

From: [Vassar, Ryan](#)
To: [Webster, Brent](#)
Subject: RE: Additional information on recent allegations
Date: Monday, October 12, 2020 4:17:57 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)

Brent:

Speaking of transparency, I think the questions I asked this morning are fair questions, and I'd appreciate direct answers. In the meantime, I've answered your questions below.

- What did you do with that information? Detailed information is appreciated.

I confirmed that the agency had no record of an approved agreement with Mr. Cammack. I determined that the contract emailed to me lacked a contract number, which further indicated that it had not been approved through the agency's contract-approval process. I also determined that there was not an approved *Signature Authorization Request* for the Attorney General's signature on this contract, which is a routine agency procedure.

- Which individuals in the office were made aware of the fact that Mr. Cammock provided you a contract with the General's signature on it? Names, please.

Then-First Assistant Jeffrey Mateer and other members of the executive staff who would have been involved in the process of approving a contract such as Mr. Cammack's.

- Did you notify General Paxton of the information you had just received?

No, I report directly to the deputy first assistant, so I reported this information through my immediate chain-of-command. Moreover, the Attorney General was traveling out-of-state during this time. Therefore, then-First Assistant Mateer was obligated to perform the Attorney General's duties in his absence. Tex. Gov't Code § 402.001(a).

Thank you in advance for your answers. You're welcome. Please immediately correct the agency's public statement falsely suggesting that I approved the Cammack contract or provided it to the Attorney General for his signature. I expect an answer today.

Thank you,
Ryan

From: Webster, Brent <Brent.Webster@oag.texas.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 12, 2020 8:53 AM

House Managers

EX. 319

CONFIDENTIAL

OAG_SUB-00001340

HBOM00182651

To: Vassar, Ryan <Ryan.Vassar@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: RE: Additional information on recent allegations

Ryan,

I'm unclear what has transpired, as I joined the office after the underlying incidents occurred. As the First Assistant, I want all employees of the OAG to behave and report in a transparent manner. That is my expectation moving forward for all employees, and this is in the furtherance of that goal.

I'll reiterate my questions:

"On Thursday, 10/1 at 8:22 AM, you received an email from Brandon Cammock with a contract that had General Paxton's signature on it.

- What did you do with that information? Detailed information is appreciated.
- Which individuals in the office were made aware of the fact that Mr. Cammock provided you a contract with the General's signature on it? Names, please.
- Did you notify General Paxton of the information you had just received?"

Thank you in advance for your answers. I expect an answer today.

Brent

From: Vassar, Ryan <Ryan.Vassar@oag.texas.gov>
Sent: Monday, October 12, 2020 8:43 AM
To: Webster, Brent <Brent.Webster@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: Re: Additional information on recent allegations

Brent,

Sorry for the delay. I wasn't expecting questions like these in light of the detailed facts laid out in my request for corrective action. For context, are these questions part of the investigation you told us you are conducting? What is the subject matter and scope of the investigation? Relatedly, I and others who made the HR report have heard that our computers are being actively monitored. Is that true?

Ryan

From: Webster, Brent <Brent.Webster@oag.texas.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 9, 2020 11:52 AM
To: Vassar, Ryan <Ryan.Vassar@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: RE: Additional information on recent allegations

Thank you, I appreciate the update and understand that you have a lot on your plate.

From: Vassar, Ryan <Ryan.Vassar@oag.texas.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 9, 2020 10:57 AM
To: Webster, Brent <Brent.Webster@oag.texas.gov>
Cc: HR-Help <HR-Help@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: Re: Additional information on recent allegations

Brent,

I am confirming receipt of this message. Like you, I am working on a number of important matters, but I will do my best to respond to your questions by noon today or as soon as I possibly can.

Thank you,
Ryan

From: Webster, Brent <Brent.Webster@oag.texas.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 9, 2020 10:22 AM
To: Vassar, Ryan <Ryan.Vassar@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: RE: Additional information on recent allegations

Good Morning Ryan,

Following up on this important issue. Please confirm you have received this email. I need your answers by noon today, so I can continue further progress on your concerns.

Brent

From: Webster, Brent
Sent: Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:43 PM
To: Vassar, Ryan <Ryan.Vassar@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: RE: Additional information on recent allegations

Good Evening Ryan,

Thank you for making me aware of your concerns. I am in the process of looking into this. As you know I am very busy with many different tasks, which has caused a delay in my response. In fact, I'm still at the office reading through your opinion packet you provided me to review.

I have some follow up questions for your that are relevant to this inquiry and your statements in this email.

On Thursday, 10/1 at 8:22 AM, you received an email from Brandon Cammock with a contract that had General Paxton's signature on it.

