water out.

Employees said they have to work alone Saturdays and Sundays. On Saturdays, employees said they rotate and work late after dark. They said there is no working light or security in the work area, and employees feel they are in an unsafe and isolated

situation. They said the security guard at A.G. Holley Hospital occasionally comes over to the laboratory, but employees feel this may not be enough should a dangerous situation arise.

IV.E.4. Management Comments

Dr. Ming Chan ^{Exhibit 9}: Dr. Chan said he was aware the buildings needed fixing, but he cannot fix the buildings unless repairs are in the budget category. He said OCO is another issue. He said BOL cannot get enough tools and other equipment. He said the Lantana roof was hit by a hurricane, but FEMA will not pay for the repairs.

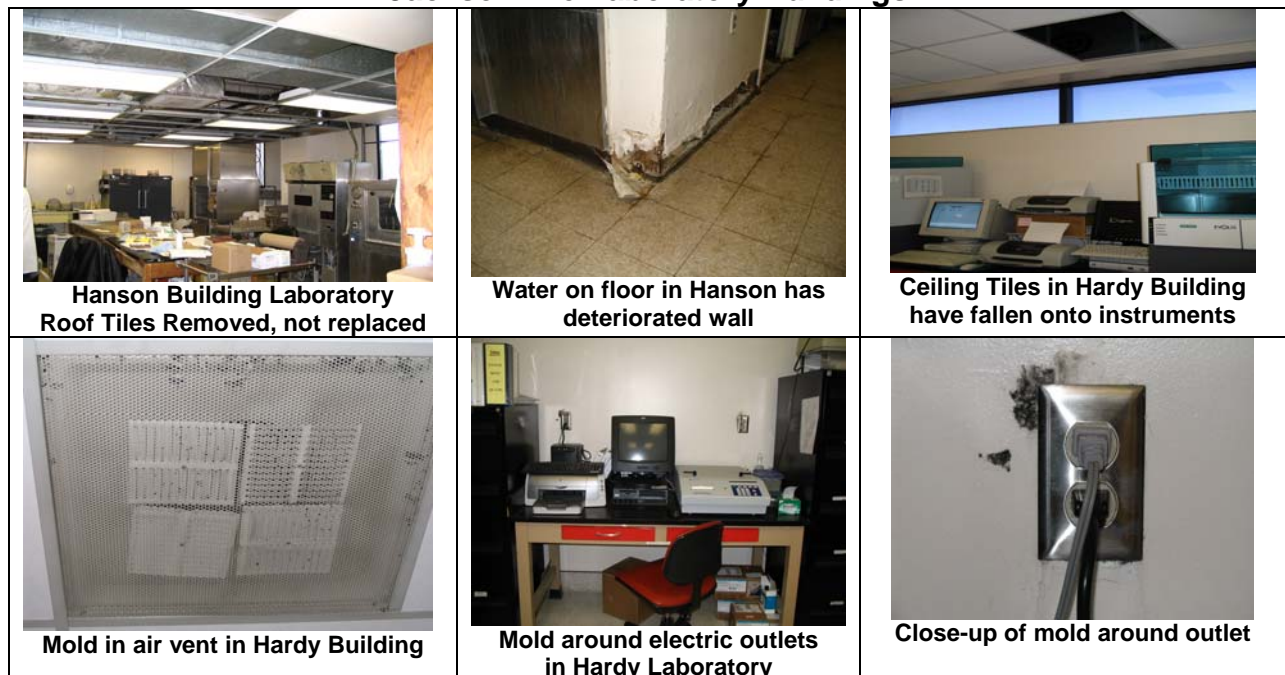
Dr. Peter Shih ^{Exhibit 10}: Dr. Shih said he is working on renovations to the building. He said the 3rd Floor is being renovated, but they have run out of money.

Dr. Roberta Lopez ^{Exhibit 11}: Dr. Lopez said there are concerns about safety on weekends. She said the Rabies and TB work is on Saturday. She said Sunday is just Rabies work. She said the problem is one person works alone on Saturday. She said she has provided each employee with weekend duty a cell phone. She said telephones also ring throughout the building. She said the A.G. Holley guard knows they are working alone and he will check on them.

