

The Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General (OIG) today released an audit report examining the equitable sharing activities of the City of Sunrise, Florida, Police Department (Sunrise Police Department). The OIG's audit identified weaknesses in the Sunrise Police Department's reconciliation of asset forfeiture funds and questioned \$374,257 in equitable sharing funds that were paid to a private law firm for civil forfeiture litigation services as unallowable.

As part of the Department of Justice (DOJ) asset forfeiture program, state and local law enforcement agencies that participate in the seizure of property and funds may receive a portion of the proceeds or an equitable share of the forfeiture to use for law enforcement purposes. From FY 2008 to 2014, the Sunrise Police Department received \$5,551,343 in equitably shared cash and proceeds and \$71,778 in property.

The OIG's audit found that, during this time, the Sunrise Police Department either did not record or incorrectly recorded 14 equitable sharing receipts in its receipts log. The Sunrise Police Department had written procedures for recording these receipts but the procedures were not consistently followed by responsible officials.

With respect to the equitable sharing funds paid to a private law firm for civil forfeiture litigation services, the OIG questioned these costs as unallowable because the Police Department could not provide adequate documentation of the selection and procurement process used by the City of Sunrise. The OIG also concluded that paying for the litigation services with equitable sharing funds was not consistent with the DOJ's standards for using equitable sharing funds to pay for consulting services.

The OIG made two recommendations to the DOJ's Criminal Division, which oversees the DOJ's asset forfeiture program, including remedying the \$374,257 in questioned costs identified in the audit. The Criminal Division and the Sunrise Police Department agreed with both recommendations.

The report can be found on the OIG's website at at the following link:
<http://www.justice.gov/oig/reports/2014/g4015003.pdf>.