

Audit of the City's 311 Call Center

Report # 2015-04 May, 2015

The 311 Call Center is Unable to Meet Its Current Service Level Goal

Additional Technological Enhancements May Help the 311 Call Center Improve Performance



City of
SACRAMENTO

Office of the City Auditor

Jorge Oseguera, City Auditor
Farishta Ahrary, Auditor



This Page Was Intentionally Left Blank

Table of Contents

An Audit of the City’s 311 Call Center	1
Audit Fact Sheet	4
Introduction	5
Background	5
Department of General Services.....	5
311 Call Center	6
Relevant Policies and Procedures	13
Work Order Systems	13
Other City Call Centers.....	14
Objective, Scope and Methodology	15
Finding 1: The 311 Call Center is Unable to Meet Its Current Service Level Goal	16
The 311 Call Center Has Insufficient Staff to Meet Its Service Level Goal.....	17
The 311 Call Center is Performing Below Its Predicted Service Level	19
Agents Are Not Held Accountable to Individual Key Performance Metrics	21
Agent Productivity Appears to Increase When Agents Are Closely Supervised	23
The 311 Call Center Has Less Supervisory and Support Staff than Other 311 Call Centers	25
Finding 2: Additional Technological Enhancements May Help the 311 Call Center Improve Performance	27
Recent Technological Enhancements Have Relieved Some Agent Workload but More is Needed to Improve Performance	27
The 311 Call Center Could Benefit From Having an Accurate and Functional Knowledge Base	31
Siebel is Outdated and Will Soon Be Unsupported	34
The Lack of Integration among Siebel, Cisco, and Witness has Limited Management’s Ability to Analyze Call Data.....	34
Agents Do Not Utilize the Customer Information Systems (CIS) Integration with Siebel.....	36
311 Call Center Agents’ Ability to Follow Up on Service Requests Submitted to Some Departments Needs to Improve	37
Appendix	39
Department of Utilities’ Contact Center	39
Department of Finance’s Revenue Services Contact Center	40
Department of Parks and Recreation’s Park Permit Office	41
Department Response	43

RECOMMENDATIONS

We made the following recommendations to enhance the operations and improve the performance of the City's 311 Call Center:

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

1. Review 311 Call Center staffing levels and ensure it is staffed to meet service level goals.
2. Perform an analysis to determine the cause of the lower than predicted service levels and make changes as necessary.
3. Develop and communicate individual agent key performance metrics and hold agents accountable to meeting goals.
4. Regularly evaluate agent performance and meet with agents to review performance and provide coaching to ensure agents meet service, quality, and efficiency goals.
5. Perform customer surveys to understand the perceptions of callers and include customer surveys in agent performance reviews.
6. Actively supervise agents to ensure they are processing requests efficiently and working productively.
7. Evaluate supervisor-to-agent and support staff-to-agent levels and consider increasing the number of supervisory and support staff in the 311 Call Center to be more in line with similarly sized 311 Call Centers.
8. Develop an online directory similar to a Knowledge Base that allows citizens to research information to answer questions relating to the City.
9. Enhance the City's mobile application to provide additional services and information for citizens to utilize.
10. Consider other technological advances that may reduce call volume and increase the number of requests processed through self-service means.
11. Work with other City departments to assign liaisons to update the 311 Call Center Knowledge Base on a regular basis.
12. Establish formal policies and procedures for updating the Knowledge Base and communicating changes to customer service agents.
13. Consider utilizing the Siebel CRM Knowledge Base and ensure the new CRM system has a functional and integrated Knowledge Base that will be utilized.
14. Work towards upgrading the current Siebel Customer Relationship Management system.
15. Integrate data from Cisco, Siebel or new CRM system, and Witness to better analyze 311 Call Center data and develop processes to improve customer service.
16. Address the limitations of the Customer Relationship System integration with the new Customer Relationship Management system and ensure agents utilize the integration while processing CIS-related service requests.
17. Provide agent training on new system upgrades and integrations to ensure agents utilize changes made for efficiency.
18. Develop a process with City departments utilizing escalation forms that allow the 311 Call Center to follow up on previous requests.

Audit of the City's 311 Call Center

May, 2015

2015-04

BACKGROUND

City of Sacramento residents, businesses, and visitors have around-the-clock access to the City through the 311 Call Center. Callers can contact the 311 Call Center through various avenues including phone, website, 311 mobile application and email to request services, report problems, or get information from the City. Primary functions of the Call Center are to answer general questions regarding City services, submit work order requests received by the public, and serve as a call transfer center by connecting callers to the City department that can address their issues. 311 Call Center agents are also responsible for handling after-hours operational emergency calls for all City departments – with the exception of Police and Fire – and dispatching after-hours crews when other City departments are closed.

FINDINGS

The 311 Call Center is Unable to Meet Its Current Service Level Goals

The City of Sacramento's 311 Call Center has a service level goal to answer 80 percent of calls within 60 seconds. Our audit found the 311 Call Center was only able to answer 31 percent of calls in 60 seconds or less. Additionally, our staffing analysis predicted the 311 Call Center should have had a service level of 39 percent for fiscal year 2014. The main causes of the low service level appear to be agent understaffing, insufficient agent supervision, and inadequate performance evaluations of agents. Specifically, we found:

- The 311 Call Center has insufficient staff to meet its service level goal;
- The 311 Call Center is performing below their predicted service level;
- Agents are not held accountable to individual key performance metrics;
- Agent productivity appears to increase when agents are closely supervised; and
- The 311 Call Center has less supervisory and support staff than other 311 Call Centers.

Additional Technological Enhancements May Help the 311 Call Center Improve Performance

The 311 Call Center has recently made technological advances by implementing an Interactive Voice Response system and creating a smartphone application. However, additional technological advances are necessary to allow customers to easily access information through self-service options. Investing in additional technological advances or upgrading outdated technology may provide customers with improved service while reducing call volume and lowering customer wait times and abandon rates in the 311 Call Center. We found:

- Recent technological enhancements have relieved some agent workload but more is needed to improve performance;
- The 311 Call Center could benefit from having an accurate and functional knowledge base;
- Siebel is outdated and will soon be unsupported;
- The lack of integration among Siebel, Cisco, and Witness has limited management's ability to analyze call data;
- 311 Call Center agents do not utilize the Customer Information System integration with Siebel; and
- 311 Call Center agents' ability to follow up on service requests submitted to some departments needs to improve.

Introduction

In accordance with the City Auditor’s 2014/15 Audit Plan, we have completed an *Audit of the City’s 311 Call Center*. We conducted this performance audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The City Auditor’s Office would like to thank the 311 Call Center and the Information Technology Department for their time and cooperation during the audit process.

Background

The three-digit 3-1-1 phone number was first implemented by the Baltimore, Maryland Police Department in October 1996 to address non-emergency police calls. In February 1997, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) approved the 311 number for nationwide use to assist cities in distinguishing between emergency and non-emergency services. The City of Sacramento adopted the 311 phone number for non-emergency City services in 2008. Prior to April 2015, the Sacramento City 311 Call Center was managed by the Department of General Services.

Department of General Services

At the time of this audit, the Department of General Services (DGS) consisted of the following divisions: Animal Care Services, Facilities and Real Property Management, Recycling and Solid Waste Services, Fleet Management, Office of the Director, and Sacramento City 311 (311 Call Center). The City’s Procurement Services was also a division of DGS until fiscal year (FY) 2013. In FY 2014, Procurement Services became a division of the City’s Finance Department. The amended FY 2014 budget for DGS included a total of 371 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and a budget of nearly \$100 million. Figures 1 and 2 below detail the Department of General Services’ budget summary and staffing levels.

*The City of
Sacramento adopted
the 311 phone
number for non-
emergency City
services in 2008.*

Figure 1: Department of General Services Budget Summary

General Services Division	FY 2012/13 Actuals	FY 2013/14 Approved	FY 2013/14 Amended	FY 2014/15 Proposed
311 Call Center	\$ 1,693,750	\$ 1,722,870	\$ 1,722,870	\$ 1,767,278
Animal Care Services	\$ 3,355,943	\$ 3,309,094	\$ 3,192,589	\$ 3,369,371
Facilities and Real Property Management	\$ 6,084,035	\$ 13,118,977	\$ 13,118,977	\$ 12,852,044
Fleet Management	\$ 38,786,655	\$ 36,706,276	\$ 36,692,234	\$ 36,721,326
Office of the Director	\$ 1,069,380	\$ 1,118,556	\$ 1,118,556	\$ 1,043,158
Procurement Services	\$ 409,828	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Solid Waste and Recycling	\$ 41,869,760	\$ 51,680,330	\$ 43,815,427	\$ 51,436,765
Department of General Services Total	\$ 93,269,351	\$ 107,656,103	\$ 99,660,653	\$ 107,189,942

Source: City Council Approved Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget

Figure 2: Department of General Services Staffing Levels

General Services Division	FY 2012/13 Actuals	FY 2013/14 Approved	FY 2013/14 Amended	FY 2014/15 Proposed
311 Call Center	23.00	23.00	23.00	23.00
Animal Care Services	33.50	35.00	35.00	35.00
Facilities and Real Property Management	63.00	63.00	65.00	65.00
Fleet Management	87.00	85.00	87.00	87.00
Office of the Director	9.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
Procurement Services	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Solid Waste and Recycling	153.00	153.00	153.00	153.00
Department of General Services Total	374.50	367.00	371.00	371.00

Source: City Council Approved Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget

As of April 25, 2015, the City made organizational changes resulting in the dissolution of the Department of General Services. The Fleet Management, Facilities and Real Property Management, and Solid Waste Divisions were transferred to the Department of Public Works. In addition, the Animal Care Services Division was moved to the Community Development Department and the 311 Call Center was transferred to the Information Technology Department.

311 Call Center

City of Sacramento residents, businesses, and visitors have around-the-clock access to the City through the 311 Call Center. 311 is an easy-to-remember phone number that was created to make access to City government easier for residents, businesses, and visitors. Callers within the City's limits¹ can use 311 to request services, report problems or get information from local government.

¹ Callers outside of the City of Sacramento's limits may contact the 311 Call Center by dialing (916) 264-5011.

The 311 Call Center responds to requests for building permits, reports of stray animals, and calls for utilities services among a variety of other issues. The centralized 311 Call Center operates twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, including weekends and all holidays.

Sacramento has had a 24 hour call center for more than thirty years. Formerly known as the City Operator Program, the service started being administered by DGS in October 2005. In August 2008, the City Operator Program officially became Sacramento City 311 when it adopted the 311 phone number. Figure 3 below identifies the 311 Call Center’s budgeted staffing level and number of requests processed by 311 Customer Service Agents (agent) each fiscal year since its inception.

Sacramento has had a 24 hour call center for more than thirty years.

