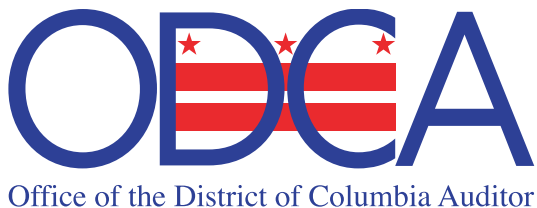

911 Reform Status Report #1: Minimal Progress

September 9, 2022

A report by Federal Engineering, Inc., for the Office of the D.C. Auditor



Audit Team
Federal Engineering, Inc.



Kathleen Patterson, District of Columbia Auditor
www.dcauditor.org

September 9, 2022

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

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

Dear Mayor Bowser and Chairman Mendelson:

What follows is an 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 #1: Minimal Progress**, describes the status of the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) progress in meeting the 31 recommendations contained in the earlier audit. As the title indicates, very little progress has been made. It is our hope that the report provides a baseline against which future progress can be measured.

A second part of the follow-up audit by Federal Engineering will be published later this year. This will include data analysis for specific recommendations and will include a sampling of 911 historical data, 911 recordings, computer-assisted-aided dispatch (CAD) history and voice recorder data for radio dispatches, along with an evaluation of in-progress plans and future plans to implement the recommendations outlined in the initial report. It will also evaluate what transpired on July 3, 2022, and August 9, 2022, when young District residents Sevyn Schatzman-Chase and Aaron Boyd, Jr., respectively, lost their lives. As was the case in the October 2021, report, the FE team will review the agency's after-action reporting and any changes made to address shortcomings in each incident.

While there have been changes to the OUC management team since our initial report was issued in 2021, including a new Chief of 911 Operations, we note that while one recommendation has been completed, there is minimal progress on 24 or 77% of recommendations and two recommendations have no observed progress. Issues highlighted in our initial report, such as inadequate supervision of the call-taking and dispatch operations and insufficient management follow-up on after-action reviews, appear to remain.

We appreciate the cooperation of the OUC and everyone who provided information and shared their experiences. We provided the OUC an opportunity to comment on this report in draft form and include the September 2, 2022, response. We are grateful for the expertise on call center operations and functions demonstrated by the Federal Engineering team and hope this update on recommendations will assist District policymakers in continuing to improve the vital functions and operations of our 911 operations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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***

Prepared by:



Federal Engineering, Inc.
10560 Arrowhead Dr., Suite 100
Fairfax, VA 22030
703-359-8200

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Review and Status of Recommendations	5
1.1 <i>Technology-Centric</i>	5
1.2 <i>Operational</i>	6
1.2.1 <i>Call-Taking Processes</i>	6
1.2.2 <i>Dispatch</i>	8
1.2.3 <i>Supervision</i>	8
1.2.4 <i>Translation Services</i>	9
1.2.5 <i>Cultural Issues</i>	10
1.2.6 <i>Quality Assurance</i>	10
1.2.7 <i>Staffing</i>	12
1.2.8 <i>GIS</i>	13
2. Summary	14
3. APPENDIX A – OUC Audit Roadmap	30



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 update and 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.

Approach

ODCA tasked **FE** to perform a multistage follow-up to the original audit report. The first stage as summarized in this report, comprised a six-month effort reviewing the status, progress, and future plans for each Audit Report recommendation. Assessing the current status of each recommendation provided a baseline from which future audit reports and analysis can be measured.

In preparing this report, **FE** personnel visited the OUC on May 3-5, 2022, and met with a cross-section of OUC personnel. OUC personnel included the Acting Director, Deputy Director, Chief of 9-1-1 Operations, Director of IT, Training Team, Floor Supervisors, and Union Representatives. The visit also encompassed time spent observing call-taking and dispatching in the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

The second stage of this effort will follow the same approach conducted during this first stage. In addition, **FE** will conduct data analysis with industry-based metrics for specific recommendations and observations noted in the original Audit Report. Specific areas of analysis will focus on call processing times, call review samplings, use of Location Determining Technologies (LDT), and use of scripted protocols.



Recommendations Progress Report

FE assessed the progress made on each of the 31 recommendations submitted to the ODCA for action as determined by OUC management. Each recommendation is summarized subsequently in this report, by a progress/status statement describing expectations and status of progress made as of May 5, 2022.



