



Office of the Auditor General / Bureau du vérificateur général

FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2007 AUDIT OF THE

3-1-1 CONTACT CENTRE

2009

SUIVI DE LA VÉRIFICATION DU

CENTRE D'APPELS 3-1-1 DE 2007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Follow-up the 2007 Audit of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre was included in the 2009 Audit Plan first presented to Council in May 2007.

The key findings of the original 2007 audit included:

- A “mystery calling” program of 25 questions asked four times each was conducted to evaluate service delivery and identified that inaccurate and inconsistent information was being provided to callers;
- Management has focused on tracking call volumes but has given little attention to monitoring call quality;
- Measuring performance quality is needed to ensure more effective management and oversight;
- More work needs to be done to fully assess the potential cost savings to the City by evaluating insourcing and outsourcing options; and,
- Reporting relationships within the contact centre should be clarified.

Summary of the Level of Completion

The table below outlines our assessment of the level of completion of each recommendation as of Fall 2009.

CATEGORY	% COMPLETE	RECOMMENDATIONS	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS
LITTLE OR NO ACTION	0 – 24	3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	9	53%
ACTION INITIATED	25 – 49	1, 5, 8, 9, 12	5	29%
PARTIALLY COMPLETE	50 – 74	-	-	-
SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE	75 – 99	-	-	-
COMPLETE	100	2, 6, 7	3	18%
TOTAL			17	100%

The follow-up found that 3 of the 17 original recommendations were fully achieved. As management has indicated in its December 2008 status, many of the remaining 14 recommendations have seen only limited progress to-date. Specifically we found that:

- Moderate progress has been made towards the accomplishment of the majority of recommendations in the year following the presentation of this audit to Council.

- Implementation of a formal listen-in monitoring process has been lengthy and management maintains that budgets for new technology and resources needs to be obtained to fully action this recommendation.
- 3-1-1 Management have not yet taken action to evaluate insourcing as a cost saving option and have postponed the targeted date for revisiting the insourcing analysis to Q3 2011.
- Of particular concern is that six years after their original request, the Council directive to review the outsourcing of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre has not been actioned and management has advised that they would not do so until 2011.

As part of the follow-up, we again conducted a mystery calling exercise, during October-November 2009, which included the original 25 questions asked in 2007 and 10 new questions; each questions was asked four times. We found that fully accurate responses were provided 49% of the time, partly accurate responses an additional 24% of the time and incorrect answers occurred 27% of the time.

The results as compared to the 2007 mystery calling exercise were as follows:

2007 Mystery Calling			2009 Mystery Calling		
	#	% of Calls Answered		#	% of Calls Answered
TOTAL CALLS ATTEMPTED	100		TOTAL CALLS ATTEMPTED	140	
UNANSWERED CALLS	13		UNANSWERED CALLS	15	
TOTAL CALLS ANSWERED	87	100%	TOTAL CALLS ANSWERED	125	100%
FULLY CORRECT	34	39%	FULLY CORRECT	61	49%
PARTIALLY CORRECT	27	31%	PARTIALLY CORRECT	30	24%
INCORRECT	26	30%	INCORRECT	34	27%

In addition to accuracy issues, we noted that:

- In most cases, agents were pleasant, polite and professional during calls;
- Agents that referenced the City's website demonstrated a higher accuracy rate;
- Agents always asked permission to put a caller on hold and 78% thanked the caller for holding.
- Agents used the complete script of the standard opening in 41%¹ of calls;
- Agents used the complete script of the standard closing in only 5% of calls;
- In 26 instances, agents either failed to provide their name or gave a false name;

¹ In order not to skew the results, unanswered calls made during non-core hours were classified as fully correct and/or having fully used the standard opening/close statements.

- In 4% of calls, agents did not respond in the language selected by the caller;
- Only 1 transfer was a “warm transfer”; and,
- Most agents did not probe the caller before answering the question and accuracy increased when agents probed for additional information.

Please refer to Section 4.1 of the full follow-up report for further details on the results of the mystery calling exercise.

Conclusion

Overall, moderate progress has been made toward implementation of the 2007 Audit of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre recommendations. We noted that some of the measures taken by management were as a result of our follow-up inquiries in May 2008 and not in response to the original recommendations from 2007. Since the presentation of the audit in June 2008, management were successful in fully implementing 3 of the 17 recommendations.

3-1-1 Management have put in place some new procedures to address the original concerns noted in the 2007 Audit of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre. Key elements such as performance monitoring through listen-in has commenced in April 2009, however remedial training has not yet been provided to agent on issues identified. In addition, Management have now advised that the review of outsourcing the 3-1-1 Contact Centre has been postponed to 2011.

With regards to the “mystery calling” results, we noted good progress in providing ‘fully correct’ responses (a 10% increase over the 2007 results). Service to the public is improving, however, ‘incorrect’ responses still amounted to 27% of the total.

In March 2010 a report was presented to the IT Sub-Committee detailing the service excellence 3-1-1 CRM procurement strategy. Council approved the multi-phase implementation of the new 3-1-1 CRM solution during the 2010 budget as part of the service excellence program. Improved IT tools is a key step towards enabling Management to address the issues identified in the audit, particularly with regard to access to timely and accurate information for call agents.

Finally, the Quarterly Performance Report to Council Q4 (for the period October 1 – December 31, 2009) presented to Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee also in March 2010 detailed that “call volumes for the 3-1-1 Contact Centre in Q4 2009 rose 9.8% in comparison to Q4 2008” and that this increase was for the most part attributable to calls relating to H1N1 pandemic response, Green Bin program and distribution of the Garbage Collection Calendar. As call volumes increase, the implementation of this new technological solution in conjunction with additional training to address accuracy levels and consistency issues is essential.

Acknowledgement

We wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and assistance afforded the audit team by management.

RÉSUMÉ

Introduction

Le Suivi de la vérification du centre d'appels 3-1-1 de 2007 était prévu dans le Plan de vérification du Bureau du vérificateur général de 2009.

Les constatations principales de la vérification initiale de 2007 sont les suivantes :

- Afin d'évaluer la prestation des services, 25 questions ont été posées quatre fois chacune dans le cadre d'un programme d'« appels mystères ». L'exercice a révélé que des renseignements non uniformes et inexacts sont fournis à la clientèle du Centre d'appels;
- La direction accorde beaucoup d'importance au suivi du volume d'appels, mais ne prête qu'une attention modeste à la surveillance de la qualité du traitement des appels;
- Une évaluation de la qualité du rendement est nécessaire afin d'accroître l'efficacité des mesures de gestion et de surveillance;
- Il faut poursuivre les travaux visant à mesurer pleinement les économies que la Ville pourrait réaliser en ayant recours à l'internalisation ou à la sous-traitance;
- Les rapports hiérarchiques au sein du Centre d'appels devraient être clarifiés.

Sommaire du degré d'achèvement

Le tableau ci-dessous présente notre évaluation du degré d'achèvement de chaque recommandation à l'automne 2009 :

CATÉGORIE	POURCENTAGE COMPLÉTÉ	RECOMMANDATIONS	NOMBRE DE RECOMMANDATIONS	POURCENTAGE DU TOTAL DES RECOMMANDATIONS
PEU OU PAS DE MESURES PRISES	0 - 24	3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	9	53 %
ACTION AMORCÉE	25 - 49	1, 5, 8, 9, 12	5	29 %
COMPLÉTÉE EN PARTIE	50 - 74	-	-	-
PRATIQUEMENT COMPLÉTÉE	75 - 99	-	-	-
COMPLÉTÉE	100	2, 6, 7	3	18 %
TOTAL			17	100 %

Le suivi a permis de constater que trois des 17 recommandations initiales ont été appliquées intégralement. Comme la direction l'a indiqué dans son rapport d'étape de décembre 2008, bon nombre des 14 recommandations restantes n'ont que peu progressé jusqu'à ce jour. Nous avons notamment constaté que :

- des progrès modérés ont été accomplis à l'égard de la mise en œuvre de la majorité des recommandations au cours de l'année suivant la présentation de la présente vérification au Conseil;

- la mise en place d'un processus de surveillance d'écoute officiel a nécessité beaucoup de temps et la direction soutient qu'il faut obtenir des fonds destinés à la technologie et aux ressources afin d'appliquer pleinement cette recommandation;
- la direction du service 3-1-1 n'a pas encore pris de mesures en vue d'évaluer l'internalisation en tant qu'option permettant de réaliser des économies et a reporté la date cible du nouvel examen de l'analyse d'internalisation au troisième trimestre de 2011;
- six ans après la demande initiale, la directive du Conseil concernant l'examen de l'impartition du Centre d'appels 3-1-1 n'a pas été appliquée et la direction a avisé qu'elle n'entendait pas le faire avant 2011, ce qui est particulièrement préoccupant.