Figure 3: 311 Call Center Annual Requests and Staffing Levels

Fiscal Year	Approved Staffing Level	Requests Processed
2009	22	322,863
2010	26	368,937
2011	24	329,542
2012	23	334,104
2013	22.5	327,170
2014	23	341,658

Source: City Council Approved Budgets and Siebel Customer Relationship Management System

Primary functions of the 311 Call Center are to answer general questions regarding City services, submit work order requests received by the public, and to serve as a call transfer center by connecting callers to the City departments that can address their issues. 311 Call Center agents are also responsible for handling after-hours operational emergency calls for all City departments—with the exception of Police and Fire—and dispatching after-hours crews when other City departments are closed.

The 311 Call Center receives two main types of requests from callers: service and information requests.

The 311 Call Center receives two main types of requests from callers: service and information requests. Service requests are those in which the customer is requesting a service to be performed by City staff, such as a Solid Waste Household Junk Pickup or Community Development Department permit inspection. Information requests are those in which the customer is inquiring about a City department or program, such as asking for the City Animal Shelter’s hours of operation. Figure 4 below identifies the number and type of all requests processed by department during fiscal year 2014.

Figure 4: Fiscal Year 2014 Requests² by Department and Type

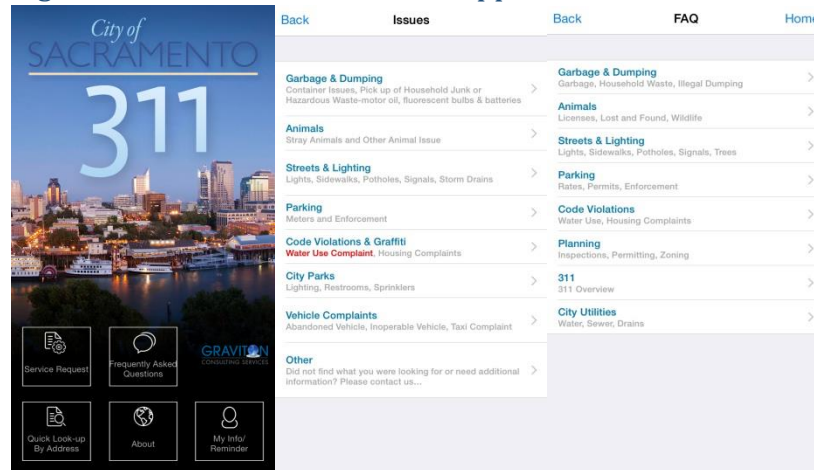
Department	Service Requests	Information Requests	Other Requests	Total
Department of General Services	94,573	61,986	263	156,822
Department of Public Works	25,117	17,910	106	43,133
Community Development Department	22,086	25,095	21	47,202
Department of Utilities	24,523	16,089	45	40,657
County of Sacramento	-	-	17,963	17,963
Other	3,157	19,016	13,708	35,881
Grand Total	169,456	140,096	32,106	341,658

Source: Siebel Customer Relationship Management System

Contacting 311

Citizens and City employees may utilize various avenues to contact the 311 Call Center including the phone, website, 311 mobile application (mobile app), email, mail, fax, and social media. The 311 mobile app, launched in August 2012, allows users to submit service requests on most issues. Priority calls such as animals left in vehicles or broken tree branches in the road cannot currently be submitted through the mobile app and need to be called in. In addition, citizens may use the mobile app to review information in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), look up council districts, find their garbage days and recycle weeks, or register for text or email alerts for recycle service days. Figure 5 below provides images of the 311 mobile app main pages.

Figure 5: 311 Call Center Mobile Application



Source: City of Sacramento 311 Mobile Application

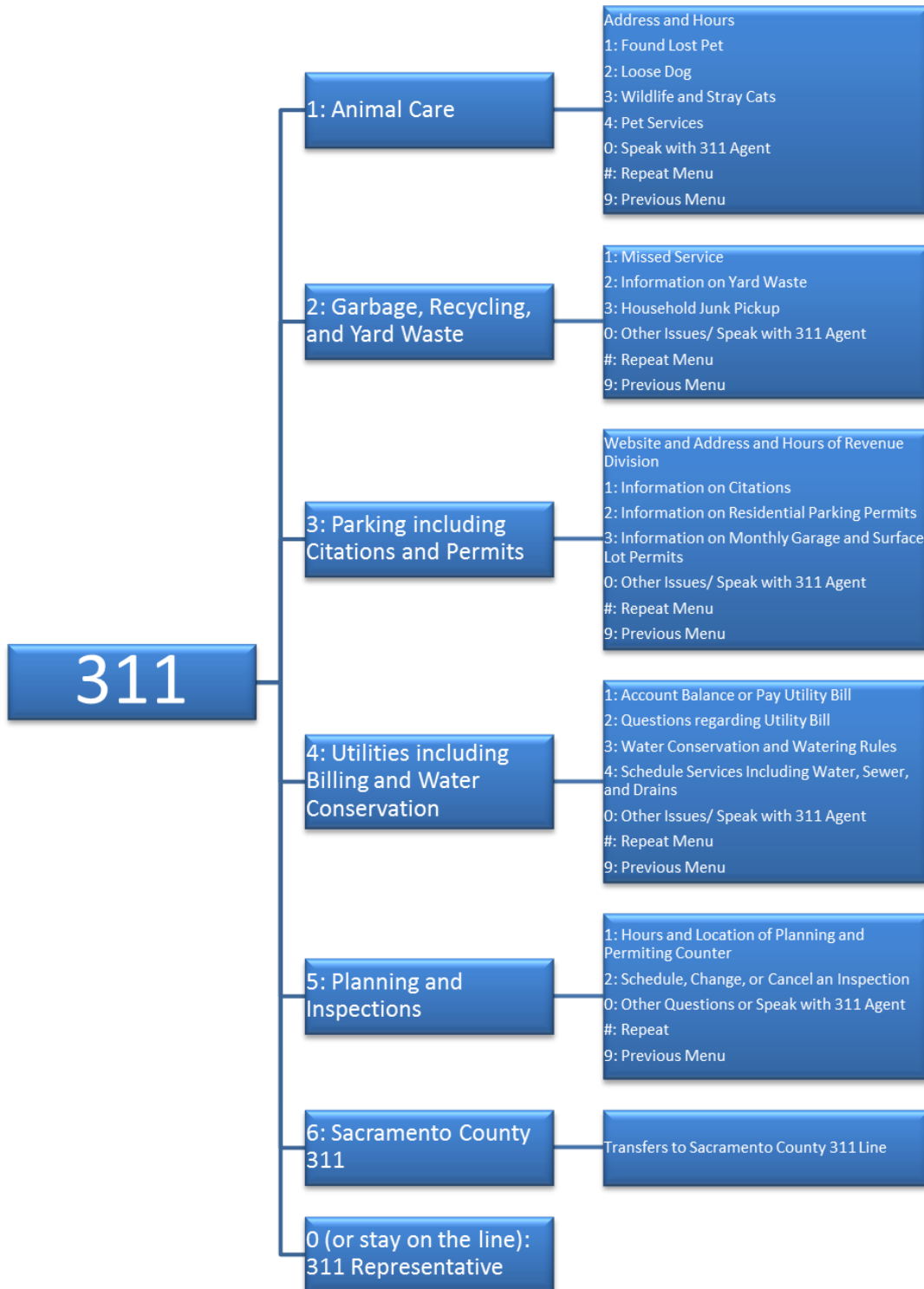
² Requests include all questions, comments, complaints, and service requests received by the 311 Call Center through all avenues including phone, email, and the mobile application.

In September 2013, the 311 Call Center implemented an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system³ to provide callers with an automated menu to address informational calls or to route calls as selected in the menu choices. According to SearchCRM.com⁴, a website dedicated to Customer Relationship Management decision makers, “IVR is an automated telephony system that interacts with callers, gathers information and routes calls to the appropriate recipient.” For example, before IVR was implemented, the 311 Call Center received a number of calls asking for the hours and location of the City’s Animal Shelter. The current IVR technology routes callers to a prerecorded message with this information after the caller selects “Animal Care” from the main menu. In this example, callers are able to receive an answer to their question without speaking to an agent. Figure 6 below documents the current 311 IVR call options.

³ Calls addressed by the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) are not documented in the totals in Figures 3 and 4 as the callers did not speak with an agent for their request.

⁴ Rouse, Margaret. "Interactive Voice Response (IVR)." SearchCRM.com. TechTarget, 17 Apr. 2008. Web. 13 Feb. 2015.

Figure 6: 311 Call Center Interactive Voice Response Call Options



Source: Auditor Compiled

Once a caller makes a selection in the IVR, the caller will be provided with the selected information through a prerecorded message, transferred to speak with an agent, or transferred to another agency or division to complete their request. This reduces the need for 311 agents to speak to callers about requests for basic information. Figure 7 below identifies the estimated number of calls addressed by the IVR in fiscal year 2014.

Figure 7: Estimated Calls Addressed by the Interactive Voice Response System During Fiscal Year 2014

IVR Call Type	Self-Service Calls
311 Main Menu	72,671
Animal Control	9,894
Solid Waste	6,382
Parking	5,533
Total IVR Answered	94,480

Source: Cisco Unified Intelligence Center

311 Call Center Management Tools

The 311 Call Center utilizes software programs consisting of Oracle’s Siebel 8.0 (Siebel), Cisco’s Internet Protocol (IP) Interactive Voice Response (IVR) 9.0 (Cisco), Verint’s Impact 360 Quality Monitoring (Witness) and CC Modeler Professional to analyze call center and agent performance. Siebel, Cisco, and Witness all contain key information for 311 Call Center performance and data analysis but are not integrated with each other.

Siebel is a customer relationship management (CRM) system and is the primary work order system for the 311 Call Center to document all requests processed by agents. Specific information about each request received by the 311 Call Center such as the City Department it pertains to, the type of request, the description of the request, and contact information of the requester (when required) are recorded in the Siebel CRM system. Siebel was implemented by the 311 Call Center in February 2008. Implementation cost around \$150,000 which included the cost of the system setup and local government customization. Siebel’s annual maintenance contract cost is \$26,000 and the operating system for Siebel’s servers are an additional \$1,400 annually. The 311 Call Center informed us the Siebel CRM system is outdated and has limited support by Oracle. At the time of this audit, the 311 Call Center was in the process of requesting cost proposals to upgrade the Siebel system or change the CRM system altogether.

Cisco’s IVR telephone product provides both telephone and IVR services for the 311 Call Center. Cisco software records specific call-related data including the time a call was received, hold time, and handle time. In addition, management can use Cisco reporting data to determine the number of callers whose questions were addressed or directed by the IVR system. Management can

Siebel, Cisco, and Witness all contain key information for 311 Call Center performance and data analysis but are not integrated with each other.

utilize Cisco data to measure both the 311 Call Center's performance as well as individual agent performance.

