911 Reform Status Report #2: Progress Made but Transparency Needed

ODCA

Office of the District of Columbia Auditor

Audit Team
Federal Engineering, Inc.
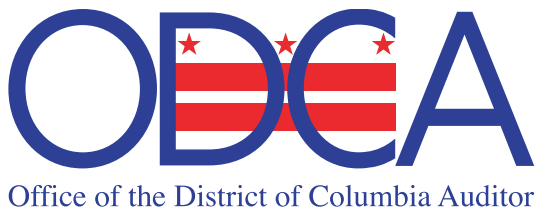
Kathleen Patterson, District of Columbia Auditor
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March 23, 2023

The Hon. Muriel Bowser   The Hon. Phil Mendelson
Mayor of the District of Columbia   Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia
The John A. Wilson Building   The John A. Wilson Building
Washington, DC 20004   Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser and Chairman Mendelson:

We present the second update on the October 2021, report, **District's 911 System: Reforms Needed to Meet Safety Needs** prepared by Federal Engineering, Inc. (FE) for the Office of the D.C. Auditor (ODCA). Today's report, **911 Reform Status Report #2: Progress Made But Transparency Needed**, updates the progress the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) has made in meeting the audit recommendations as well as meeting national call and dispatch metrics and includes a review of two child deaths in summer 2022. We are pleased to report that seven recommendations have been completed, another 24 are in progress, and that Acting Director Heather McGaffin indicated the agency will pursue compliance with the audit recommendations.

We are nevertheless concerned that the most recent accounting by the agency appears to significantly overstate actions taken since the status report published in September 2022, **911 Reform Status Report #1: Minimal Progress** and we describe the discrepancy in our response to agency comments at the end of this document.

This status report also updates findings from the original audit on two important metrics – "time to answer" and "answer to notification" for all top priority Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) calls. The original audit found that OUC did not meet national standards for either metric for the majority of the 24 months in 2019 and 2020. The updated review looked at 99,000 priority medical calls from September 2021 through August 2022 and found OUC was not compliant with time-to-answer metrics for roughly half the time and was not in compliance with the 60-second answer-to-notification requirement at any time.

In ODCA's view, even more serious than failure to meet these national standards is the agency's failure to be accurate and transparent in describing after-action reviews of the July 3, 2022, and August 9, 2022, incidents when young District residents Sevyn Schatzman-Chase and Aaron Boyd, Jr., respectively, lost their lives. In one case OUC failed to acknowledge that the call taker recorded the wrong address after the correct address had been displayed on a locator map. The audit team notes that a new agency policy on incident reporting is inadequate and "a revised policy should require that after-action reports clearly articulate all investigative and remediation efforts."

For testimony on March 15, 2023, ODCA downloaded from the OUC website the most recently published incident report on a call received October 10, 2022, which is not only incomplete but inaccurate. We recommend that the OUC incident reporting policy not only require more robust information but that de-identified versions of after-action reports be posted to the OUC website within 10 days of an incident with audio files available on request. It is ODCA's view that additional transparency can help ensure accountability and help rebuild the public's trust in the critical services provided by OUC.

We appreciate the cooperation of OUC and everyone who provided information and shared their experiences. We are grateful for the expertise shown by the Federal Engineering team and hope the updates on meeting the audit's recommendations will assist District policymakers in continuing to improve the vital service provided by the 9-1-1 operations.

Sincerely yours,

Kathleen Patterson
District of Columbia Auditor

cc: D.C. Councilmembers

Office of Unified Communications
9-1-1 Operations Division
Audit and Process Improvement
Recommendations Follow-up Report

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Executive Summary

Federal Engineering, Inc. (**FE**) is pleased to provide the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) with this *Office of Unified Communications (OUC) 9-1-1 Operations Division Audit and Process Improvement Recommendations Follow-up Report*.

On October 19, 2021, ODCA released the *Office of Unified Communications (OUC) 9-1-1 Operations Division Audit and Process Improvement Recommendations Report;* an audit of the OUC 9-1-1 Operations performed by **FE**. The report identified 31 recommendations intended to change the environment and enable OUC personnel to improve services provided to the District. ODCA has requested an updated report by **FE** as to the progress OUC is making regarding the recommendations made in the original report.

FE conducted this project in accordance with the scope of work as detailed in Contract #ODCA 2022-15 dated March 22, 2022. **FE's** observations, conclusions, and recommendations as expressed in this report are the opinions of **FE** and are based upon information provided by OUC as well as meetings, interviews and in-person observations of operations at the primary OUC Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

Approach

ODCA tasked **FE** to perform a multistage follow-up to the original audit report. The first stage was summarized in the follow-up report to the original audit report and was based on **FE** personnel visits to the OUC on May 3-5, 2022. The follow-up report was delivered to the ODCA on September 9, 2022. **FE** personnel met with a cross-section of OUC personnel including the Deputy Director, Chief of 9-1-1 Operations, Training Team, floor supervisors, and Union representatives. The visit also encompassed time spent observing call-taking and dispatching in the Public Safety Answering Point.

This current effort followed the same approach conducted during the second stage and is based on **FE** personnel visits to the OUC on September 12-13, 2022. **FE** personnel met with OUC personnel including the Deputy Director, the Chief of 9-1-1 Operations, the new Chief of Professional Standards and Development, floor supervisors, and Emergency Communications Center (ECC) operations staff. A full day was committed to observing call-taking and dispatching inside the PSAP.

For this report, **FE** conducted another round of data analysis using industry-based metrics for specific recommendations and observations noted in the original Audit Report. In addition to an update on the progress made on the recommendations indicated in the first report, **FE** was tasked by the ODCA to analyze two call events that occurred in 2022.

Recommendations Progress Summary

FE assessed the progress made on each of the 31 recommendations that were submitted to the ODCA for action by OUC management. Each recommendation has been summarized in Section 1 of this report with progress/status statements that describe the progress made during this review period.

Overall, there has been progress in addressing and adopting the recommendations identified in the *Office of Unified Communications (OUC) 9-1-1 Operations Division Audit and Process Improvement Recommendations Report* released on October 19, 2021. As of this report, the OUC has completed seven of the recommendations and shown partial progress in addressing 17 others, with seven recommendations showing minimal progress.

It should be noted, however, that the challenges associated with the existing Criteria Based Dispatch (CBD) system, as well as the migration to a new call handling protocol system (PowerPhone), were the result of a decision by senior management to abandon a previously adopted protocol system.

At the point in time when the PSCC (predecessor to the OUC) came into being, the Priority Dispatch Corporation (PDC) protocols for Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) and Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD) were in use, training for these having occurred in 1999-2000. OUC purchased the final package, Emergency Police Dispatch (EPD) in 2007. All three protocols were upgraded in 2015.

The PDC suite of products are a highly structured software-based protocol system that uses a scripted interrogation method for triaging service calls.

The scripted protocols must be strictly followed with no deviation from the scripted questions. This system of protocols also discourages "freelance questioning" and uses an automated software-based Quality Assurance program that assesses and evaluates individual compliance with the protocols. In order to be effective, the evaluation of compliance to the protocol system is required.

In 2018, OUC management made the decision to abandon the Priority Dispatch protocols and transition to the CBD system which had been developed by King County, Washington.

It must be noted that the ongoing effort to adopt the new protocol system should include support from MPD, FEMS, and the Medical Director.

It will also require the retraining of OUC staff, as well as the modification of the current Quality Assurance process, and will require the understanding and cooperation of employees who must transition (for the third time) to a new protocol system.

More importantly, it will further delay the time that the OUC will be able to generate performance-based metrics.

1. Review and Status of Recommendations

1.1 Technology-Centric

1. **Evaluate and reduce the number of event types and associated priorities.**

   Progress/Status: After transitioning away from the PDC protocol system with the adoption of the CBD system in 2018, the OUC is again in the process of procuring an entirely new call-taking and dispatch system. The event types and associated priorities germane to the new system are currently under review by the Operations Chief in cooperation with both Metro-Police Department (MPD) and Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS). The Deputy Director further reported that it is expected that this effort will significantly reduce the event types and ensure that an appropriate priority has been assigned to each call type. The procurement of the new system was in process and was expected to be completed in Q2 of 2023. In addition, the current Criteria-Based Dispatch (CBD) system is no longer supported by the vendor, requiring any changes to be completed in-house by the IT Team.

   As a result of the pending transition to PowerPhone, there has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

2. **Streamline the call entry data formatting in the CAD system.**

   Progress/Status: This recommendation is tied to the reduction of event types and associated priorities (as noted in Item 1 above) as well as the future implementation of the new call-taking system. It remains to be seen if the migration to the new system will actually result in Emergency Communication Operators (ECO) more effectively and more efficiently "coding" calls. The Deputy Director reported that under the direction of the medical director, there has been progress made in the reduction of fire/EMS call types, however, the majority of the changes will not be fully implemented until the adoption of the new protocol system later in Q2 of 2023. It was further determined by OUC management that although there has been an identified need to significantly reduce the number of call types, it was decided that the re-training effort required to accommodate major changes to the CBD system would be onerous and impractical pending the transition to the new protocol system.

   The type and method of the protocol chosen for call-taking in any 9-1-1 PSAP go to the core of how the workflow in the PSAP occurs. Therefore, it follows

that a change of this magnitude will require complete re-training of staff, substantial revisions to the call-taking portions of the center's policy and procedures, as well as a heightened vigilance on the part of supervision to make certain that the new protocols are being followed. However, simply changing the protocol system (and such a change is definitely not "simple", as detailed above) will not improve outcomes for the OUC, unless and until a quality assurance and control program is actually followed.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

3. **Assess and improve the integration of the scripted protocols (CBD) into the call handling process.**

Progress/Status: The Deputy Director reported that the OPSD team is in the process of ensuring ECOs continue to follow all the scripted protocols in the CBD system pending the migration to the new call-taking system. Additional QA staff have been added to the QA unit, and as previously noted, the Training and Quality Assurance units have been placed under OPSD and are working together to measure compliance with the scripted protocols and remediation training through call review.

The reported statistics for QA reviews are as follows:

- QA staff has been increased from two to eight (six additional positions)

- Industry standard of 2% of all calls reviewed are being met

- Based on overall calls received (1.4 million in 2021), 233 calls are being reviewed monthly by each of seven of the current evaluators, averaging eight calls reviewed per day, per evaluator

- Reviewed calls have increased from 280 per month to 1,630 calls per month

- OUC is in compliance with industry standards of providing feedback to ECOs within five days

- To date, 100 feedback sessions have occurred daily since the beginning of the fiscal year
- Compliance with OUC performance requirements for fire/EMS calls has increased from 86% to 88%[1]

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[1] OUC's agency call-taking performance standard is 90% compliance with all call-taking requirements, per reviewed call. The 88% number here indicates that 88% of all Fire/EMS calls reviewed in the period met or exceeded the 90% threshold.

- Compliance with OUC performance requirements for police calls has increased from 77% to 82%[2]

There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

4. **Train staff on use of Location Determining Technologies (LDTs) followed by alert supervision and QA to monitor use.**

Progress/Status: RapidSOS has been deployed and activated, and training of all PSAP staff has been completed. The QA team and supervisors continue to perform spot-checks to ensure compliance as there are ongoing challenges with ECC staff and their acceptance of the reliability of the Location Determining Technologies (LDTs).

Implementation of this recommendation is described below.

The Deputy Director reported that in FY 2021, the OUC had 31 allegations of incorrect addresses of which:

- 18 were confirmed as incorrect (sustained)
- Four were determined to have been acted upon appropriately (not sustained)
- Two were determined to be inconclusive
- Seven are still under investigation by Special Operations and Investigations (SPOI)

It is unclear why investigations of this nature have not been resolved in a timely manner. OUC management should ensure that the timeline for such investigations is articulated in SPOI policy and procedure and enforced.