IV.E.5. Independent Review of Records and Documents

The HIG team conducted an empirical walk-through of all laboratory facilities visited and verified the building health and safety issues expressed by employees. The following pictorial of selected HIG photographs illustrates what the team witnessed.

Jacksonville Laboratory Buildings



Jacksonville Laboratory: The HIG obtained an email, dated February 28, 2006, that advised the 4th Floor cooler at Jacksonville was broken, resulting in the loss of 400 specimen samples ^{Exhibit 36}. The HIG team observed during its February site visit the broken elevator and could not, in fact, transport a supply case of materials without going to the Bureau of Vital Statistics building, which had restricted access to the Bureau of Laboratories building. The door had to be unlocked on both sides. The team observed visible mold on a window air conditioning unit, on the laboratory walls, and on the air vents. The team saw a broken toilet that had been removed and discarded in the corner of the bathroom. The HIG team observed the Medical Laboratory ceiling remained un-repaired and open with exposed piping, wires, and insulation. The HIG team observed both the Hardy and Porter buildings have visible mold and water leaking into the laboratory areas where employees are conducting tests. The HIG team saw trash cans inside the laboratory to collect water leakage.

The HIG reviewed the environmental inspection report summary from Lipsey & Associates, Inc., dated February 21, 2005, on the mold and air quality ^{Exhibit 37}. The report confirmed the Jacksonville Laboratory has significant mold levels in excess of the acceptable levels for immunocompromised individuals. The problem areas noted include both the Porter and Hardy buildings. This report cites the buildings must have water intrusion problems that resulted in the mold build up.

The HIG was provided a comments report, dated February 24, 2006, detailing an action plan to address the mold issues from the Lipsey & Associates report ^{Exhibit 38}. This report is dated a full year after the original findings, and does not address possible roof leakage or airconditioning problems in the Hardy building, that could cause large amounts of mold and ceiling leaks.

Miami Laboratory Buildings



Miami Laboratory: The HIG team observed at the Miami Laboratory a blood-stained wood table in the Rabies Room that has absorbed blood and smells badly. The team also observed the renovation on the 3rd floor, which was to have a new Rabies Room. The HIG understands the 3rd floor renovation has stalled due to lack of money.

The team observed problems with the exterior of the laboratory building. The team observed structural problems with visible cracking along the exterior walls. Also, the building still has a large boarded window from the past hurricane season.

On the interior of the building, the HIG team observed visible mold on the walls and on the equipment. There is also water leakage into the receiving section of the laboratory where specimen intake occurs.

Lantana Laboratory



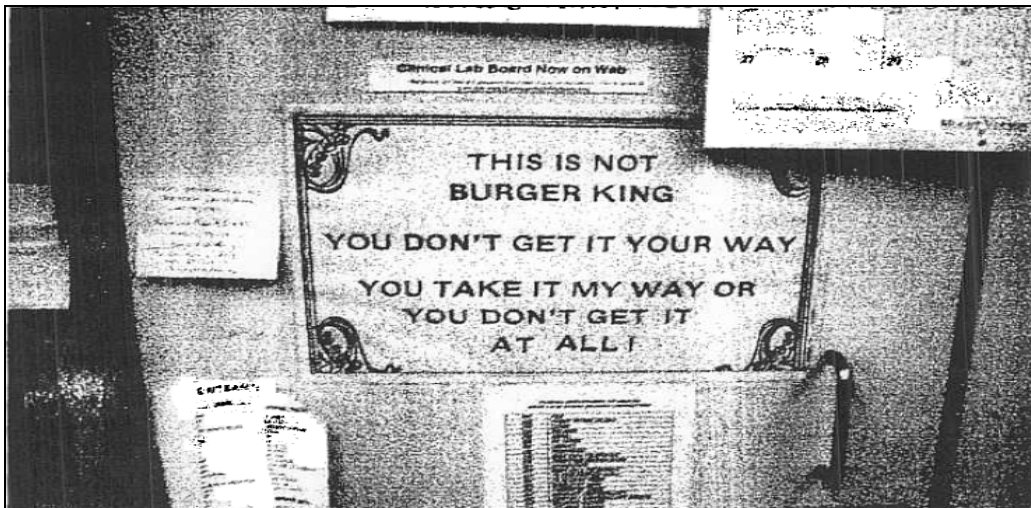
Lantana Laboratory: During its March 1st site visit, the HIG team reviewed policy and procedure files and records at the Lantana Laboratory, including files on safety orientation for new employees and on the internally conducted 2005 program review.