The Witness program records all incoming calls made to the 311 Call Center. Management can log into the program and listen to recorded agent calls by searching for the agent's name or the date and time the call took place. The Witness program is utilized for agent training, agent monitoring, and to investigate any complaints received regarding an agent's customer service.

CC Modeler Professional is a call center workforce management software program used by the 311 manager to determine staffing and scheduling needs for the 311 Call Center.

Staffing

As shown earlier in Figure 2, the 311 Call Center had 23 employees during fiscal year 2014. These employees were comprised of a Division Manager, an Administrative Analyst, a 311 Customer Service Supervisor, and twenty 311 Customer Service Agents. Most employees work during peak call volumes Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Nights and weekends are minimally staffed because the 311 Call Center receives less calls.

As mentioned, a 311 Call Center agent's duties include taking calls from citizens and City employees on a wide variety of issues including animal care, water, solid waste, and street maintenance. The 311 Call Center also provides full-time dispatching for the Solid Waste, Urban Forestry, Facilities Maintenance, and Animal Care Divisions. In addition, the 311 Call Center provides overnight dispatching for the Department of Utilities, Parking Division, and Parks and Recreation Department. During the City's normal business hours, two customer service agents are assigned strictly to dispatching services. On weekends and after-hours, one individual is assigned dispatching duties but also answers phone calls when there is no dispatching work.

Funding

Funding for the 311 Call Center comes from the General Fund and other special funds such as the Storm Drainage, Solid Waste, Parking, and Gas Tax funds. Each call type is associated with a fund to be charged to a particular division or program.

The 311 Call Center's budgeted revenue from each fund is based on the percentage of the prior fiscal year's total call volume relating to each division or program. At year end, a reconciliation is performed to determine actual costs associated with each division or program's percentage of total call volume.

A call center agent's duties include taking calls from citizens and City employees on a wide variety of issues including animal care, water, solid waste, and street maintenance.

Performance Measures

The 311 Manager reviews 311 Call Center data from Cisco and Siebel on a monthly basis to assess the overall performance of the Call Center. Figure 8, below, identifies the performance measures tracked by the 311 Call Center during fiscal year 2014.

Figure 8: Fiscal Year 2014 311 Call Center Performance Measures⁵

Performance Measures	Fiscal Year 2014 Results
Workload Measures	
Number of Incoming Calls Received	369,830
Number of Requests Handled ⁶	424,197
Number of Requests Processed ⁷	339,971
Effectiveness Measures	
	Average for Year
Percent of Calls Handled Within 60 Seconds	31%
Percent of Requests Transferred	13%
Percent of Requests Addressed Through Self-Service Tools	29%
Percent of Calls Abandoned	19%

Source: 311 Call Center Management and Cisco Unified Intelligence Center

An assessment of the 311 Call Center’s performance is discussed in Finding 1.

Relevant Policies and Procedures

311 Call Center agents reference and share a large amount of City information. Resource materials are stored on a shared network drive and are referred to as the Knowledge Base. The Knowledge Base is organized into one or more folders, for each area the 311 Call Center supports. Documents housed in the drive include other departmental policies and procedures, department contact information, training material for various systems utilized by City departments and answers to frequently asked questions on specific topics.

The 311 Call Center also has division-specific policies and procedures for its employees outlined in the *Sac City 311 Employee Handbook* (handbook). The handbook discusses management’s expectations of the employees and provides information on the City’s other departments and divisions.

Work Order Systems

311 Call Center agents utilize software systems also used by other City departments to record service requests from citizens and generate work orders.

Call Center agents utilize software systems also used by other City departments to record service requests from citizens and generate work orders.

⁵ Except for the Percent of Calls Answered Within 60 Seconds (calculated by the City Auditor’s Office), the results of the performance measures were provided to us by 311 Call Center management and have not been audited for accuracy and completeness.

⁶ Number of requests handled include requests handled by the 311 Call Center through all avenues including phone, email, mobile app, and IVR.

⁷ Number of requests processed include all requests recorded in the Siebel CRM system and does not include calls addressed by the IVR.

Some, but not all, of the work order systems utilized by other City departments are integrated with the 311 Call Center's Siebel system. The following work order systems are most commonly used by 311 Call Center agents:

- Infor EAM (7i) – An enterprise asset management system used by Public Works, Parks Maintenance, and Facilities. The Siebel system is fully integrated with this system.
- PeopleSoft Customer Information System (CIS) – Used by Utilities and Solid Waste to manage customer utilities data. The Siebel system is mostly integrated with this system.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) – Used Citywide to capture, store, check, integrate, manipulate, analyze, and display data related to a position on the Earth's surface. GIS is integrated with the Siebel system and is used by the 311 Call Center to provide information about an address including water district, code officer, and council district.
- Chameleon – A case management system used by Animal Care Services to manage and track data. The Siebel system is not integrated with this system.
- Citizenserve – Used by the Code Enforcement Division of the Community Development Department to process City Code violations. The Siebel system is not integrated with this system.
- Accela – Used by the Community Development Department to process building permits. The Siebel system is not integrated with this system.

Other City Call Centers

While the 311 Call Center handles most of the City's calls, some of the City's departments have their own call centers to assist callers with more specific questions. The Department of Utilities, Department of Finance, and the Department of Parks and Recreation each have their own call centers for services provided by their respective departments. See the appendix of this audit report for additional information on the other City call centers.

Objective, Scope and Methodology

The objective of the *Audit of the City's 311 Call Center* was to assess the City 311 Call Center's operations and identify areas of risk and opportunities for enhanced efficiencies. Our scope included all services performed by the 311 Call Center and all requests logged into the Siebel CRM system during fiscal year 2014.

We obtained and analyzed information from the following:

- Siebel Customer Relationship Management System;
- Cisco Unified Intelligence Center;
- Witness Telephony Recording; and
- The City's Electronic Citywide Accounting and Personnel System (eCAPS).

In performing our audit, we reviewed the 311 Call Center's system of internal controls. We also assessed the risks of fraud occurring and developed our audit plan to adequately address relevant risks. In conducting our review, we defined the types of calls and determined the avenues by which individuals may contact the 311 Call Center.

We reviewed the 311 Call Center's Knowledge Base and policies and procedures. To determine the completeness and accuracy of the Siebel CRM system, we listened to prerecorded calls in the Witness program to confirm they were entered into Siebel and selected a sample of Siebel requests to confirm there was a corresponding recorded call in Witness. We also listened to prerecorded calls to ensure agents were not collecting unnecessary personal information from callers and ensure service requests were appropriately categorized in the Siebel CRM system.

We reviewed the 311 Call Center's staffing level and compared it to its workload to determine if the staffing and hours of operation appear appropriate. We performed a staffing analysis utilizing the CC Modeler Professional workforce management program used by the 311 manager. We observed 311 Call Center agents and documented the requests processed to assess agent productivity. We performed testing on various Cisco and Siebel data reports to ensure completeness and accuracy of the reports but found variances in the testing that could not be explained. Although our testing identified data integrity concerns, we relied on the Cisco and Siebel reports as they were the best available information. We performed data analysis using both the Cisco and Siebel data reports. We also summarized the Cisco reports identifying all calls coming into the 311 Call Center to determine the abandonment rate, call wait times, handle times, and service levels. We also reviewed the 311 Call Center's fiscal year 2014 cost allocation to assess the appropriateness of cost distribution.

The objective of the Audit of the City's 311 Call Center was to assess the City 311 Call Center's operations and identify areas of risk and opportunities for enhanced efficiencies.

Finding 1: The 311 Call Center is Unable to Meet Its Current Service Level Goal

The 311 Call Center's Employee Handbook states, "Every interaction with a caller is a golden opportunity to express the City's responsiveness and concern to our customer. We represent every department in the City. We represent every City employee. The manner in which we deliver service, our tone of voice, our word choice and our willingness to serve sets the stage for all future interaction with the City." According to the North American Quitline Consortium's (NAQC) Issue Paper titled *Call Center Metrics: Best Practices in Performance Measurement to Maximize Quitline Efficiency and Quality*, one of the most important performance metrics in the call center industry is the service level of the center.

NAQC defines the service level as "the percentage of calls that are answered in a defined wait threshold and is most commonly stated as x percent of calls answered in y seconds or less." Call centers typically have service goals to ensure they have sufficient staff to ensure callers do not wait on hold for too long, or worse, hang up (abandon the call) before the callers have their questions answered. According to 311 Call Center management, the 311 Call Center's service level goal is to answer 80 percent of calls within 60 seconds⁸. Our audit found the 311 Call Center was only able to answer 31 percent of calls in 60 seconds or less during fiscal year 2014. The main causes of the low service level appear to be agent understaffing, insufficient agent supervision, and inadequate performance evaluations of agents. More specifically, our audit found:

- The 311 Call Center has insufficient staff to meet its service level goal;
- The 311 Call Center is performing below their predicted service level;
- Agents are not held accountable to individual key performance metrics;
- Agent productivity appears to increase when agents are closely supervised; and
- The 311 Call Center has less supervisory and support staff than other 311 Call Centers.

Low service levels negatively affect the callers' perception of the 311 Call Center. The 311 Call Center should be sufficiently staffed to ensure service level goals are met and agents are productive and meeting performance measures. The 311 Call Center should also have a sufficient number of supervisory and

According to 311 Call Center management, the 311 Call Center's service level goal is to answer 80 percent of calls within 60 seconds.

⁸ The wait time begins after the caller has gone through the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system and is transferred into a queue to speak with an agent.

support staff to closely monitor performance and hold agents accountable to performance metrics.

The 311 Call Center Has Insufficient Staff to Meet Its Service Level Goal

The NAQC's issue paper titled *Call Center Metrics: Fundamentals of Call Center Staffing and Technologies* states "Perhaps the most critical operational function in a call center is making sure enough people are on the phones to respond to callers with a minimum of delay." Failure to answer calls in a reasonable amount of time may lead to higher abandoned call rates or discourage callers from utilizing 311 services. As previously mentioned, service level is the percent of calls answered within a specific period of time. According to the NAQC, call centers set service level goals and consider those goals when scheduling to ensure staffing levels are sufficient to handle the volume of incoming calls. Call centers may utilize workforce management tools to assist in efficiently scheduling agents. For the workforce management tools to estimate a call center's service level, call center management enter the service level goal and staffing information and estimate the number of incoming calls, the average duration of each call, and the average wrap-up time⁹ for each call. Management can then schedule accordingly to ensure the call center is predicted to meet its service level goals.

As previously mentioned, the 311 Call Center's current service level goal is to answer 80 percent of calls within 60 seconds. While the NAQC states there are no industry standards for service level goals, the 311 Call Center's goal appears to be in line with other 311 call centers we surveyed (see Figure 16). However, potential future changes in the 311 Call Center's service level goal will impact the service levels calculated in this audit. For example, changing the goal to answer 80 percent of calls within 120 seconds will appear to improve the service level of the 311 Call Center without actually improving performance.