As of December 2022, the OUC had 34 allegations of incorrect addresses, of which:

- 30 were confirmed as incorrect (sustained)
- Four were determined to have been acted upon appropriately (not sustained)

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation. It should be noted that we have assigned "minimal" instead of "no" compliance solely due to the documented change in responsibility within OUC for the processing of

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[2] Call taking performance standards for MPD calls are identical to FEMS review standards.

complaints, and the creation of the (long overdue) Power DMS training and complaint tracking database, both of which, in our opinion, are the necessary first steps in bringing the addressing problem to heel. *FE* is cognizant of the fact that actual sustained incorrect address complaints have increased when comparing FY 2021 to calendar year 2022. In any case, ongoing compliance validation through the QA call review process must continue to be the focus going forward to ensure effectiveness.

We note that the current OUC policy concerning Special Operations and Investigations requires a modification to include a step-by-step procedure, most importantly including specific, defined timelines and accountability measures, concerning the investigative and complaint resolving process. The current version of the policy, issued in November 2022, should be modified accordingly.

5. **Configure the work screen landscape of applications to bring the LDT solutions to the forefront in process and visibility. Do not allow other applications to pop-up in front of the maps and other LDTs displayed on screen.**

   Progress/Status: This recommendation has been completed.

1.2 Operational

1.2.1 Call-Taking Processes

1. **Reduce improvising and ad-libbing by adhering to the scripted questions in the CBD call processing standard.**

   Progress/Status: It was reported by the Deputy Director that the QA/QI Team continues to evaluate compliance with the CBD system pending the migration to the new call-taking system, with remedial action taken, as necessary. It was acknowledged that the current CBD system allowed for free-lance questions whereas a more structured protocol system reduces if not eliminates ad-libbing and instances of free-lance questions. It is anticipated that the migration to the new system will significantly improve compliance with the protocol interrogation questions. Refer also to Recommendation #3 under *1.1 Technology-Centric* section of this report.

   There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

2.   **Ensure the complete acquisition and entry of all caller/reporting party information.**

     Progress/Status: It was reported by the Deputy Director that the QA/QI Team continues to monitor the accuracy of call entry by ongoing call review. Refer also to Recommendation #3 under *1.1 Technology-Centric* section of this report.

     There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

3.   **Verify address information as defined in OUC policy. Adapt policy to allow immediate confirmation of location if an exact match is found between caller reported location and LDT map pinpointing of location. This will save time in gathering information.**

     Progress/Status: The existing *Address and Telephone Number Verification* SOP (issued April 2021) was updated in June 2022, with spot checks being conducted by supervisory staff to ensure compliance.

     Refer also to Recommendation #4 under *1.1 Technology-Centric* section of this report.

     There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

4.   **Require the use of LDTs to locate a caller that cannot immediately state a precise location of an incident, and in situations where the caller does not know the address of an incident.**

     Progress/Status: The Deputy Director reported that a new policy that directs PSAP staff to use the address being provided by the LDT equipment for situations where the caller does not know the address of an incident was developed in June 2022. It was also reported that the newly adopted PowerDMS system tracks the reading and acknowledgement of new policies for each employee, and that all employees have reviewed this policy.

     Perhaps more than, and later than other large PSAPs, the OUC was wary of the locations that the cell phone companies were delivering with 9-1-1 calls. Historically, the early attempts of the cell phone companies to comply with the FCC's requirements for location accuracy were not promising, especially in built-up urban environments with an abundance of building reflections to confuse the location mechanisms in use at the time. The OUC at that time ignored the latitude and longitude presented during cell phone 9-1-1 calls,

and an entire generation of ECOs were trained in that method. Over recent years, with the tightening of the FCC requirements and the improvement in cell phone technology, the locations provided to the OUC are far more accurate, and a policy change (which was overdue) finally occurred in June 2022 that allows ECOs to use the provided LDT information when the caller is not sure of where they are, and – just as important – allows the ECO to use the LDT to confirm the location of a caller who does know where they are, saving precious time by removing the need to repeatedly (and annoyingly, to the callers) ask for the address. Supervisory staff continue to conduct spot checks to ensure compliance.

There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

5. **Require apartment numbers to be collected and entered in CAD in the appropriate field and format for dispatch to responders.**

    Progress/Status: The Deputy Director reported that the OPSD has been assigned to train all new and experienced PSAP staff to use a standardized format when entering apartment numbers, and that the training for all ECOs has been completed. The QA/QI Team is conducting ongoing reviews to ensure compliance. During floor observation periods, *FE* did note compliance with the new policy.

    There has been partial progress on this recommendation. Ongoing compliance validation through QA call review process should continue to be the focus going forward.

6. **Monitor and encourage a method(s) for selecting the correct Chief Complaint (call type).**

    Progress/Status: OPSD has completed refresher training for new and experienced ECOs in the correct selection of the Chief Complaint. The QA/QI Team continues to review compliance and report issues to the OPSD for remedial training as well as the creation of performance management plans for individuals as needed.

    There has been partial progress on this recommendation. Ongoing compliance validation through QA call review process should continue to be the focus going forward.

7. **Improve customer service through QA review and follow up and requiring training and in-service (ongoing education) that addresses tone, inflection, and professional presentation.**

Progress/Status: The QA/QI Team is actively reviewing call transcripts on a monthly basis and conducting remediation training as needed. It was reported by the Deputy Director that customer service complaints have been reduced as the result of this effort. Statistics on complaints received by the OUC are as follows:

In 2021, the OUC received 156 complaints of which:

- 66 were determined to be valid complaints
- 35 were determined to have been acted upon appropriately (not sustained)
- Six were determined to be inconclusive
- 49 are still under investigation by the SPOI

It is unclear why investigations of this nature have not been resolved in a timely manner. OUC management should ensure that the timeline for such investigations is articulated in SPOI policy and procedure, and enforced.

In 2022, the OUC received 132 complaints of which:

- 93 were determined to be valid complaints
- 36 were determined to have been acted upon appropriately (not sustained)
- One was determined to be inconclusive
- Two are still under investigation by the SPOI

It was also reported that six additional team members have been added to the QA/QI Team and the Transcription unit continues to conduct reviews on calls processed related to fulfilling requests from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and US Attorney's Office.

As previously stated, there has been an improvement on the OUC's approach to investigating complaints involving the commitment of resources to find the underlying cause of such complaints.

The current OUC policy concerning Special Operations and Investigations requires a modification to include a step-by-step procedure, along with defined timelines, concerning the investigative and complaint resolving

process. The current version of the policy, issued in November 2022, should be modified accordingly.

At this time, we judge that the change in approach represents partial progress on this recommendation.

1.2.2   Dispatch

1.   **FE recommends the addition of an automated dispatch function to the CAD system and the FEMS dispatch process. Automating the broadcast announcement of event type and location will enhance and improve the ability of the FEMS dispatchers to meet the 60-second notification to units requirement in the NFPA standard.[3]**

    Progress/Status: It was reported by the Deputy Director that discussions on this topic are continuing with FEMS, however, FEMS initially expressed concerns that the automated dispatch function is not a preferred solution.

    The reasoning for adding the automated dispatch function to the dispatch radio talkgroup is explained in detail in the original audit report. The decisions regarding how, in a technology sense, the OUC will accomplish the requirement of over-the-radio notification of a call to FEMS, should be within the purview of OUC, since it directly impacts workflow and staffing requirements. OUC and FEMS are already using the automated system for in-house fire station alerting, which means that two different messages are currently being voiced during calls, depending on whether one is listening to the dispatch talkgroup or if one is listening to the fire station alerting system. This results in three different messages if one also counts the message on the assigned tactical talkgroup. *FE* reiterates that there is no added value provided to FEMS by retaining the human voice announcement. The automated voice will always be clearer to units on the radio, it will have a consistent, non-emotional tone of voice. In short, the dispatcher's time is better utilized checking the dispatch messages as they queue, and watching for changes on active calls that may require the dispatch of FEMS resources.[4] It further frees the dispatcher to keep the status table of available units up to date, which is just as critical in order to avoid fire units passing stations with

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[3] NFPA 1225 (formerly NFPA 1221) is the ANSI Standard which specifies the minimum job performance requirements for service as Public Safety Telecommunications Personnel and specifies minimum requirements for systems, retransmissions, dispatching, performance levels and quality of installations for emergency services communications. The 2022 edition of NFPA 1225 was approved as an American National Standard by the ANSI Board of Standards Review on September 15, 2021.
[4] See Sec. 4.1.2.3. Incident Summary in regards to the August 9th, 2022 "lockout" call

in-quarters units. The Chief of Operations is making an ongoing effort to fully explain to the FEMS chiefs the rationale for implementing this system.

There continues to be minimal progress on this recommendation.

1.2.3   Supervision

1. **OUC to develop and assign a minimum of three supervisors around the clock on the operations floor with assigned discipline focus on call-taking, MPD dispatch, and FEMS dispatch.**

    Progress/Status: *FE* observed and confirmed that three supervisors have been assigned for each shift.

    In order to provide maximum flexibility, OUC has determined that all supervisors need to be able to operate within all three areas of discipline – call taking, MPD dispatch, and FEMS dispatch. Additional watch commanders have been identified for FY23 to train specified supervisors in call-taking, law enforcement, and fire/EMS. All supervisors began training in July and continue to cross-train to become familiar with all disciplines. More recently, space on the operations floor has been identified in the FEMS pod for a call management supervisory position for fire/EMS calls.

    In addition, the Deputy Director reported that there is a plan to add an Analyst Position to each shift. This position will be responsible to oversee and monitor all aspects of high acuity calls in progress and ensures a complete view of how each call is being handled. This includes the emergency response and final resolution of each in-progress event. The staffing of the Analyst positions will draw from current ECC staff and will be required to complete a 40-hour course that is currently under development through collaboration with NENA, APCO and other subject matter experts. The Analyst position will report to the on-duty Watch Commander and is based on a current model that is being used in a similar sized PSAP in a similar demographic.

    There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

2. **A fourth supervisor to be added as an available resource intended to provide backup to the on-duty supervisors and for the performance of required administrative duties such as evaluations, QA reviews and follow up, scheduling and call outs.**

Progress/Status: In April 2022, the Director identified to the Executive Office of the Mayor (EOM) the need for an additional five supervisory positions. The positions were subsequently approved and are in the process of being filled. The Deputy Director indicated that the ultimate goal is to have functional watch commanders on every shift to provide direct supervision and support in all three disciplines (i.e., Police, Fire, EMS) as needed. It is expected that the candidates will be fully trained and in place in FY23.

There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

1.2.4   Translation Services

1.   **Determine if there are additional applications that would augment or replace this service.**

     Progress/Status: The Deputy Director indicated that the OUC has made a determination to continue with the Language Line service while increasing recruitment and retainage of bilingual staff. OUC has participated in multicultural and bilingual job fairs and has revamped their recruitment literature to ensure that it reaches a broader audience. It was further reported by the Deputy Director that the Mayor's New Year New Career virtual job fair in March resulted in the onboarding of four additional bilingual ECOs.

     Partial progress on this recommendation noted. Ongoing compliance validation through QA call review process should continue to be the focus going forward to ensure effectiveness in handling translation services during 9-1-1 calls.

2.   **Investigate how translation processes are called upon to ensure maximum efficiencies and reduce call processing times through automation.**

     Progress/Status: This issue concerns the use of Language Line service. It was noted that a high-priority phone line dedicated to translation services has been installed at all ECO positions. In addition, Genovation keypads have been installed to improve the ability to quickly transfer calls to the Language Line service.

     This recommendation has been completed.

1.2.5   Cultural Issues

1. **Expand the training and development of supervisors specifically in leadership and soft skills.**

   Progress/Status: This was assigned by the Deputy Director to the OPSD for further action as required. It was reported by the OPSD that the training and development of supervisors has been expanded, with a focus on the development of leadership and soft skills. Funding for FY23 has been set aside for this effort. All supervisors have been tasked with attending NENA's one-week long Center Managers Certification Course (CMCP).