According to the document, entitled “Safety Orientation for New Employees,” the Lantana Laboratory has developed a program of training and retraining for all employees on safety techniques to be utilized during routine work activities ^{Exhibit 39}. The document explains that potentially harmful accidents can occur in a laboratory setting, and guides employees through precautions that will keep them safe. Precautions include use of safety clothing and protective devices, and the importance of following proper testing procedures.

The HIG reviewed the 2005 Management Review Report, dated March 17, 2005, and written by Dr. Roberta Lopez ^{Exhibit 40}. This report details corrective actions taken to comply with proficiency testing requirements, as provided in Section 64E-1.106, F.A.C.

The HIG obtained documents that showed the Assistant Director with negative comments toward laboratory staff's suggestions ^{Exhibit 41}. In an email, dated February 6, 2005, the Assistant Director stated in response to an employee suggestion about scheduling that, "...why are we trying to give any credence to these kinds of non-sensible reasons..." The Assistant Director further stated that if the Director wanted the employee making the suggestion to take over as the Assistant Director, the employee would have to "...get the proper licenses, work in all the departments, stay late to finish all that needed attention. Above all, maybe he can also run the entire Bureau of Laboratory (or maybe even as high as the legislators), because, to do it the way he wants to do, he would have to have the control of hiring, firing, budgets, and etc."

The HIG team obtained a posted directive in the Serology Department, where the Assistant Director is the supervisor, making reference to Burger King. The directive read, "This is not Burger King. You don't get it your way. You take it my way, or you don't get it at all!"



Burger King Directive in Serology Department

The HIG team observed and photographed at the Lantana Laboratory the old equipment and the mold growing inside the Laboratory. The team observed the TB unit is currently using cardboard boxes to hold specimens, and found the unit uses these boxes because it does not have the proper containers.

IV.E.6. Recommendations

- 10. DOH and BOL management should identify all available fixed capital outlay and operating capital outlay funding allocated to BOL, and secure the necessary spending authority to access these funds for the purpose of building repair, renovation, mold/mildew eradication, and equipment replacement.**
- 11. BOL management should prioritize key process requirements, such as the hiring of a Safety Officer and the acquisition of a new billing system.**
- 12. BOL management should resolve the issue of late courier deliveries resulting in delayed specimen testing.**

IV.F. Organizational Performance Results

Employees at every Laboratory location indicated they were not aware of a mechanism for measuring customer satisfaction. They said as far as their work was concerned, they measured it according to the internal standards by which they operated. The general rule was that tests had to be completed the same day specimen samples were received. Employees stated they were able to meet this standard, unless the specimen samples had to be sent to another Laboratory for testing, or unless the courier service was late delivering the specimen samples.