The 311 Call Center manager currently utilizes a workforce management software program called CC Modeler Professional to assist in agent scheduling. We utilized the same program to perform an analysis of the 311 Call Center's staffing levels. We entered the 311 Call Center's Cisco data from fiscal year 2014 to perform the staffing analysis. Our analysis of the 311 Call Center's staffing level and average call volume found that it does not have sufficient staff to meet its current service level goal. Based on this analysis, the 311 Call Center is only projected to have the capacity to handle approximately 39 percent of calls in 60 seconds or less. Figure 9 below identifies the number of daily calls, average

Call Centers set service level goals and utilize those goals when scheduling to ensure staffing levels are sufficient to handle the volume of incoming requests.

⁹ www.contactcenterworld.com defines wrap-up time as the time required by an agent after a conversation has ended, to complete work that is directly associated with the call just completed.

handle time¹⁰, and average wrap-up time we used in performing our analysis and the staffing program’s projected service level for each day of the week in the 311 Call Center.

Figure 9: 311 Call Center Predicted Service Level¹¹ for Fiscal Year 2014

Week Day	Average Daily Calls	Average Handle Time (Seconds)	Average Wrap-up Time ¹² (Seconds)	Predicted Service Level (Answered in 60 Seconds or Less)
Mondays	1,343	184	71	46%
Tuesdays	1,356	185	84	43%
Wednesdays	1,329	185	82	46%
Thursdays	1,247	189	80	39%
Fridays	1,072	188	91	14%
Saturdays	417	163	80	29%
Sundays	305	155	71	60%
WEIGHTED AVERAGE SERVICE LEVEL				39%

Source: Auditor Staffing Analysis Utilizing CC Modeler Professional

With the current staffing levels and call volume and in isolation of all other factors impacting service levels, the staffing software predicts the 311 Call Center can answer an average of 39 percent of calls in 60 seconds or less. Although the 311 Call Center receives less average daily calls on Fridays than the rest of the weekdays, the predicted service level is significantly lower (14%) because staffing levels are lower and the average wrap-up time appears to be higher (91 seconds). Based on the results of this staffing analysis, the 311 Call Center does not appear to have sufficient staff to meet its current service level goal of 80 percent of calls answered within 60 seconds.

The staffing analysis data estimates the 311 Call Center is understaffed by an estimated five to six agents during the peak summer season¹³. During the time period this audit was conducted, City Council approved the addition of three full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for the 311 Call Center at a budgeted cost of nearly \$231,000. Two positions will be for Customer Service Agents and one position will be for a Customer Service Specialist. If all three new positions are tasked with answering incoming calls, the staffing analysis projects average

¹⁰ The average handle time includes the duration of the call and the after call work time that is built into the Cisco program.

¹¹ Estimates are a calculated average for the entire fiscal year. The summer season had a higher number of calls and lower estimated service level and the winter season estimated a higher service level due to a lower number of calls.

¹² Due to limitations of the staffing program, wrap-up time in our staffing analysis also included the time agents spent on off-phone tasks such as breaks, training, email handling, IT issues, and projects.

¹³ Predicted service levels significantly improve during the winter season.

service levels will increase to 67 percent – a 28 percent improvement. Figure 10 below documents the results of the staffing analysis with each incremental increase in FTE positions.

Figure 10: Predicted Service Level Improvement with Additional Full Time Equivalent Positions¹⁴

Increases in Full Time Equivalent Positions (FTE)	Average Service Level
2014 Predicted Service Level	39%
1 Additional FTE	50%
2 Additional FTE	60%
3 Additional FTE	67%

Source: Auditor Staffing Analysis Utilizing CC Modeler Professional

Our staffing analysis identified agent understaffing as a potential cause for the 311 Call Center’s low service level during fiscal year 2014. The addition of the three FTEs recently approved by City Council are expected to significantly improve the 311 Call Center’s service level. However, the manner in which the three new positions are utilized will ultimately determine the extent of improvement. In our opinion, the 311 Call Center should closely monitor the impact of the three new employees and ensure it is efficiently staffed to meet service level goals.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

1. Review 311 Call Center staffing levels and ensure it is staffed to meet service level goals.

The 311 Call Center is Performing Below Its Predicted Service Level

As mentioned in the section above, our staffing analysis of the 311 Call Center predicted it should have a service level of 39 percent. However, a review of the 311 Call Center’s Cisco call data for fiscal year 2014 found its performance was below the estimated service level—the 311 Call Center only answered an average of 31 percent of its calls in 60 seconds or less. In addition, 20 percent of the 311 Call Center’s calls were not answered at all and 23 percent of the calls were answered after more than 300 seconds (5 minutes). Figure 11, below, illustrates the results of our analysis of the 311 Call Center’s service level data for fiscal year 2014.

Our staffing analysis identified agent understaffing as a potential cause for the 311 Call Center’s low service level during fiscal year 2014.

¹⁴ The calculations in figure 10 utilize fiscal year 2014 call volume and performance. FTEs were scheduled given the current scheduling practices and were not distributed evenly among the seven days.

Figure 11: Fiscal Year 2014 Cisco Service Level Data

Answer Rate	Number of Calls	Percent of Calls	Average Wait Time (Seconds)
Answered in 60 Seconds or Less	114,368	31%	9
Answered in 61 to 120 Seconds	28,607	8%	90
Answered in 121 to 180 Seconds	25,403	7%	150
Answered in 181 to 240 Seconds	22,539	6%	210
Answered in 241 to 300 Seconds	19,661	5%	270
Answered in more than 300 Seconds	84,565	23%	543
Not Answered/Abandoned	74,460	20%	129
Grand Total	369,603	100%	198

Source: Cisco Unified Intelligence Center

We also reviewed the Cisco call data during fiscal year 2014 by day of the week and compared it to the results of our staffing analysis. We found the 311 Call Center performed significantly lower than predicted Mondays through Thursdays and performed better on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Figure 12 documents the 311 Call Center’s actual service level for fiscal year 2014 by day of the week.

Figure 12: Fiscal Year 2014 311 Call Center Service Level by Day of the Week

Week Day	Answered in 60 seconds or less	Total Calls Received	Actual Average Service Level
Mondays	15,665	71,388	22%
Tuesdays	21,914	70,515	31%
Wednesdays	21,370	69,209	31%
Thursdays	16,333	65,108	25%
Fridays	17,387	55,774	31%
Saturdays	10,815	21,693	50%
Sundays	10,884	15,916	68%
TOTAL SERVICE LEVEL	114,368	369,603	31%

Source: Cisco Unified Intelligence Center

As shown in Figure 12, the 311 Call Center answered an average of 31 percent of its calls in 60 seconds or less while our staffing analysis indicated they should have answered an average of 39 percent. The 311 Call Center’s fiscal year 2014 service level is below the staffing model’s projected service level and significantly below the 311 Call Center’s service level goal to answer 80 percent of its calls within 60 seconds. While understaffing may be one cause of the 311 Call Center’s inability to meet its service level goals, the staffing analysis suggests there may be additional inefficiencies causing the low service levels.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

2. Perform an analysis to determine the cause of the lower than predicted service levels and make changes as necessary.

Agents Are Not Held Accountable to Individual Key Performance Metrics

Call center managers typically measure performance regularly to ensure the call center and its individual agents are meeting service, quality, and efficiency goals. The North American Quitline Consortium's (NAQC) Issue Paper titled *Call Center Metrics: Best Practices in Performance Measurement to Maximize Quitline Efficiency and Quality* states, "The most common quantitative measures of performance are schedule adherence, availability, AHT [average handle time], ACW [after call work or wrap-up time], on-hold and transfer rates, and conversion rate. Agents should also be evaluated on qualitative measures, including general telephone etiquette and communications skills, product and service knowledge, completeness of the call handling, and adherence to defined procedures and processes." In addition, the NAQC Issue Paper states that every call center should perform customer surveys to understand the perception of callers related to call center transactions. While management tracks some of the above mentioned performance measures for the 311 Call Center as a whole, we found it does not perform customer surveys nor track or hold individual agents accountable to most individual performance metrics.

Prior to June 2013, the 311 Call Center did not perform regular reviews of its statistics or individual agent performance except a review of the number of calls answered. During our audit, 311 Call Center management informed us that although feedback sessions with agents were first implemented in June 2013, they were only recently required to be completed on a consistent basis beginning in August 2014. The 311 Call Center currently conducts monthly feedback sessions with agents. During these sessions, the supervisor reviews each agent's tardiness, logged-in hours, percent of time on-line, and the total number of calls answered. In addition, the supervisor and agent review three phone calls together and critique each call for customer service and correct entry into the Siebel and work order systems. An example of the top half of the 311 Call Center's feedback session form is documented in Figure 13 below. The bottom half of the form consists of areas to document comments and agent, supervisor, and manager commitments.

Call center managers typically measure performance regularly to ensure the call center and its individual agents are meeting service, quality, and efficiency goals.

Figure 13: Excerpt From Monthly Agent Feedback Session Form

Monthly Feedback Form

SupervisorName	<input type="text"/>		
AgentName	<input type="text"/>		
Review Month	<input type="text" value="December"/>	Calls Answered	<input type="text" value="1415"/>
Date of Meeting	<input type="text" value="1/16/2015"/>		
Tardies	<input type="text" value="3"/>	CallMonitored1	<input type="text" value="30888470648"/>
HoursLoggedIn	<input type="text" value="152"/>	CallMonitored2	<input type="text" value="30888465584"/>
Online PC	<input type="text" value="74.8"/>	CallMonitored3	<input type="text" value="30888468215"/>

Source: 311 Call Center Supervisor

Review of the Monthly Feedback Forms found the 311 Call Center has not helped 311 Call Center management establish individual key performance metrics to ensure agents are meeting service, quality, and efficiency goals. As a result, agents are unable to identify opportunities for service improvement by setting personal goals or comparing themselves with other agents. As shown in Figure 13, the current feedback form simply tracks numbers but does not include the necessary information to make these figures meaningful. For example, documenting the number of calls answered in the Feedback Form does not help determine the efficiency of the agent. A more meaningful statistic would include an expected number of calls processed given the number of hours the agent was logged on. In addition, the agent's average handle time and schedule adherence are not reviewed to determine agent productivity.

Agents could benefit from being provided with quantitative goals to compare themselves against. For example, if agents are informed they are expected to process an average of 15 requests per hour, they will be better able to gauge how well they are performing and management will be better able to compare each agent's productivity. However, as the NAQC issue paper mentioned, qualitative measures should also be evaluated. As such, the 311 Call Center should be cautious not to rely solely on quantitative performance measures as customer experience may suffer if clearing calls quickly becomes an agent's sole priority. In our opinion, the 311 Call Center should develop individual agent key performance metrics, with a balance between customer service and efficient call handling, and hold agents accountable to meeting goals. Management should also routinely evaluate agent performance and meet with agents to discuss performance and provide coaching to agents if necessary. Developing and tracking performance metrics allows the 311 Call Center to hold agents accountable and ensure they are meeting service, quality, and efficiency goals.