   There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

2. **Include refresher or in-service training in call etiquette, professional tone.**

   Progress/Status: This was assigned by the Deputy Director to the OPSD for further action as required. The training and development of supervisors has been expanded to include in-service training in call etiquette and professional tone. This training is being woven into all classes, with a focus on Customer Service. It was observed at a roll call briefing that there was strong coaching by the supervisor regarding the need for good customer service. Additionally, individual training is being tracked in the new Power DMS database system, which tracks the status of new training, as well as the acknowledgement of new policies for each employee.

   There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

3. **Enforce OPSD policy for returning completed QA reviews and for follow up to ensure the behavior is not repeated.**

   Progress/Status: The Chief of 9-1-1 Operations reported that policy concerning the follow-through with QA/QI reports and correction of inappropriate ECO and dispatcher behaviors is now being followed. In addition to the QA/QI Team expansion, floor supervisors now provide feedback to ECC staff within five days of their individual QA reviewed calls.

   Refer also to Recommendation #3 under 1.1 Technology-Centric section of this report.

There has been partial progress on this recommendation, however, it should be noted that this is an ongoing process intended to ensure that remedial efforts are meeting with success.

1.2.6   Quality Assurance

1.   **Improve documentation concerning the completion and follow up of QA reviews with staff.**

Progress/Status: QA and IT Teams have completed the upgrade to the NICE logging recorder system including the development of new forms. However, it has now been realized that the migration to a new call-processing system (the change from CBD to PowerPhone) will require a complete revamp and customization of the QA interfaces to the logging recorder system. It was also noted that it will be necessary to procure and implement PowerPhone's QA program when PowerPhone is implemented in the OUC.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

2.   **Provide timely feedback to staff through the OPSD. Industry best practice requires that QA reviews be completed within a few days of the call occurring whenever possible, and that feedback be provided to the call-taker as soon as possible thereafter.**

Progress/Status: The QA/QI Team has updated the feedback forms used for call evaluations and the supervisors have been tasked with providing feedback to employees within five days of the call[5]. It was reported by the Deputy Director that the updating of QA/QI methodologies is a work in progress and expected to be completed the third quarter of 2022.

Refer also to Recommendation #3 under *1.1 Technology-Centric* section of this report.

There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

3.   **Track corrective behavior outcomes including compliance to protocols and customer service. Ensure any training, action plans, or required coaching is discussed and documented, along with a set time for follow up and conclusion. The consistent methods in this approach will**

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[5] This is in compliance with APCO/NENA ANS 1.107.1--2015 Standard for the Establishment of a Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Program for Public Safety Answering Points

support improved call-taker performance and quality improvement center wide.

Progress/Status: It was reported by the new Chief of Professional Standards and Development that a training tracking database (Power DMS) that monitors QA/QI outcomes has been procured by the Information Technology unit. This system allows for the creation of individual folders for each employee and has been integrated into the performance evaluation system.

Refer also to Recommendation #3 under *1.1 Technology-Centric* section of this report.

This recommendation has been completed.

4. **Evaluate and document the results of remediation training efforts.**

    Progress/Status: A training repository database (Power DMS) intended to track QA/QI remediation outcome efforts has been procured by the Information Technology unit. The Chief of Professional Standards and Development reported that the information flow process is in place, and they are now tracking individual ECC staff that have been identified as benefitting from remedial training. This training is now being provided by Certified Training Officers (CTOs) and done on an individual "as-required" basis.

    This recommendation has been completed.

5. **Use the Quality Assurance data to identify training and process gaps and trends throughout the center. Also use this data to create a quality improvement program that addresses additional training, policy changes, and support for consistent improvement in call-taker performance.**

    Progress/Status: The Chief of Professional Standards and Development reported that since the QA Team has been moved under OPSD, the tracking and analysis of QA reports and any follow-up actions are now being assigned to the Training unit. The Chief of Professional Standards and Development reported that the tracking of QA reports and further data analysis continue to support agency trends, as well as ongoing remedial training, the updating of policies, and the overall improvement of ECO performance.

    There has been partial progress on this recommendation.

1.2.7   Staffing

1. **Schedule staffing of call-taking positions according to predictable spikes in call volume over a 24-hour period as outlined in Table 7 of the original report.**

    Progress/Status: The Deputy Director acknowledged that there was a need to consider the adoption of a "power shift" that would address periods of high call volume. In the interim, a policy that increased the minimum number of ECOs has been developed for both day and night shifts. The data extracted from the Emergency Call Tracking System (ECaTS)[6] is now being used to predict workload increases for upcoming special events, holidays, and other predictable spikes in call volume. In addition, there have been additional resources assigned to the night shifts to accommodate the predictable busier times of day. It was also reported that some ECOs have agreed to extend their dayshift to assist with early evening spikes in calls. However, there has been no progress towards the creation of a "power shift" to deal with call spikes.

    There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

2. **Review the daily break schedule of the MPD dispatchers with a view to maximize staff availability.**

    Progress/Status: The Deputy Director reported that the supervisors have been asked to enforce policies concerning the number of police dispatch assignments and their respective break schedules. It was also reported that during busy periods, police dispatchers who are on their break are being asked to assist with administrative lines and other operational support duties.

    This recommendation has been completed.

3. **Consider consolidating the back-up dispatcher role to support multiple (two or more) channels rather than a one-to-one assignment.**

    Progress/Status: The Deputy Director reported there have been ongoing discussions with MPD concerning an increase in the number of police dispatch channels. The issue is on hold due to staffing issues with MPD, which is reported to be experiencing a serious shortage of officers. This shortage creates a further issue with MPD supervisors being unavailable to

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[6] ECaTS: Information into Insights (ecats911.com) owned by Intrado©

monitor the existing dispatch channel. It was further reported that consideration is being given to having the back-up dispatcher remain in place and assist with the administrative call volume on an as-required basis.

There continues to be minimal progress on this recommendation.

4. **Maintain staffing levels as outlined in Table 15 of the original report that includes consideration and staff count to address known and projected turnover as detailed in Section 3.3.8 of the *FE* recommendations report submitted on October 19th, 2021.**

    Progress/Status: The Deputy Director, and Chief of 9-1-1 Operations have conducted a review of the staffing numbers as recommended by *FE* and have been working with Human Resources to hire and train additional staff. It was reported there has been an effort to recruit and train new employees, with a class of 15 new employees having all completed their training in July, and a second class of 17 trainees currently underway. It was also reported that there have been 57 employees leave the center, but that seven have agreed to return to work.

    There has been partial progress on this recommendation. It should be noted here that chronic staffing shortages continue to plague ECCs across the nation and that employee turnover continues to challenge the profession.

1.2.8   GIS

1. **OCTO GIS team should maintain the accuracy of GIS data by continuing with their current business processes and practices relating to the in-depth analysis of the GIS, ALI, and MSAG data to ensure synchronization.**

    Progress/Status: GIS data continues to be maintained under the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) utilizing current business processes and practices.

    This recommendation has been completed.

2. **Continue regular in-depth analysis of the GIS, ALI, and MSAG data to ensure synchronization.**

    Progress/Status: The Management Team advises that they are maintaining a status quo.

This recommendation has been completed.

2. Summary Status Table

The progress of the Recommendations are summarized in the following table.

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item**[7]	**Current Status**
Technology-Centric			
1 Evaluate and reduce the number of event types and associated priorities.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Work to reduce the police call types with MPD taskforce.	Minimal progress on this recommendation.
		Work to reduce the fire call types with the FEMS liaison.	
2 Streamline the call entry data formatting in the CAD system.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Streamline CAD data.	Minimal progress on recommendation
3 Assess and improve the integration of the scripted protocols into the call handling process.	The Agency partially agrees with this recommendation. While we agree that integration of scripted protocols is critical to quality emergency call-taking, we are also cognizant of the need for professional ECOs to do their jobs rapidly and effectively without excess prescriptive language.	Work to ensure the protocols are being used by all ECOs as prescribed to ensure the right information is received in dispatch each time.	Partial progress on recommendation
4 Train staff on use of Location Determining Technologies (LDT) followed by alert supervision and QA to monitor use.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Train staff to use LDT.	Minimal progress on this recommendation. Ongoing compliance validation through the
		Ensure supervisors are super users and understand how it works.	

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[7] OUC Action Item as provided under the OUC Audit Roadmap (see Appendix A)

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
		Have QA team conduct spot checks to ensure its use.	QA call review process must continue to be the focus going forward to ensure effectiveness.
5 Configure the work screen landscape of applications to bring the LDT solutions forefront in process and visibility. Do not allow other applications to pop up in front of the maps and other LDTs displayed on Screen.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. The layout of windows on ECO screens is managed by each user's preferences. We will engage personnel on the benefits of prioritizing the presence of maps on screen.	Order a fourth monitor for each call-taking position.	Recommendation has been completed.
Operational			

	Recommendations Summary Status			
	Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item**[7]	**Current Status**
1	Reduce improvising and adlibbing by adhering to the scripted questions in the CBD call processing standard.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. The Agency agrees with the report's narrative regarding the effective engagement of callers with the need for timely, accurate responses. We are in the process of reducing the number of event types across the board, a process started during the initial roll-out of CDB. The implementation of CBD dramatically improved the split of ALS-BLS calls which both improved patient care and leveraged FEMS resources in a more efficient manner.	Back to Basics training was conducted by OPSD for all ECOs. Continue quarterly training in some capacity.	Partial progress on recommendation
2	Ensure the complete acquisition and entering of all caller/reporting party information.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. It is existing OUC policy.	The QA team will need to focus on this as a metric for call-taking.	Partial progress on recommendation
3	Verify address information as defined in OUC policy. Adapt policy to adapt immediate confirmation of location if an exact match is found between caller reported location and LDT map pinpointing of location. This will save time in gathering information.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. It is existing OUC policy and deviations from the policy are thoroughly investigated and addressed accordingly.	Develop a policy to verify address using LDT similar to how it is verified using ALI.	Partial progress on recommendation

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
4 Require the use of LDTs to locate a caller that cannot immediately state a precise location of an incident, and in situations where the caller does not know the address of an incident.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation and will make policy changes as appropriate.	Develop a policy that directs ECOs to use the address being provided by the LDT information if an exact address cannot be verified by the caller.	Partial progress on recommendation
5 Require apartment numbers to be collected and entered in CAD in the appropriate field and format for dispatch to responders.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation and will work to develop a solution.	Train all new and experienced ECOs to use the same format for entering Apartment #s. Conduct QA checks on addresses to ensure this is happening.	Partial progress on recommendation. Ongoing compliance validation through the QA call review process must continue to be the focus going forward to ensure effectiveness.

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
6 Monitor and encourage a method(s) for selecting the correct Chief Complaint (call type).	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. The actual number of event types was significantly reduced in the changeover from the previous ProQA system. The Agency agrees with this recommendation and is beginning a process in FY22 Q1 to conduct an evaluation of event types with the goal of reducing the number of "Chief Complaints." The Agency disagrees with the statement that event types increased with the implementation of Criteria Based Dispatch.	Continued training for all ECOs on the correct Chief Complaint code. Create a cheat sheet that helps with odd calls or common erred calls and where to place them in the Chief Complaint options.	Partial progress on recommendation. Ongoing compliance validation through the QA call review process must continue to be the focus going forward to ensure effectiveness.

| 7 | Improve customer service through QA review and follow up and requiring training and in-service (ongoing education) that addresses tone, inflection, and professional presentation. | The Agency agrees with this recommendation.

The Agency has moved the QA personnel to the operations floor. This has allowed QA to have the ability to listen to live events and be in the position to intervene if necessary or otherwise assist. They can also be used to back up the ECOs for overload calls.

Quality assurance that is integrated into every step of the process is a hallmark of every highly effective call center, and we are wholly committed to improving QA within the Agency. We have undertaken several QA reforms in FY21 and will evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Agency's annual review of its performance. | Review and follow up with Q2 reviews from transcription monthly. | Partial progress on recommendation.

