
2025 Inspection Nichols, Cauley & Associates, LLC

(Headquartered in Dublin, Georgia)

October 23, 2025

THIS IS A PUBLIC VERSION OF A PCAOB INSPECTION REPORT

PORTIONS OF THE COMPLETE REPORT ARE OMITTED FROM THIS DOCUMENT IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH SECTIONS 104(g)(2) AND 105(b)(5)(A) OF THE SARBANES-OXLEY ACT OF 2002

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2025 INSPECTION

In the 2025 inspection of Nichols, Cauley & Associates, LLC, the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) assessed the firm's compliance with laws, rules, and professional standards applicable to the audits of issuers.

We selected for review one audit of an issuer with a fiscal year ending in 2024. For the issuer audit selected, we reviewed a portion of the audit. We also evaluated elements of the firm's system of quality control.

2025 Inspection Approach

In selecting issuer audits for review, we use a risk-based method of selection. We make selections based on (1) our internal evaluation of audits we believe have a heightened risk of material misstatement, including those with challenging audit areas, and (2) other risk-based characteristics, including issuer and firm considerations. In certain situations, we may select all of the firm's issuer audits for review.

When we review an audit, we do not review every aspect of the audit. Rather, we generally focus our attention on audit areas we believe to be of greater complexity, areas of greater significance or with a heightened risk of material misstatement to the issuer's financial statements, and areas of recurring deficiencies. We may also select some audit areas for review in a manner designed to incorporate unpredictability.

Our selection of audits for review does not necessarily constitute a representative sample of the firm's total population of issuer audits. Additionally, our inspection findings are specific to the particular portions of the issuer audits reviewed. They are not an assessment of all of the firm's audit work or of all of the audit procedures performed for the audits reviewed.

View the details on the [scope of our inspections and our inspections procedures](#).

OVERVIEW OF THE 2025 INSPECTION AND HISTORICAL DATA BY INSPECTION YEAR

The following information provides an overview of our 2025 inspection as well as data from the previous inspection. We use a risk-based method to select audits for review and to identify areas on which we focus our review. Because our inspection process evolves over time, it can, and often does, focus on a different mix of audits and audit areas from inspection to inspection and firm to firm. Further, a firm's business, the applicable auditing standards, or other factors can change from the time of one inspection to the next. As a result of these variations, we caution that our inspection results are not necessarily comparable over time or among firms.

Firm Data and Audits Selected for Review

	2025	2023
Firm data		
Total issuer audit clients in which the firm was the lead auditor	1	1
Total engagement partners on issuer audit work¹	1	1
Audits reviewed		
Total audits reviewed	1	1
Audits in which the firm was the lead auditor	1	1
Integrated audits of financial statements and internal control over financial reporting (ICFR)	0	0
Audits with Part I.A deficiencies	1	1
Percentage of audits with Part I.A deficiencies	100%	100%

If we include a deficiency in Part I.A of our report, it does not necessarily mean that the firm has not addressed the deficiency. In certain cases, the firm may have performed remedial actions after the deficiency was identified. Depending on the circumstances, remedial actions may include performing additional audit procedures, informing management of the issuer of the need for changes to the financial statements or reporting on ICFR, or taking steps to prevent reliance on prior audit reports.

¹ The number of engagement partners on issuer audit work represents the total number of firm personnel (not necessarily limited to personnel with an ownership interest) who had primary responsibility for an issuer audit (as defined in AS 1201, *Supervision of the Audit Engagement*) during the twelve-month period preceding the outset of the inspection.

Our inspection may include a review, on a sample basis, of the adequacy of a firm’s remedial actions, either with respect to previously identified deficiencies or deficiencies identified during the current inspection. If a firm does not take appropriate actions to address deficiencies, we may criticize its system of quality control or pursue a disciplinary action.

If we include a deficiency in our report — other than those deficiencies for audits with incorrect opinions on the financial statements and/or ICFR — it does not necessarily mean that the issuer’s financial statements are materially misstated or that undisclosed material weaknesses in ICFR exist. It is often not possible for us to reach a conclusion on those points based on our inspection procedures and related findings because, for example, we have only the information that the auditor retained and the issuer’s public disclosures. We do not have direct access to the issuer’s management, underlying books and records, and other information.

Audit Areas Most Frequently Reviewed

This table reflects the audit areas we have selected most frequently for review in the 2025 inspection and the previous inspection. For the issuer audits selected for review, we selected these areas because they were generally significant to the issuer’s financial statements, may have included complex issues for auditors, and/or involved complex judgments in (1) estimating and auditing the reported value of related accounts and disclosures and (2) implementing and auditing the related controls.

2025		2023	
Audit area	Audits reviewed	Audit area	Audits reviewed
Revenue and related accounts	1	Revenue and related accounts	1
Cash and cash equivalents	1	Cash and cash equivalents	1
Other investments	1	Other investments	1

PART I: INSPECTION OBSERVATIONS

Part I.A of our report discusses deficiencies, if any, that were of such significance that we believe the firm, at the time it issued its audit report(s), had not obtained sufficient appropriate audit evidence to support its opinion(s) on the issuer's financial statements and/or ICFR.