Review of the Monthly Feedback Forms found the 311 Call Center has not helped 311 Call Center management establish individual key performance metrics to ensure agents are meeting service, quality, and efficiency goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

3. Develop and communicate individual agent key performance metrics and hold agents accountable to meeting goals.
4. Regularly evaluate agent performance and meet with agents to review performance and provide coaching to ensure agents meet service, quality, and efficiency goals.
5. Perform customer surveys to understand the perceptions of callers and include customer surveys in agent performance reviews.

Agent Productivity Appears to Increase When Agents Are Closely Supervised

The concept that an individual's behavior is affected by the presence of others is known in social psychology as *social facilitation*¹⁵. Psychologist Robert Zajonc found that performance of well-learned tasks is facilitated by the presence of others while learning is impaired¹⁵. Perhaps this is why the call center industry stresses the importance of monitoring calls as most of the tasks performed by agents are well-learned and are expected to be enhanced in the presence of others. Based on our review of the 311 Call Center data and the results of the staffing analysis, we could not identify a leading cause for the lower-than-expected service level. As a result, we observed agents to see if any patterns emerged that would help us identify additional opportunities for improvement. Based on our observations, it appears that agents are significantly more productive and efficient when closely supervised.

We observed six agents for several hours each and tracked the number of calls processed during our observation. We then projected the number of requests the agents should have processed during an eight-hour day and compared it to each agent's average daily requests processed during fiscal year 2014. Based on our observations and analysis, we found agent productivity appeared to increase when agents were monitored and observed by auditors. Figure 14, below, documents the results of our observations.

Based on our observations, it appears that agents are significantly more productive and efficient when closely supervised.

¹⁵ Zajonc, Robert B. "Social Facilitation." *Science* 149.3681 (1965): 269-74. *JSTOR*. Web. 11 Mar. 2015.

Figure 14: Agent Observations

Agent Observed ¹⁶	Hours Observed	Requests Processed During Observation	2014 Average Daily Requests ¹⁷	Projected Requests in 8 Hours	Total Projected Increase
Agent A	3.5	52	83	119	143%
Agent B	1.5	28	87	149	172%
Agent C	2.25	27	63	96	152%
Agent D	4	59	79	118	149%
Agent A	4	79	83	158	190%
Agent B	2.75	41	87	119	137%
Agent E	3.75	68	101	145	144%
Agent B	4	77	87	154	177%
Agent E	3.75	82	101	175	173%
Agent F	4	57	104	114	110%

Source: Auditor Compiled From Agent Observations and Siebel Customer Relationship Management System

We calculated the average number of requests processed per hour by each agent and compared it to the average number of requests processed per hour during the rest of the date of observation, while the agent was not actively supervised. Figure 15, below, shows agent productivity increased when they were observed.

Figure 15: Calls Handled Per Hour During Agent Observations

Agent Observed	Calls Handled Per Hour - When Observed	Calls Handled Per Hour Rest of the Day - Unobserved	Percent Change
Agent A	15	8	186%
Agent B	19	10	180%
Agent C	12	9	141%
Agent D	15	11	140%
Agent A	20	11	185%
Agent B	15	19	78%
Agent E	18	17	109%
Agent B	19	15	131%
Agent E	22	17	129%
Agent F	14	11	125%

Source: Auditor Compiled From Agent Observations and Siebel Customer Relationship Management System

¹⁶ Some agents were observed more than once during our observations. For example, Agent A was observed in two different instances outlined above.

¹⁷ The 2014 Average Daily Requests includes all requests processed by the agents which may also include email requests processed during fiscal year 2014.

The above figures suggest agents are not as efficient or productive when they are not closely supervised. Lower productivity resulting from a lack of close supervision may be one cause of the low service levels. Lower agent productivity negatively affects call center metrics (metrics are addressed in the previous section) such as call wait times and abandonment rates. Our review suggests that increased active supervision could lead to increased productivity and further improve the 311 Call Center's service level. In our opinion, agents should be actively supervised to ensure they are processing requests efficiently and working productively.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

6. Actively supervise agents to ensure they are processing requests efficiently and working productively.

The 311 Call Center Has Less Supervisory and Support Staff than Other 311 Call Centers

A successful call center should have competent, efficient, and well-trained agents in addition to a sufficient number of supervisory and support staff to assist the agents. In their white paper titled *2007 Call Center Supervisor Best Practices*, DMG Consulting LLC, a consulting firm specializing in contact centers, states that call center supervisors are not only expected to provide coaching, training, and motivation to agents but also prepare management reports, lead call center initiatives, and ensure that service level and quality objectives are achieved. While there are no industry standards for determining a required agent-to-supervisor ratio, our research found many call centers have between eight and twelve staff per supervisor¹⁸. The hours of operation of the call center are also taken into account when determining the number of supervisors needed¹⁸. In addition to supervising staff, support staff also play a role in increasing service levels by providing training and operational support. Based on our review, it appears that the 311 Call Center may not have enough supervisory and support staff to ensure service level and quality objectives are achieved.

The 311 Call Center currently has one 311 Manager, one 311 Customer Service Supervisor and one Administrative Analyst. However, the 311 Customer Service Supervisor is the only individual directly supervising the 311 Call Center agents. The Customer Service Supervisor works from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Agents working nights, weekends, and holidays do not have a supervisor immediately available to which they can escalate issues and ask

311 Call Center agents working nights, weekends, and holidays do not have a supervisor immediately available to escalate issues and ask questions.

¹⁸ Cleveland, Brad. "Staff to Supervisor Ratio." *Staff to Supervisor Ratio*. International Customer Management Institute, 13 June 2012. Web. 18 Feb. 2015.

questions. In fact, the 311 Call Center attributed the outdated Knowledge Base (discussed in Finding 2) and inability to provide regular, ongoing training to agents to their lack of support staff and call volume-to-staffing ratios. Ideally, at least one supervisor and enough support staff should be available during each shift to assist agents and provide operational support to the 311 Call Center. We contacted 16 other 311 Call Centers to confirm their staffing levels and received responses from 7 cities. We then compared their 311 Call Center staffing levels and performance with the City of Sacramento’s 311 Call Center. The results of the survey are documented in Figure 16 below.

Figure 16: Staffing Levels of Selected 311 Call Centers

Local Government Entity	2013 Population	Open 24 Hours?	Supervisors-to-Agent Ratio	Support Staff-to-Agent Ratio	2014 Service Level Goal	2013 Call Volume (Calls Received)	2013 Average Handle Time (In Seconds)
Sacramento, CA	480,000	Yes	1:19	1:19	80% in 60 Seconds	351,927	178
Albuquerque, NM	675,000	No	6:41	6:41	80% in 30 Seconds	1,794,244	121
Denver, CO	660,000	No	2:23	2:23	80% in 30 Seconds	261,346	210
San Francisco, CA	850,000	Yes	6:63	14:63	60% in 60 Seconds	1,540,786	141
Minneapolis, MN	400,000	No	3:24	5:24	65% in 20 Seconds	306,850	257
Houston, TX	2,200,000	Yes	7:70	10:70	80% in 90 Seconds	2,020,980	151
Tulsa, OK	400,000	No	4:31	2:31	85% in 45 Seconds	599,687	196
Wichita, KS	390,000	No	1:13	3:13	Not Measured in 2014	363,716	560

Source: Auditor Compiled

As Figure 16 above illustrates, Minneapolis and Wichita have a similar population and call volume as the City of Sacramento. Although their 311 Call Centers are only open limited hours on the weekdays, they have more supervisory and support staff ratios for their centers. As mentioned in a previous section, agent productivity appeared to increase during our observations. With increased active supervision, agent productivity should also increase. In our opinion, a review of the 311 Call Center’s supervisory and support positions should be performed to ensure it has a sufficient number of positions to achieve service level and quality objectives.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

- Evaluate supervisor-to-agent and support staff-to-agent levels and consider increasing the number of supervisory and support staff in the 311 Call Center to be more in line with other similarly sized 311 Call Centers.

Finding 2: Additional Technological Enhancements May Help the 311 Call Center Improve Performance

According to *Call Centre Helper*, a popular contact center magazine in the United Kingdom, “when customers have questions, they usually go to the place where they can find answers in the shortest possible time and with the least effort. Frequently, that place is the Web; and the way they access the information they need is increasingly through self-service.” The 311 Call Center has recently made technological advances by implementing an Interactive Voice Response system and creating a smartphone application (mobile app). However, additional technological enhancements are necessary to allow customers to easily access information through self-service options. Investing in additional technological advancements or upgrading outdated technology may provide customers with improved service while reducing call volume and lowering customer wait times and abandon rates in the 311 Call Center. Specifically, our audit found the following:

- Recent technological enhancements have relieved some agent workload but more is needed to improve performance;
- The 311 Call Center could benefit from having an accurate and functional Knowledge Base;
- Siebel is outdated and will soon be unsupported;
- The lack of integration among Siebel, Cisco, and Witness has limited management’s ability to analyze call data;
- 311 Call Center agents do not utilize the Customer Information System integration with Siebel; and
- 311 Call Center agents’ ability to follow up on service requests submitted to some departments needs to improve.

Enhancements to the 311 Call Center’s website and mobile app may help reduce incoming calls and improve service levels. In addition, advances in the 311 Call Center’s CRM system and integration with other key programs may make processing requests more efficient and allow management to better analyze performance.

Recent Technological Enhancements Have Relieved Some Agent Workload but More is Needed to Improve Performance

The telephone is the primary device to connect the 311 Call Center with the public. However, in today’s high-tech world, customers have been turning to self-service options with greater regularity. In the past few years, the 311 Call Center has been addressing this trend by working to develop new avenues for the public to submit service requests and ask questions without having to directly interact with an agent. For example, the 311 Call Center receives requests from customers through email, the City website, and the Sac311

Enhancements to the Call Center’s website and mobile application may help reduce incoming calls and improve service levels.

mobile app. Although these are great advancements and improve our ability to provide customer service, given the prior concerns raised regarding low service levels, it appears more technological enhancements are needed.

The 311 Call Center’s recent technological enhancements and self-service solutions have shifted some customers to self-service options. Figure 17 below documents milestones in the 311 Call Center’s advancement toward self-service options.

Figure 17: 311 Call Center Historical Timeline



Our review of the 311 Call Center’s Siebel data for fiscal year 2014 found most of the incidents received by the 311 Call Center were by phone. In addition, the top two call categories were informational requests and City service requests. Figure 18 below identifies the number of requests received by the 311 Call Center during fiscal year 2014 by category and method.