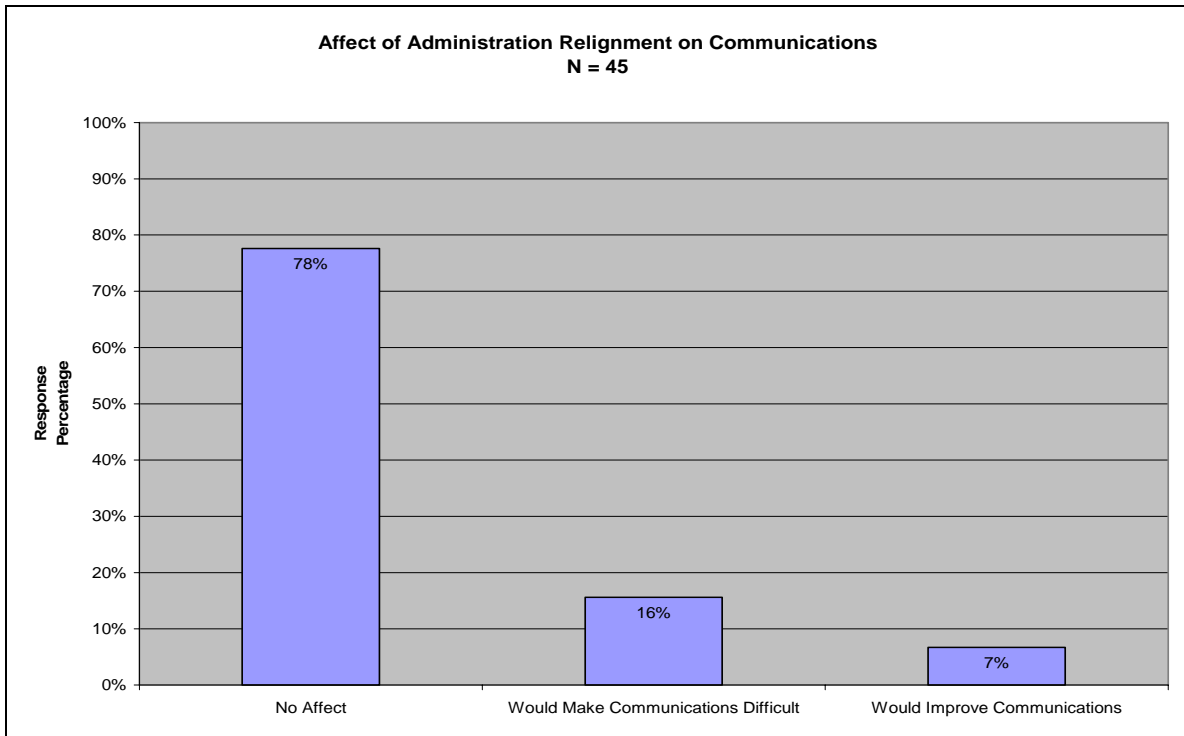
The HIG conducted its own customer survey and received highly favorable perceptions of the BOL in terms of timeliness of service and overall quality of service. Findings appear below.

IV.F.1. Stakeholder Survey Results Exhibit 42

The Stakeholder Survey was distributed by email to 60 CHD Directors and Administrators, representing all 67 county health departments. Some Directors and/or Administrators provided leadership to more than one county health department. CHDs are the major stakeholder group for BOL because they routinely utilize BOL services for testing of specimen samples. Of the 60 CHD contacts made, 45 or 75% completed and returned the survey.

Stakeholders had a very positive image of BOL. The majority of survey respondents indicated that BOL timeliness and service quality were good to excellent. The majority of respondents were aware of the retirement of the Bureau Chief and felt moving BOL administration to Tallahassee would have little to no affect on communications with the CHDs. Respondents indicated that the most important issue to them was timeliness and accuracy of laboratory test results, followed by communications with laboratory personnel.

Bureau Chief Retirement and Administrative Realignment: The majority (28 or 62%) of respondents indicated they were aware of the Bureau Chief's retirement and they knew about the proposal to move BOL administration to Tallahassee. Regarding how the move to Tallahassee would affect communications with the CHDs, 35 or 77.6% of respondents said the move would have no affect on communications; 7 or 15.6% said the move would make communications difficult; and 3 or 6.7% said the move would improve communications.