Dans le cadre du suivi, nous avons de nouveau mené un exercice d'« appels mystères » au cours de la période d'octobre à novembre 2009, ce qui incluait les 25 questions initiales posées en 2007 et 10 nouvelles questions; chacune d'elles a été posée quatre fois. Nous avons constaté que des réponses totalement exactes ont été données dans 49 % des cas, des réponses partiellement exactes dans 24 % des cas de plus et des réponses erronées dans 27 % des cas.

Voici les résultats comparés à ceux de l'exercice d'« appels mystères » de 2007 :

Appels mystères de 2007			Appels mystères de 2009		
	#	% des appels auxquels on a répondu		#	% des appels auxquels on a répondu
TENTATIVES D'APPELS TOTALES	100		TENTATIVES D'APPELS TOTALES	140	
APPELS SANS RÉPONSE	13		APPELS SANS RÉPONSE	15	
NOMBRE TOTAL D'APPELS AUXQUELS ON A RÉPONDU	87	100 %	APPELS TOTAUX RÉPONDUS	125	100 %
TOTALEMENT EXACTES	34	39 %	TOTALEMENT EXACTES	61	49 %
PARTIELLEMENT EXACTES	27	31 %	PARTIELLEMENT EXACTES	30	24 %
INCORRECTES	26	30 %	INCORRECTES	34	27 %

Outre les problèmes d'exactitude, nous avons noté que :

- dans la plupart des cas, les agents étaient aimables, polis et professionnels durant les appels;
- les agents qui consultaient le site Web de la Ville présentaient un taux de précision plus élevé;

- les agents ont toujours demandé à l'appelant sa permission avant de mettre en garde l'appel et 78 % d'entre eux ont remercié l'appelant d'avoir patienté;
- les agents ont utilisé tout le script de l'ouverture standard dans seulement 41 %¹ des cas;
- les agents ont utilisé tout le script de la fermeture standard dans seulement 5 % des cas;
- dans 26 cas, les agents ont omis de donner leur nom ou ont donné un faux nom;
- dans 4 % des cas, les agents n'ont pas répondu à l'appelant dans la langue qu'il utilisait;
- seul un transfert était un « transfert à chaud »;
- la plupart des agents n'ont pas cherché à obtenir plus de renseignements auprès de l'appelant avant de répondre à la question, et la précision a augmenté lorsque les agents ont cherché à obtenir des renseignements supplémentaires.

Veillez consulter la section 4.1 du rapport de suivi complet pour obtenir de plus amples détails sur les résultats de l'exercice d'« appels mystères ».

Conclusion

Dans l'ensemble, des progrès modérés ont été accomplis en vue de la mise en œuvre des recommandations du centre d'appels 3-1-1 de la vérification de 2007. Nous avons noté que certaines des mesures prises par la direction découlaient des demandes de renseignements de suivi en mai 2008 et qu'elles ne venaient pas en réponse aux recommandations de 2007. Depuis la présentation de la vérification en juin 2008, la direction a réussi à mettre en œuvre trois des 17 recommandations.

La direction du service 3-1-1 a adopté de nouvelles procédures suite aux préoccupations initiales indiquées dans la vérification du Centre d'appels 3-1-1 de 2007. Des éléments clés, tels que la surveillance du rendement par le biais de l'écoute, sont mis en œuvre depuis avril 2009; toutefois, une formation de rattrapage n'a pas encore été donnée aux agents relativement aux problèmes indiqués. De plus, la direction a maintenant indiqué que l'examen de l'impartition du Centre d'appels 3-1-1 a été reporté à 2011.

En ce qui a trait aux résultats des « appels mystères », nous avons noté une bonne amélioration des réponses « entièrement exactes » (soit une augmentation de 10 % par rapport aux résultats de 2007). Le service au public s'améliore, toutefois, les réponses erronées représentaient toujours 27 % du total.

¹ Dans le but de ne pas fausser les résultats, les appels effectués en dehors des heures normales et auxquels on n'a pas répondu ont été classés comme ayant obtenu une réponse entièrement exacte et/ou au cours desquels on a utilisé les énoncés d'ouverture et de fermeture au complet.

En mars 2010, un rapport présenté au Sous-comité de la TI détaillait l'Excellence du service : Stratégie d'achat d'une solution 3-1-1 / GRC. Le Conseil a approuvé la mise en œuvre en plusieurs phases de la nouvelle solution 3-1-1 / GRC dans le budget 2010 dans le cadre du programme d'excellence en matière de service. Des outils de TI améliorés constituent une étape clé en vue de permettre à la direction de corriger les problèmes déterminés dans la vérification, particulièrement en ce qui concerne l'accès à de l'information opportune et précise pour les agents du Centre d'appels.

Enfin, le rapport trimestriel sur le rendement présenté au Conseil du quatrième trimestre (pour la période du 1^{er} octobre au 31 décembre 2009) soumis au Comité des services organisationnels et du développement économique, également en mars 2010, indiquait que « les volumes d'appels pour le Centre d'appels 3-1-1 au quatrième trimestre de 2009 avaient augmenté de 9,8 % comparativement au quatrième trimestre de 2008 » et que cette augmentation était attribuable en grande partie à des appels liés à l'intervention face à la pandémie de grippe H1N1, au programme de Bac vert et à la distribution du calendrier de la collecte des déchets. Comme le nombre d'appels ne cesse d'augmenter, la mise en œuvre de cette nouvelle solution technologique, de concert avec une formation supplémentaire pour corriger les problèmes de précision et de cohérence, est essentielle.

Remerciements

Nous tenons à remercier la direction pour la coopération et l'assistance accordées à l'équipe de vérification.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Follow-up the 2007 Audit of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre was included in the 2009 Audit Plan first presented to Council in May 2007.

The key findings of the original 2007 audit included:

- A “mystery calling” program of 25 questions asked four times each was conducted to evaluate service delivery and identified that inaccurate and inconsistent information was being provided to callers;
- Management has focused on tracking call volumes but has given little attention to monitoring call quality;
- Measuring performance quality is needed to ensure more effective management and oversight;
- More work needs to be done to fully assess the potential cost savings to the City by evaluating insourcing and outsourcing options; and,
- Reporting relationships within the contact centre should be clarified.

2 KEY FINDINGS OF THE ORIGINAL 2007 AUDIT OF THE 3-1-1 CONTACT CENTRE

Since amalgamation in 2001, and since the official launch of 3-1-1 in September 2005, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre has accomplished a lot. The key strengths and accomplishments of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre noted during the course of the audit include:

- Focus on training for 3-1-1 Contact Centre staff;
- Investment in technology, including the development of a knowledge-based tool that all Call agents have access to;
- Developed a framework for capturing statistics and reporting;
- Good resource planning and scheduling;
- Establishment of service level standards;
- Reviewed efficiencies to be achieved through insourcing; and,
- Developed positive working relationships internally.

Based on the criteria used in this audit, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre has satisfied many of the criteria but is not meeting several others. The key areas where there are opportunities for improvement are as follows:

1. **Organization and Leadership** – The four main areas were as follows:
 - Clarify supervision of staff;

- Improve communications with staff;
- Review staffing model (balance of full-time, part-time, and casual staff); and,
- Resolve overpayment of shift premium payments.

2. **Service Delivery** – IBM was engaged as a part of this audit to conduct a “mystery calling” program to evaluate service delivery. The program was designed to evaluate the customer service levels of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre (e.g., response time, availability, appropriate language, courteousness) as well as the service outcomes (e.g., accuracy, did individuals obtain what they needed) across hours of service.

There is significant room for improvement in the accuracy of the answers being provided. Only 39% of responses were considered “fully correct”, while another 31% of responses were “partially correct”, and 30% of the calls were answered incorrectly. The results indicate that management should:

- Implement a formal call monitoring program to better assess whether staff are following procedures and protocols;
- Review current training practices and address specific topics where accuracy has been identified as an issue; and,
- Use the results of the mystery calling study as a baseline for measuring performance and continue to perform similar assessments in the future.

The findings of the mystery-calling program are summarized in the audit report and the full IBM report is included in Appendix A of the full audit report.

3. **Performance Measurement** – The audit found that 3-1-1 management has established a comprehensive reporting framework. The three key reports are as follows:

- Quarterly Performance Report to Council;
- Monthly 3-1-1 Service Request Report; and,
- Weekly activity reporting.

This reporting provides useful data, however, these reports focus on activities, call volumes and quantitative analysis rather than performance measures related to quality. The current reporting does not provide 3-1-1 management or other stakeholders with useful and relevant data on service quality. At present, 3-1-1 management relies on informal feedback from internal business clients and the public/external clients to gauge qualitative performance.