Figure 18: Fiscal Year 2014 311 Call Center Requests by Category and Method¹⁹

Category	Mobile App	Email	Phone	Walk-In	Web	Grand Total	Percent of Total
Comment	-	11	38	-	-	49	<1%
Complaint	2	38	322	-	4	366	<1%
Compliment	3	22	126	-	2	153	<1%
Info	3,276	2,640	132,757	-	1,423	140,096	41%
Miscellaneous	-	91	6,674	-	-	6,765	2%
Non-City Info	16	298	24,437	-	22	24,773	7%
Service	9,329	6,409	137,999	2	15,708	169,447	50%
Grand Total	12,626	9,509	302,353	2	17,159	341,649	100%
Percent of Total	4%	3%	88%	<1%	5%	100%	

Source: Siebel Customer Relationship Management System

As shown in Figure 18, 88 percent of the 311 Call Center’s requests were received by phone while 12 percent were received through self-service options (mobile app, email, and website). Some information received through self-service is not captured in Siebel, and therefore not included in our calculation above. For example, citizens may obtain answers to their questions by using the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section of the mobile app which do not create an incident in Siebel and are not tracked or accounted for in Figure 18. Likewise, calls addressed by the IVR system are not captured in Siebel²⁰. As a result, the number of requests processed through self-service options may be higher than the total indicated in the figure above.

When we reviewed the City of Sacramento’s current 311 website, we noticed it is limited in the information it provides. Figure 19 below illustrates the 311 Call Center’s Online Service Request Portal.

¹⁹ The Siebel data is the best available information we could analyze. However, we were informed that requests identified as either Phone or Email are not 100 percent accurate as Siebel automatically identifies the request as Phone and occasionally agents do not change the type to Email when handling email requests.

²⁰ Based on our analysis, we estimate nearly 95,000 calls were addressed by the IVR system during fiscal year 2014. Actual numbers of calls addressed by the IVR may differ from our estimate as the system does not distinguish between abandoned calls and those that the IVR system addressed successfully.

Figure 19: Screenshot of 311 Call Center Online Service Request Portal



Source: City of Sacramento 311 Call Center Website

The 311 online service request portal allows citizens to submit service requests and sign up to receive email or text reminders for recycle days. We noted that other call centers provide online access to their Knowledge Base to allow the public to research City information through the 311 website. For example, the City of Los Angeles has a 311 directory that allows citizens to search for information online through the City’s website. The online directory pulls information from the City of Los Angeles 311 Call Center’s Knowledge Base and has the ability to only publish entries that are marked as “externally view-able” so that confidential internal information is not provided to the public.

Informational requests comprised over 40 percent of the 311 Call Center’s request volume and almost all of the requests were handled by agents by phone. The 311 Call Center’s website does not have a directory that gives the public access to the type of information housed in the internal Knowledge Base for agents. Providing a Knowledge Base to the public on the 311 Call Center’s website could reduce the number of information requests received by phone. As previously mentioned, the public has increasingly been willing to research questions through self-service avenues as it is generally quicker and easier than speaking with an agent.

Review of the 311 Call Center’s mobile app found additional enhancements could help to divert callers to self-service methods. When the mobile app was initially launched in August 2012, it could only be utilized to submit service requests. In January 2015, the 311 Call Center added the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section in the app to answer some informational requests. However, creating a more robust mobile app with additional features would allow the City to provide the public with more information without the need to speak with an agent. For example, the City of Columbus, Ohio’s *My Columbus* mobile app also provides City news, alerts, activities and events, and food and fitness tips. The *Go Long Beach* mobile app for the City of Long Beach, California

Informational requests comprised over 40 percent of the 311 Call Center’s request volume and almost all of the requests were handled by agents through the phone.

has a Knowledge Base section for the public to research City information. The SF311 mobile app for the City of San Francisco, California allows citizens to view all recent requests by location to minimize the number of incoming requests for the same service. In our opinion, the City of Sacramento's 311 Call Center should consider making similar enhancements to its mobile app to further encourage the public to utilize the mobile app for City services and questions.

As previously mentioned, in today's high-tech world, customers are turning to self-service options to obtain information from the City. These changes create an opportunity for the City to enhance its service delivery model while decreasing call volume. Technological enhancements such as providing public access to the Knowledge Base and expanding the number of features on the mobile app, will allow customers to make better use of self-service methods provided by the City. In our opinion, the City should work towards reviewing and implementing new technology to supply the public with a broad menu of options to satisfy the informational needs of its customers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

8. Develop an online directory similar to a Knowledge Base that allows citizens to research information to answer questions relating to the City.
9. Enhance the City's mobile application to provide additional services and information for citizens to utilize.
10. Consider other technological advances that may reduce call volume and increase the number of requests processed through self-service means.

The 311 Call Center Could Benefit From Having an Accurate and Functional Knowledge Base

A challenge call centers face is ensuring they provide customers with correct and timely information to ensure high service levels. Call centers typically utilize a Knowledge Base as the primary source of information for call center agents. According to a white paper titled *Knowledge Bases in Call and Service Centers* by USU, an international company specializing in knowledge bases in call centers, structured preparation of knowledge is critical and should contain information that is current, technically correct, complete, easy to read, easy to understand, and easy to find. We selected 32 requests from Siebel and utilized the Witness program to listen to each call to determine if agents provided callers with correct information. Our testing found agents were generally able to answer callers' questions correctly. However, there may be additional benefits to having an accurate and functional Knowledge Base that may warrant re-establishing the 311 Call Center's Knowledge Base.

Structured preparation of knowledge is critical and should contain up-to-date, technically correct, complete, easy to read, quick to interpret, and easy to find documents.

A well-structured and up-to-date Knowledge Base assists agents--especially newly hired agents--to provide consistent and correct information to callers, ensures institutional knowledge is retained during turnover, and holds agents accountable for providing correct information to callers. However, the City's current Knowledge Base is an unviable option for use. 311 Call Center management informed us the current Knowledge Base is not user-friendly or up-to-date. According to them, the Knowledge Base is outdated because they do not have sufficient staff to organize and update the information. An outdated Knowledge Base that is not well-structured increases the risk of 311 Call Center agents providing callers incorrect information, increases the risk of loss of institutional knowledge with employee turnover, and decreases the 311 Call Center's ability to hold agents accountable for providing accurate information.

An article in the October 2013 issue of CRM Magazine titled *CRM and Knowledge Management: Balancing Information and Insight*, states knowledge base systems "were designed to improve internal information flow and operate as a central repository of information." More recently, call centers have integrated their Knowledge Base with their Customer Relationship Management systems to help reduce call resolution times. USU wrote about the benefits of having an all-in-one system in their white paper by stating "CSRs [customer service representatives] need to have all the tools they need available at a glance in order to be able to access the relevant information as required and dependent on the respective process step. Hence the basis for optimized service workflows is end-to-end IT support with smooth interaction of all the technologies, applications, and files used."

Knowledge Base systems "were designed to improve internal information flow and operate as a central repository of information."

The Siebel CRM system currently utilized by the 311 Call Center has a built-in Knowledge Base. The 311 Call Center used the integrated Knowledge Base until a couple of years ago. The current 311 Call Center manager mentioned the Siebel Knowledge Base was not functional or user-friendly as over 600 documents were listed on one page and could not be organized. Additionally, the manager stated the Siebel Knowledge Base is not easily searchable and cannot be used while the agent is entering information into Siebel. The 311 Call Center now houses its Knowledge Base in electronic folders on a shared network drive. The Knowledge Base is made up of various folders corresponding to various departments and divisions. Our review of the Knowledge Base found many documents that had not been updated for many years and contained incorrect information. As the Knowledge Base contains information regarding all City departments, participation by other departments by way of assigned liaisons, is essential to developing the Knowledge Base and ensuring information is current.

Proponents of an integrated CRM and Knowledge Base system mention greater customer insight and knowledge, improved response time, increased customer

satisfaction, and fewer escalated inquiries as some benefits of integration²¹. As mentioned in Finding 1, the City Council recently approved three additional full time equivalent positions (FTE) for the 311 Call Center. A user-friendly and up-to-date Knowledge Base could be an important tool for the newly hired agents to provide callers with accurate information with fewer escalations. In addition, an up-to-date and well-structured Knowledge Base allows the 311 Call Center to retain institutional knowledge that might otherwise be lost in employee turnover and assist new employees in researching answers to caller questions. It may also decrease the various avenues agents utilize to research information and allow the 311 Call Center to hold agents accountable for providing accurate information to callers.

The City of Sacramento's 311 Call Center has already taken steps to integrate the CRM system with a Knowledge Base as it has made an integrated Knowledge Base a requirement in their Request for Proposal for a new CRM system. In our opinion, the 311 Call Center should work towards integrating their Knowledge Base and CRM system into an all-in-one system to increase customer service and agent efficiency. City departments should assign liaisons to work with the 311 Call Center to ensure department information in the Knowledge Base is updated and reviewed on a regular basis. In addition, the 311 Call Center should develop formal policies and procedures to direct the 311 Call Center and other divisions to update the Knowledge Base and communicate changes with the 311 Call Center agents.

The City of Sacramento's 311 Call Center has already taken steps to integrate the CRM system with a Knowledge Base as it has made an integrated Knowledge Base a requirement in their Request for Proposal for a new CRM system.

Recommendations

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

11. Work with other City departments to assign liaisons to review and update the 311 Call Center Knowledge Base on a regular basis.
12. Establish formal policies and procedures for updating the Knowledge Base and communicating changes to customer service agents.
13. Consider utilizing the Siebel CRM Knowledge Base and ensure the new CRM system has a functional and integrated Knowledge Base that will be utilized.

²¹ *CRM and KM Integration: Its Time Has Come*. Issue brief. OSF Global Services, 2015. Web. 18 Mar. 2015

Siebel is Outdated and Will Soon Be Unsupported

Every customer interaction with 311 Call Center agents is documented in the Siebel Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system as a service request. The 311 Call Center has used Oracle's Siebel 8.0 CRM software since its inception in 2008. Since 2008, the 311 Call Center has made many technological advances including installing an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, launching a 311 mobile app, and partially integrating Siebel with some of the City's work order systems. Unfortunately, the Siebel CRM system has not kept up with the City's technological advances. According to the 311 manager, Siebel is supported by the Internet Explorer 8 web browser and will not be updated by Oracle to be supported by newer versions of Internet Explorer. In addition, beginning January 12, 2016, Microsoft will only provide technical support and security updates to the most current version of Internet Explorer and will no longer support Internet Explorer 8. Utilizing unsupported software makes the 311 Call Center susceptible to security breaches as Microsoft will no longer provide security updates. In addition, the Call Center's current Siebel CRM system does not offer many of the new technological capabilities that newer CRM systems are providing such as publishing the Knowledge Base online or integrating the CRM system with the 311 Call Center's phone system. During our audit, the 311 Call Center informed us that they are looking into upgrading the current Siebel CRM system. Getting a new CRM system will present the 311 Call Center with an opportunity to address many of the shortcomings of the current system. In our opinion, the 311 Call Center should work towards upgrading to a new CRM system.