Part I.B discusses certain deficiencies, if any, that relate to instances of non-compliance with PCAOB standards or rules other than those where the firm had not obtained sufficient appropriate audit evidence to support its opinion(s). This section does not discuss instances of apparent non-compliance with rules related to maintaining independence.

Part I.C discusses instances of apparent non-compliance with rules related to maintaining independence.

Consistent with the Sarbanes-Oxley Act ("Act"), it is the Board's assessment that nothing in Part I of this report deals with a criticism of, or potential defect in, the firm's quality control system. We discuss any such criticisms or potential defects in Part II. Further, you should not infer from any Part I deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, that we identified a quality control finding in Part II. Section 104(g)(2) of the Act restricts us from publicly disclosing Part II deficiencies unless the firm does not address the criticisms or potential defects to the Board's satisfaction no later than 12 months after the issuance of this report.

Classification of Audits with Part I.A Deficiencies

Within Part I.A of this report, we classify each issuer audit in one of the categories discussed below based on the Part I.A deficiency or deficiencies identified in our review.

The purpose of this classification system is to group and present issuer audits by the number of Part I.A deficiencies we identified within the audit as well as to highlight audits with an incorrect opinion on the financial statements and/or ICFR.

Audits with an Incorrect Opinion on the Financial Statements and/or ICFR

This classification includes instances where a deficiency was identified in connection with our inspection and, as a result, an issuer's financial statements were determined to be materially misstated, and the issuer restated its financial statements. It also includes instances where a deficiency was identified in connection with our inspection and, as a result, an issuer's ICFR was determined to be ineffective, or there were additional material weaknesses that the firm did not identify, and the firm withdrew its opinion, or revised its report, on ICFR.

This classification does not include instances where, unrelated to our review, an issuer restated its financial statements and/or an issuer's ICFR was determined to be ineffective. We include any deficiencies identified in connection with our reviews of these audits in the audits with multiple deficiencies or audits with a single deficiency classification below.

Audits with Multiple Deficiencies

This classification includes instances where multiple deficiencies were identified that related to a combination of one or more financial statement accounts, disclosures, and/or important controls in an ICFR audit.

Audits with a Single Deficiency

This classification includes instances where a single deficiency was identified that related to a financial statement account or disclosure or to an important control in an ICFR audit.

PART I.A: AUDITS WITH UNSUPPORTED OPINIONS

This section of our report discusses the deficiencies identified, by specific issuer audit reviewed, in the audit work supporting the firm's opinion on the issuer's financial statements.

We identify each issuer by a letter (e.g., Issuer A) and industry sector. Each deficiency could relate to several auditing standards, but we reference the PCAOB standard that most directly relates to the requirement with which the firm did not comply.

We present issuer audits below within their respective deficiency classifications (as discussed previously). Within the classifications, we generally present the audits based on our assessment as to the relative significance of the identified deficiencies, taking into account the significance of the financial statement accounts and/or disclosures affected, and/or the nature or extent of the deficiencies.

Audits with an Incorrect Opinion on the Financial Statements and/or ICFR

None

Audits with Multiple Deficiencies

None

Audits with a Single Deficiency

Issuer A – Information Technology

Type of audit and related area affected

In our review, we identified a deficiency in the financial statement audit related to **Revenue**, for which the firm identified a fraud risk.

Description of the deficiency identified

The firm did not perform procedures to test, or in the alternative, test any controls over, the accuracy and completeness of certain issuer-produced reports that it used to substantively test certain revenue. (AS 1105.10)

PART I.B: OTHER INSTANCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE WITH PCAOB STANDARDS OR RULES

This section of our report discusses certain deficiencies that relate to instances of non-compliance with PCAOB standards or rules other than those where the firm had not obtained sufficient appropriate audit evidence to support its opinion. This section does not discuss instances of apparent non-compliance with rules related to maintaining independence.

When we review an audit, we do not review every aspect of the audit. In some cases, we assess the firm's compliance with specific PCAOB standards or rules on other audits that were not reviewed and include any instances of non-compliance below.

We identified the following deficiency:

In the audit reviewed, the firm, when testing journal entries for evidence of possible material misstatement due to fraud, did not perform sufficient procedures to determine whether the journal entry population that it used to identify selections was complete. In this instance, the firm was non-compliant with AS 1105, *Audit Evidence*.

PART I.C: INDEPENDENCE

PCAOB Rule 3520, *Auditor Independence*, requires a firm and its personnel to be independent of the firm's audit clients. This requirement encompasses not only an obligation to satisfy the independence criteria set out in PCAOB rules and standards but also an obligation to satisfy all other independence criteria applicable to an engagement, including the independence criteria set out by the SEC in Regulation S-X, 17 C.F.R. § 210.2-01, *Qualifications of Accountants*.