4. **Quality Assurance** – The audit found that there are no formal processes in place to monitor or evaluate the quality of the 3-1-1 services being delivered externally to clients. The biggest costs to the 3-1-1 Contact Centre of poor call quality are

repeat callers, escalation of calls and complaints to higher management, negative reaction and publicity from angry clients, and staff rework caused by errors made during the call. Therefore, the emphasis should always be on handling each call correctly.

The two key quality indicators that the 3-1-1 Contact Centre currently does not measure or track are as follows:

- Errors and rework; and,
- Customer satisfaction.

The audit also found that there are no formal processes in place to assess the quality of the 3-1-1 service being delivered internally to the business clients and other parts of the organization. As with external business clients, there are no tracking or reporting mechanisms in place to monitor or assess the quality of internal service delivery.

5. **Alternate Service Delivery** – The audit found that 3-1-1 management has completed the preliminary work to assess potential insourcing opportunities. In late 2006, 3-1-1 management engaged a consultant to assess the feasibility of combining the operations of other City call centres under 3-1-1. The consultant found that, based on the cost per call minute (CPCM) methodology used, four out of the eight call centres included in the evaluation were “high potential 3-1-1 candidates”, as follows:

- Transit (OC Transpo);
- Tax – Customer Accounts;
- Utilities; and,
- RPAM.

This audit found that even though the consultants report is based on a sound CPCM analysis, there are other qualitative issues that were not factored into the CPCM analysis, and as a result, these impact the feasibility of consolidating operations. The audit found that consolidating operations of the four call centres listed above may not be appropriate at this point in time.

As well, until the staffing, service delivery and service quality issues raised in this report have been more fully resolved in the 3-1-1 Contact Centre, it would not be appropriate for the 3-1-1 Contact Centre to expand its operations and assume additional responsibility.

Finally, as a part of this audit, we conducted an independent review and assessment of the viability and practicality of outsourcing the provision of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre service (non-emergency calls to the City). The objective was to provide a high level assessment of the possible business case for outsourcing 3-1-1.

We concluded that outsourcing is a viable option for further consideration, based on the following findings:

- Outsourcing has been used, and is continuing to find favour in both the public and private sector, for complex and simple transactions.
- Outsourcers have a number of strategic advantages that may translate into lower costs to serve, while at the same time delivering enhanced customer service and service delivery.
- Outsourcing has been and continues to be used in at least one major 3-1-1 environment (New York), and is seen as a viable option to ensure flexibility and redundancy (emergency back-up) planning.

While labour relations considerations will impact on the ability to fully outsource, it was identified that the biggest savings would come from outsourcing a consolidated 3-1-1 operation.

3 STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF 2007 AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

2007 Recommendation 1

That 3-1-1 management clarify the roles and responsibilities of the program manager, supervisors, and service level coordinator and communicate this to staff to ensure a common and consistent understanding.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

The introduction of contact centre industry standard practices lead to changes in some roles and functions, which may have resulted in confusion for staff. Management will clarify the roles and responsibilities of the program manager, supervisors and service level coordinator for staff by the end of Q2 2008.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 1 at December 31, 2008

Roles and responsibilities were defined and documentation was complete by year-end. Communication with staff will occur in February 2009.

Management: % complete **90%**

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 1

The 3-1-1 Contact Centre provided us with job descriptions, which were revised April 21, 2009. 3-1-1 Management informed us that these were posted on the cubicle wall across the fax and copier room and posted on the Client Services Forum on May 15, 2009. The intent of the recommendation was not to just have job descriptions posted but rather that reporting relationships be clarified and that

management ensure that individual staff clearly understand each of the program manager, supervisors and service level coordinators roles and responsibilities.

OAG: % complete *35%*

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 1 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that action has been initiated to implement this recommendation but it is not yet considered complete.

The following actions have been undertaken to satisfy this recommendation:

- On June 26, 2008 staff was asked by email to advise if any clarification was needed on the various 3-1-1 Contact Centre roles. As a result, a detailed list of task-based responsibilities was developed.
- On May 15, 2009, staff was sent an email making them aware of the availability of the above information, and to provide an opportunity to discuss with management if they had any questions or if further clarification was required.
- The list of responsibilities is posted on the Client Services Forum, the agent source for operational and procedural information.
- Roles and responsibilities are included in staff orientation training.
- Regular one-on-one meetings with staff are conducted to provide information sharing and an opportunity for staff and supervisors to clarify any questions that might arise regarding roles.
- Organizational charts are available to ensure clarity of reporting relationships.

Management considers implementation of this recommendation to be complete.

Management: % complete *100%*

2007 Recommendation 2

That 3-1-1 Contact Centre agents be accountable to only one supervisor for monitoring and assessing performance.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

While this has occurred in practice over the past year, management will formalize and communicate this approach by the end of Q2 2008.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 2 at December 31, 2008

(None provided)

Management: % complete *100%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 2

Two organizational charts, one on June 30, 2008 was sent to all Contact Centre staff and an updated chart on March 31, 2009 was communicated in a staff meeting. As not all employees could have attended this staff meeting and as there are only 39 Contact Centre Agents, a personal e-mail or official letter from the respective supervisor may have been a more personal approach.

OAG: % complete *100%*

2007 Recommendation 3

That a process be implemented to regularly monitor, assess, and document staff performance.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

While this has occurred in practice over the past year during periodic one-on-one feedback sessions, management will conduct yearly performance reviews as part of Employee Services' new Performance Development Program for unionized employees. Prior to the development of this program, no formal review process existed for CUPE members.

Employee Services is currently rolling out this program branch-by-branch in a controlled and coordinated fashion. Management expects to complete performance appraisals by Q4 2009.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 3 at December 31, 2008

Implementation is in progress and is on target for completion by Q4 2009.

Management: % complete *5%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 3

As stated by management, Employee Services will be implementing regular performance appraisals for CUPE 503 unionized employees by fall 2009. At the time of the follow-up, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre Management are in the first phase of implementation of regular monitoring to assess and document agents' performance. A 3-1-1 Agent Contribution Results Report (ACR) has been developed as a tool for measuring performance. We noted that the performance measures relate to timeliness of call answering. Quality performance measures, e.g., call exactness, completeness, and appropriateness are not quantified on this particular tool. Until this tool is used for at least six months, results cannot be analysed in any meaningful way. It is hoped that implementation of recommendation 4 will improve communication.

Based on the results of the mystery-calling program, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre should continue to implement a formal quality call monitoring program. Without one it is difficult to accurately gauge if agents are consistently following the procedures and protocols set out for them.

OAG: % complete

5%

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 3 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that there has been little or no action taken to implement this recommendation.

The original recommendation required the implementation of a process to regularly monitor, assess, and document staff performance. An Agent Contribution Report (ACR) is completed every month and delivered to agents. Regular meetings have been held with agents to review and provide feedback on these reports. The ACR outlines agents' performance on the following quantitative and qualitative measures:

- Average Customer Contacts (Calls) per Hour (ACCH) – This reflects the number of calls an agent would normally take in an hour. For development purposes management would expect to see a trend for agents to take more calls per hour over time.
- Average Sign On Hours Per Day (ASOH) – When an agent reports to work they sign on to the phone system and then sign out at the end of the day. A full time employee would be expected to be signed on for the length of their shift.
- Average Make Busy Minutes Per Hour (AMBM) – This indicates the amount of time in a shift that the agent is not available to assist customers – for example, breaks, going to the washroom, meeting with supervisors, etc. Although they are signed on for the entire shift they are not available for calls the entire time.
- Customer Contact (Calls) Service Quality (CSQ) – This is reflective of the Quality Assurance program in place. Each agent has two calls per month recorded and reviewed by their supervisor. The calls are reviewed with respect to their compliance with quality standards such as; was the greeting correct? Did they provide the correct information?
- Attendance Management - this program tracks the number of planned (i.e., vacation) and unplanned (sick leave) absences by an agent. This can provide information around agent reliability.

In 2009, management focused on developing core behaviours and agent responsibilities for the 3-1-1 Contact Centre Agent Position. The Contact Centre Agent Position represents 90% of the 3-1-1 complement. The positions within 3-1-1

which represent the remaining 10% will have a self-assessment tool developed and implemented in Q2 2010.

An email was sent to all 3-1-1 Contact Centre Agents on November 20, 2009 requesting that each agent complete a self assessment tool that had been created in-house. It consisted of 38 individual evaluation questions in four competency categories of Skill and Knowledge that is a) Good for the Customer b) Good for the City c) Courteous, Polite and Professional and d) Timely. Each agent was asked to self-assess against the 38 individual questions and rate themselves as either doing it consistently, sometimes, or as finding it difficult. Staff was also asked to provide any other areas of concern they might be experiencing as all the information collected from the self-assessment tool would support the development of ongoing agent training in 2010, as well as immediate individual coaching opportunities. 63% of agents returned the forms. Efforts are currently underway to ensure the remaining 37% of self-assessment forms are completed and returned by Q2 2010. All 3-1-1 Contact Centre agents will receive feedback on the ACR results at the end of Q2 2010. The results of this self-assessment will be used as an input in the City's formal PDP process in 2010, and will support discussions with respect to potential gaps in performance between the staff self-assessment, and the supervisor's assessments.