There has been an improvement on the OUC's approach to investigating complaints involving the commitment of resources to find the underlying cause of such complaints. The current OUC policy concerning Special Operations and Investigations requires a modification to include a step-by-step procedure, along with defined timelines, concerning the investigative and complaint resolving process. The current version of the policy, issued in November 2022, should be modified accordingly. |

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
Dispatch			
1 *A*ddition of an automated dispatch function to the CAD system and the FEMS dispatch process. Automating the broadcast announcement of event type and location will enhance and improve the ability of the FEMS dispatchers to meet the 60 second notification to units NFPA standard.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation, to the extent that the recommendation calls for review of fire dispatch protocols. The Agency currently dispatches FEMS calls simultaneously on a citywide dispatch channel and through an automated alerting system (Purvis) in units and fire stations. The current process was developed in close collaboration with FEMS. The current process was developed in close collaboration with FEMS and reflects that department's preference for citywide dispatch notifications. The dispatch of FEMS apparatus during critical or large incidents takes time to verbally announce on the citywide channel due to the number and variety of resources announced over the radio. We will engage FEMS on this topic.	Review the possibility of this with FEMS.	Minimal progress on this recommendation

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
Supervision			
1 OUC to develop and assign a minimum of three supervisors around the clock on the operations floor with assigned discipline focus on call-taking, MPD dispatch, and FEMS dispatch.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. OUC is in the process of developing expanded training for supervisory staff and intends to include leadership and mentorship modules. The Agency is also evaluating supervisory staffing needs and will take the minimum supervisory staffing recommendation under advisement. The Supervisor Initiative Pilot will provide an opportunity to measure, evaluate, and make all necessary changes to supervisor roles, tools, development, and resources. We have already made the necessary changes to include each discipline in the teams of shift supervisors.	Currently there are three supervisors on each shift Identify tenured employees who can act in an assist role on each shift when supervisors are out.	Partial progress on recommendation

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
2	A fourth supervisor be added as an available resource intended to provide backup to the on-duty supervisors and for the performance of required administrative duties such as evaluations, QA reviews and follow-up, scheduling, and call outs.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. OUC is in the process of developing expanded training for supervisory staff and intends to include leadership and mentorship modules. The Agency is also evaluating supervisory staffing needs and will take the minimum supervisory staffing recommendation under advisement. The Supervisor Initiative Pilot will provide an opportunity to measure, evaluate, and make all necessary changes to supervisor roles, tools, development, and resources. We have already made the necessary changes to include each discipline in the teams of shift supervisors.	Hire a fourth supervisor for each shift.	Partial progress on recommendation

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
Translation			
1 Determine if there are additional applications that would augment or replace this service.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Certified bilingual ECOs and dispatchers.	Partial progress on this recommendation noted. Ongoing compliance validation through QA call review process should continue to be the focus going forward to ensure effectiveness in handling translation services during 9-1-1 calls.
2 Investigate how translation processes are called upon to ensure maximum efficiencies and reduce call processing times through automation.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. We have been working with Office of Human Rights and will implement Interpreter Certification requirements within the call-center personnel.	Ensure ease of ability to transfer calls.	Recommendation has been completed.
Culture Issues			
1 Expand the training and development of supervisors specifically in leadership and soft skills.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Implementing recommendations cited for improving supervision, training, and QA, and thereby improve culture.	Partial progress on recommendation
2 Include refresher or in-service training in call etiquette, professional tone.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.		Partial progress on recommendation

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
3 Enforce OPSD policy for returning completed QA reviews and for follow-up to ensure the behavior is not repeated.	The Agency agrees in part and disagrees in part with this recommendation. Quality assurance which is integrated into every step of the process is a hallmark of every highly effective call center, and we are wholly committed to improving QA within the Agency. We have undertaken several QA reforms in FY21 and will evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Agency's annual review of its performance.		Partial progress on recommendation. However, it should be noted that this is an ongoing process intended to ensure that remedial efforts are meeting with success.

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
Quality Assurance			
1 Improve documentation concerning the completion and follow-up of QA reviews with staff.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. Quality assurance which is integrated into every step of the process is a hallmark of every highly effective call center, and we are wholly committed to improving QA within the Agency. We have undertaken several QA reforms in FY21 and will evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Agency's annual review of its performance.	Work to upgrade NICE QA forms and process.	Minimal progress on this recommendation
2 Provide timely feedback to staff through OPSD. Industry best practice requires that QA reviews are completed within a few days of the call occurring, whenever possible, and that feedback be provided to the call-taker as soon as possible thereafter.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation. Quality assurance which is integrated into every step of the process is a hallmark of every highly effective call center, and we are wholly committed to improving QA within the Agency. We have undertaken several QA reforms in FY21 and will evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Agency's annual review of its performance.	Work to upgrade feedback forms and conduct all feedback within five days of the call under review.	Partial progress on recommendation

	Recommendations Summary Status			
	Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
3	Track corrective behavior outcomes including compliance to protocols and customer service. Ensure any training, action plans, or required coaching is discussed and documented, along with a set time for follow-up and conclusion.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Develop a training repository database with a jacket for each employee. Develop a focused document each quarter to address needs and to address the recurring themes and issues. Quarterly training directly related to the identified issues.	Recommendation has been completed.
4	Evaluate and document the results of remediation training efforts.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Create a database for training initiatives for individuals.	Recommendation has been completed.
5	Use the quality assurance data to identify training and process gaps and trends throughout the center. Use this data to create a quality improvement program that addresses additional training, policy changes, and support for consistent improvement in call-taker performance.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	QA report to include trends for the agency and each individual shift. QA & Training meeting monthly to identify the trends and develop training. Using national standards, develop a program that addresses quality improvement.	Partial progress on recommendation

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
Staffing			
1 Schedule staffing of call-taking positions according to predictable spikes in call volume over a 24-hour period.	The Agency agrees with the recommendation to investigate minimum staffing levels at each level of call-taking, dispatch, and supervising. We have begun this process and may engage ODCA further prior to the release of the final audit report. The agency notes that any analysis concerning minimum staffing should consider peak call times throughout the year. We will continue to work with the Executive and our labor partners on staffing levels.	Develop a policy for minimum staffing numbers for days and night shifts. Review quarterly upcoming events/holidays/expected increases using the ECaTS program.	Minimal progress on recommendation. There has been no progress towards the creation of a "power shift" to deal with call spikes.
2 Review the daily break schedule of the MPD dispatchers with a view to maximize staff availability.		Ensure and enforce standardized police dispatch numbers that are needed daily.	Recommendation has been completed.
3 Consider consolidating the back-up dispatcher role to support multiple (two or more) channels rather than a one-to-one assignment.		Review increasing channels on MPD dispatch to assist with the volume of traffic.	Minimal progress on recommendation
4 Maintain staffing levels as outlined in Table 15 that includes consideration and staff count to address known and projected turnover.		Review audit staffing numbers to ensure there are minimum staffing levels for the center.	Partial progress on recommendation

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	**OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations**	**OUC Action Item[7]**	**Current Status**
GIS			
1 GIS team should maintain the accuracy of GIS data by continuing with their current business processes and practices relating to the in-depth analysis of the GIS, ALI, and MSAG data to ensure synchronization	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Continue with current practice.	Recommendation has been completed.
2 Continue regular in-depth analysis of the GIS, ALI, and MSAG data to ensure synchronization.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Continue with current practice.	Recommendation has been completed.

3. Assessment of 9-1-1 Call Data

FE was tasked with reviewing call data statistics for the previous 12-month period from September 2021 through August 2022.

3.1 Call Processing Time

This section deals with the response time continuum that is initiated at the first appearance of a call within OUC and has specific milestones that are used to measure the center's performance. These are:

1.   Call appearance – clock starts

2.   Call answered – ECO begins interrogation

3.   Call available for dispatch – ECO has supplied CAD with sufficient information to allow dispatch

4.   Call assigned to unit(s) – Dispatcher has taken the call from CAD and assigned it to responder(s)

5.   Unit responding

6.   Unit arrival

Requirements for Items "1" and "2" are governed by NENA and NFPA Standards.[8] Items "3" and "4" are governed by NFPA only. The last two items "5" and "6" are not under the control of OUC but are part of the total response time seen by the public.

At *FE's* request, OCTO provided detailed monthly call counts from available CAD data, including the metrics for call processing.

The data set used to evaluate what percentage of calls meet national standards were the 914,612 total reported inbound emergency calls from September 1, 2021, through August 31, 2022.[9] Included within this data set were a total of 99,104 Priority 1 FEMS incidents.

3.1.1   Time to Answer Findings

For September 2021 through August 2022, OUC was not in compliance with the 15-second answer, 90th percentile requirement for four consecutive months (May through

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[8] National Emergency Number Association (NENA) "*Standard for 9-1-1 Call Processing*", NENA-STA-020.1-2020, effective 4/16/2020; and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) #1225 "*Standard for Emergency Services Communications*" (2022 Edition), effective 9/15/2021

[9] Not included in this total are inbound calls abandoned in under 10 seconds

August) and not in compliance with the 20-second answer, 95th percentile requirement for six months (December, and April through August). These findings are represented in *Chart 1* below.

Chart 1 – Call Answer Time Compliance - September 2021 - August 2022[10]

Answer Time Compliance Percentage, by Month

■ % Answered <= 15 Sec   ■ % Answered <= 20 Sec
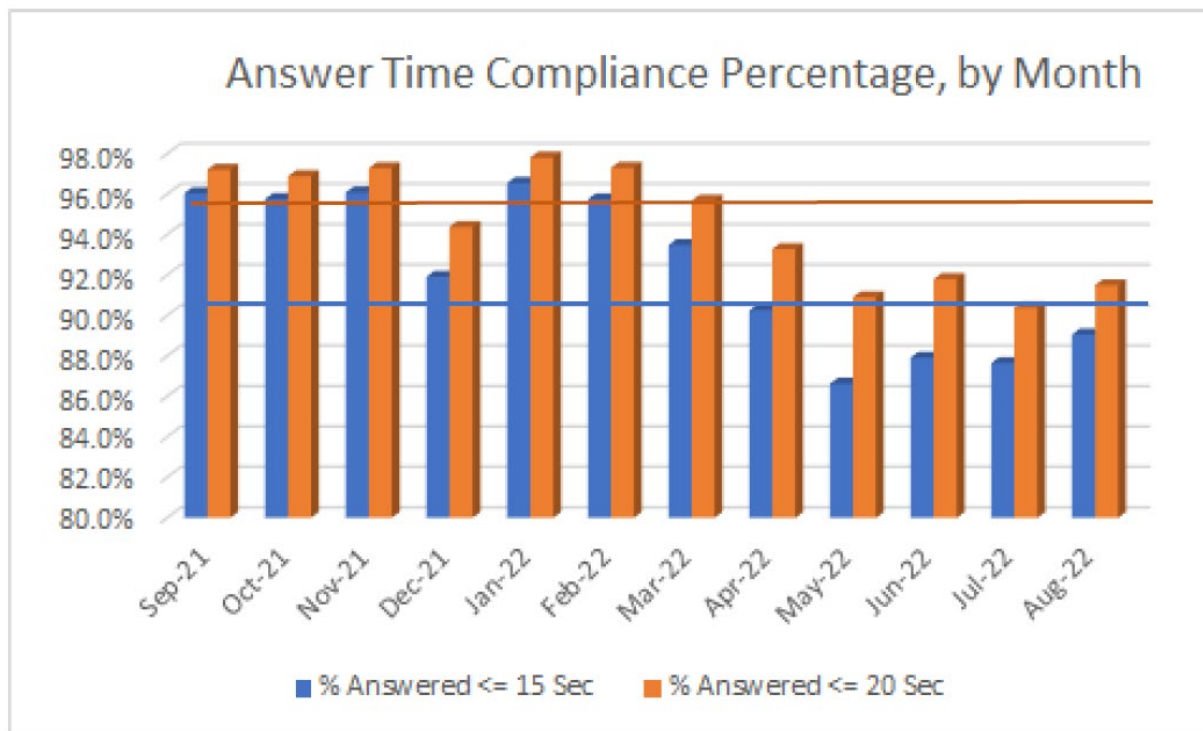
3.1.2   Answer to Notification Findings

FE requested OUC provide a report showing the time from call answer to first unit notification for Priority 1 FEMS calls to allow for a review of OUC's capability to meet the NFPA #1225 Standard's 60-second requirement for answer-to-dispatch elapsed time (90% of the time).