In the 2025 inspection, we did not identify, and the firm did not bring to our attention, any instances of apparent non-compliance with PCAOB Rule 3520. Although this section does not include any instances of apparent non-compliance with PCAOB Rule 3520 that we identified or the firm brought to our attention, there may be instances of non-compliance with rules related to independence that were not identified through our procedures or the firm's monitoring activities.

While the firm did not bring to our attention any instances of apparent non-compliance with PCAOB Rule 3520, the number, large or small, of firm-identified instances of apparent non-compliance may be reflective of the size of the firm, including the number of associated firms; the design and effectiveness of the firm's independence monitoring activities; and the size and/or complexity of the issuers it audits, including the number of affiliates of those issuers. Therefore, we caution against making any comparison of firm-identified instances of apparent non-compliance across firms.

PART II: OBSERVATIONS RELATED TO QUALITY CONTROL

Part II of our report discusses criticisms of, and potential defects in, the firm's system of quality control.

We include deficiencies in Part II if an analysis of the inspection results, including the results of the reviews of individual audits, indicates that the firm's system of quality control does not provide reasonable assurance that firm personnel will comply with applicable professional standards and requirements. Generally, the report's description of quality control criticisms is based on observations from our inspection procedures.

This report does not reflect changes or improvements to the firm's system of quality control that the firm may have made subsequent to the period covered by our inspection. The Board does consider such changes or improvements in assessing whether the firm has satisfactorily addressed the quality control criticisms or defects no later than 12 months after the issuance of this report.

When we issue our reports, we do not make public criticisms of, and potential defects in, the firm's system of quality control, to the extent any are identified. If a firm does not address to the Board's satisfaction any criticism of, or potential defect in, the firm's system of quality control within 12 months after the issuance of our report, we will make public any such deficiency.

APPENDIX A: FIRM'S RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT INSPECTION REPORT

Pursuant to Section 104(f) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7214(f), and PCAOB Rule 4007(a), the firm provided a written response to a draft of this report. Pursuant to Section 104(f) of the Act and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), the firm's response, excluding any portion granted confidential treatment, is attached hereto and made part of this final inspection report.

The Board does not make public any of a firm's comments that address a nonpublic portion of the report unless a firm specifically requests otherwise. In some cases, the result may be that none of a firm's response is made publicly available.

In addition, pursuant to Section 104(f) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 7214(f), and PCAOB Rule 4007(b), if a firm requests, and the Board grants, confidential treatment for any of the firm's comments on a draft report, the Board does not include those comments in the final report. The Board routinely grants confidential treatment, if requested, for any portion of a firm's response that addresses any point in the draft that the Board omits from, or any inaccurate statement in the draft that the Board corrects in, the final report.



August 15, 2025

VIA Email – ResponsestoDraftReport@pcaobus.org

Ms. Christine Gunia, Director
Division of Registration and Inspections
Public Company Accounting Oversight Board
1666 K. Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

Re: Response to Part I of Draft Report of Inspection Nichols, Cauley & Associates, LLC

Dear Ms. Gunia,

We are pleased to submit our response to the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board's (the "Board") draft report (the "Report") dated July 17, 2025 on its inspection of Nichols, Cauley & Associates, LLC (the "Firm") performed during 2024. We are supportive of the Board's mission and believe that inspections by the Board can be of significant benefit to the public, our profession and our Firm.

With respect to the issues presented in Part I.A of the Report, we believe this reflects the fact that accounting and auditing standards are highly complex and require significant professional judgment as it relates to the manner and extent of testing and determining what constitutes sufficient documentation. The sufficiency of audit documentation necessary to document the audit procedures performed and support an audit opinion is determined through professional judgment based on a specific set of facts and circumstances. While audit documentation is an important part of the audit process, consensus among auditing professionals regarding the sufficiency of documentation varies significantly.

The understanding of what constitutes an issuer-produced report and what controls are applicable are subject to professional judgement. We believe, in our professional judgment, sufficient audit procedures were performed by the engagement team to support our opinion on the issuer's financial statements. Consequently, we believe the noted issue presented by the Board are the result of a lack of sufficient explanatory audit documentation in the judgement of the Board.

We have considered these matters in accordance with AU 390, *Consideration of Omitted Procedures After the Report Date*, AS 2901, *Consideration of Omitted Procedures After the Report Date*, and AS 1105 *Audit Evidence*. As a result of the above considerations, no new information came to our attention that caused us to believe our previously issued audit report should be changed.

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With respect to the issues presented in Part I.B, we have considered this matter in accordance with AU 390, *Consideration of Omitted Procedures After the Report Date*, AS 2901, *Consideration of Omitted Procedures After the Report Date* and AS 1105 *Audit Evidence*. We believe there is substantial auditor judgement in the design and testing of journal entries, and acknowledge that documentation of rationales and testing should have been enhanced. Based upon our consideration of the above referenced guidance, no new information came to our attention that caused us to believe our previously issued audit report should be changed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read "Ian M. Waller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ian" being more prominent.

Ian M. Waller, CPA