Siebel is supported by the Internet Explorer 8 web browser and will not be updated by Oracle to be supported by newer versions of Internet Explorer.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

14. Work towards upgrading the current Siebel Customer Relationship Management system.

The Lack of Integration among Siebel, Cisco, and Witness has Limited Management's Ability to Analyze Call Data

Call Centers utilize performance metrics to ensure quality, service, and efficiency. According to the previously mentioned North American Quitline Consortium's (NAQC) issue paper *Call Center Metrics: Best Practices in Performance Measurement and Management to Maximize Quitline Efficiency and Quality* "Performance measures allow a call center to track and trend performance; identify, diagnose, and correct call center and individual performance problems; and establish and assign accountability for achieving performance goals." To efficiently and effectively analyze call center data, call centers may integrate the CRM application with the Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) communication platforms. Unfortunately, the 311 Call Center

currently has not integrated these systems which limits management’s ability to analyze call center data.

During our audit, we reviewed data from the three main 311 Call Center programs: Siebel, Cisco, and Witness. Siebel contains service request data such as the avenue by which the request was received, the type and category of the request, and a description of the request. Cisco contains phone data including the phone number of the caller²², which phone line the call was received by and transferred to, the length of the call, and the length of time the caller was on hold before speaking with an agent. The Witness program records most incoming calls for monitoring purposes.

As shown in Figure 20 below, the three programs capture various pieces of key information but are not integrated so that key information from the three systems can be combined and analyzed. For example, management is unable to perform an analysis to determine which types of calls have the longest handle times as the information on the type of call is retained in Siebel and the information on the length of the call is retained in Cisco. In addition, the 311 Call Center is unable to determine the types of calls with the longest wrap-up time to identify opportunities for process improvement. To better analyze call center data, the 311 Call Center should develop a way to integrate Siebel, Cisco, and Witness.

Figure 20: 311 Call Center Management Tools

Program	Information Captured	Limitation From Not Integrating
Cisco	Call data such as phone number, if answered, time received, wait time, talk time, etc.	Difficult to find Siebel requests related to call, difficult to find recorded call in Witness.
Siebel	Requests are manually entered by agents and identifies the category, keyword, call type, description, etc.	Difficult/impossible to determine length of call, hold times for callers, handle time, etc.
Witness	Records agents' calls received by the 311 Call Center.	Difficult to find Siebel requests and call data associated with each recording.

Source: Auditor Compiled

Our research found there are software products that integrate CRM applications with CTI communication platforms. These products would allow the 311 Call Center to integrate telephone data from Cisco and request data from Siebel to more effectively analyze call center data. Our correspondence with one of the companies that offer the integration software found the cost to integrate Siebel and Cisco in the 311 Call Center is \$37 per month per agent. The 311 Call Center currently has 20 agents; therefore the annual cost of the software is roughly

²² In some instances Cisco could not determine the phone number used to make the call and this information was not captured.

\$8,900. By investing in an integration solution, the 311 Call Center would be able to analyze which information requests are the most common and take the most time. The 311 Call Center may then make the information available through more self-service avenues to relieve call volume and agent time.

During our audit, the 311 Call Center informed us that the integration of the CRM system and the Cisco telephony platform is a requirement when selecting a new CRM system or upgrading Siebel in the near future. In our opinion, as they move forward, the 311 Call Center should ensure integration of its systems to enhance its data analysis capabilities and improve performance.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

15. Integrate data from Cisco, Siebel or the new CRM system, and Witness to better analyze 311 Call Center data and develop processes to improve customer service.

Agents Do Not Utilize the Customer Information Systems (CIS) Integration with Siebel

As mentioned in the Background section of this report, agents utilize a variety of work order systems used by other City Departments to submit service requests received by customers. To reduce duplicate entries²³ by the agents and reduce call handle times, the 311 Call Center integrated the most common work order systems with Siebel: Infor EAM (7i) and Customer Information Systems (CIS). 7i is used by the City's Public Works, Parks Maintenance, Facilities, and Urban Forestry divisions and is fully integrated with Siebel. CIS is used by the Utilities Department and Solid Waste Division of the City and is mostly integrated with Siebel. Our audit found agents are not utilizing the CIS integration in Siebel when entering work orders.

Our observation of 311 Call Center agents found most agents utilized the 7i integration. However, most agents do not appear to be utilizing the CIS integration in Siebel for service requests. When we asked two agents why they do not utilize the integrated feature in Siebel, they stated they were more comfortable with the CIS system and were less familiar in navigating CIS within Siebel. They also mentioned there were some limitations with the integration. For example, agents are unable to select a specific date in scheduling Utilities and Solid Waste services. When an agent tries to schedule a service in Siebel, such as a Household Junk Pickup, the integrated system selects the next available date in the system and does not allow date changes. While this

Our observation of Call Center agents found most agents utilized the 7i integration. However, most agents do not appear to be utilizing the CIS integration in Siebel for service requests.

²³ Duplicate entries occur when an agent enters service request information in both Siebel and the work order system.

limitation does exist, there are many service requests that the integration has made more efficient. During our observation, one 311 Call Center agent admitted it was much quicker to process service requests utilizing the CIS integration but stated that she did not use it because she was much more comfortable with the CIS system itself.

Management confirmed agents are not required to utilize the integrated CIS system due to its limitations. The 311 Call Center was unable to estimate the amount of time or money it would take to correct the issue. Call Center management stated they will wait to update the CRM system before correcting integration issues. In our opinion, the 311 Call Center should work towards addressing the limitations of the integration with the new CRM system and direct agents to utilize the integration to more efficiently process service requests. Additionally, agents may benefit from additional training on utilizing the CIS integration in Siebel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

16. Address the limitations of the Customer Information System integration with the new Customer Relationship Management system and ensure agents utilize the integration while processing CIS-related service requests.
17. Provide agent training on new system upgrades and integrations to ensure agents utilize changes made for efficiency.

311 Call Center Agents' Ability to Follow Up on Service Requests Submitted to Some Departments Needs to Improve

The North American Quitline Consortium's 2010 Issue Paper *Call Center Metrics: Best Practices in Performance Management and Management to Maximize Quitline Efficiency and Quality* states "One of the components driving the call center operation is information. An effective flow of communication is needed between customers and the center, between the center and other business units, and within the call center itself." Many of the service requests received by the 311 Call Center agents are entered into work order systems used by other City departments that process the requests. Agents can review work orders and inform callers of the status of their requests. However, for some requests, there are no work order systems for the agents to submit caller requests. Agents instead complete online escalation forms that are emailed to the appropriate departments, and therefore have no way of following up and ensuring the requests are completed.

When an online escalation form is completed, the 311 Call Center loses its ability to track the request's progress. For example, when a caller requests to

"An effective flow of communication is needed between customers and the center, between the center and other business units, and within the call center itself."

When a caller speaks with a specialist in the Community Development Department, the 311 Call Center agent completes an online escalation form that is emailed to the Community Development Department and severs any connection to the initial call. If a caller calls back to check the status of their request, the 311 Call Center agent does not know the status and submits another online escalation form. This process creates additional work for both the 311 Call Center agent who has to submit another form and the individual in the Community Development Department who has to review and process a duplicate request.

The following are escalation forms used by the 311 Call Center that the agents do not have the ability to follow up on.

- Animal Care Escalation Form
- Found Animal Report Form
- Community Development Department (CDD) EZ Permit Form
- CDD Planning Form
- CDD Research Form
- CDD Signs Form
- Dump Coupon Request Form
- Homeless Camp Form
- IOU Parking Payment Form
- Parking Escalation Form
- Parking Payment Form

During calendar year 2014, the 311 Call Center processed an estimated 9,000 online escalation forms. The 311 Call Center did not have information on the number of online escalation forms prior to January 1, 2014. Some of these requests are duplicate requests resulting from an agent submitting a second escalation form when a customer called back to follow up on a previous request. To provide better customer service and minimize duplicate work, the 311 Call Center and City Departments should work together to develop a process that allows agents to review and provide callers with the status of previous requests.

Recommendation

We recommend the Information Technology Department:

18. Develop a process with City departments utilizing escalation forms that allow the 311 Call Center to follow up on previous requests.

Appendix

Department of Utilities' Contact Center

The Department of Utilities' (DOU) customer service center, known as the DOU Contact Center, responds to utility billing questions. Utility customers contact the DOU Contact Center to set up a new account, change an existing one, and get information on liens among other utility billing services. In addition to receiving calls, the DOU Contact Center also has walk-in customers and receives mail and email correspondence.

Before 2010, the DOU Contact Center handled all calls and requests related to utilities. In 2010, the DOU Contact Center transferred simpler calls to the 311 Call Center. Since 2010, requests for services related to water, sewer, and drain services are handled by the 311 Call Center. The DOU Contact Center is only open 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday; 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Fridays; and is closed on weekends and holidays.

The DOU's Contact Center currently consists of 20 employees, comprised of a Program Manager, 2 Customer Service Supervisors, 4 Customer Service Specialists, and 13 Customer Service Representatives. All of the employees work 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. A DOU Customer Service Representative's duties include taking calls and responding to email and mail correspondence from citizens and City employees on a wide variety of utilities issues including billing, water usage, stormdrain and sewer costs, making a payment, filing a complaint, changing billing to tenants, and escalating issues.

Funding for the DOU Contact Center comes from Utilities Enterprise Funds. The DOU Contact Center had a budget of nearly \$1.7 million during fiscal year 2014. 311 Call Center allocated charges for services are paid by the Department of Utilities' budget rather than the DOU Contact Center Division budget.

Customers contact the DOU Contact Center by four main avenues: phone, email, mail, and walk-in. Unlike the 311 Call Center, the DOU Contact Center does not utilize a Customer Relationship Management System such as Siebel. The Contact Center utilizes the PeopleSoft CIS system to manage customer life-cycle processes, from initiating service to credit and collections. Every customer contact is entered into the CIS system. Figure 21 identifies the number of requests received by phone, email, and walk-in during fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014.

Figure 21: Department of Utilities' Contact Center Requests²⁴

Type	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
Calls	79,063	77,192	73,171
Walk-Ins	7,317	7,683	8,579
E-mail	15,699	14,383	14,412
Total	102,079	99,258	96,162

Source: Department of Utilities' Contact Center Management

We utilized Cisco call reports to review fiscal year 2014 call data for the DOU Contact Center. Figure 22 below documents DOU Contact Center call data from the Cisco report.