For the twelve-month period ending August 31, 2022, the OUC was not in compliance with the 60-second answer to notification requirement for any part of the period. The highest performance was October 2021 when the OUC dispatched 28% of all FEMS Priority 1 calls for service within the 60-second period. This is far short of the 90th percentile requirement. Beginning February 2022, the OUC's performance steadily decreased from March through July of this year, increasing only slightly in August. This information is represented in *Chart 2* below.

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[10] Source: *FE* Analysis

Chart 2 – Answer to Notification Time by Month[11]

Priority 1 Calls Meeting the 60-second Requirement, by month

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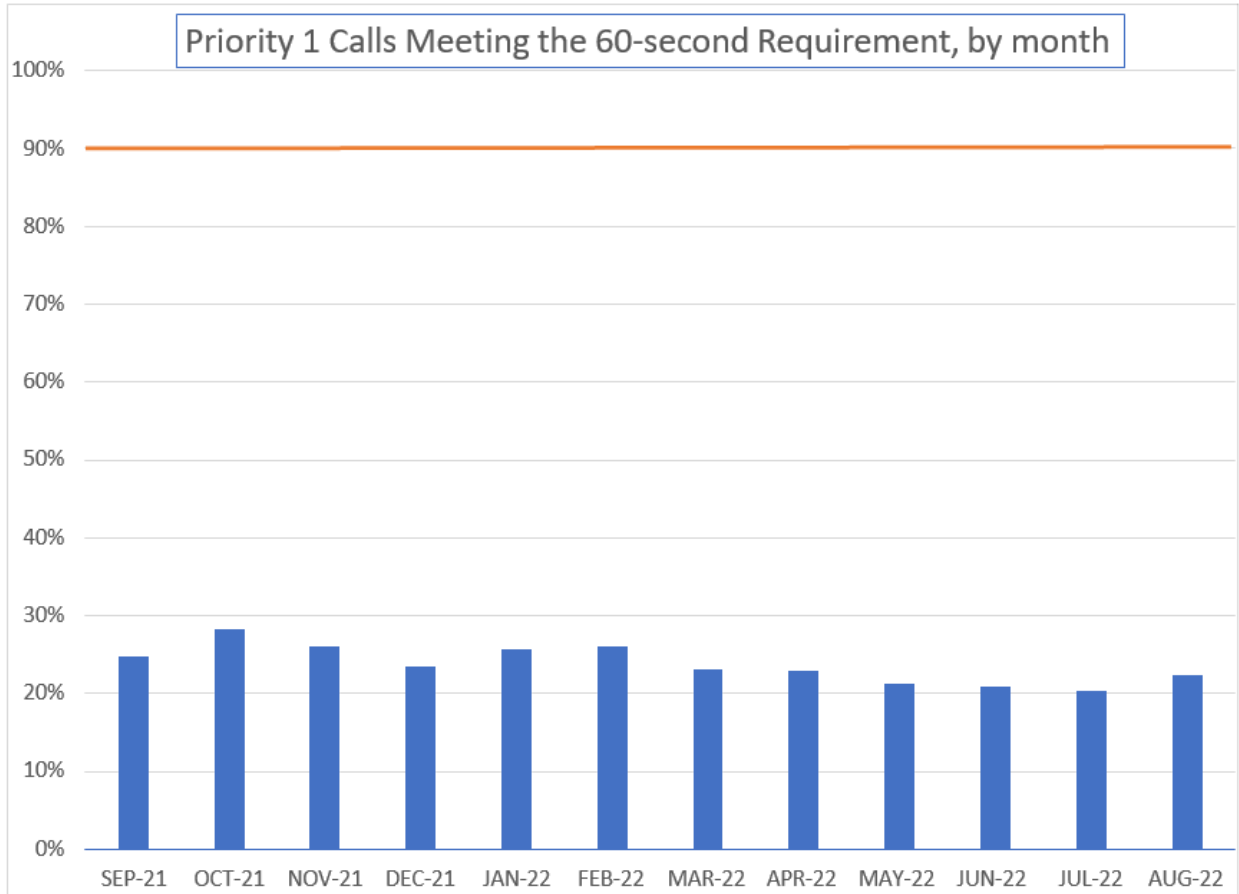
[11] Source: *FE* Analysis

4. Internal Investigations

In most PSAP environments, there are generally two instances where an investigation occurs.

The first is when a call for service ends in tragedy, usually with the loss of life. High profile situations of this nature may appear in the media and garner a great deal of publicity.

The second instance is the result of a QA review, or an internal observation, wherein it is discovered that standard operating procedures have not been followed, or when a supervisor observes the behavior or actions of an employee. This may include a particular procedural issue or an outcome that cast the PSAP, or an employee, in a bad light. Internal investigations of this nature are not typically made public and are resolved within the scope of operations within the PSAP.

FE was tasked with reviewing the after-action reports for two, high-profile incidents as selected by the ODCA. The review of each incident was to include the following items:

1. What warranted the investigation?
2. Time frame for incident reviews and turnaround?
3. Were the investigations/after-action reports conducted according to policy?
4. Were the judgements and conclusions of the internal investigations sound?
5. Were corrective action plans implemented?

4.1 Incidents For Review

The ODCA provided two high-profile calls for review by **FE**. These events are detailed in *Sections 4.1.1* and *4.1.2*. The following areas were examined for each event:

- Incident Summary
- Extent of the Investigation
- Actions Taken
- Information Made Public

From the calls reviewed in this report, ongoing focal issues continue to be as follows:

- Ineffective use of the Location Determining Technologies available to the ECOs to accurately determine and confirm the exact location of incidents.

- A span of control of supervision that makes it difficult to provide adequate oversight to the floor operation, and no direct discipline monitoring of call-taking, and dispatching. The OUC has recognized this and is in the process of increasing the number of floor supervisors and adding an analyst position to improve overall span and control.

4.1.1   Event F220105979 - 2100 Block Savannah Terrace

4.1.1.1   Warranting of Investigation

The loss of life of an infant as well as errors in location of the event warranted this investigation.

4.1.1.2   Time Frame for Incident Review and Turn Around

This event was investigated by the Special Operations and Investigations (SPOI) unit.

The investigation for this incident began immediately following the disclosure by the family of the above-noted outcome.

4.1.1.3   Incident Summary

This incident was reported to the OUC at 02:26:03 on Sunday, July 3rd, 2022. The nature of the call as indicated by the caller, was that there was an infant in cardiac arrest. The initial investigation by SPOI revealed that the ECO selected an incorrect address, and it was this address that was entered into the CAD system. The actual address was in the 2100 Block of Savannah Terrace SE, whereas the ECO inadvertently entered the address as the 2100 Block Savannah Street SE.

Telephone CPR was initiated by the ECO about one minute into the call. Units were dispatched to the incorrect address at 02:27:33, with the first Engine arriving at the incorrect address 02:35:03.

At 02:33:34, a second 9-1-1 call was received, where the caller provided the correct address. The ECO, however, did not update the address in the corresponding CAD location field, but entered the correct address into the "CAD Notes" part of the event screen. This action did not update the CAD incident location field. In other words, unless the responding units had read the CAD notes, they would not have been aware that they were enroute to the wrong location.

At 02:35:31, the second caller confirmed that MPD has arrived on scene to the correct address, and that CPR is underway.

Medic 25 arrived at the correct address at 02:36:23 (about 10 minutes after the call was received).

A series of radio communication exchanges occurred between the responding units, and at 02:37:00, the correct location of the incident was confirmed.

It should be noted that the ANI/ALI technology which is designed to plot the location of a wireless caller was functioning properly during this call.

A review of the Event Chronology report shows that the originating wireless device was plotted to +38.849308 (Lat), -76.974725 (Lon). Reference *Figure 1* below.

Figure 1 – Event Chronology Report – Savannah Terrace

F220105979 - CARDIAC - CARDIAC ARREST-UNCON/NOT BREATHING CPR IN PROGRESS
**2106 SAVANNAH TER SE DC**

☑ System Comments

Date/Time	Terminal	Operator	
07/03/22 02:26:05	c129	0	**ANI/ALI - Phone**: 202-500-3638, **Lat**: +038.849308, **Lon**: -076.974724, **Call ID**: 20220703000011122929
07/03/22 02:26:55	c129	99840	**EVENT CREATED** - **Type**: CARDIAC - CARDIAC ARREST-UNCON/NOT BREATHING CPR IN PROGRESS, **Location**: 2106 SAVANNAH ST SE DC:,C, **Agency**: DCFEMS, **Group**: EMS, **Beat**: FIRE, **Status**: P, **Priority**: 1
07/03/22 02:26:55	c129	99840	**INITIAL CALL** - **Call Source**: ANI/ALI, **Caller Name**: , **Caller Phone Number**: 202-500-3638, **Caller Address**: LL(-76:58:29.0064,38:50:57.5087): EST 2086 SAVANNAH TER SE DC
07/03/22 02:26:55	c129	99840	**EVENT REMARK** - ** ECBD STARTED
07/03/22 02:26:55	c129	99840	**EVENT REMARK** - F 1 DAY
07/03/22 02:26:55	c129	99840	**EVENT REMARK** - Patient Not Conscious
07/03/22 02:26:55	c129	99840	**EVENT REMARK** - Patient Not Breathing Normally

The plotting of the above noted geographic coordinates, using the data provided by the Location Determining Technology, placed the caller in the 2100 Block of Savannah Terrace. Reference *Figure 2* below.

Figure 2 – Geographic Coordinates of Wireless Caller – Savannah Terrace
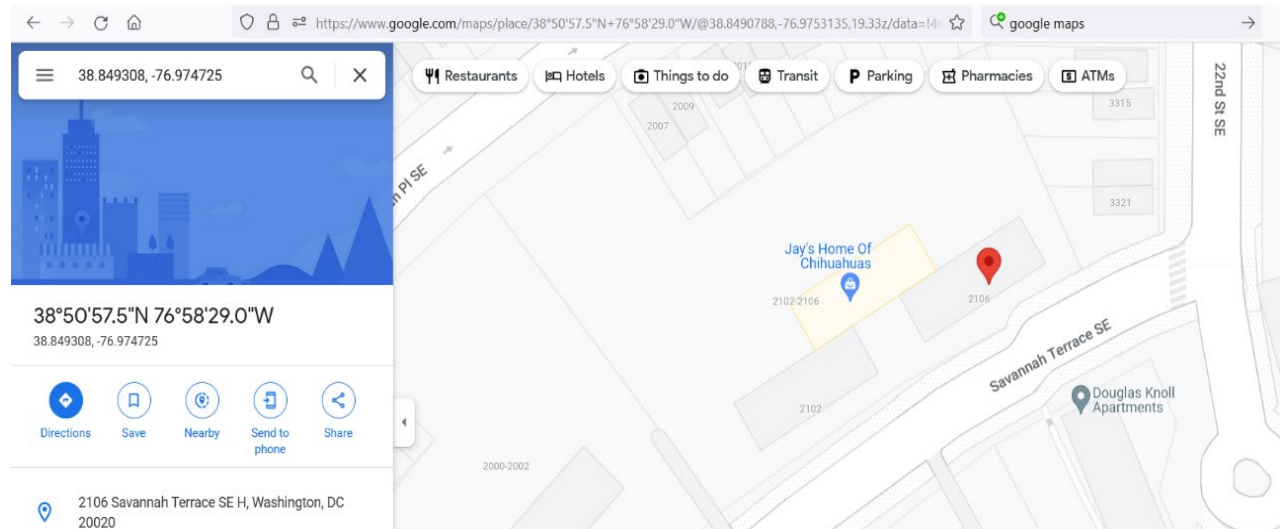
4.1.1.4   Actions Taken

It should be noted that this was a high acuity/low frequency event that involved an infant in cardiac arrest. Understandably, incidents of this type evoke a strong emotional response from all those involved, but in particular, the ECO on the phone doing his or her best to coach callers on the use of Telephone CPR.