A decision was made by management and Human Resources to implement the formal PDP process in 2010 because individual staff received these guiding documents at year-end 2009. The PDP process will be implemented by the end of Q4 2010 for all eligible, unionized staff, including supervisors and support staff.

Management considers implementation of this recommendation to be substantially complete.

Management: % complete *75%*

2007 Recommendation 4

That 3-1-1 management review their communication approach with Contact Centre agents to ensure that the appropriate processes and tools are in place that result in relevant information being communicated in an efficient, effective, and consistent manner.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

With 3-1-1's scope of service spanning across the organization, the flow of information into the Contact Centre can be daunting, as the information comes from various sources and via many channels. Technology is being used to tag new and updated procedures. In-person briefings are used periodically for sensitive topics.

Management will establish a project that will review the communication approach with Contact Centre agents and establish new processes and tools, by the end of Q4 2008.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 4 at December 31, 2008

A project scope and plan have been developed. Focus groups are scheduled for January 2009 and implementation of this recommendation is targeted for completion in Q2 2009.

Management: % complete *15%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 4

3-1-1 Contact Centre Management has established focus groups of full-time, part-time and casual agents as a first step to reviewing their communications approach. A business analyst from Corporate Communication and Customer Service branch facilitated the focus group. Management informed us that the business analyst, based on staff availability, randomly chose participants. Using an external party usually ensures greater success for focus groups. As at December 31, 2008 only one of the five focus group session had occurred.

The four remaining sessions occurred from January 25 to February 4, 2009. We confirmed with Management that no process was put in place to gather input from 3-1-1 staff not participating in the focus group. Management advised us that they did share the results of the focus group sessions with 3-1-1 staff on March 31, 2009.

Based on the results of the mystery-calling program, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre should:

- Review training practices to determine areas of weakness for the 3-1-1 centre.
- Offer frequent training courses to help improve accuracy. These courses could be detailed foundational courses or refresher courses on specific topics.
- Include learning plans as part of developmental discussions with employees if this is not already the case.
- Use the information obtained from this program as data to continue building a repository of performance.
- Perform similar assessments (using larger sample sizes) on a regular basis to track performance and give staff a relatively quick feedback mechanism to help improve performance.

OAG: % complete *15%*

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 4 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that there has been little or no action taken to implement this recommendation.

3-1-1 management has reviewed its communication approach through staff focus groups that were conducted between December 2008 and February 2009 with 50% of the agents and 100% of the support staff actively participating. As a result, the following improvements have been implemented:

- Quarterly briefings with employees to provide updates on current and new procedures, programs and other items of general interest. Information delivered in a consistent and regular manner.
- Centralizing all routine procedural information through the Contact Centre Procedures email inbox.
- Streamlining e-mail responses.
- Communicating agent performance feedback and general information during one/one ACR meetings.
- Reviewing the 3-1-1 Knowledge Base to ensure all phone numbers are up to date.
- Reorganizing information and standardizing the INDEX in the 3-1-1 Knowledge Base to make it easier for agents to find procedures.

With regard to the new recommendations the OAG has provided in the recent assessment, the first two pertain to training and are covered by the implementation of Recommendation 9. The remaining three are related to the use of a mystery calling program, and are addressed through the implementation of Recommendation 10. Management considers implementation of this recommendation to be complete

Management: % complete ***100%***

2007 Recommendation 5

That 3-1-1 management review the staffing model to determine the appropriate mix of full-time, part-time, and casual staff to support the Contact Centre’s objective of delivering high quality, accessible and timely service at the lowest possible total cost.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

This recommendation is already in place. The current staffing model was developed in 2006 and management continues to fine-tune the appropriate mix of full-time, part-time, and casual staff depending upon our operational requirements. The implementation of a more flexible staffing model has enabled management to more effectively control costs, including the use of overtime, while positively impacting coverage in a fluctuating call demand operation.

Management reviews the staffing model on an ongoing basis to ensure that the Contact Centre is delivering high-quality, accessible and timely service at the lowest

possible cost. The current staffing model has not significantly impacted staff turnover and is in-line with contact centre industry best practices.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 5 at December 31, 2008

(None provided)

Management: % complete *100%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 5

Management originally agreed with the recommendation and indicated that measures were in place in 2006 and since fine-tuned. However, evidence was not provided that a formal review of the staffing level, to determine the appropriate mix of full-time, part-time, and casual staff to support the Contact Centre's objective of delivering high quality, accessible and timely service at the lowest possible total cost, has been undertaken.

Management advised us that "review of the staffing model occurs frequently, daily in some cases, and involves a combination of methodologies including data analysis of forecasted versus actual call volume, and identification of planned and unplanned issues or absences, including weather, which affect call volume. Decisions to alter the staffing model are made verbally, in consultation with Supervisors, as part of daily operations and team meetings. These decisions are not documented. They are part of managing the day-to-day requirements of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre." It is acknowledged that daily review of resources is an important component to ensuring that day-to-day demands are met. However, the broader intent of this recommendation was to determine the optimal mix of full-time, part-time and casual resources for the overall staffing model.

OAG: % complete *25%*

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 5 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that action has been initiated to implement this recommendation but it is not yet considered partially complete.

In response to a request for information and documentation as part of the 2009 follow-up of the 2007 Audit of 3-1-1, management demonstrated the progression of its staffing model to ensure operational efficiencies resulting in service level adherence, cost per call levelling despite yearly labour rate increases, and the addition of three of the phone operational support functions.

Review of the staffing model occurs frequently, daily in some cases, and involves a combination of methodologies including data analysis of forecasted versus actual call volume, and identification of planned and unplanned issues or absences, including weather, which affect call volume. Staffing model adjustments can also

occur during isolated peaks in service, such as the launch of the Green Bin program and H1N1 events, where temporary agency resources are necessary. The current, on-going staffing model adjustments are directly related to the Contact Centre's objective of delivering high quality, accessible and timely service at the lowest possible total cost.

Management considers implementation of this recommendation to be complete.

Management will not be conducting further staffing model reviews pending the outcome of the 3-1-1 Optimization Project, which will include benchmarking and best practice reviews related to optimizing staffing models.

Management: % complete *100%*

2007 Recommendation 6

That 3-1-1 management ensure accountability in enforcing all aspects of the Collective Agreement, including the shift premium payments.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

The December 2007 signing of the new CUPE 503 inside/outside Collective Agreement gave management the opportunity to move to the desired model of eliminating the payment of shift premiums to some employees.

Under the guidance of labour relations, management is committed to enforcing all aspects of the Collective Agreement by the end of Q2 2008.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 6 at December 31, 2008

(None provided)

Management: % complete *100%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 6

We have reviewed shift premiums earned by employees for the month of August 2008. All shift premiums paid were in compliance with the collective agreement (i.e., for weekend or the work provided that 50% or more of those regular hours fell between 19:00 and 7:00).

OAG: % complete *100%*

2007 Recommendation 7

That the compensation budget for the 3-1-1 Contact Centre not be increased until management can demonstrate compliance with the Collective Agreement for shift premiums paid to staff.

2007 Management Response

Management disagrees with this recommendation.

Council reviewed the 3-1-1 Contact Centre service levels and budget in detail as part of the 2008 Administrative Review process. The budget, branch operations and service will continue to be reviewed in a manner prescribed by Council budget directions.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 7 at December 31, 2008

This item was discussed at the November 21, 2008 meeting of CAWG and will go to Council for approval in the next quarterly report. In consultation with Labour Relations and CUPE 503 Administration, this matter was resolved on May 31, 2008. Given that management can demonstrate compliance with the collective agreement, management can now move forward with this recommendation.

Management: % complete **100%**

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 7

See Auditor General's Comments on Follow-up from recommendation 6. In addition, we observed that actual shift premium expenditures decreased from \$56,500 (2007 actual) to \$41,800 (2008 actual). As at the end of September 2009, only 50% of the planned shift premium budget had been spent.

OAG: % complete **100%**

2007 Recommendation 8

That 3-1-1 management implement formal call monitoring technology to assess if agents are following the procedures and protocols in place and handling calls in a consistent manner.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

As part of the Point of Service Strategy, a Quality Assurance Program was developed and approved in 2007. Planned implementation was to take place in the fall and winter of 2007-2008 and is currently being rolled out as planned.

Recording technology has now been acquired using a low cost option to record adhoc calls, which are used to review with agents. Recording of all calls was an option at a higher cost, which would have been redundant pending the City's migration to Voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology. The technology to record all calls will be considered as part of the VoIP implementation by IT Services.