1. Review and Status of Recommendations

1.1 Technology-Centric

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

Progress/Status: The event types and associated priorities are currently under review by the Operations Chief in cooperation with both Metro-Police Department (MPD) and Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS) to reduce and assign the correct priority to the event call types.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

2. **Streamline the call entry data 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). The reduction of event types (i.e., Chief Complaints) will reduce the size of the event picklist on the Criteria-Based Dispatch (CBD) system and is expected to allow call-takers to more effectively code calls.

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: It was reported by the Deputy Director that the Quality Assurance team is in the process of ensuring that call-takers follow all the scripted protocols in the CBD system, and that callers have been interrogated using the CBD protocol system. In the CBD system, the option to freelance may result in the omission of certain key questions which further results in incomplete or inaccurate event information. The compliance to the scripted protocols is being measured by the Quality Assurance team through call review.

There has been minimal 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: Efforts are being made through IT, Office of Professional Standards and Development (OPSD), QA and Operations to ensure call-takers are making use of LTD. A new location-centric technology known as RapidSOS has been deployed and activated in the PSAP (see Item 5 below). The first round of training on this technology was completed in February 2022; however, the management team expects that refresher training will be an ongoing necessity.

Progress on this recommendation noted, but additional follow-up and monitoring necessary to ensure effectiveness.

- 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: An additional monitor specifically intended to display the RapidSOS technology has been added to each call-taking console.

This recommendation has been completed.

1.2 Operational

1.2.1 Call-Taking Processes

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

Progress/Status: It was reported by the Deputy Director that the Quality Assurance team is in the process of ensuring that call-takers follow all the scripted protocols in the CBD system, and that callers have been interrogated using the CBD protocol system. The compliance to the scripted protocols will be measured by the Quality Assurance team through call reviews.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

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

Progress/Status: The responsibility for this recommendation has been assigned by the Deputy Director to the QA/QI Team. The QA/QI Team is



currently developing the process and metrics to adequately measure the completeness and accuracy of all caller/reporting party information.

There has been minimal 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) is under review for adaptation and use of LDT.

There has been minimal 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 existing *Address and Telephone Number Verification* SOP (issued April 2021) is under review for adaptation and use of LDT.

There has been minimal 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: OPSD has been assigned by the Deputy Director to oversee refresher training for new and experienced call-takers to use the same format for entering apartment numbers. Training was completed May 1, 2022.

This recommendation has been partially completed. Follow-up QA checks should be conducted by OPSD to ensure full compliance.

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

Progress/Status: OPSD has been assigned by the Deputy Director to oversee refresher training for new and experienced call-takers in the correct selection of the Chief Complaint. Initial training has been completed on effectively determining and selecting the correct Chief Complaint based on the current list of call types.



This recommendation has been partially completed. Ongoing monitoring will be necessary as additional effort to reduce the number of event types in the CBD program is completed.

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: This recommendation was assigned to the QA/QI team by the Deputy Director for the review of random calls. The QA/QI team will be reviewing call transcripts on a monthly basis. Results of these reviews will be provided to Training and Operations for further action and remediation as required.

There has been minimal 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 NFPA standard.

Progress/Status: It was reported by the Deputy Director that discussions on this topic are currently underway between the OUC and FEMS.

There has been 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 a team of three supervisors has been assigned for each shift. However, emphasis on the assigned discipline focus on call-taking, MPD dispatch, and FEMS dispatch is yet to be fully developed. Observance of additional duties such as paperwork, administrative phone answering, scheduling, and other associated tasks are preventing the supervisors from performing their most critical function – on the floor, in-person supervision of personnel.



There has been minimal 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: The Director informed the *FE* team that an effort is in progress with the Mayor's Office seeking approval to add five additional supervisory FTE positions. This would fulfill a supervisory model that has four supervisors on the floor for each shift. This issue has been assigned by the Deputy Director to the 9-1-1 Chief for further action once the Mayor's Office grants approval to add the additional supervisory positions.

There has been minimal 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: There is a recognized need to hire additional certified bilingual call-takers. This matter was assigned by the Deputy Director to the Public Information Officer for further action. The due date for the completion of this effort is September 30, 2022.

There was no observed progress on this recommendation.

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

Progress/Status: This issue has been ongoing and concerns with the use of Language Line service are being addressed by the Chief Information Officer with the creation of a dedicated 10-digit number solely for translation purposes. Genovation keypads have been installed to improve the ability of call transfers to the Language Line service.

Progress on this recommendation is noted, but additional follow-up and monitoring are necessary to ensure effectiveness.