As previously stated, a thorough review of the circumstances was started by the SPOI unit immediately following the incident. The investigation report we reviewed stated that the ECO followed OUC event-location verification procedure but *FE*'s review indicates that this was not the case, and that the location information as determined by the Location Determining Technology was either overlooked or assumed to be inaccurate. The result was the incorrect address entered into the CAD event location field, and location information was never updated to the correct address.

It must be reiterated that the wireless 9-1-1 caller's correct location had been accurately reported by the LDT and had plotted correctly on the mapping application in use by the CAD.

As indicated in the internal investigation, the ECO failed to accurately determine the location of the incident. Subsequent actions to update the location occurred in the CAD event notes (rather than in the actual event location field) further exacerbating the misinterpretation of the true location of the event.

Corrective Actions Plan

As a result, it was reported that the ECO received the appropriate remedial training and was counseled in this regard.

In addition, there is a concerted effort now being done through the QA Unit to conduct regular call reviews for each employee. The increase of Supervisors along with the addition of the planned Analyst positions will improve the vigilance in overseeing in-progress high-acuity events.

Under the current version of the OUC policy concerning Special Operations and Investigations, an appropriate corrective plan for this incident was completed.

As previously noted, however, this policy requires modification to include a step-by-step procedure, along with defined timelines, concerning the investigative and complaint resolving process. The current version of the policy, issued in November 2022, should be modified accordingly with specific actions and detailed steps clearly defined.

4.1.1.5   *Information Made Public*

The July 3 incident was made public by the OUC in a Final Statement released on July 28th, 2022, and the story was covered by the Washington Post and other media outlets[12].

4.1.1.6   *Investigations/After-Action Reports*

The investigation and after-action reports for this incident were conducted according to current policy, however, as noted above, a revised policy should require that after-action reports clearly articulate all investigative and remediation efforts.

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[12] https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/07/28/dc-911-mistake-baby-dead/
https://wtop.com/dc/2022/07/newborn-dies-dc-911-sent-crews-to-wrong-address/
https://www.statter911.com/2022/07/28/new-dc-911-sends-fire-ems-to-wrong-address-for-newborn-in-cardiac-arrest/

4.1.2   Event F220129546 - 600 Block Park Road NW

4.1.2.1   Warranting of Investigation

The loss of life of an infant as well as in-progress call disposition errors warranted this investigation.

4.1.2.2   Time Frame for Incident Review and Turn Around

The investigation for this incident began immediately following the disclosure by the family of the above noted outcome.

4.1.2.3   Incident Summary

This incident was reported to the OUC at 18:00:29 on Tuesday, August 9th, 2022. The nature of the call as reported by the caller, was an infant had been accidentally left in a vehicle. The investigation by the OUC revealed that the ECO selected *"Child Locked in Vehicle"* as the event type. At 18:01:48, the caller reported to the ECO that the child was out of the vehicle with the FEMS dispatcher entering a remark in the CAD event notes field that indicated truck and rescue units were no longer required.

At 18:01:53, the caller indicated that the child was not breathing, and the event type was subsequently updated by the ECO to *"Cardiac Arrest"* at 18:02:08. The FEMS dispatcher did not notice the update to the call and was already in the process of closing the call. The responding units were returned to service and the event was closed at 18:02:30.

At some point the police dispatcher noticed that units were not on scene and subsequently notified the Watch Commander at 18:07:30. After a review of the CAD event screen, the Watch Commander determined that the FEMS dispatcher had not noticed the change of status of the call. The dispatch of the updated call occurred at 18:10:01, with the units arriving on scene at 18:14:40, about 14 minutes after the initial call was received.

4.1.2.4   Extent of the Investigation

A review of the circumstances was initiated by the Special Operations and Investigations (SPOI) unit.

4.1.2.5   Actions Taken

A thorough review of the circumstances revealed that the ECO followed the appropriate steps in the processing of this call which started as a low priority call and escalated by the ECO to a higher priority call.

As noted in the internal investigation, there was a change in the call event type that unfortunately, and for unknown reasons, went unnoticed by the FEMS dispatcher. This oversight ultimately led to a delayed response.

Corrective Actions Plan

From the documentation provided to **FE** as to exactly what remedial action was taken to prevent similar situations from occurring, it is evident that a concerted effort through the QA Unit is now being made to conduct regular call reviews for each employee, and that any remediation efforts have been proven to be successful (i.e., the specific behavior has changed). In addition, the increase of Supervisors along with the addition of the planned Analyst positions will improve the vigilance in overseeing all in-progress high-acuity events. Management must ensure that there is a measurable process in place that proves that QA efforts are actually meeting with success.

It is the opinion of **FE** that an appropriate corrective action plan for this incident was completed, however, as previously noted, this policy itself requires a modification to include a step-by-step procedure, along with defined timelines, concerning the investigative and complaint resolving process. The current version of the policy, issued in November 2022, should be modified accordingly with specific actions and detailed steps clearly defined.

4.1.2.6   Information Made Public

This incident was made public by the OUC on August 10th, 2022, and the story was covered extensively in the local media[13].

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[13] https://wjla.com/features/i-team/baby-hot-car-death-dc-911-unified-communications-center-karima-holmes-police-investigation-ems-infant
https://www.foxweather.com/weather-news/infant-dies-in-dc-after-being-left-in-hot-car
https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/08/13/boy-dead-car-911-call/

4.1.2.7 Investigations/After-Action Reports

The investigation and after-action reports for this incident were conducted according to current policy, however, as noted above, after action reports must clearly articulate all investigative and remediation efforts.

5. Summary

Overall, there has been some progress in addressing and adopting the recommendations identified in the *Office of Unified Communications (OUC) 9-1-1 Operations Division Audit and Process Improvement Recommendations Report* released on October 19, 2021, and the issues surrounding supervision and ECO performance continue to improve. Some items, however, have been met with marginal improvement.

The OUC is currently under the direction of an Acting Director recently appointed by the mayor. Outstanding management positions are now staffed, and all Chief positions including a dedicated Chief Counsel are in place. Additional training, supervisory, and the proposed analyst positions are in the process of being filled. In addition, the Quality Assurance Team has been expanded, is fully functional, and is meeting all aspects of accepted best practices including call review, employee follow-up, and remediation as needed[14].

The effort to fill vacant positions is ongoing, as is the effort to recruit bilingual ECOs. In addition, the current training program has been completely revamped, with a change in philosophy concerning the adopting of a combined ECO/dispatcher training. Historically, ECO training consists of call-taking first. When an ECO demonstrated competency in call taking, and there was a dispatcher vacancy, they were then offered dispatcher training. The OUC has adopted a new process intended to fast-track new employees into operational roles by combining ECO/dispatcher training.

There is an ongoing effort to improve the on-line reporting system in an effort to reduce non-emergency call volume.

More importantly, the Acting Director stated that there is an effort made by the OUC management to improve, build, and restore relationships with the agencies that they serve.

Through continued data analysis and ECC operations observations, it can be stated that the issues that have plagued the call-taking and dispatch operations are rooted in long-established processes and habits but are now being addressed by Management.

However, there has been no improvement in compliance with national standards for either emergency call answering or dispatch requirements. Call answering times are most closely linked with staffing levels. Implementing modified staffing systems, such as a "power shift" that provides additional ECOs during the predictable high-volume call periods would improve this performance. As we have seen, insufficient staffing causes

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[14] https://www.nena.org/general/custom.asp?page=QualityAssurance

delays in call answering times, leading to abandoned 9-1-1 calls, frustrated citizens and ultimately delays in getting help to those who need it.

Delays in elapsed time until FEMS dispatch are related to policy and procedures in use in the OUC. This includes the current lack of _mandatory_ break points in Priority 1 EMS or Fire calls that force the automated dispatch of appropriate units at specific points in the ECO scripted questioning. This procedure would allow units to start responding while questioning continues by the ECO. Additional delays are caused by the failure to automate the radio dispatch function as recommended in the October 19, 2021, audit report.

Some of these delays may be alleviated with the upcoming change in the emergency call handling software that is scheduled to be implemented in the first quarter of 2023; however, as stated in the Executive Summary, the migration to a new call handling system and the retraining involved in the adoption of the system itself presents a myriad of issues that include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Conversion to an entirely new protocol system and the subsequent impact on operations

- Change fatigue experienced by ECC personnel adjusting to the new protocol system

- Technical challenges in the interfacing of the new protocol system to the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system

- Further opportunity for ECC staff to freelance and drift off script

- Development of a new Quality Assurance interface

- Effort needed in the in the transitioning of existing chief complaint types to the new system

Although there were overall indications that the OUC management has made progress on improving accountability and supervision, continued monitoring and analysis of the OUC's overall progress on the recommendations as well as the serious consideration of transitioning to a new protocol system will be imperative in achieving the level of performance and service required of this Public Safety Agency.

Appendix A - OUC Audit RoadMap

The OUC provided the following matrix illustrating the planned action items and progress towards the adoption of each recommendation identified in the *Office of Unified Communications (OUC) 9-1-1 Operations Division Audit and Process Improvement Recommendations Report* submitted on October 19, 2021.

Appendix A

OUC Roadmap

	Recommendation	Actions	Owner	Due Date	Notes
Technology- Centric	Evaluate and reduce the number of event types and associated priorities	Work to reduce the police call types with MPD taskforce	911 Ops Chief/ MPD	6/1/22	
		Work to reduce the fire call types with the FEMS liaison	911 Ops Chief/ FEMS	6/1/22	
	Streamline the call entry data formatting in the CAD system		Technology/CAD Vendor	6/1/22	
	Assess and improve the integration of the scripted protocols into the call handling process	Work to ensure the protocols are being used by all call takers as prescribed to ensure the right information is received in dispatch each time.	OPSD Chief		
	Train staff on use of Location Determining Technologies (LDT) followed by alert supervision and QA to monitor use	Train staff to use LDT	IT Team and OPSD	Completed during the first round – will need to be continued as ConEd with OPSD	Completed by IT Team 2/22
		Ensure supervisors are super users and understand how it works	Karl Millard & Calvin Williams / Supervisors	4/1/22	Completed training on 2/22/22 with RAVE.
		Have QA team conduct spot checks to ensure its use	QA Team- Latrice and Trayshelle	ongoing	In Progress and is being done on each QA review
	Configure the work screen landscape of applications to bring the LDT solutions forefront in process and visibility. Do not allow other applications to pop up in	Order a fourth monitor for each call taking position	Selena	4/30/22	In Progress – monitors are ordered and will be reconfigured. Supervisors' positions are complete