Figure 22: Department of Utilities Contact Center Fiscal Year 2014 Cisco Call Data

Call Data	FY 2014
Calls Received	91,125 ²⁵
Calls Handled	73,171
Calls Abandoned	16,866
Average Handle Time	243 Seconds
Average Speed of Answer	184 Seconds
Service Level	No Goal Set
Abandon Rate	19%

Source: Cisco Unified Intelligence Center

Department of Finance's Revenue Services Contact Center

The Revenue Division of the Department of Finance is primarily responsible for the overall billing and collection of major taxes, fees, and citation revenues for the City. The Revenue Division's Revenue Services Contact Center provides information requests for parking citations, business tax accounts, and vehicle boots. In addition, the Contact Center takes payments, researches citations, and processes residential and commercial parking permits among other services. Citizens can contact the Revenue Services Contact Center by phone, walk-in, email, mail, and fax. The counter for walk-in services is open to the public Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and the phone lines are open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

There are a total of sixteen employees at the Revenue Services Contact Center; and three to four employees are typically answering the phones when the

²⁴ The numbers identified in this table were provided to us by DOU Contact Center management and were not audited for accuracy and completeness.

²⁵ The Cisco report identified over 1,000 calls as either "Other" or "Calls Error." Cisco defines "Other" calls as calls that were short (the caller hung up within a short time period), routed to non-agents, or were redirected and "Calls Error" as calls that had errors or were incomplete.

phone lines are open. Funding for the Revenue Services’ Contact Center comes mostly from the General Fund with some interdepartmental transfers from the Parking and Utilities Funds. The Revenue Services Contact Center does not utilize a Customer Relationship Management system nor do they track the number of requests processed. We reviewed the Cisco reports to determine the number of phone calls received by Revenue Services but were not able to determine the total number of customer contacts they received during fiscal year 2014. Figure 23 documents the Revenue Services’ Contact Center’s call information for fiscal year 2014.

Figure 23: Revenue Service’s Contact Center Fiscal Year 2014

Call Data	FY 2014
Calls Received	46,719 ²⁶
Calls Handled	19,862
Calls Abandoned	24,679
Average Handle Time	242 Seconds
Average Speed of Answer	15 Minutes, 10 Seconds
Service Level	No Goal Set
Abandon Rate	53%

Source: Cisco Unified Intelligence Center

Department of Parks and Recreation’s Park Permit Office

The Parks and Recreation Department offers classes to the public and allows the public to rent parks and facilities for personal use. The Department of Parks and Recreation’s Park Permit Office takes calls related to parks and recreation services. The Parks Permit Office answers questions regarding the Department’s services, allows the public to book parks and facilities, and takes payments for park and facilities bookings and class registrations. The Park Permit Office is open to the public Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Park Permit Office staffs between four and six employees, depending on the season. Summer requires more employees as it is the peak season for the Department. Most of the citizens contact the Park Permit Office by email and walk-ins. About 50 percent of the work processed in the office pertains to the approximately 100 sports fields the City owns. Phone calls make up about 20 percent of the office’s workload. The budget for the Parks Permit Office is pooled with other Parks and Recreation programs; the budget for the Park Permit Office is around \$230,000 per year from the City’s General Fund.

Similar to the Revenue Services Contact Center, the Park Permit Office does not track the number of requests received by their office. We used Cisco call

²⁶ The Cisco report identified nearly 1,700 calls as either “Other” or “Calls Error.” Cisco defines “Other” calls as calls that were short (the caller hung up within a short time period), routed to non-agents, or were redirected and “Calls Error” as calls that had errors or were incomplete.

information to determine the number of calls received by the office but were not able to determine the number of walk-ins, emails, mail, or fax received by the office during fiscal year 2014. Figure 24 documents the Park Permit Office's call information for fiscal year 2014.

Figure 24: Park Permit Office's FY 2014 Call Information

Call Data	FY 2014
Calls Received	13,913 ²⁷
Calls Handled	8,169
Calls Abandoned	2,076
Average Handle Time	Unknown
Average Speed of Answer	77 Seconds
Service Level	No Goal Set
Abandon Rate	15%

Source: Cisco Unified Intelligence Center

²⁷ The Cisco report identified nearly 3,600 calls as "Other" which Cisco defines as calls that were short (the caller hung up within a short time period), routed to non-agents, or were redirected.

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 12, 2015

TO: Jorge Oseguera, City Auditor

FROM: Maria MacGunigal, Chief Information Officer

CC: Howard Chan, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: **311 Call Center Audit**

1. This letter is in response to the City Auditor's Audit of the 311 Division.
2. The Department of Information Technology (IT) acknowledges receipt and concurs with the recommendations from the City Auditor's draft report.
3. Corrective actions are actively being taken. In addition, internal operating procedures are being updated and staff training has begun to ensure established performance measures are followed and program goals and individual responsibilities are assigned.
4. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the City Auditor and staff for their efforts in identifying process improvements in this audit. Please feel free to contact me directly should you have any questions.
5. Below is the department response to the 18 audit recommendations identified in the audit report:

AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS AND DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSE:

1. **Review 311 Call Center staffing levels and ensure the Call Center is staffed to meet service level goals.**

Response: The 311 call center received an additional three FTE as part of the mid-year budget process. These new employees will begin taking phone calls mid-May 2015. The new staff members will have a positive impact on the Division's ability to meet service level goals.

IT will analyze the impact of the new staff members and investigate staffing levels for current and anticipated future call volumes. A draft staffing plan has been developed. The plan will be updated to reflect the impact of new staff members and address future staffing requirements.

2. **Perform an analysis to determine the cause of the lower than predicted service levels and make changes as necessary.**

Response: IT has begun an analysis of why the predicted service levels found by the City Auditor differed from the actual service levels provided by the 311 Division. Based on the outcome of that analysis, operational and managerial adjustments in the call center will be made to ensure optimal performance.

3. **Develop and communicate individual agent key performance metrics and hold agents accountable to meeting goals.**

Response: IT has developed internal procedures and processes to provide individual employee metrics to staff. A draft policy and preliminary training has begun to ensure employees understand and meet performance targets.

4. **Regularly evaluate agent performance and meet with agents to review performance and provide coaching to ensure agents meet service, quality, and efficiency goals.**

Response: IT will ensure that employees receive regular meetings to review performance and receive feedback on service, quality and efficiency goals. The two 311 Specialist positions created in 2015 will allow the Division's Supervisor to refocus on employee reviews and feedback.

5. **Perform customer surveys to understand the perceptions of callers and include customer surveys in agent performance reviews.**

Response: IT has identified a process to create after-call surveys which will provide callers a method of providing feedback on the service received through the 311 Call Center. This new process is anticipated to launch in September 2015.

6. **Actively supervise agents to ensure they are processing requests efficiently and working productively.**

Response: IT has added additional support staff in 2015 to provide additional monitoring and feedback for employees, and to allow time for the 311 Supervisor to regularly evaluate and provide direct feedback to employees.

7. **Evaluate supervisor-to-agent and support staff-to-agent levels and consider increasing the number of supervisory and support staff in the 311 Call Center to be more in line with other similarly sized 311 Call Centers.**

Response: IT will continue to evaluate the support staffing levels with the goal of meeting industry best practices of one 311 Supervisor for every 10-12 311 Agents, and to identify any additional needs for other support staff.

8. **Develop an online directory similar to a knowledge base that allows citizens to research information to answer questions relating to the City.**

Response: IT is actively evaluating replacement systems for the current 311 customer service system. One of the primary requirements of the new system is the ability to share the knowledge base with residents through multiple channels including the web, app and integrated voice response (IVR) system. It is anticipated that public access to the 311 knowledge base will be available in the first quarter of 2016.

9. **Enhance the City's mobile application to provide additional services and information for citizens to utilize.**

Response: As part of the effort to replace the existing 311 customer service system, an upgrade to the 311 App is planned to take advantage of the new features of the replacement system. Any new app will provide more information and services than the current app, while providing flexibility for future enhancements.

10. **Consider other technology advances that may reduce call volume and increase the number of requests processed through self-service means.**

Response: IT is, and will continue to, research and pursue call volume reduction initiatives through the innovative use of technology and the increase of self-service options for citizens. The Department is actively pursuing a solution for web chat, and enhanced self-service through the IVR system.

11. **Work with other City Departments to assign liaisons to review and update the 311 Call Center Knowledge Base on a regular basis.**

Response: IT will partner with other Departments within the City to identify single points of contact to update the Call Center and review the Department's information and processes on a regular basis. The 311 Division has begun meeting regularly with customer Divisions and Departments for which service is provided in early 2015.

12. **Establish formal policies and procedures for updating the knowledge base and communicating changes to customer service agents.**

Response: As part of the call center software replacement project, IT will create a formal policy for maintaining and updating the knowledge base articles. In addition, ongoing 311 Agent training will be conducted to ensure that new processes and procedures are communicated to all staff on an as-needed basis.

13. **Consider utilizing the Siebel CRM Knowledge Base and ensure a new CRM system has a functional and integrated Knowledge Base that will be utilized.**

Response: The new CRM system will feature a functional knowledge base that fits into the workflow of the 311 Customer Service Agents. IT does not plan to utilize the Siebel knowledge base, as it does not provide the required functionality for the 311 Customer Service Agents to effectively use it on a call with a citizen.

14. **Work towards upgrading the current Siebel Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.**

Response: IT has made significant movement towards the replacement of the Siebel CRM system. An RFP was released in January 2015, and the expected implementation date for the new CRM is first quarter 2016.

15. **Integrate data from Cisco, Siebel or new CRM system, and Witness to better analyze 311 Call Center data and develop processes to improve customer service.**

Response: IT plans for the new CRM system to integrate with the Cisco phone system to automatically populate caller information based upon the phone number from which they are calling. IT will evaluate improving the integration between the CRM system and Witness to improve the ability to effectively monitor employee interactions.

16. **Address the limitations of the Customer Information Systems (CIS) integration with the new CRM system and ensure agents utilize the integration while processing CIS-related service requests.**

Response: The new CRM is planned to be fully integrated with CIS, and to move from the current semi-integrated state into a full integration. IT is actively working on this project in the current Siebel CRM system with the goal of having a more complete and seamless integration built before the new CRM is released. The expectation with the new CRM is that all transactions will be housed within the CRM and 311 Agents will have little to no interaction with other City systems.

17. **Provide agent training on new system upgrades and integrations to ensure agents utilize changes made for efficiency.**

Response: IT will incorporate a training plan and timeline into the CRM upgrade project to ensure agents are well aware of how to process requests in the new CRM without going into the other City systems.

18. Develop a process with City Departments utilizing escalation forms that allow the 311 Call Center to follow up on previous requests.

Response: IT will investigate how to create this type of escalation form as part of the CRM upgrade project, with the goal being that the escalation is created through the new CRM, and that the request is closed once the other City Department responds to the requestor.