1.2.5 Cultural Issues

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

Progress/Status: The need for expanded supervisory and personnel management-related training (i.e., leadership, soft skills, improved customer service) is being directed by the Deputy Director.

There was no observed 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. Remedial training has been initiated based on call reviews conducted by the QA/QI team.

There has been minimal 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 acknowledged that completed QA/QI reports concerning the correction of inappropriate call-taker and dispatcher behaviors are being sent to supervisors for further follow-up with their staff. Floor supervisors are expected to provide this follow-up within a two-day window to maximize the effectiveness of the remediation effort.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

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 initiated a review of the NICE QA forms and processes to better document the completion and follow-up of QA reviews.

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 Team is in the process of updating the feedback forms used for call evaluations, as well as an ongoing effort to provide feedback to employees within five days of the call. 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.

There has been minimal 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 support improved call-taker performance and quality improvement center wide.**

Progress/Status: A training repository database is being created by the Information Technology unit intended to track QA/QI outcomes. When completed, a quarterly report will be generated that addresses any recurring themes or issues that require attention. This was assigned by the Deputy Director to OPSD/9-1-1 for further action along with a due date of September 30, 2022.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

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

Progress/Status: A training repository database is being created by the Information Technology unit intended to track QA/QI remediation outcomes. This was assigned by the Deputy Director to OPSD/9-1-1 for further action along with a due date of September 30, 2022.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

- 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: A training repository database is being created by the Information Technology unit intended to track QA/QI remediation outcomes to identify process gaps and trends based on a review of national standards in an effort to enhance the effectiveness of the QA/QI program. This was assigned by the Deputy Director to OPSD/9-1-1 for further action along with a due date of September 30, 2022.

There has been minimal 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: There is an effort in progress to analyze current call volumes using the ECaTS¹ records management system. The data extracted from ECaTS is being used to develop a staffing plan for both the day and night shifts. This was assigned by the Deputy Director to the Chief of 9-1-1 Operations for the formulation of a staffing policy.

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 Management Team is collaborating with the Chief of 9-1-1 Operations to ensure that the break schedule is not interfering with the mandatory staffing levels.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

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

Progress/Status: Currently, there is a back-up dispatcher assigned to each of the active dispatcher positions. The Management Team is working with 9-1-1 Operations and the MPD Task Force to review the possibility of increasing the number of MPD radio channels and dispatch positions to accommodate increases in the volume of radio traffic and using the back-up

¹ [ECaTS: Information into Insights \(ecats911.com\)](http://ecats911.com) owned by Intrado©



dispatchers to be dedicated to the monitoring and operation of the additional MPD radio channels.

There has been 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 Acting Director, Deputy Director, and Chief of 9-1-1 Operations are conducting a review of the staffing numbers as recommended by *FE*.

There has been minimal progress on this recommendation.

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.

The OUC is complying with this recommendation.

- 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.

The OUC is complying with this recommendation.



2. Summary

Recent changes to the OUC management team, including the return of the former Director to serve as Acting Director as well as the hiring of a new Chief of 9-1-1 Operations, have been viewed as positive changes by the front-line staff.

As stated in the initial Audit report, the issues that continue to challenge OUC call-taking and dispatch operations are rooted in established processes and habits that will need to be changed to improve service to citizens and responders serviced by the Agency.

While we see indications of effort and movement within some areas, there has been minimal overall progress towards this set of recommendations as summarized below.



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

Recommendations Summary Status				
Recommendation		OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	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 recommendation
			Work to reduce the fire call types with the FEMS liaison	Minimal progress on recommendation
2	Streamline the call entry data formatting in the CAD system.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.		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 call-takers to do their jobs rapidly and effectively without excess prescriptive language.	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.	Minimal 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	Initial training on use of LDT completed February 2022
			Ensure supervisors are super users and understand how it works	

² 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 ²	Status
		Have QA team conduct spot checks to ensure its use	Supervisory and QA follow-up with staff necessary to ensure compliance Progress on this recommendation noted, but additional follow-up and monitoring necessary to ensure effectiveness
5	<p>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.</p>	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>The layout of windows on call-taker screens is managed by each user's preferences. We will engage personnel on the benefits of prioritizing the presence of maps on screen.</p>	<p>Order a fourth monitor for each call-taking position</p> <p>Additional monitors have been added to each call-taking console</p> <p>Recommendation has been completed</p>