	Recommendation	Actions	Owner	Due Date	Notes
	front of the maps and other LDTs displayed on Screen				
Operations	Reduce improvising and adlibbing by adhering to the scripted questions in the CBD call processing standard	Back to Basics training was conducted by OPSD for all TEOS. Continue quarterly training in some capacity	Marcia King	Ongoing	Ongoing – needs to continue on a quarterly basis
	Ensure the complete acquisition and entering of all caller/reporting party information	The QA team will need to focus on this as a metric for call taking	QA Team – Trayshelle & Latrice	Ongoing	
	Verify address information as defined in OUC policy. Adapt policy to adapt immediate confirmation of location if an exact match is found between caller reported location and LDT map pinpointing of location. This will save time in gathering information.	Develop a policy to verify address using LDT similar to how it is verified using ALI	Policy – Domingo and Ingrid	4/15/22	
	Require the use of LDTs to locate a caller that cannot immediately state a precise location of an incident, and in situations where the caller does not know the address of an incident.	Develop a policy that directs TEOs to use the address being provided by the LDT information if an exact address can not be verified by the caller.	Policy – Domingo and Ingrid	4/15/22	
	Require apartment numbers to be collected and entered in CAD in the appropriate field and format for dispatch to responders.	Train all new and experienced TEOs to use the same format for entering Apartment #s. Conduct QA checks on addresses to ensure this is happening	OPSD	5/1/22	
	Monitor and encourage a method(s) for selecting the correct Chief Complaint (call type).	Continued training for all TEOs on the correct Chief Complaint code	QA/OPSD/ Supervisors	5/1/22 & ongoing	

	Recommendation	Actions	Owner	Due Date	Notes
		Create a cheat sheet that helps with odd calls or common erred calls and where to place them in the Chief Complaint options			
	Improve customer service through QA review and follow up and requiring training and in-service (ongoing education) that addresses tone, inflection, and professional presentation.	Review and follow up with Q2 reviews from transcription monthly	Transcription	Ongoing	Reviews are ongoing Review monthly reports by QA team and report to training and operations
Dispatch	Addition of an automated dispatch function to the CAD system and the FEMS dispatch process to meet the 60 second notification to units	Review the possibility of this with FEMS	911 Operations/ IT	4/30/22	
Supervision	OUC develop and assign a minimum of three (3) supervisors around the clock on the operations floor with assigned discipline focus on call-taking, MPD dispatch, and FEMS dispatch	Currently there are three supervisors on each shift Identify tenured employees who can act in an assist role on each shift when supervisors are out	911 Operations	Ongoing	There are currently three supervisors on each shift.
	A fourth supervisor be added as an available resource intended to provide backup to the on-duty supervisors and for the performance of required administrative duties such as evaluations, QA reviews and follow-up, scheduling and call outs.	Hire a fourth supervisor for each shift.	911 Chief	10/1/22	
Translation	Determine if there are additional applications that would augment or replace this service	Certified bilingual call takers and dispatchers	PIO	9/30/22	

	Recommendation	Actions	Owner	Due Date	Notes
	Investigate how translation processes are called upon to ensure maximum efficiencies and reduce call processing times through automation	Ensure ease of ability to transfer calls	911 Operations/IT	7/1/22	Generation Keypads were installed at each console for ease of transferring calls to the Language Line
Culture Issues	Implementing recommendations cited for improving supervision, training, and QA, and thereby improve culture	Expand the training and development of supervisors specifically in leadership and soft skills	Deputy Director	6/30/22	
		Include refresher or in-service training in call etiquette, professional tone	OPSD	4/1/22	
		Enforce OPSD policy for returning completed QA reviews and for follow-up to ensure the behavior is not repeated	QA Team	Ongoing	QA team reviews calls in person and using feedback forms
Quality Assurance	Improve documentation concerning the completion and follow-up of QA reviews with staff	Work to upgrade NICE QA forms and process	QA Team and IT	6/1/22	
	Provide timely feedback to staff through OPSD. Industry best practice requires that QA reviews are completed within a few days of the call occurring, whenever possible, and that feedback be provided to the call-taker as soon as possible thereafter.	Work to upgrade feedback forms and conduct all feedback within five (5) days of the calls	QA Team	Ongoing	Calls are being reviewed with the TEOs with a QA officer and supervisor with 5 days of review. We currently have a QA officer on days and one on nights to help alleviate long wait times

	Recommendation	Actions	Owner	Due Date	Notes
	Track corrective behavior outcomes including compliance to protocols and customer service. Ensure any training, action plans, or required coaching is discussed and documented, along with a set time for follow-up and conclusion	Develop a training tracking database with a jacket for each employee Develop a focused document each quarter to address needs and to address the recurring themes and issues . Quarterly training directly related to the identified issues.	OPSD/ 911 Operations/ QA Team (OPSD)	9/30/22	
	Evaluate and document the results of remediation training efforts	Create a database for training initiatives for individuals	OPSD/ 911 Operations	9/30/22	
	Use the quality assurance data to identify training and process gaps and trends throughout the center.	QA report to include trends for the agency and each individual shift. QA & Training meeting monthly to identify the trends and develop training	QA Team – Trayshelle & Latrice and OPSD	4/1/22	
	Use this data to create a quality improvement program that addresses additional training, policy changes, and support for consistent improvement in call-taker performance.	Using national standards, develop a program that addresses quality improvement	Deputy Director and QA Team	7/1/22	
Staffing	Schedule staffing of call-taking positions according to predictable spikes in call volume over a 24-hour period	Develop a policy for minimum staffing numbers for days and night shifts. Review quarterly upcoming events/holidays/expected increases using the ECaTS program	Operations Managers / Policy – Domingo and Ingrid	Policy by 6/1/22 and ongoing review	

	Recommendation	Actions	Owner	Due Date	Notes
	Review the daily break schedule of the MPD dispatchers with a view to maximize staff availability.	Ensure and enforce standardized police dispatch numbers that are needed daily	Operations Managers	Ongoing	
	Consider consolidating the back-up dispatcher role to support multiple (two or more) channels rather than a one-to-one assignment.	Review increasing channels on MPD dispatch to assist with the volume of traffic	911 Operations/ MPD Taskforce	Ongoing	
	Maintain staffing levels as outlined in Table 15 that includes consideration and staff count to address known and projected turnover as detailed	Review audit staffing numbers to ensure there are minimum staffing levels for the center	HR	Ongoing	
GIS	GIS team continues with their current business processes.		GIS	Ongoing	Ongoing
	Continue regular in-depth analysis of the GIS, ALI, and MSAG data to ensure synchronization.		GIS	Ongoing	Ongoing

Agency Comments

On February 23, 2023, we sent a draft copy of this report to the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) for review and written comment. OUC responded with comments on March 10, 2023. Agency comments are included here in their entirety, followed by ODCA's response.

Muriel Bowser
Mayor

Heather McGaffin
Acting Director

March 10, 2023

Ms. Kathy Patterson
D.C. Auditor
717 14th Street, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Patterson:

Thank you for providing a draft copy of the **Office of Unified Communications 9-1-1 Operations Division Audit and Process Improvement Recommendations Follow-up Report**, for updates made between May 2022 and September 2022.

Since the delivery of the second report in September 2022, we have made great strides to implement the recommendations; however, I simultaneously acknowledge there is still work to be done.

To date, 23 of the 30 (or 76% of the total) recommendations are complete. This was achieved through various methodologies and includes some of the following accomplishments:

- Revitalization of the OUC's Office of Professional Standards and Development (OPSD) (responsible for training and quality assurance and improvement) to include onboarding additional team members and aligning trainers, training materials, and the delivery of training modules with national standards and best practices;
- Hiring of additional supervisors to ensure each shift has a minimum of four supervisors; supervisors have independent focus areas of police dispatch, fire dispatch, and call taking;
- Creation of new training programs to address performance gaps;
- Procurement and impending implementation of a new national standards-based protocol system to streamline the processing of each call; and
- Integration of technology including a fourth monitor designated for mapping (LDT) and Genovation keypads for further ease of call transfers when appropriate.

We anticipate finalizing the remaining eight recommendations, on which partial progress has been made, by the end of the summer 2023. Of these eight, the one recommendation regarding the power shift will be fulfilled by increasing overall staffing numbers. While we agree with the recommendation's goal, we also have to acknowledge that since the initial audit report, our call volume has increased throughout the entire day, beyond the recommended hours of a power shift.

Therefore, we have made the decision to increase staffing on all of our shifts, which eliminates the need for a power shift.

I would like to note this audit has now spanned three directors, and therefore some of the responses to the original audit are no longer valid or applicable. For example, recommendation #3 under the technology-centric recommendations states, "assess and improve the integration of the scripted protocols into the call handling process." The agency agrees with this recommendation and has been working toward implementation of a standards-based solution with final implementation expected by the end of calendar year 2023.

Each month since late summer 2022, OUC has tracked and published our progress towards addressing the audit findings on our website. That progress is updated monthly and can be found here, and the March update is also available below. Our roadmap and progress were made available to the audit team from the beginning of their latest engagement in September 2022 through January 2023, when they last requested it.

As you can see in the March 2023 Roadmap Update, we have made much more progress on many original recommendations than the five-month-old review attests to. For example:

- The September Follow-Up Report indicates we made partial progress on Supervision Recommendation #1 which states: "OUC to develop and assign a minimum of three (3) supervisors around the clock on the operations floor with assigned discipline focus on call-taking, MPD dispatch, and FEMS dispatch," while our March Roadmap Update shows that we have completed this task by hiring five additional supervisors, which translates to a minimum of four supervisors on each of our four shifts. The supervisors are assigned to specific disciplines including call-talking, MPD dispatch, and fire dispatch.

- The September Follow-Up Report indicates we made partial progress on Supervision Recommendation #2 which states: "A fourth supervisor be added as an available resource intended to provide backup to the on-duty supervisors and for the performance of required administrative duties such as evaluations, QA reviews and follow-up, scheduling, and call outs," while our March Roadmap Update shows that we have completed this task with the hiring of five additional supervisors.

- The September Follow-Up Report indicates we made partial progress on Culture Issue Recommendation #2 which states: "Include refresher or in-service training in call etiquette, professional tone," while our March Roadmap Update shows this as complete, because we implemented call etiquette and customer service modules in all courses offered through OPSD.

- The September Follow-Up Report indicates we made minimal progress on Quality Assurance Recommendation #1 which states: "Improve documentation concerning the completion and follow-up of QA reviews with staff," while our March Roadmap Update shows that we now use the NICE forms, as was recommended. With the implementation of the new protocol system, will come a more robust QA form that aligns with national standards and best practices.

- The September Follow-Up Report indicates we made partial progress on Quality Assurance Recommendation #2 which states "Provide timely feedback to staff through OPSD. Industry best practice requires that QA reviews are completed within a few days of the call occurring, whenever possible, and that feedback be provided to the call-taker as soon as possible thereafter," while our March Roadmap Update shows this is in progress and that new team members were added to the QA team so now feedback is being offered in person within the five days as recommended by national standards. As mentioned above, we have also updated the forms and will have even more robust forms coming by the end of calendar year 2023 with the implementation of the PowerPhone Total Response protocol system.

- The September Follow-Up Report indicates that we made partial progress on Quality Assurance Recommendation #5 which states: "Use the quality assurance data to identify training and process gaps and trends throughout the center" and "Use this data to create a quality improvement program that addresses additional training, policy changes, and support for consistent improvement in call-taker performance," while our March Roadmap Update shows we have completed this task with the move of the Quality Assurance team from operations back to the Office of Professional Standards and Development in June 2022, so the Quality Assurance team could directly collaborate with the training team to complete the 911 training cycle as intended . A quality improvement program was developed. Additionally, a program was developed for those employees who are not responding to remedial training, which allows them to partake in a developed 40-hour one-on-one course with a member of the OPSD team. After that course, progress is monitored, and appropriate action is taken.