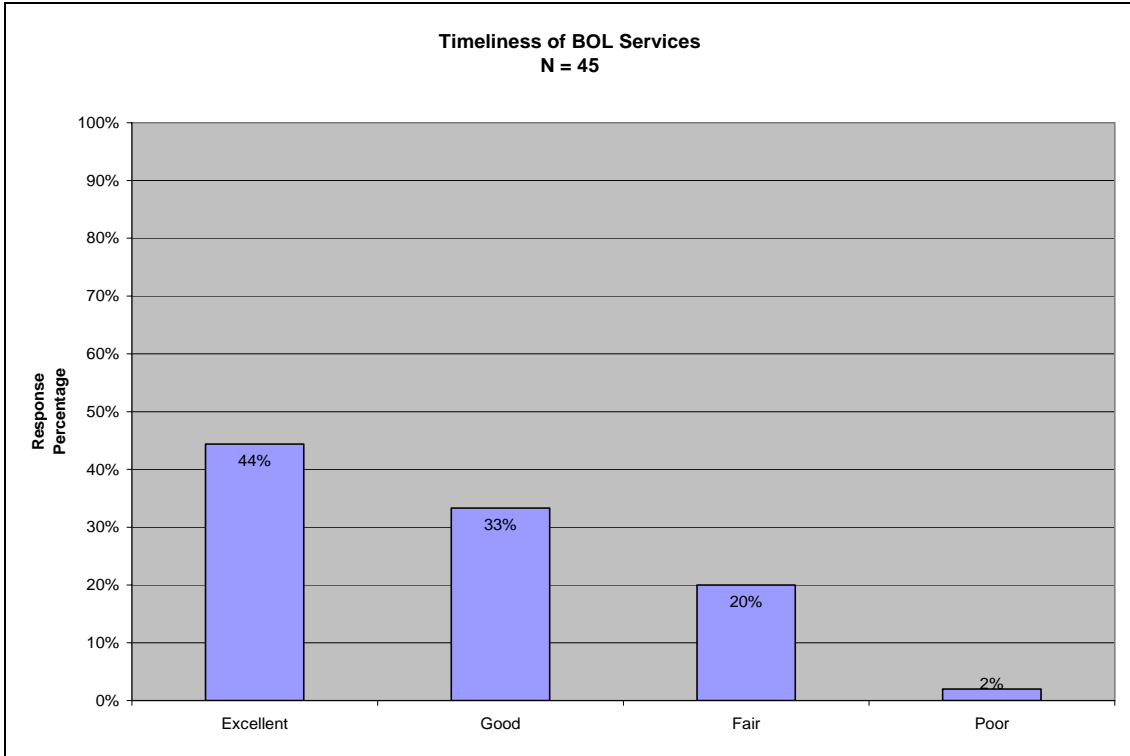


Priority Issues for CHDs: The survey respondents provided a priority order of issues from a list of choices that included: CHD/Bureau Relations; Timeliness and Accuracy of Lab Test Results; Hours of Lab Services; Communications with Lab Personnel; Training and Skill Enhancement of Lab Personnel; Experience and Longevity of Lab Personnel; Physical Condition of Lab Buildings; Up-to-date Testing Facilities; and Value of Lab Services. The top four issues appear below.

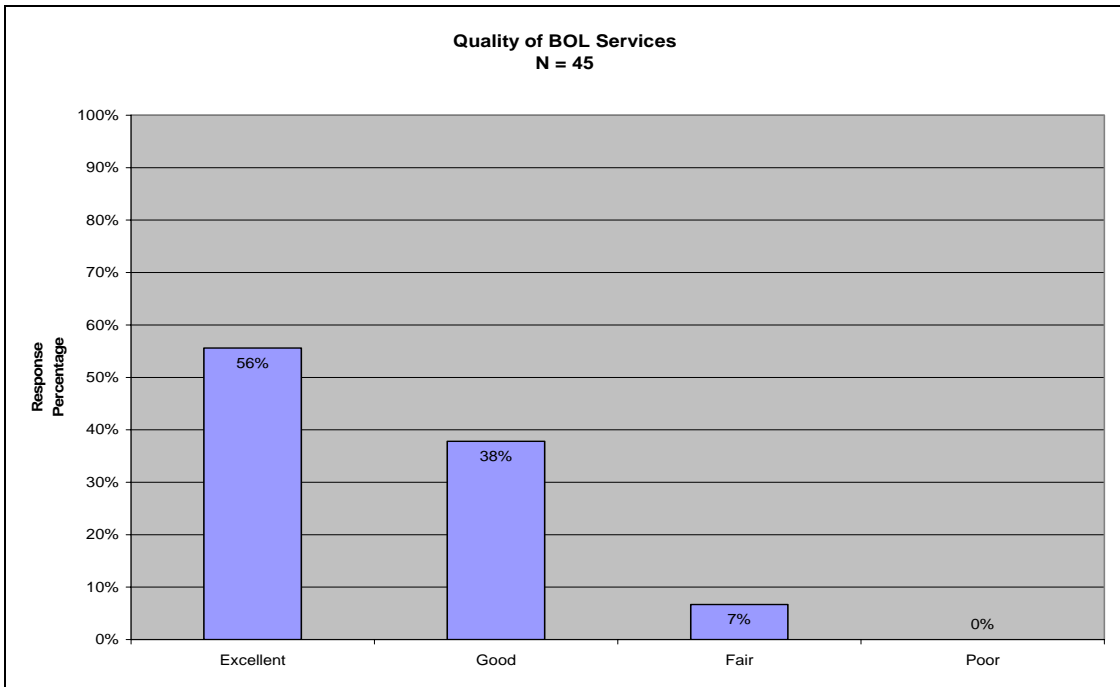
CHD TOP FOUR BOL PRIORITIES

Level of Priority	BOL Issue
First	Timeliness and accuracy of lab test results
Second	Communications with lab personnel
Third	CHD/Bureau Relations
Fourth	Up-to-date testing facilities

