

July 2008

# Highlights

Internal Audit Report to the  
Board of Supervisors

## Why We Did This Review

Each year the Office of the Medical Examiner (OME) conducts 5,000 investigations, 4,700 medical examinations, and 2,500 autopsies (see graph at right). Additionally, OME authorizes 16,600 cremations throughout the County.

The Office of the Medical Examiner supports County citizens and the law enforcement community by reporting on the cause and manner of death for cases under its jurisdiction. To successfully perform these duties, OME uses a case management system to track and report on the progress and facts of each case.

The Office of the Medical Examiner is required by state statute to ensure that qualified personnel perform the functions of the Office.

## What We Recommend

- Stronger user access controls
- Error handling procedures
- Improved CME audit trails
- More robust data edit controls
- Better credentialing processes
- Legal advice concerning licensure documentation
- Data policies for sensitive information



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# Office of the Medical Examiner

## Case Management and Physician Credentialing: Key Management Systems Lack Adequate Controls

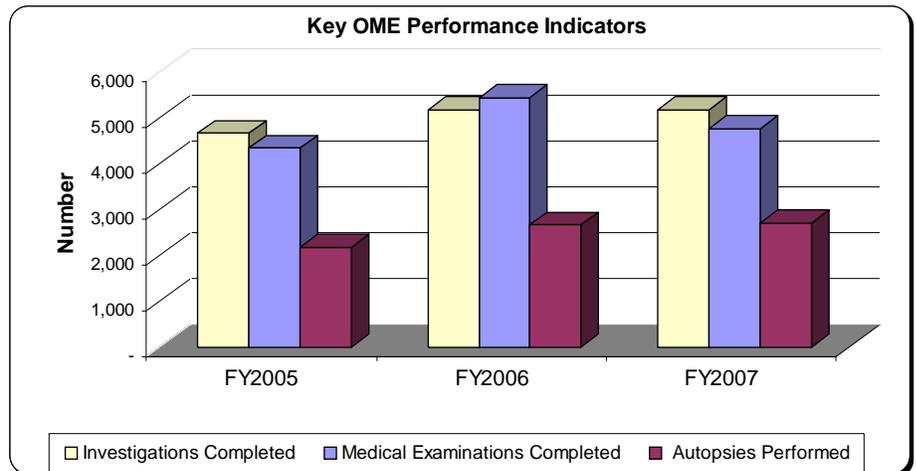
### What We Found

#### Software Application

We found the following weaknesses in the Office of the Medical Examiner's case management system (CME):

- Application controls are inadequate to protect against unauthorized access
- The system lacks a sufficiently detailed audit trail function, and formal policies and procedures to properly handle errors
- Existing controls do not protect confidentiality, integrity, and availability of sensitive data

Weak access controls allow users to access data and authorize transactions that are not appropriate for their job responsibilities. In addition, stronger error processing controls are needed to help keep data complete and accurate, as well as detect and deter potential fraud.



### Physician Credentialing

OME does not have an effective process to manage physician credentialing practices. For instance, licensure expiration dates and professional certifications are not always documented. This weakness resulted in 13 autopsies being performed by a physician with an expired license, a violation of state statute.

We appreciate the excellent cooperation received from the management and staff while conducting these procedures.

Maricopa County Internal Audit Department