Management believes that this recommendation has been adequately fulfilled pending implementation of VoIP. Details regarding the rollout plan for VoIP are not yet available.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 8 at December 31, 2008

Low-cost technology to listen-in and/or record agent calls on an ad-hoc basis has been purchased and rolled-out. The Agent Knowledge Base is currently being refined so that agents have one source of information from which to provide consistent and accurate information. This work should be completed by Q4 2009 and will form the baseline against which a more comprehensive call monitoring process can be evaluated. In the interim, staff are occasionally listening to agent calls, and are immediately providing verbal feedback to improve performance. A budget pressure of \$225K was identified in the 2009 Budget for resources and technology to implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance program, but it was not approved. Until such time as this budget pressure is approved, staff are limited by existing technology and resources, which could result in further enhancements being delayed until 2011.

Management: % complete *50%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 8

As at December 31, 2008 this recommendation had not been implemented. However, quality call sampling did begin in April 2009. The majority of employees had one call monitored per month. Management informed us that the date and time of the call monitored is not captured due to the non-automated recording process in use. Management schedules a date at which time employees will have one call listen-in. There is a possibility of results may be skewed should employees become aware as to when listen-in occurs (be more polite, accurate, provide greater details to callers during listen-in days, be absent from work, etc.). A more random approach to listen-in should be pursued. Results of the mystery-calling program clearly demonstrated issues in terms of accuracy, consistency and call quality.

OAG: % complete *25%*

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 8 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that action has been initiated to implement this recommendation but it is not yet considered partially complete.

While resource intense, the existing low tech solution of recording calls using a recorder and reviewing against a set of quality standards has assisted the management team in providing quality feedback to agents and facilitating the identification of trends. Management implemented this low-cost call monitoring technology within current budget limitations; however, this technology does not track call time or date.

A formal call monitoring system would require a capital investment in technology which was not approved in the 2008 or 2009 budgets. Funds were approved within

the 2010 Service Excellence Program budget to implement CRM technology. As part of the CRM procurement process, management will explore the opportunity to purchase a more formal call monitoring solution. However, until new technology is purchased or additional funds are approved, the current call monitoring process constitutes management's solution.

With respect to the OAG's new findings that employees are informed in advance of being monitored, this is a random process and employees are not made aware prior to being recorded.

The intent of the recommendation, to monitor calls in order to assess if agents are following the procedures and protocols in place and handling calls in a consistent manner, has been met. Management considers implementation of this recommendation to be complete.

Management: % complete *100%*

2007 Recommendation 9

That 3-1-1 management review current training practices to ensure that ongoing agent training is offered frequently and on specific topics where accuracy has been identified as an issue.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management will target future training initiatives to address specific areas where completeness of answer has been identified as an issue. This will be done through ongoing discussions with staff and through the results of the Quality Assurance Program that will be fully implemented by Q2 2009.

With respect to the IBM Mystery Calling Program, management is concerned that the report is not a fair representation of the service delivered at 3-1-1.

The Auditor indicates that only 39% of responses were considered "fully correct", while another 31% of responses were "partially correct", and 30% of the calls were answered incorrectly. Currently, the 3-1-1 Call Centre is primarily focused on accuracy and timeliness. An assessment of the IBM Mystery Calling Program, although referencing accuracy, is focused on degree of completeness. Management believes that "fully complete" and "partially complete" should have been the words used to evaluate the responses and as such, the results should be interpreted as informative and pointing in the right direction as the 3-1-1 Call Centre strives for excellence.

The IBM Mystery Calling Program focussed on information-based questions and excluded service request questions. Service requests accounted for 34% of the over 500,000 calls serviced by 3-1-1 in 2007. A more relevant study to measure and evaluate the service levels and performance of 3-1-1 would have been a true

customer service satisfaction survey of residents who had recently used the 3-1-1 service. Management conducted such a study in the fall of 2007 based on a sample size of 400 and has shared the findings with the Auditor. The survey revealed strong satisfaction ratings of over 80% (4.2/5) for both information and service requests.

In addition, in 2004, Council directed the reduction in service level at the Contact Centre from a full service 24/7 operation to a Contact Centre that has two service level periods (core hours and non-core hours). The evaluation of responses to questions posed through the IBM Mystery Calling Program reflected two very different service level periods, and as such, were not a fair assessment of the customer service abilities of some of the agents, nor a clear representation of the service provision.

All of the questions asked by the mystery caller during non-core hours, were in fact out-of-scope for the “normal” non-core hours service. Had management been given an opportunity to review the questions for relevance in advance, a more appropriate set of questions reflective of non-core hours of operation would have been provided. Agents working after-hours are required to balance the responsibilities related to handling urgent, priority requests with that of helping callers with non-priority matters.

Any reference made to a “call not being answered by an agent at all (reached a recording asking them to call back during core hours),” is incorrect. This only happens if the caller dials “0” when waiting in the queue, as per the messaging.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 9 at December 31, 2008

Implementation of this recommendation is linked to recommendation 8. Management is targeting future training initiatives to address specific areas where completeness of answer has been identified as an issue. Adhoc agent review sessions are being conducted by listening and/or recording a live conversation with a caller, and providing verbal feedback. Where reoccurring problems are observed, enhanced protocols and/or agent prompts are immediately developed and shared with staff. The Agent Knowledge Base is being refined so that agents have one source of information from which to provide consistent and accurate information. This work should be completed by Q4 2009. As new or emerging issues have arisen (i.e., graffiti management, OC Transpo labour disruption), management has met with operating departments to share information and discuss best practices to ensure a high level of customer service. A budget pressure of \$225K was identified in the 2009 Budget for resources and technology to implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance program, but it was not approved. Until such time as this budget pressure is approved, staff are limited by existing technology and resources. Once improved technology is identified and an operating budget approved, further training enhancements will be implemented.

Management: % complete

25%

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 9

As at December 31, 2008 recommendation 8 had not been implemented. As stated in management's status of implementation, management will be targeting future training initiatives to address specific areas where completeness of answer has been identified as an issue. For this to occur, a greater amount of listen-in must take place. As stated in recommendation 8, call monitoring was implemented in April 2009.

A slight improvement in terms of accuracy was noted during the October-November 2009 mystery calling. However, results clearly demonstrated issues in terms of accuracy, consistency and call quality. As stated earlier and based on these results, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre should review training practices to determine areas of weakness for the 3-1-1 centre and offer frequent training courses to help improve accuracy. These courses could be detailed foundational courses or refresher courses on specific topics. Learning plans should be included as part of developmental discussions with employees if this is not already the case.

OAG: % complete

25%

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 9 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that action has been initiated to implement this recommendation but it is not yet considered partially complete.

3-1-1 management has reviewed training practices and an action plan is being implemented to ensure that ongoing agent training is offered frequently and on specific topics - including accuracy, consistency and call quality.

Phase one of the training action plan is complete, with the introduction of the enhanced 3-1-1 Training Curriculum for new agents which includes:

- Interactive modules on Call Handling, Call Control and Strategies for Effective Client Communications have been developed and integrated into the training;
- Emphasis on skill practice exercises using call simulation techniques and call recording scenarios, taken from recent 3-1-1 call quality sampling results and Mystery Shopper results related to call quality, accuracy and consistency;
- The Agent Contribution Reporting process (ACR) is now integrated into the Training Program;
- Interactive exercise and comprehension assessments so as to gauge the skill and knowledge transfer as the training program progresses;

- Scheduled involvement and participation during the training of key internal business clients to assist agents in better understanding their internal business operations.
- The duration of the training program has increased from 5 to 10 days to accommodate these enhancements and provide a more complete learning experience.

The enhanced curriculum is being delivered to the first class of recently hired agents the weeks of May 3 and 10, 2010.

Phase two of the training action plan addresses ongoing training. As the new training curriculum is modular in design, those sections of the training that focus on accuracy, consistency and call quality will be used to address ongoing agent training and development. Phase two of the training action plan will be completed by year-end 2010.

Management considers implementation of this recommendation to be partially complete.

Management: % complete *50%*

2007 Recommendation 10

That 3-1-1 management use the results of the “mystery calling” program as a baseline for measuring performance, and continue to perform similar assessments on an ongoing basis to track performance and provide feedback to agents.

2007 Management Response

Management disagrees with this recommendation.

Management will review the questions and responses in detail to determine if these are the appropriate questions to be asked. Changes to questions and responses where deemed appropriate will be made.

Management also intends to use a third party to conduct a customer satisfaction survey every six months. The first customer satisfaction survey was conducted in November 2007 and will be used as a baseline.

The results of both these programs will be used to track performance and provide feedback to agents.