Quality of Services: Respondents were pleased with BOL services. The majority (77.7%) of respondents said the BOL's timeliness was good (15 or 33.3%) or excellent (20 or 44.4%). Nine (20%) said timeliness was fair and one (2%) said timeliness was poor.



The majority of respondents said BOL overall quality was excellent (25 or 55.6%). Seventeen (38%) said overall quality was good. Three (6.7%) said overall quality was fair.



Focus on Next Six Months: Respondents were asked to provide strategic action items for BOL for the next six months. These items were then placed in the order of importance for implementation as the respondents expressed. The top five responses follow.

**Strategic Action Items
For Implementation in Next Six Months**

Order of Implementation	Action Item
First	Update technology and facilities; and improve lab infrastructure.
Second	Improve communications between BOL and CHDs.
Third	Ensure timeliness and accuracy of lab results.
Fourth	Focus on organizational development of present lab structure.
Fifth	Emphasize quality of new leadership and continuing leadership.

Additional Comments: Several respondents provided additional comments worth noting here. These comments focus on service and organizational issues.

- Automate services such that they could transact Lab business online.
- Protect BOL from privatization because loss of capability to respond through laboratory services would be detrimental to public health in Florida in future disasters.
- DOH should actively seek funding to coordinate a statewide system for BOL, thus alleviating the problem of Labs not communicating effectively.
- Removing the Bureau Chief from a laboratory setting could jeopardize the relationship with staff and the flow of information. A strong administrator is needed in Jacksonville.
- BOL is progressive when considering new tests and should continue pursuing grants.

IV.F.2. Recommendations

13. BOL management should monitor and document performance results.

14. DOH and BOL management should incorporate CHD director and administrator priorities and action items expressed in this report into the BOL strategic and transition plans, and develop strategies to implement the priorities and actions.

IV.G. Other

Employees expressed concerns about morale and cultural sensitivity. They also indicated that the BOL should work to prevent business from going to private laboratories.

IV.G.1. Jacksonville Laboratory Other

Morale: Employees stated morale was poor because they feel undervalued and unappreciated. They have to work in deplorable conditions and are overlooked for promotions and pay increases. They feel the Bureau Chief does not know what they do and is not interested in finding out. They said morale and retention of employees has been affected by non-communication and unresponsive management to needs and supply requests. They said morale is also affected when one manager speaks condescendingly about another manager. Employees often hear this “bad mouthing.”

IV.G.2. Miami Laboratory Other

Cultural Sensitivity: Some employees stated that management is not culturally sensitive. The Hispanic employees said they have customs and traditions that are overlooked or ignored. They said management is not fair with them and, often, does not understand their position on matters.

Employees expressed a sense of distrust and intolerance, both among workers and management. They said a perceived, or actual, division between cultures and or nationality contributes to some of the stress. They said customs from other counties are not understood, and even language can become a barrier among employees, and between employees and management. Employees said an EEO Office with someone in the region to deal with EEO issues would help their situation.

Morale: Employee morale is fair to poor. The employees said they would feel better about their job if they could, at least, receive the training they want. They are willing to do training online or over satellite broadcasts. They said they cannot keep up with changes in their professions, and training could help them improve productivity.

Employees under contract expressed the most satisfaction with their employment at the BOL. Although working side by side with non-contract employees, their outlook was positive and they expressed good morale.

IV.G.3. Lantana Laboratory Other

Private Laboratories: Employees requested the new bureau chief advocate to keep laboratory work at the state labs and not outsourced to private labs. They also want to know why the prisons have contracts with private laboratories, instead of doing business with the state laboratories.

