

# Florida Department of Corrections



## Office of the Inspector General

**CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION**

**Case # 18-01225**



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
**CASE SUMMARY REPORT**



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**Case Number:** 18-01225

**Inspector:** Senior Inspector Kate Gustafson

**Date Assigned or Initiated:** 01/17/2018

**Complaint Against:** Inmate Aubrey Knowles, DC# 098866 (*Deceased*)

**Location of Incident – Institution/Facility/Office:** Santa Rosa Correctional Institution

**Complainant:** Florida Department of Corrections

**Use of Force Number:** N/A

**PREA Number:** N/A

**Classification of Incident:** Death Investigation

**Confidential Medical Information Included:**  Yes  No

**Whistle-Blower Investigation:**  Yes  No

**Equal Employment Opportunity Investigation:**  Yes  No

**Chief Inspector General Case Number:** N/A



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**I. AUTHORITY**

The Florida Department of Corrections, Office of the Inspector General, by designation of the Secretary and § 944.31, Florida Statutes, is authorized to conduct any criminal investigation that occurs on property owned or leased by the department or involves matters over which the department has jurisdiction.

The testimony references included in this report are summations of oral or written statements provided to inspectors. Statements contained herein do not necessarily represent complete or certified transcribed testimony, except as noted. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all interviews with witnesses, complainants, and subjects were audio or video recorded.

**II. METHODOLOGY**

The investigation reviewed the derivations of the allegation advanced by the complainant. The scope of this investigation does not seek to specifically address tort(s), but violations of criminal statutes. The criterion used to evaluate each contention or allegation was limited to the following standard of analysis:

1. Did the subject's action or behavior violate Florida criminal statutes?

**III. ANALYSIS**

The standard and analysis in this investigation is predicated with the burden of proving any violation of law, established by probable cause. The evidence considered for analysis is confined to the facts and allegations stated or reasonably implied. The actions or behavior of the subject are presumed to be lawful and in compliance with the applicable Florida law, unless probable cause indicates the contrary.



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#### **IV. DEFINITIONS**

**Unfounded:**

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which a preponderance of the evidence exists to suggest the suspect's alleged behavior or action did not occur.

**Closed by Arrest:**

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause exists that an identified subject committed the offense and one for which an arrest or formal prosecution has been initiated.

**Exceptionally Cleared:**

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which probable cause exists that an identified suspect committed the offense, but one for which an arrest or formal charge is not initiated, or in the case of a death investigation, one for which no evidence exists that the death was the result of a crime or neglect.

**Suspended:**

Refers to a disposition of a criminal case for which a criminal investigation commenced, but where evidence is insufficient to close as unfounded, closed by arrest, or exceptionally cleared.



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**V. PREDICATE**

On or about January 17, 2018, the Florida Department of Corrections, Office of the Inspector General, received information indicating on January 17, 2018, Inmate Aubrey Knowles DC# 098866 was declared deceased at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution (SARCI). Inmate Knowles was found [REDACTED] in his assigned cell and [REDACTED] at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution. On January 17, 2018, Senior Inspector Kate Gustafson was notified by On-Call Inspector Supervisor Maurice Radford with instructions to respond to Santa Rosa Correctional Institution to initiate an investigation. *This death investigation was later documented in Management Information Notes System (MINS) # 685165.*

**VI. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS**

Based on the exhibits, statements, and the record as a whole, presented or available to the primary inspector, the following findings of facts were determined:

On January 17, 2018, Senior Inspector Gustafson responded to SARCI cell #D1-107 and completely photographed the scene which had been assigned to Inmate Knowles and noted no indication of foul play. Inmate Knowles was classified as a Close Management I inmate, who was housed alone at the time of his death. On January 17, 2018, Inspector Gustafson responded [REDACTED] at SARCI. Inspector Gustafson photographed the decedent and noted [REDACTED] or foul play.

The photographs of the Inmate Knowles and his assigned cell, D1-107, were placed into the District 1 Regional Evidence Control Area (RECA) as evidence.