The cost of implementing a regular customer satisfaction survey is \$20,000 per year. The cost of implementing a “Mystery Calling Program” is \$25,000 per year. Funding for these programs will be requested through the 2009 budget process.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 10 at December 31, 2008

Implementation of this recommendation has not yet begun. This item was discussed at the November 21, 2008 meeting of CAWG and will go to Council for approval in the next quarterly report. A budget pressure for \$225K was identified in the 2009 Budget for resources and technology to implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance program, including regular surveying and the implementation of a Mystery Calling program, but it was not approved. The branch is currently working with the Corporate Performance Reporting office to establish customer satisfaction survey methodology suitable to the 3-1-1 Operation using existing corporate technology. The estimated date of completion is Q4 2009. Further performance measuring, such as through a mystery calling program, will require approval of resources and technology related to a Comprehensive Quality Assurance program.

Management: % complete *0%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 10

The CAWG minutes of November 21, 2008 state that: "Given that a mystery calling program and client surveys are included within the comprehensive quality assurance plan, management can now move forward with the implementation of this recommendation."

In September 2009, 3-1-1 management advised us that agent performance and feedback is being tracked through call monitoring activities which began in April 2009, and that preliminary work has begun on improving the agent knowledge base, including streamlining the procedure index, removal of outdated information, and fixing of broken links.

OAG: % complete *0%*

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 10 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that there has been little or no action taken to implement this recommendation.

Management appreciates the value in a mystery calling program and initiated its own preliminary exercise with a third party firm in 2009.

Findings from recently conducted satisfaction surveys (external 2007 & 2009, and internal 2010) will also be a regular part of the analysis to further identify on-going quality improvements.

Management will be reviewing the status of the implementation of the current Quality Assurance Program by the end of Q4 2010. This review will examine how elements such as surveys, mystery calling, data analysis, and linkages to training,

procedure development and knowledge base enhancements will be integrated into a broader Quality Assurance Program.

Management considers implementation of this recommendation to have been initiated.

Management: % complete *25%*

2007 Recommendation 11

That 3-1-1 management develop a comprehensive set of performance measures that adequately reflect its performance against strategic and operational objectives in order to provide adequate performance information to Council and manage more effectively.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

In addition to our comprehensive reporting framework, management will develop performance measures related to the quality of internal and external service delivery.

Management will communicate these performance metrics to Council once the second customer satisfaction study has been completed in Q3 2008.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 11 at December 31, 2008

Implementation of this recommendation has not yet begun. Implementation of this recommendation is linked to recommendation 10. As part of the 2009 Operating Budget, Council approved an overall technology improvement budget, which included Client Relationship Management (CRM) technology for the 3-1-1 Contact Centre. It also approved a Service Excellence budget, which included improvements to 3-1-1 reporting. It is anticipated that a CRM solution cannot be implemented until 2011. In the interim, the branch is working with staff from Organizational Development and Performance to identify how existing technology (MAP) can be enhanced to capture and provide more adequate performance information to Council. The branch is also closely monitoring existing volumetric data contained in the various 3-1-1 reports, establishing manual performance tracking processes, and working with departments to manage more effectively. It is anticipated that this will be completed by Q3 2009. A budget pressure for \$225K was identified in the 2009 Budget for resources and technology to implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance program, but it was not approved. Until such time as this budget pressure is approved, further progress in automating performance measures cannot be implemented at this time.

Management: % complete *0%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 11

This recommendation is linked to recommendation 10. Management indicated they had not started the implementation of either recommendation.

At the end of September 2009, management advised us that staff met with ITS in June and July 2009 to identify potential modifications to the MAP information system in the short-term, and discussions are on going. However, technology improvements have been put on hold temporarily, pending the results of the IBM review of 3-1-1 optimization opportunities.

Management also advised that current practices have permitted the identification of certain performance issues through MAP, such as improper categorization of calls and omissions providing the Service Request tracking number back to the customer.

OAG: % complete

0%

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 11 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that there has been little or no action taken to implement this recommendation.

Management currently measures what is mandated by Council with regard to service level objectives and quantitative measures, available in weekly, quarterly and yearly reports. This information is also posted on ottawa.ca, and is presented publicly through the Committee and Council process. Also measured are customer and employee satisfaction through branch and corporate initiatives, as well as ad-hoc requests for real-time data in support of emerging issues.

A comprehensive set of performance measures will be developed as part of the 3-1-1 Optimization Project Plan by Q4 2010, which will change business and strategic operational objectives.

Management considers implementation of this recommendation to have been initiated.

Management: % complete

25%

2007 Recommendation 12

That 3-1-1 management develop a quality assurance program for monitoring, assessing, and reporting on call quality and the quality of the services delivered to the public.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Quality assurance is an integral part of any service organization. As part of its Point of Service Strategy, the Client Services and Public Information branch has

developed the various components required to increase the quality and consistency of service to its clients:

1. Knowledge Base: Since 2005, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre went through a comprehensive exercise with its internal clients to develop over 400 concise operating procedures, using the corporate software standard for enterprise content management.
2. Training Curriculum: The 3-1-1 training program has been redesigned for consistency and effectiveness, for both regular and after hours service.

The above were required to move to the final stage.

3. A Quality Assurance program was approved in 2007 with planned implementation in 2008. This has been developed under advisement with the City's MFIPPA and Labour Relations representations for both privacy and labour concerns. This program identifies coaching and consistency of delivery opportunities, such as refinement of operating processes with our internal partners.

To ensure success of this program, management will request funding for a dedicated quality assurance specialist position in the 2009 budget process.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 12 at December 31, 2008

Implementation of this recommendation has not yet begun. Implementation of this recommendation is linked to recommendations 8 and 9. Low-cost technology to listen-in and/or record agent calls on an ad-hoc basis has been purchased and rolled-out. The Agent Knowledge Base is currently being refined so that agents have one source of information from which to provide consistent and accurate information. The combination of these two improvements will increase feedback to agents on the quality of their responses and will improve agent knowledge, ultimately improving the consistency of the information provided to customers. Once these improvements are implemented, the 3-1-1 training program will be revised. This should be completed by Q4, 2009.

A budget pressure for \$225K was identified in the 2009 Budget for resources and technology to implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance program, but it was not approved. Until such time as this budget pressure is approved, staff are limited by existing technology and resources, which could result in further enhancements being delayed until 2011.

Management: % complete

0%

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 12

This recommendation is linked to recommendations 8 and 9, both of which are not yet complete. As of December 2008, management indicated they had not started the implementation of this recommendation. Management advised us that a

comprehensive Quality Assurance program continues to be a requirement for 3-1-1 and that an associated budget pressure will be re-submitted as part of the 2010 budget review process. In March 2010 a report was presented to the IT Sub-Committee detailing the service excellence 3-1-1 CRM procurement strategy. Council approved the multi-phase implementation of the new 3-1-1 CRM solution during the 2010 budget as part of the service excellence program. As a result, action has now been initiated.

OAG: % complete

25%

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 12 as of Winter 2010

Management agrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding.

Efforts with regard to call sampling and the ACR process have shown positive results as noted by the 10% improvement in the mystery calling exercise conducted by the OAG.

Although this recommendation is dependent on technology for full implementation, management will be reviewing the current Quality Assurance activities, and defining an enhanced Quality Assurance program by the end of Q4 2010 as previously noted in Recommendation 10. A temporary Quality Assurance resource is being hired, and various QA initiatives are in development in order to continue progress in this area. In addition, the following work is planned for the remainder of 2010:

- Call quality standards will be refreshed, based on a) 2009 client satisfaction and mystery caller results and b) input to be gathered from key internal business clients. The focus of the refresh will be to update standards related to accuracy and consistency of information provided to clients, and;
- Call quality sampling training for supervisors will be refreshed to keep their skills current and in-line with the refreshed call quality standards.

Management: % complete

25%

2007 Recommendation 13

That 3-1-1 management work more closely with internal business clients to reduce the number of misdirected calls and service requests.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

While this exercise is performed periodically and as needed, a more consistent proactive approach should be adopted. This responsibility would rest with the quality assurance specialist. Implementation will take place in Q3 2009, dependent on the approval of this position during the 2009 budget process. Should this

position not be approved, management will continue to work with internal clients in an informal manner.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 13 at December 31, 2008

A budget pressure for \$225K was identified in the 2009 Budget for resources and technology to implement a comprehensive Quality Assurance program, but it was not approved. Management will continue to schedule meetings with internal business clients to enhance communications, understand their business needs and establish a formal process where issues and concerns can be addressed and resolved on an ongoing basis. The branch is also working with IT to identify how existing technology (MAP) can be configured to improve the tracking of misdirected calls and service requests. Expected implementation is Q3 2009. The branch is also regularly meeting with primary stakeholders (i.e., OC Transpo re: labour disruption and mitigation, Public Health re: discarded syringes, By-law Services re: wildlife, Public Works re: graffiti reporting, Public Information re: consistency of messaging between channels, Elected Officials, etc.) to more clearly understand their programs and services, and how 3-1-1 can best assist. This has increased agent awareness and has reduced misdirected calls. Further enhancements will be made when CRM technology is implemented, which is not expected until 2011.