IV.G.4. Management Comments

Dr. Peter Shih ^{Exhibit 10}: Dr. Shih said employee morale was fair. He said there is segregation of employees. He said a clique of six employees will not participate with other employees and will have their own functions. He said the clique group feels things are unfair, and they filed an EEO complaint. He said the EEO office did not find anything. He said he has tried to include the clique employees at office parties and other functions. He said Dr. Amuso, Dr. Chan, and Ms. Humbert came down to talk to the employees.

IV.G.5. Recommendations

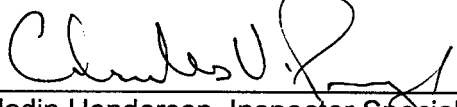
- 15. Bureau management should promote cultural diversity throughout the organization and encourage appropriate activities that do not interfere with laboratory workflow or productivity.


Eric F. Whitehead, Management Review Specialist

April 12, 2006
Date


Lori Van Riper, Inspector Specialist

April 12, 2006
Date


Charles Henderson, Inspector Specialist

4/14/06
Date


Sheila Martin, Inspector Specialist

April 12, 2006
Date


Linda A. Keen, R.N., M.S., J.D., Inspector General

April 12, 2006
Date

Office of Inspector General
Bureau of Laboratories
Management Review
HIG-06-001-MR
May 2, 2006, 2006

This is a response to the Office of Inspector General's Management Review of the Bureau of Laboratories. There were 15 recommendations made to the laboratories.

The Bureau of Laboratory Services agrees with the findings and wishes to thank the Inspector General's Office for this management review.

Recommendations:

1. Bureau management should promote team work and seamless provision of services throughout the organization.

With the help of special training consultation from the local health department, staff are developing a team building workgroup. Their goals are to address issues identified by staff to develop forums to foster communications between staff and supervisors, and to develop activities designed to improve the working environment.

A process will be developed to assess the process of provision of services throughout the organization. The intent will be to identify barriers and gaps affecting smooth unabated delivery of services. Staff will work to identify solutions to removing barriers to delivery, and to implement processes and procedures to eliminate identified process gaps. New processes will be exercised and evaluated on a routine basis.

2. Department management should ensure and monitor the implementation of Sterling organizational excellence principals throughout each of the five laboratories, with emphasis on effective statewide communication strategies that reach every level of the organization.

Laboratory staff have pursued the five aspects of self-assessment as defined by Sterling. Ensuing activities will be centered on developing the objectives identified by staff with associated activities to expand the existing short term objectives into strategic 3-5 yr. objectives.

3. Bureau management should update strategic plans on a regular basis, and include employees in the planning process at every level of the organization.

A marketing campaign will be developed addressing a multilevel approach to defining the value of the laboratory with emphasis on current public health issues i.e., bioterrorism, avian influenza, and other novel virus identification etc.

4. The BOL should develop a standardized system to track customer feedback at all five laboratories to improve BOL operations and document changes resulting from the feedback process.

These items have been identified as a strategic objective and will be addressed over the coming year.

5. Bureau management should assess individual personnel issues at each laboratory based upon the findings of this report, and take the appropriate action to resolve these issues.

This item also has been identified in the strategic plan and will be addressed over the coming year.

6. Bureau management should institute an employee recognition system bureau-wide and task each laboratory director with implementing the employee recognition system at his or her laboratory.

A committee is under development throughout the BOL to address this issue over the coming year.

7. Bureau management should review employee evaluation practices, and ensure adherence to the DOH employee performance evaluation process at DOHP 60-22-02.

A mandatory review of DOH and BOL policies and procedures related to Employee Evaluation practices will be provided to all laboratory supervisors and managers.

8. Bureau management should promote innovative and cost effective training opportunities for all BOL employees through the use of technology, and ensure that current staff has been properly trained in all facets of their positions.

A training coordinator will be hired to address training needs, beginning with a BOL assessment of current status followed by the creation of a plan outlining basic training needs for all levels of staffing. In addition, the new trainer will be tasked with searching for and developing new and innovative training techniques to address training requirements with the goal of meeting CEU requirements, and pursuing scientific excellence and retaining a superior workforce.

9. Bureau Management should institute uniform policies for orientation of all new employees to include, but not be limited to, safety policies and practices. Further, bureau management should require annual updates for training on safety policies and practices for all employees.

A new employee orientation packet is being prepared. Annual reviews and periodic updates will be the responsibility of the training coordinator and Safety officer.