I want to thank you and your team for your time, and we look forward to continuing our progress and success in answering the call for the residents of and visitors to the nation's capital. Please let me know if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Heather McGaffin
Acting Director

cc: Lindsay Appiah, Acting Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
        Betsy Cavendish, Mayor's Office of Legal Counsel
        Lindsey Parker, Assistant City Administrator and Chief Technology Officer

March 2023 Roadmap Update:

Muriel Bowser
Mayor

Heather McGaffin
Acting Director

OUC Roadmap (March 2023 Update)

	#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
Technology- Centric	R1	Evaluate and reduce the number of event types and associated priorities	R1.1	Work to reduce the police call types with MPD taskforce	In progress with new protocol implementation	OUC and MPD conducted the working session to reduce the call types and realign call types for dispatch and TRU.
			R1.2	Work to reduce the fire call types with the FEMS liaison	In Progress	New call types are being loaded into the test bed for operational testing, training, and launch.
	R2	Streamline the call entry data formatting in the CAD system	R2.1	Streamline CAD data	In progress and will be complete with new protocol implementation	Migrating to new protocol system which will help to streamline the call entry formatting in CAD.
	R3	Assess and improve the integration of the scripted protocols into the call handling process	R3.1	Work to ensure the protocols are being used by all call takers as prescribed to ensure the right information is received in dispatch each time.	In progress and will be complete with new protocol implementation	Migrating to new protocol system which will help to streamline the call entry formatting in CAD.
	R4	Train staff on use of Location Determining Technologies (LDT) followed by alert supervision and QA to monitor use	R4.1	Train staff to use LDT	Complete	Call Takers demonstrate this monthly to OUC 911 Supervisors and Managers.
			R4.2	Ensure supervisors are super users and understand how it works	Complete	Completed training in February 2022.
			R4.3	Have QA team conduct spot checks to ensure its use	Ongoing	QA team and Transcription team review LDT screens against address input to ensure compliance on all calls that go through the QA process.
	R5	Configure the work screen landscape of	R5.1	Order a fourth monitor for each call taking position	Complete	Added monitors to all call taker positions.

	#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
		applications to bring the LDT solutions forefront in process and visibility. Do not allow other applications to pop up in front of the maps and other LDTs displayed on Screen				
Operations	R6	Reduce improvising and adlibbing by adhering to the scripted questions in the CBD call processing standard	R6.1	Back to Basics training was conducted by OPSD for all TEOs. Continue quarterly training in some capacity.	Ongoing	Migrating to new protocol system which will help to streamline the call processing of each call. QA Team is reviewing calls and providing feedback.
	R7	Ensure the complete acquisition and entering of all caller/reporting party information	R7.1	The QA team will need to focus on this as a metric for call taking	Complete	QA team reviews a percentage of calls each week and provides feedback within five (5) days. Added two new employees to the QA team.
	R8	Verify address information as defined in OUC policy. Adapt policy to adapt immediate confirmation of location if an exact match is found between caller reported location and LDT map pinpointing of location. This will save time in gathering information.	R8.1	Develop a policy to verify address using LDT similar to how it is verified using ALI	In progress	There is a policy in place for address verification that is not specific to LDT.
	R9	Require the use of LDTs to locate a caller that cannon immediately state a precise location of an incident, and in situations where the	R9.1	Develop a policy that directs TEOs to use the address being provided by the LDT information if an exact address cannot be verified by the caller.	Complete	QA team and Transcription team review LDT screens against address input to ensure compliance on all calls that go through the QA process.

	#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
		caller does not know the address of an incident.				
	R10	Require apartment numbers to be collected and entered in CAD in the appropriate field and format for dispatch to responders.	R10.1	Train all new and experienced TEOs to use the same format for entering Apartment #s. Conduct QA checks on addresses to ensure this is happening	Complete	Training completed and QA team reviews during quality assurance reviews.
	R11	Monitor and encourage a method(s) for selecting the correct Chief Complaint (call type).	R11.1	Continued training for all TEOs on the correct Chief Complaint code	Ongoing	Migrating to new protocol system which will allow for the correct chief complaint to be automatically chosen based on how the questions are answered by the caller.
	R12	Improve customer service through QA review and follow up and requiring training and in-service (ongoing education) that addresses tone, inflection, and professional presentation.	R12.1	Review and follow up with Q2 reviews from transcription monthly	Ongoing	New members have been added to the QA team and customer service courses have been added to the catalog of courses being offered.
Dispatch	R13	Addition of an automated dispatch function to the CAD system and the FEMS dispatch process to meet the 60 second notification to units	R13.1	Review the possibility of this with FEMS	In progress	Working through technical concerns

	#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
Supervision	R14	OUC develop and assign a minimum of three (3) supervisors around the clock on the operations floor with assigned discipline focus on call-taking, MPD dispatch, and FEMS dispatch	R14.1	Identify tenured employees who can act in an assist role on each shift when supervisors are out	**Complete**	Each shift now has a minimum of four supervisors.
	R15	A fourth supervisor be added as an available resource intended to provide backup to the on-duty supervisors and for the performance of required administrative duties such as evaluations, QA reviews and follow-up, scheduling and call outs.	R15.1	Hire a fourth supervisor for each shift.	**Complete**	Each shift now has a minimum of four supervisors.
Translation Services	R16	Determine if there are additional applications that would augment or replace this service	R16.1	Certified bilingual call takers and dispatchers	**Complete**	The translation service vendor provided a dedicated line to OUC with priority.
	R17	Investigate how translation processes are called upon to ensure maximum efficiencies and reduce call processing times through automation	R17.1	Ensure ease of ability to transfer calls	**Complete**	Genovation keypads were installed at each workstation for ease of transferring calls to the Language Line.

	#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
Culture Issues	R18	Implementing recommendations cited for improving supervision, training, and QA, and thereby improve culture	R18.1	Expand the training and development of supervisors specifically in leadership and soft skills	**Ongoing**	All supervisors will be required to take the CMCP Course. Additionally, all new supervisors will partake in a developed 40 hour course that incorporates City government requirements, managing 911 centers, and an 8-hour emotional intelligence course.
			R18.2	Include refresher or in-service training in call etiquette, professional tone	**Complete**	Call etiquette and customer service modules are now a part of all courses offered through OPSD.
			R18.3	Enforce OPSD policy for returning completed QA reviews and for follow-up to ensure the behavior is not repeated	**Complete**	New team members were added to QA team to ensure more feedback is returned within the five (5) days. The QA team was relocated back to the OPSD office for collaboration in closing the loop of the training cycle. Trends are recognized and shared with training.
Quality Assurance	R19	Improve documentation concerning the completion and follow-up of QA reviews with staff	R19.1	Work to upgrade NICE QA forms and process	**In progress and will be complete with new protocol implementation**	PowerPhone has a quality assurance module that has been procured and will be used to complete quality assurance reviews. In the meantime, the QA team is using the forms different and meet regularly to discuss how they're scoring and providing feedback.

#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
R20	Provide timely feedback to staff through OPSD. Industry best practice requires that QA reviews are completed within a few days of the call occurring, whenever possible, and that feedback be provided to the call-taker as soon as possible thereafter.	R20.1	Work to upgrade feedback forms and conduct all feedback within five (5) days of the calls	**In progress and will be complete with new protocol implementation**	New team members were added to QA team to ensure more feedback is returned within the five (5) days.
R21	Track corrective behavior outcomes including compliance to protocols and customer service. Ensure any training, action plans, or required coaching is discussed and documented, along with a set time for follow-up and conclusion	R21.1	Develop a training tracking database with a jacket for each employee	**Complete**	We have launched PowerDMS
R22	Evaluate and document the results of remediation training efforts	R22.1	Create a database for training initiatives for individuals	**Complete**	PowerDMS has been procured and is integrated.
R23	Use the quality assurance data to identify training and process gaps and trends throughout the center.	R23.1	QA report to include trends for the agency and each individual shift. QA & Training meeting monthly to identify the trends and develop training	**Complete**	The QA team was relocated back to the OPSD office for collaboration in closing the loop of the training cycle.

	#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
	R24	Use this data to create a quality improvement program that addresses additional training, policy changes, and support for consistent improvement in call-taker performance.	R24.1	Using national standards, develop a program that addresses quality improvement	Complete	Quality Improvement program has been developed and an individualized remedial training program occurs when necessary. Those employees who are not responding to remedial training partake in a developed 40-hour one-on-one course with a member of the OPSD team. After that course, progress is monitored and appropriate action is taken.
Staffing	R25	Schedule staffing of call-taking positions according to predictable spikes in call volume over a 24-hour period	R25.1	Develop a policy for minimum staffing numbers for days and night shifts. Review quarterly upcoming events/holidays/expected increases using the ECaTS program	Complete	ECaTS predictive staffing program is used to determined scheduling needs. Managers are responsible to get staffing numbers from the shift supervisors one week ahead of schedule to ensure accurate staffing.
	R26	Review the daily break schedule of the MPD dispatchers with a view to maximize staff availability.	R26.1	Ensure and enforce standardized police dispatch numbers that are needed daily	Complete	Break schedules are adequate and in accordance with CBA.
	R27	Consider consolidating the back-up dispatcher role to support multiple (two or more) channels rather than a one-to-one assignment.	R27.1	Review increasing channels on MPD dispatch to assist with the volume of traffic	Ongoing	Discussions on feasibility are occurring with MPD.

	#	Recommendation	#	Actions	Progress	Current Status
GIS	R28	Maintain staffing levels as outlined in Table 15 that includes consideration and staff count to address known and projected turnover as detailed	R28.1	Review audit staffing numbers to ensure there are minimum staffing levels for the center	Ongoing	Recruitment is ongoing with entry level training courses starting every few months. 8 new TEOs started on 2/27/2023
	R29	GIS team continues with their current business processes.	R29.1	Continue with practice	Complete	Continuing with practice
	R30	Continue regular in-depth analysis of the GIS, ALI, and MSAG data to ensure synchronization.	R30.1	Continue with practice	Complete	Continuing with practice

ODCA Response to Agency Comments

ODCA appreciates the response to the draft report on the status of recommendations provided by the OUC and would like to reiterate our appreciation to the OUC for their cooperation and timely response to all inquiries and requests throughout the audit and follow-up process.

ODCA is encouraged that the acting director has stated publicly she agrees with the vast majority of the audit's recommendations and that she intends to implement them. However, ODCA remains concerned that the agency response to this update along with an updated roadmap published on the OUC website on the audit recommendations declares several recommendations completed when our expert audit team has been either unable to document progress, or determined it is simply too soon to evaluate whether progress has been made. While this report notes partial progress on several recommendations in order for a recommendation to be considered complete, more data and evidence is needed.

In response to specific recommendations discussed in OUC's response to ODCA:

Under Supervision, Recommendations 1 and 2 state that OUC should develop and assign a minimum of three supervisors around the clock on the operations floor and also add a fourth supervisor as an available resource. Our team found that the new supervisor positions were "in the process of being filled" with the expectation "that the candidates will be fully trained and in place" during this fiscal year.

Under Culture, the three recommendations referenced speak to expanding training and development, including refresher or in-service training in call etiquette, and also to enforcing Office of Professional Standards and Development policy for returning completed QA reviews and for follow-up to ensure the behavior is not repeated. While the OUC reported these recommendations are either ongoing or complete, our team found partial progress and also note that the third recommendation applies to an ongoing process intended to ensure that remedial efforts are met with success.

Under Quality Assurance, the fifth recommendation was to "use the quality assurance data to identify training and process gaps and trends throughout the center" and "use this data to create a quality improvement program that addresses additional training, policy changes, and support for consistent improvement in call-taker performance." The OUC reports this has been completed, while our team reported partial progress. The March update to the OUC roadmap indicates "A quality improvement program has been developed and an individualized remedial training program occurs when necessary." While this is encouraging, review and analysis of these quality improvement steps is important to measure the completion of this recommendation.

ODCA is encouraged to see the OUC publish updates to the roadmap on their website and is hopeful the OUC will continue to provide regular updates to the roadmap and provide evidence of the recommendations being implemented.

About ODCA

The mission of the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) is to support the Council of the District of Columbia by making sound recommendations that improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the District government.

To fulfill our mission, we conduct performance audits, non-audit reviews, and revenue certifications. The residents of the District of Columbia are one of our primary customers and we strive to keep the residents of the District of Columbia informed on how their government is operating and how their tax money is being spent.

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