Management: % complete 15%

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 13

As at December 31, 2008, work had not yet begun towards working directly with business clients.

In September 2009, 3-1-1 management have advised us that staff have met with ITS in June and July 2009 to identify potential modifications to MAP in the short-term, and discussions are on going. However, technology improvements have been put on hold temporarily, pending the results of the IBM review of 3-1-1 optimization opportunities.

In March 2010 a report was presented to the IT Sub-Committee detailing the service excellence 3-1-1 CRM procurement strategy. Council approved the multi-phase implementation of the new 3-1-1 CRM solution during the 2010 budget as part of the service excellence program.

OAG: % complete 15%

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 13 as of Winter 2010

Management agrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding.

As part of the Shared Services Strategy, a formalized process will be developed by the end of Q4 2010, to work more closely with internal business clients to address

their needs and concerns regarding misdirected service calls and service requests. Management will undertake to streamline intake points into the Client Services Branch and identify Client Relationship Management contacts as part of the process. In addition, supervisors and tier II support functions are regularly in contact with stakeholders to reduce incidence of misdirected calls.

Management: % complete *15%*

2007 Recommendation 14

That the appropriate tools and processes be implemented to track and report on misdirected calls and service requests.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management agrees that a formal mechanism is required to qualify, track and action complaints. Working with IT Services, a comprehensive complaint management process for internal clients will be identified by end of Q1 2009.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 14 at December 31, 2008

Implementation of this recommendation is linked to recommendation 13.

Management: % complete *15%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 14

At the time of the follow-up, this recommendation had not been implemented. A business case for the purchase of the new technology has not been developed even though this represents a substantive investment of City dollars. Management advised that a report for CSEDC had been drafted but not presented as at June 2009. As funding for a new Quality Assurance specialist was not approved, management will have to devise a new approach to implement this recommendation. However, the recommendation was for a tool to track misdirected call and not per management's response to track complaints.

As stated in recommendation 13, in September 2009, 3-1-1 management have advised us that staff have met with ITS in June and July 2009 to identify potential modifications to MAP in the short-term, and discussions are on going. However, technology improvements have been put on hold temporarily, pending the results of the IBM review of 3-1-1 optimization opportunities.

In March 2010 a report was presented to the IT Sub-Committee detailing the service excellence 3-1-1 CRM procurement strategy. Council approved the multi-phase implementation of the new 3-1-1 CRM solution during the 2010 budget as part of the service excellence program.

As part of the 2010 budget process, Council approved a capital expenditure of \$12M in 2010 to invest in the 311 Optimization project which includes the redesign of the Client Service Operations and the development of a new operating model to improve customer service. Associated with the new model will be the establishment of new service standards and performance measures to support a new way of doing business. In addition, the new model will be supported by the implementation of a Client Relationship Management (CRM) tool, the implementation of a knowledge repository and enhanced computer telephony as well as a redesign of Ottawa.ca to make it more user-friendly and meaningful. These changes will occur over the next 3 years.

OAG: % complete *15%*

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 14 as of Winter 2010

Management agrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding.

While full implementation of this recommendation requires a technology solution which is being considered as part of the 3-1-1 Optimization Project, management has worked with ITS to identify and implement a partial solution to enable the tracking of redirected service requests as an interim solution pending CRM. Management will analyze and incorporate this information into procedures and training modules by Q4 2010. Any further technology enhancements to this process will be considered as part of the CRM implementation.

Management: % complete *15%*

2007 Recommendation 15

That 3-1-1 management solicit input from internal business clients regarding the training of new hires to ensure the major issues and concerns of each client are addressed in the training program.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management will solicit input from internal business clients and will identify specific areas to focus on as part of this recommendation, by the end of Q3 2008.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 15 at December 31, 2008

Implementation of this recommendation is linked to recommendation 13. Management will schedule meetings with internal business clients to enhance communications, understand their business needs and establish a formal process where issues and concerns can be addressed and resolved. The results/findings of this process will be integrated into training as appropriate.

Management: % complete *15%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 15

No attempts to solicit input from internal business clients regarding the training of new hires had been performed as at December 31, 2008.

Management advised us that due to the impact of the OC Transpo strike, this had been deferred to Q3 2009.

OAG: % complete ***0%***

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 15 as of Winter 2010

Management disagrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding that there has been little or no action taken to implement this recommendation.

The Customer Relationship Management process which is being developed/implemented with internal business clients as part of the Shared Services initiative by the end of 2010 will facilitate the implementation of this recommendation. This process, once developed and implemented, will allow for formal engagement with internal business clients on a number of service-related opportunities, including training and education.

Presentations by key internal business partners are incorporated into the new agent curriculum. Representatives from Environmental Services and By-Law (Parking Control) are scheduled to attend as part of the May 3 - 14, 2010 training pilot. In addition, staff is exploring field training opportunities with stakeholders, as well as refresher Rural Champions training for possible delivery by Q4 2010.

Results of the recently completed internal client survey and mystery shopper results will be used to inform further training requirements.

By Q3 2010, management will have evaluated the new 10-day training pilot and will be seeking stakeholder feedback by Q4 2010, for incorporation into future training curriculums.

Management considers implementation of this recommendation to have been initiated.

Management: % complete ***35%***

2007 Recommendation 16

That there be no consolidation of other City call centres into 3-1-1 at this time, however, once the recommendations of this audit have been fully implemented, the insourcing analysis should be revisited to determine if there is a business case for consolidating the operations of some of the City call centres into 3-1-1.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management will investigate further consolidation of other City call centres once all agreed upon recommendations have been implemented, by Q4 2009.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 16 at December 31, 2008

Implementation of this recommendation has not yet begun. Delays related to budget approval, technology and resource procurement have impacted the timeframe for implementation of these audit recommendations. The targeted date for revisiting the insourcing analysis is Q3 2011. This date assumes a best-case scenario where activities and timelines are on target, particularly the implementation of CRM and VOiP technology. At that point in time, the 3-1-1 Contact Centre should be well positioned to promote its value proposition (trained and skilled staff, defined processes, supporting technology and reporting) to other City Call Centres.

Management: % complete *0%*

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 16

As at December 31, 2008 management indicated they had not started the implementation of this recommendation. As discussed in the original 2007 audit report, in order for this recommendation to be implemented, all other recommendations contained in the audit will need to be put in place. As indicated by management in-sourcing analysis is scheduled for Q3 2011

OAG: % complete *0%*

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 16 as of Winter 2010

Management agrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding.

This recommendation will not be implemented until all recommendations are complete; however, as part of the 3-1-1 Optimization project, the insourcing component will be studied by the end of Q2 2011.

Management: % complete *0%*

2007 Recommendation 17

That 3-1-1 management follow through on Council's direction to investigate the possibility of outsourcing the 3-1-1 Contact Centre. This should be done in parallel with the other recommendations outlined in this report.

2007 Management Response

Management agrees with this recommendation.

Management agrees with this recommendation but believes that a more full investigation into the possibility of outsourcing the Contact Centre should not occur

until all agreed upon recommendations have been implemented by Q4 2009 and management has had an opportunity to revisit the outsourcing analysis.

Management Representation of the Status of Implementation of Recommendation 17 at December 31, 2008

In 2005, management conducted an internal preliminary review of the possibility of outsourcing the 3-1-1 Contact Centre. At that time, the review did not support an alternate service delivery method, but did reinforce the need for some internal re-engineering. Since then, management and staff have been actively engaged in improving the performance of 3-1-1. The Auditor General's report acknowledged that significant improvements to the overall 3-1-1 operation have been made, but that there were still many issues that needed to be addressed. The majority of recommendations, not dependent on new Contact Centre technology, will be completed by the end of 2009. Further refinements to the 3-1-1 operations are dependant on new technology improvements, such as CRM, Quality Assurance and VOiP, which are not expected to be fully implemented until 2011. In addition, until Council approves an operating budget, which includes a dedicated focus on Quality Assurance, full implementation of the audit recommendations will not be completed to the extent necessary to perform a fair comparison between the performance and capability of the current Contact Centre with that of other third party service providers. Therefore, management will not be in a position to revisit the outsourcing analysis and provide an updated assessment until 2011.

Management: % complete

30%

OAG's Follow-up Audit Findings regarding Recommendation 17

This recommendation, which was originally a Council direction, has not been implemented.