On January 18, 2018, Inspector Gustafson attended the autopsy of Inmate Knowles at the 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit Medical Examiner's Office in Pensacola, Florida, which had been performed Chief Medical Examiner Andrea Minyard. Chief Minyard informed Inspector Gustafson that Inmate Knowles had [REDACTED]; however, Chief Minyard [REDACTED] which would have contributed to the cause of death. Chief Minyard advised Inmate Knowles' cause of death was pending the outcome of the toxicology screening.

On January 19, 2018, Inspector Gustafson obtained a copy of the related fixed wing video record for January 17, 2018, from the [REDACTED] dormitory at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution. A review of the fixed wing video record revealed the following:

- [REDACTED] security check was completed by Officer Brian Brett in wing (1) of D-dormitory.
- [REDACTED], Sergeant Reginald Kossey entered wing (1) of D-dormitory. While completing the security check in wing (1), Sergeant Kossey attempted to get Inmate Knowles to respond to verbal commands to no avail.
- 4:49 p.m., Sergeant Kossey radioed for assistance [REDACTED] on Inmate Knowles.



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- 4:52 p.m., Sergeant Kossey, Officer Brett, Sergeant Dustin Stewart and Sergeant Christopher Patrick-Hughes entered cell D1-107 [REDACTED] on Inmate Knowles.
- 4:53 p.m., [REDACTED] entered cell D1-107.
- 4:59 p.m., Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] out of wing (1) of D-dormitory.

*INSPECTOR'S NOTE: The video record was too large to upload into IGIIS and will be maintained in the District 1 Regional Evidence Control Area as evidence.*

On January 18, 2018, Inspector Gustafson obtained and reviewed [REDACTED] for Inmate Knowles which indicated Inmate Knowles [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

A review of the Disciplinary Reports written on Inmate Knowles revealed he had the following violations for unauthorized use of drugs and/or being in possession of narcotics:

- 07/10/1993 Possession of Narcotic (*Does not define the narcotic*)
- 06/05/2001 Unauthorized use of drugs (*cannabinoid*)
- 09/11/2001 Possession of Narcotics (*cannabinoid*)
- 05/16/2005 Unauthorized use of drugs (*cannabinoid*)
- 01/19/2011 Unauthorized use of drugs (*cannabinoid*)
- 01/19/2011 Possession of Narcotics (*cannabinoid*)
- 09/15/2011 Unauthorized use of drugs (*cannabinoid*)

On January 17, 2018, Inspector Gustafson conducted a recorded, sworn interview with [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED], at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution, in which she indicated the following:

[REDACTED] stated that she saw an officer believed to be Officer Stewart with a shield. The officer stated to [REDACTED] prepared by grabbing some protective gloves and was summoned by the officers to look into the cell on wing 1. [REDACTED] found Inmate Knowles sitting upright in that cell [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] immediately left and notified [REDACTED] [REDACTED] responded back to the cell and found that security had breached the cell, laid Inmate Knowles on his back [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. Inmate Knowles [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] while Officer Dustin Stewart [REDACTED] Later, [REDACTED]









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On January 17, 2018, Inspector Gustafson conducted a recorded, sworn interview with Correctional Officer Sergeant Dustin Stewart, at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution, in which he indicated the following:

Sgt. Stewart stated Sgt. Kossey asked for additional staff to perform [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. When Sgt. Stewart was approaching the cell, officers were breaching Inmate Knowles' door. Upon arrival, Sgt. Stewart found Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] while sitting on his bunk with his [REDACTED] and his back on the bunk. Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Sgt. Stewart [REDACTED] Sgt. Stewart stayed with Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] Inmate Knowles [REDACTED]

On January 17, 2018, Inspector Gustafson conducted a recorded, sworn interview with Correctional Officer Sergeant Christopher Patrick-Hughes, at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution, in which he indicated the following:

Sgt. Hughes stated Delta Dorm radioed for additional staff [REDACTED]. Once in Delta Dorm, Sgt. Hughes met up with Sgt. Stewart, [REDACTED], Officer Brett and Sgt. Kossey. Once Sgt. Hughes got to the cell, he found Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] Sgt. Hughes placed Inmate Knowles [REDACTED]. Sgt. Hughes, Sgt. Kossey and Sgt. Stewart placed Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] and Inmate Knowles [REDACTED]

On January 17, 2018, Inspector Gustafson conducted a recorded, sworn interview with Correctional Officer Sergeant Reginald Kossey, at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution, in which he indicated the following:

Sgt. Kossey stated one of the inmates who assists in feeding other inmates, alerted Sgt. Kossey to Inmate Knowles' cell because Inmate Knowles wouldn't take the food tray. Sgt. Kossey looked into the cell and saw Inmate Knowles sitting [REDACTED] Sgt. Kossey beat on the window with his keys and did not get a reaction from Inmate Knowles. Sgt. Kossey looked at Inmate Knowles' back and saw no movement, [REDACTED] Sgt. Kossey last saw Inmate Knowles alive at 4:00 p.m. Sgt. Stewart [REDACTED] and Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] Sgt. Kossey remembered that Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] on the day of his death. Sgt. Kossey admitted the scheduled checks were done 15-17 minutes late due to feeding, constant inmate assaults on officers and lack of experience with staff.

On January 30, 2018, Inspector Gustafson obtained and reviewed the related Incident Report (DC6-210) authored by Sergeant Reginald Kossey and Officer Brian Brett. The review revealed Sergeant Kossey and Officer Brett observed Inmate Knowles [REDACTED] while sitting on the lower bunk inside cell D1-107. Sergeant Kossie and Officer Brett noted Sergeant Kossie initiated the Incident Command System (ICS), [REDACTED] additional assistance [REDACTED] to be completed on Inmate Knowles. When additional assistance arrived, [REDACTED] was completed on Inmate Knowles. Once Inmate Knowles was secured and then [REDACTED] [REDACTED] on Inmate Knowles to no avail. [REDACTED] and Inmate Knowles was transported [REDACTED] at SARC [REDACTED]



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June 28, 2018, Senior Inspector Gustafson obtained and reviewed the autopsy report authored by Chief Medical Examiner Andrea Minyard. The review revealed that Chief Minyard conducted an autopsy on the remains of Inmate Knowles on January 19, 2018. Chief Minyard determined Inmate Knowles' cause of death was [REDACTED] and the manner of death to be an accident.

*INSPECTOR'S NOTE: A review of the fixed wing video record revealed security checks of inmates in the [REDACTED]-dorm were delayed by 15 minutes at the time Inmate Knowles was discovered [REDACTED] inside his cell at Santa Rosa Correctional Institution on January 17, 2018. The issue of delayed security checks was forwarded to management for review and handling.*

*SUPERVISOR'S NOTE: On February 11, 2019, a man who identified himself as Tim White and a friend of Inmate Knowles, called Inspector Supervisor Maurice Radford from phone number (423) 202-2773 to inquire about the status of this death investigation. Mr. White informed Supervisor Radford he possessed letters from Inmate Knowles which expressed fear for his life. Supervisor Radford provided Mr. White his email address and requested he forward copies of the letters for review by the primary inspector.*

*On April 30, 2019, Inspector Supervisor Maurice Radford received an email message from Administrative Assistant Mariann Hyres indicating a Mr. Tim White has been calling Central Office regarding Inmate Aubrey Knowles from telephone number (423) 202- 2773. Supervisor Radford called Mr. White the same date and again requested he provide copies of the inmate correspondence he claimed to possess for review in this case. However, Mr. White never sent the inmate correspondence as requested.*

**VII. CHARGES**

- N/A

**VIII. CONCLUSION**

Based on the information gathered during this investigation, it is the recommendation of Senior Inspector Kate Gustafson the cause of death for Inmate Aubrey Knowles DC# 098866 be deemed accidental and this case be termed:

- Exceptionally Cleared