9. DOH and BOL management should identify all available fixed capital outlay and operating capital outlay funding allocated to BOL, and secure the necessary spending authority to access these funds for the purpose of building repair, renovation, mold/mildew eradication and equipment replacement.

Recently, each Laboratory Director compiled a list of the top 10 projects essential to achieve and maintain laboratory compliance and certification. These projects will be combined, and reprioritized by the BOL transition team. Funds will be identified to begin tackling projects identified as critical to maintaining laboratory operations and will be addressed one by one until all have been completed.

11. BOL management should prioritize key process requirements, such as hiring of a Safety officer and the acquisition of a new billing system.

a) Interviews are underway for a safety officer.

b) All aspects of Medicaid billing are being addressed. Third party billing (Prioritized for New Born Screening) is being issued as an ITN and a contract should be executed by June 30.

12. BOL management should resolve the issue of late courier deliveries resulting in delayed specimen testing.

This item will be considered as part of the strategic objective devoted to customer service and will be examined in terms of value added to laboratory operations and cost effectiveness.

13. BOL management should monitor and document performance results.

Laboratory staff as part of the Sterling process have developed a performance scorecard matrix that will allow them to actively and objectively monitor their performance, with mechanisms for routine evaluation followed by measurement of improvement where warranted.

14. DOH and BOL management should incorporate CHD director and administrator priorities and action items expressed in this report into the BOL strategic and transition plans, and develop strategies to implement the priorities and actions.

The BOL will reactivate the Advisory Council to include members from the CHD, and other key customers i.e., academia, private laboratories, infectious disease specialists.

15. Bureau management should promote cultural diversity throughout the organization and encourage appropriate activities that do not interfere with laboratory workflow or productivity.

The workgroup addressing improving the workplace environment will be comprised of staff representing the entire organization and will address the need to celebrate cultural and other aspects of human diversity; physical disabilities, ethnicity, etc. The workgroup will develop activities involving the entire laboratory staff in an effort to encourage communication and a better understanding of the value of diversity.

V. EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1	Laboratory Certification Inspection Report and Certificate
Exhibit 2	Press Release of Mission Possible Award
Exhibit 3	Miami Laboratory Certifications
Exhibit 4	Pompano Beach letter of appreciation
Exhibit 5	Lantana Annual Report
Exhibit 6	Lantana Certifications
Exhibit 7	Bureau Accomplishments
Exhibit 8	Preliminary Report of Bureau Chief Characteristics
Exhibit 9	Interview of Dr. Ming Chan
Exhibit 10	Interview of Dr. Peter Shih
Exhibit 11	Interview of Dr. Roberta Lopez
Exhibit 12	Management Teleconference
Exhibit 13	BOL Strategic Plan
Exhibit 14	Management and Employee Survey
Exhibit 15	Employee Satisfaction Survey
Exhibit 16	Administration Realignment
Exhibit 17	Customer Feedback for Environmental Laboratory Certification Program
Exhibit 18	Seven Minute Rule Memo
Exhibit 19	Timeliness Memo from Dr. Shih
Exhibit 20	BOL Training Records
Exhibit 21	BOL Training/Travel Cost Sheet
Exhibit 22	Lantana Training Records
Exhibit 23	BOL Position Vacancy and Organization Charts
Exhibit 24	People First Personnel Data Chart
Exhibit 25	PAR Committee Process
Exhibit 26	Pay Increase Nominations
Exhibit 27	EEO Filings
Exhibit 28	Management Response to EEO Filings
Exhibit 29	Employee Grievances
Exhibit 30	Employee Recognition, Image Awards, et al
Exhibit 31	Employee of the Month Form
Exhibit 32	Comptroller's Memo on Meritorious Service Award
Exhibit 33	Payments under Meritorious Service Award
Exhibit 34	Miami Employee Evaluations
Exhibit 35	Lantana Employee Evaluations
Exhibit 36	Jacksonville Refrigerated Cooler Broke
Exhibit 37	Lipsey Environmental Inspection of Mold
Exhibit 38	Lipsey Comments on Mold
Exhibit 39	Safety Orientation for New Employees
Exhibit 40	Lantana Management Review by Dr. Lopez
Exhibit 41	Negative Comments from Lantana Assistant Director
Exhibit 42	HIG Stakeholder Survey Report