We asked management if a status report providing a rationale for postponement had been provided to Council and if so, at what date. In September 2009, 3-1-1 management responded that: "Staff has not yet been able to confirm information to reply to this request. As a result of a number of corporate restructuring initiatives and staffing changes since 2005, additional time will be required to determine whether or not such a status report was provided to Council or not, and a corresponding date. Staff continues to research the matter, and will provide additional information subsequently, as it becomes available."

However, as part of the report related to outstanding Council motion received by Council September 23, 2009, management advised Council that: "Management will revisit outsourcing in Q1 2011 once all the audit recommendations have been implemented".

OAG: % complete

0%

Management Representation of Status of Implementation of Recommendation 17 as of Winter 2010

Management agrees with the OAG's follow-up audit finding.

Given the Service Excellence strategy proposed within the 2010 Budget, which includes a 3-1-1 Optimization project, it would be premature to review contracting out further at this time. The current plan is to present a report to CSEDC in Q1 2011 once the service delivery model has been defined through the 3-1-1 Optimization project.

This report will be in response to both the Council Motion, as well as this recommendation.

Management: % complete *0%*

4 SUMMARY OF THE LEVEL OF COMPLETION

The table below outlines our assessment of the level of completion of each recommendation as of Fall 2009.

CATEGORY	% COMPLETE	RECOMMENDATIONS	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RECOMMENDATIONS
LITTLE OR NO ACTION	0 – 24	3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	9	53%
ACTION INITIATED	25 – 49	1, 5, 8, 9, 12	5	29%
PARTIALLY COMPLETE	50 – 74	-	-	-
SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLETE	75 – 99	-	-	-
COMPLETE	100	2, 6, 7	3	18%
TOTAL			17	100%

Specifically we found that,

- Moderate progress has been made towards the accomplishment of the majority of recommendations in the year following the presentation of this audit to Council.
- Implementation of a formal listen-in monitoring process has been lengthy and management maintains that budgets for new technology and resources needs to be obtained to fully action this recommendation.
- 3-1-1 Management have not yet taken action to evaluate insourcing as a cost saving option and have pushed back the targeted date for revisiting the insourcing analysis to Q3 2011.
- Of particular concern is that six years after their original request, Council directive to review the outsourcing of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre has not been actioned and management has advised that they would not do so until 2011.

4.1 Results of the 2009 Mystery Calling Exercise

As part of the follow-up, we again conducted a mystery calling exercise, during October-November 2009, which included the original 25 questions asked in 2007 and 10 new questions; each questions was asked four times. We found that fully accurate responses were provided 49% of the time, partly accurate responses an additional 24% of the time and incorrect answers occurred 27% of the time.

The results as compared to the 2007 mystery calling exercise were as follows:

2007 Mystery Calling			2009 Mystery Calling		
	#	% of Calls Answered		#	% of Calls Answered
TOTAL CALLS ATTEMPTED	100		TOTAL CALLS ATTEMPTED	140	
UNANSWERED CALLS	13		UNANSWERED CALLS	15	
TOTAL CALLS ANSWERED	87	100%	TOTAL CALLS ANSWERED	125	100%
FULLY CORRECT	34	39%	FULLY CORRECT	61	49%
PARTIALLY CORRECT	27	31%	PARTIALLY CORRECT	30	24%
INCORRECT	26	30%	INCORRECT	34	27%

Each of the 35 questions was also reassessed by the OAG against answers provided by management, which they felt would represent a fully correct answer. It should be noted that, in many cases, management provided multiple possible correct answers for a question, which made assessing for accuracy at times difficult. For example, any one of the following three answers would be considered fully correct to the question: *Where can I cross country ski without having to go to Gatineau?*

1. *“Mooney's Bay Park (Terry Fox Athletic Facility) has 5 km of trails; or*
2. *There is also our new urban cross-country ski trails located right in the city at the Richelieu-Vanier Community Centre, 300 des Pères-Blancs. (No mention can be found on City website of other trails); or*
3. *Transfer to NCC.”*

We found it concerning that all agents transferred this call to the NCC and did not seem to have knowledge of the City of Ottawa's ski trails (and/or ski programs).

As another example of multiple possible responses, any one of the following four answers would be considered fully correct to the question: *I just bought a house and want to put a pool in our yard next year. How tall does my fence need to be?*

1. *“Fence must be at least 5'; or,*
2. *Transfer to Building Services Clerk contact based on location; or,*
3. *Create service request – Building Code Services – Pool Fence Private – Pool General; or,*
4. *Refer to information on the website.”*

The result of the assessment of each question against answers management provided, which they felt they would consider acceptable, is as follows:

**2009 Results Using Management-Defined
Acceptable Answers**

TOTAL CALLS ATTEMPTED	140	
UNANSWERED CALLS ¹	6	
TOTAL CALLS ANSWERED	134	100%
FULLY CORRECT	72	54%
PARTIALLY CORRECT	38	28%
INCORRECT	24	18%

In addition to accuracy issues, we noted that:

- Agents that referenced the City’s website demonstrated a higher accuracy rate. Referencing the website should therefore be encouraged; and,
- Agents always asked permission to put a caller on hold and 78% thanked the caller for holding.

We also observed that 3-1-1 call agents were first and foremost pleasant, polite and professional during calls. Notwithstanding, greater attention is required in terms of the quality and consistency of the services provided. Specifically:

- Use of the full City’s standard opening - The 3-1-1 Agent Contribution Resource Kit indicates that the standard greeting to be used by agents is: *Thank you for calling the City of Ottawa. My name is ____². How may I help you?* We found that agents used the complete script in 41%³ of calls. This percentage increased to 82%³ when we accepted *City of Ottawa. My name is ____.* *How may I help you?* In 1% of instances no part of the standing opening script was used;
- In 26 instances, agents either failed to provide their name or gave a false name;
- In 4% of calls, agents did not respond in the language selected by the caller;
- Transfer protocols: Only 1 transfer was a “warm transfer”. We also noted transferring of calls without first informing the caller and choosing to provide the caller with the phone number during core business hours as oppose to transferring the caller or asking the caller if they would like to be transferred;

¹ Fewer Unanswered calls in this analysis is as a result of transferred calls being deemed correct by management-defined acceptable answers.

² “_____ speaking” also accepted as correct.

³ In order not to skew the results, unanswered calls made during non-core hours were classified as fully correct and/or having fully used the standard opening/close statements.

- Use of customer's name in appropriate situations is not employed as suggested in the 3-1-1 Agent Contribution Resource Kit;
- Most agents did not probe the caller before answering the question. Accuracy in responses increased when agents probed for some or all background elements;
- Queue times were up significantly in 2009. Overall the mean time in queue (time waiting to reach an agent) was 35% longer than 2007;
- Inconsistencies were noted in non-emergency questions being answered or not answered during non-core hours; and,
- Use of the full City's standard close. The 3-1-1 Agent Contribution Resource Kit communicates the standard close to be used by agents as: *Is there anything else I can help you with today?* and, *Thank you for calling the City of Ottawa.* We found that agents used the complete script in only 5% of calls. In only five of the answered calls (4%) did an agent either ask "*Is there anything else I can help you with today?*" or a variation (e.g., any other question).

5 CONCLUSION

Overall, moderate progress has been made toward implementation of the 2007 Audit of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre recommendations. We noted that some of the measures taken by management were as a result of our follow-up inquiries in May 2008 and not in response to the original recommendations from 2007. Since the presentation of the audit in June 2008, management were successful in fully implementing 3 of the 17 recommendations.

3-1-1 Management have put in place some new procedures to address the original concerns noted in the 2007 Audit of the 3-1-1 Contact Centre. Key elements such as performance monitoring through listen-in has commenced in April 2009, however remedial training has not yet been provided to agent on issues identified. In addition, Management have now advised that the review of outsourcing the 3-1-1 Contact Centre has been postponed to 2011.

With regards to the "mystery calling" results, we noted good progress in providing 'fully correct' responses (a 10% increase over the 2007 results). Service to the public is improving, however, 'incorrect' responses still amounted to 27% of the total.

In March 2010 a report was presented to the IT Sub-Committee detailing the service excellence 3-1-1 CRM procurement strategy. Council approved the multi-phase implementation of the new 3-1-1 CRM solution during the 2010 budget as part of the service excellence program. Improved IT tools is a key step towards enabling Management to address the issues identified in the audit, particularly with regard to access to timely and accurate information for call agents.

Finally, the Quarterly Performance Report to Council Q4 (for the period October 1 – December 31, 2009) presented to Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee also in March 2010 detailed that “call volumes for the 3-1-1 Contact Centre in Q4 2009 rose 9.8% in comparison to Q4 2008” and that this increase was for the most part attributable to calls relating to H1N1 pandemic response, Green Bin program and distribution of the Garbage Collection Calendar. As call volumes increase, the implementation of this new technological solution in conjunction with additional training to address accuracy levels and consistency issues is essential.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to express appreciation to the staff and management for their cooperation and assistance throughout the audit process.