- What did you do with that information? Detailed information is appreciated.
- Which individuals in the office were made aware of the fact that Mr. Cammock provided you a contract with the General's signature on it? Names, please.
- Did you notify General Paxton of the information you had just received?

Thank you in advance, and I await your response. Unfortunately, I have some important work unrelated to this tomorrow, so it may take some time for me to respond.

Sincerely,
Brent Webster

From: Vassar, Ryan <Ryan.Vassar@oag.texas.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 8, 2020 3:12 PM
To: Webster, Brent <Brent.Webster@oag.texas.gov>
Cc: HR-Help <HR-Help@oag.texas.gov>; GeneralCounsel <General.Counsel@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: Additional information on recent allegations

Brent,

I was appalled when I read the OAG's tweet (<https://twitter.com/TXAG/status/1313964850192830466?s=20>) that supposedly contains "additional information" on the allegations that are the subject of my report to law enforcement for potential illegal acts committed by the Attorney General. The tweet identifies me, by name, and contains statements that could only be intended to mislead the public and to intimidate or harass those, like myself, who reported the Attorney General's activities to appropriate law enforcement. I am personally offended by the content of the OAG's statement and its apparent disregard for the truth.

As you no doubt know by now, I drafted a contract, at the Attorney General's insistence, that could be used to retain Mr. Cammack's services as outside counsel, if doing so was determined by the agency to be in the State's best interest. I also provided that "draft" agreement to Mr. Cammack "for review"—as my attached email unequivocally states—again at the Attorney General's direct instruction. Apart from the Attorney General's personal involvement in this situation, neither of these actions is novel. In almost all contracting discussions, agency lawyers provide draft agreements to persons who may contract with the agency to negotiate the terms and conditions of an agreement.

Yet the statement departs from the truth and inaccurately portrays my role in the execution of that document.

First, I lack authority under OAG's contracting policies to individually authorize retaining outside

counsel for the agency—not just in this case, in any case. Second, at no point did I provide a copy of the agreement to the Attorney General “for his signature”, as the OAG’s statement provides. The second attached email clearly states that the contract that I sent to the Attorney General was a “draft”. And I made it abundantly clear, in previous conversations with the Attorney General, that any contract must be authorized under the agency’s well-established contracting policies and procedures. This process requires authorization from at least eight high-ranking OAG officials and deputies. Indeed, when the Attorney General had learned that Mr. Cammack’s contract had not been approved by agency staff yet, he asked me what was taking so long and stated that he “was tired of his people not doing what he had asked.” This plainly shows that the Attorney General was are of the approval process that was required for an agreement such as this. Moreover, suggesting that I possessed the exclusive authority to retain Mr. Cammack or subvert the OAG’s contracting policies is belied by the fact that I forwarded a draft EAM and a copy of the draft contract to the General Counsel Division to initiate the agency’s internal-review process, as shown by the attached DocuSign certificate. And, as the attached certificate reveals, the agency declined to authorize a contract with Mr. Cammack, based on Deputy Attorney General Mark Penley’s concerns:

“Decline Reason: I cannot and will not sign this contract because the complainant has not provided all requested documents in his possession custody or control, and is thus non-cooperative. I believe the complainant is trying to manipulate the AG and me in an attempt to use the authority of this Office for his own personal legal and financial benefit. I cannot ethically proceed with the investigation or authorize another to do so under these circumstances.”

Third, my most recent email to the Attorney General, which to date has gone unanswered, and which is not mentioned in the OAG’s tweet, explains both the legal and ethical concerns that an agreement with Mr. Cammack had created. The absence of such information in any official communication paints an inaccurate picture of the circumstances surrounding this situation.

I implore you to delete these grave misrepresentations that were disseminated using the OAG’s official resources and that appear to target me and label me as an accomplice in any wrongdoing. Furthermore, the OAG’s use of official communications staff and resources to publish the OAG’s tweet appears to violate state law. Section 2113 of the Government Code expressly prohibits a state agency, such as the OAG, from using “appropriated money to publicize or direct attention to an individual officer or employee of state government.” Tex. Gov’t Code § 2113.011(a).

I trust you will immediately take all necessary corrective action.

Thank you,
Ryan Vassar

Ryan M. Vassar

Deputy Attorney General for Legal Counsel

Office of Attorney General Ken Paxton
P.O. Box 12548

Austin, Texas 78711-2548
(512) 475-4280

This message may contain confidential and/or privileged attorney-client communications or attorney work product and be excepted from required disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, Texas Government Code chapter 552. The contents of this message should not be disclosed without the express authorization of the Attorney General.