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D.C. Auditor: Recommendations of *Rosenbaum Task Force* Not Fully Implemented

Washington D.C. – Nine years after Washington journalist David Rosenbaum died from wounds sustained in an assault on an upper Northwest street, the D.C. Auditor has found that the District government has implemented or partially implemented just 17 of the 36 recommendations made by a [Task Force on Emergency Medical Services](#) impaneled in the wake of the journalist’s death.

A compliance review looked at the policy and practice recommendations that came from the task force which included government leaders, family representatives, and experts in emergency medical services.

In November 2006, Rosenbaum’s family filed a \$20 million lawsuit against the District. The following March, Mayor Adrian Fenty announced a negotiated settlement that required creation of the task force to investigate the journalist’s treatment and make recommendations to improve the delivery of emergency medical services by the Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) Department.

In the review undertaken as new leadership assumes command of FEMS, the D.C. Auditor found that of the 36 specific recommendations to improve service delivery, 11 have been implemented, 6 have been partially implemented, 15 have not been implemented, and 4 were largely implemented but then later reversed or rescinded. “We are pleased to share this evaluation and hope it will be useful to the Bowser Administration and the new leadership of acting FEMS Chief Gregory Dean,” said D.C. Auditor, Kathy Patterson.

Dean served for 10 years as the Fire EMS Chief in Seattle, Washington -- a department known for its emergency medical services delivered by a fully integrated staff of individuals cross-trained for fire and medical work. His confirmation hearing is scheduled June 30 before the Council’s Committee on the Judiciary.

The District’s agency transition “to a fully integrated, all hazards agency” was the first recommendation of the task force, a major change that the Auditor found has not yet been fully implemented. Several steps to strengthen the emergency medical staffing structure within the department were taken but apparently rescinded including an increase in EMS officer positions to nine in 2010, which then dropped to one in February 2015. The review also found that compliance with the task force recommendations was a matter of frequent review until 2010, but was suspended thereafter.

“The work of the task force was a major step forward for a department that has faced significant challenges,” Patterson said. “While we do note significant progress in our report, challenges remain, and moving forward at this point will require consensus and collaboration among the Executive, the Council, and both leadership and employees of the department.”