

# Florida Department of Corrections



## Office of the Inspector General

### CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Case # 18-04103



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



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**Case Number:** 18-04103

**Inspector:** Inspector Dorothy Stafford

**Date Assigned or Initiated:** 03-01-2018

**Complaint Against:** Inmate Robert Bisson DC#138936

**Location of Incident – Institution/Facility/Office:** Columbia Correctional Institution

**Complainant:** Lieutenant Karlie Heinz

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

**PREA Number:** N/A

**Classification of Incident:** Inmate Death-Undetermined

**Confidential Medical Information Included:**  Yes  No

**Whistle-Blower Investigation:**  Yes  No

**Equal Employment Opportunity Investigation:**  Yes  No

**Chief Inspector General Case Number:** 2014-0112-0005



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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.

**Open-Inactive:**

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 February 27, 2018, at approximately 9:50PM, Senior Inspector Justin Bates was contacted by the On-call Inspector Supervisor, Yolanda Brown in reference to an in-custody death at Columbia Correctional Institution Annex (CCI). Brown advised Inmate Robert Bisson, DC# 138936 was found [REDACTED] in a cell [REDACTED] declared the inmate deceased.

Senior Inspector Bates and Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) Special Agent (SA) Matthew Grinstead responded to CCI, with SA Grinstead assuming the investigative lead. Upon initial review of the information the Office of Inspector General initiated an Investigative Assist, assigned to Senior Inspector Dorothy Stafford on March 1, 2018.

**VI. SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS**

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

The following was taken from the Investigative Brief completed by Senior Inspector Bates;

On February 27, 2018, at approximately 9:50PM, Senior Inspector Bates was contacted by On-call Inspector Supervisor Brown in reference to an in-custody death at CCI. Supervisor Brown advised Inmate Robert Bisson, DC# 138936 had been found [REDACTED] in a cell [REDACTED] [REDACTED] declared the inmate deceased. Supervisor Brown notified the FDLE Watch Desk.

Senior Inspector Bates made contact with CCI and spoke to Major Jared Johnson who was on scene and he provided the same information as above. Major Johnson advised based on his observations and information provided by staff, it appeared the death was most likely [REDACTED]

Senior Inspector Bates was contacted by SA Grinstead. Senior Inspector Bates briefed SA Grinstead on the information up to that point. SA Grinstead advised he would be in route to CCI.

Senior Inspector Bates arrived at CCI and made contact with Major Johnson. Senior Inspector Bates [REDACTED] observed the body of Inmate Bisson. Senior Inspector Bates did not observe any [REDACTED] foul play. Inmate Bisson [REDACTED], indicating to me he had been deceased for some time before Senior Inspector Bates' arrival. Inmate Bisson's [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Inmate Bisson's person.

SA Grinstead arrived at CCI and assumed the lead on the investigation. SA Grinstead first observed Inmate Bisson's and took photographs of the scene. SA Grinstead and Senior Inspector Bates went to S-Dormitory where the incident occurred, photographed, and searched the cell as well. SA Grinstead also interviewed the staff that responded to the complaint as well.



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Senior Inspector Bates and SA Grinstead conducted interviews with the inmates (*Identified as Inmates Kyle McCray DC#H46431 and Jorge Diaz DC#M79828*) that were housed in the cell where Inmate Bisson died. It was determined that Inmate Bisson was in a cell he was not assigned in at the time of his death.

Inmate McCray indicated Inmate Bisson was his friend and he allowed him to come to his (*McCray*) cell nearly every night to smoke "Toochie" or K-2. Inmate McCray, who is not a smoker, stated Inmate Bisson had been in his cell for about fifteen (15) minutes smoking the K-2 when he began [REDACTED]. Suddenly Inmate Bisson [REDACTED]. Inmate McCray ran down to the quad door and advised the officer that Inmate Bisson was in his cell [REDACTED]. Inmate McCray said at first the officer did not believe him but when the officer [REDACTED] they responded, it had been thirty (30) to forty-five (45) minutes.

Inmate Diaz, with the help of Officer Priscilla Bacetty interpreting as, Diaz did not speak English. Inmate Diaz indicated he was not in the cell at the time Inmate Bisson collapsed, but saw Inmate McCray put a sheet over the door and he (*Diaz*) knew they were smoking K-2 in the cell. Inmate Diaz stated Inmate McCray has inmates in their cell every night smoking so, Inmate Diaz stays out of the room at night.

*The interviews conducted were not recorded by Senior Inspector Bates. SA Grinstead conducted the recorded interviews and maintains the recordings in his case file.*

On February 28, 2018, Senior Inspector Stafford received related video and reports from Major Roger Hesters. SA Grinstead was advised and provided an Investigative Demand and was given copies of all available items.

The fixed wing video was reviewed and provided no information of evidentiary value as there is not a camera view that shows into the cells. The video will be maintained in the case file.

In incident reports dated February 27, 2018, staff reported that at approximately 9:02PM, Inmate McCray approached the Officer's Station and reported there was an inmate in his cell [REDACTED]. ICS was initiated. Security [REDACTED] staff arrived [REDACTED] inmate (*Later identified as Inmate Bisson*). [REDACTED] and pronounced Inmate Bisson deceased at 9:44PM.

On March 30, 2018, final autopsy report was received. The report listed Inmate Bisson's cause of death as; [REDACTED]. The manner of death was listed as; accident.

A copy of the report was forwarded to SA Grinstead. SA Grinstead advised he will forward his report as soon as it is complete and approved.

On April 20, 2018, SA Grinstead provided a copy of his final summary report. SA Grinstead reported that nefarious activity by staff or inmates did not play a role in Inmate Bisson's death. Inmate Bisson's [REDACTED] the cause of death. SA Grinstead reported no further investigation was warranted and the case was closed. SA Grinstead identified no Administrative issues in his report.



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**VII. CHARGES**

**List alleged violations of Florida Law:**

No criminal violations were identified.

**VIII. CONCLUSION**

Based on the information gathered during this investigation, it is the recommendation of Inspector Dorothy Stafford, the death of Inmate Robert Bisson DC#138936, be termed as follows:

1. Exceptionally Cleared

To wit: Inmate Bisson's death was determined by the Medical Examiner's Office to have been the result [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The manner of death was listed as; accident. There were no criminal or administrative issues identified during the course of the investigation.