State auditor gives Snohomish County clean audit

The Washington State Auditor’s Office presented Snohomish County Thursday with a clean accountability audit for the fifth straight year.

The audit highlights the county’s strong internal controls in multiple areas such as credit card use and travel expenses across county departments including the Executive Office.

“In a number of other entities within the region, we do find a number of issues,” Chuck Pfeil, director of State and Local Audit for the Washington State Auditor’s Office, told county staff during an audit exit interview. “So to say we came in here and we looked at a number of different areas and didn’t find any significant items is a reflection on what you’re doing.”

Despite earlier claims that the county’s financial records were in disarray, state audit officials said Thursday that documents were in good order, complete and provided in a timely manner.

“We looked at a number of different areas. Certainly we looked at credit card and travel, and we found that the information requested came in timely, in good order and we were able to go through it, and we appreciate that,” Pfeil said.

The clean audit validates the checks and balances that Snohomish County has in place to make sure county funds are used appropriately, said the county’s Finance Director Roger Neumaier.

“This audit report is a strong confirmation of the fiscal integrity that our employees have established in county records and systems,” Neumaier said. “We take seriously our responsibility to maintain strong financial records so that there is no question of how funds are used.”

Reardon meets Korean delegation on regional goodwill tour

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Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon (seated) and Deputy Executive Gary Haakenson (standing) met earlier this week with a delegation from Dangjin, South Korea. The group visited with numerous government and business officials in Snohomish County as part of an economic and goodwill tour of the region. The delegation’s goal was to gain a better understanding of the state’s economy, culture and art. Executive Reardon is shaking hands with Dangjin Mayor Lee Chul-hwan.

Paine Field Fire Department stellar in emergency landing response

An Allegiant Air MD-80, carrying about 160 passengers, made an emergency landing Monday at Paine Field Airport with one engine out.

While the landing occurred without incident, Paine Field Fire Department staff was ready to assist before the plane touched down on the tarmac should it have experienced more trouble.

The Paine Field Fire Department responded with two foam trucks and a rescue truck along with seven personnel – two of whom came in off duty. Everett Fire Department also sent three engines, a ladder truck, two medic units and an aid unit. All said, about 30 personnel were ready to assist the plane with any trouble.

“This is what these women and men train for, and today’s response shows that both are prepared for a disaster that of course we hope never comes,” Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon said.

Just this past September, the Paine Field Fire Department and many other local fire departments including Everett once again completed their FAA-required disaster exercise, which is due every three years, for such an event. Ongoing training is an essential part of Paine Field’s regimen and helps the airport and fire department maintain a ready presence during times of trouble.

Reardon signs AFSCME contract in support of county workers
Snohomish County Executive Reardon and Chris Dugovich, president of Council 2 of the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, sign papers outlining a new contract for Snohomish County employees represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The master agreement will cover years 2012-2014.

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