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

Recommendations Summary Status					
Recommendation		OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status	
Operational					
1	Reduce improvising and adlibbing by adhering to the scripted questions in the CBD call processing standard.	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Back to Basics training was conducted by OPSD for all call-takers.</p> <p>Continue quarterly training in some capacity</p>	Minimal progress on recommendation	
2	Ensure the complete acquisition and entering of all caller/reporting party information.	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>It is existing OUC policy.</p>	The QA team will need to focus on this as a metric for call-taking	Minimal 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.	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>It is existing OUC policy and deviations from the policy are thoroughly investigated and addressed accordingly.</p>	Develop a policy to verify address using LDT similar to how it is verified using ALI	<p>Existing policy under review for adaptation and use of LDT</p> <p>Minimal progress on recommendation</p>	



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

Recommendations Summary Status				
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	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 call-takers to use the address being provided by the LDT information if an exact address cannot be verified by the caller.	Existing policy under review for adaptation and use of LDT Minimal 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 call-takers to use the same format for entering Apartment #s. Conduct QA checks on addresses to ensure this is happening.	Training completed on May 1, 2022. Recommendation is partially completed. Follow-up QA checks should be conducted by OPSD to ensure full compliance.



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

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status
6	Monitor and encourage a method(s) for selecting the correct Chief Complaint (call type).	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Initial training on correct selection of Chief Complaint types completed. This recommendation is partially completed. Ongoing monitoring will be necessary as additional efforts to reduce the number of event types in the CBD program is completed.
		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.	
		Create a cheat sheet that helps with odd calls or common erred calls and where to place them in the Chief Complaint options	



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

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status
7	<p>Improve customer service through QA review and follow up and requiring training and in-service (ongoing education) that addresses tone, inflection, and professional presentation.</p>	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>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 call-takers for overload calls.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Review and follow up with Q2 reviews from transcription monthly</p> <p>The QA/QI team in process of reviewing call transcripts. Results of these reviews will be provided to Training and Operations for further action and remediation as required.</p> <p>Minimal progress on recommendation</p>



Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status
Dispatch			
1	<p>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 NFPA standard.</p>	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation, to the extent that the recommendation calls for review of fire dispatch protocols.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Review the possibility of this with FEMS</p> <p>Ongoing discussions between OUC and FEMS underway.</p> <p>Minimal progress on recommendation</p>



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

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status
Supervision			
1	<p>OUC 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.</p>	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>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</p> <p>Each shift currently has three supervisors assigned as recommended. On floor supervision is still being impacted by ancillary duties assigned to supervisors.</p> <p>Minimal progress on recommendation</p>



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

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status
2	<p>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.</p>	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Hire a fourth supervisor for each shift.</p> <p>Director working through Mayor’s Office to add additional supervisory FTE positions.</p> <p>Minimal progress on recommendation</p>



Recommendations Summary Status					
Recommendation		OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status	
Translation					
1	Determine if there are additional applications that would augment or replace this service.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Certified bilingual call-takers and dispatchers	Further action being undertaken by Public Information Officer concerning need to recruit and hire additional certified bilingual call-takers. No observed progress on recommendation	
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	Genovation keypads installed to improve ability of call transfers to the Language Line service. Progress on this recommendation noted, but additional follow-up and monitoring necessary to ensure effectiveness.	



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

Recommendations Summary Status					
Recommendation		OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status	
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	No observed progress on recommendation	
2	Include refresher or in-service training in call etiquette, professional tone.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.		Remedial training in progress. Ongoing effort in line with QA/QI call review process Minimal progress on recommendation	
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.		Operations set a two-day window in which QA review follow-up must be completed between supervisors and personnel under review. Minimal progress on recommendation	



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

Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status
Quality Assurance			
1	<p>Improve documentation concerning the completion and follow-up of QA reviews with staff.</p>	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Work to upgrade NICE QA forms and process</p> <p>Minimal progress on recommendation</p>
2	<p>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.</p>	<p>The Agency agrees with this recommendation.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Work to upgrade feedback forms and conduct all feedback within five days of the call under review</p> <p>Minimal progress on recommendation</p>



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

Recommendations Summary Status				
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	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.	Minimal progress on recommendation
4	Evaluate and document the results of remediation training efforts.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	Create a database for training initiatives for individuals	Minimal progress on recommendation
5	Use the quality assurance data to identify training and process gaps and trends throughout the center.	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	Minimal progress on recommendation
	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	Minimal progress on recommendation



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

Recommendations Summary Status				
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	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	Operations analyzing call volume data captured via ECATS to establish and further refine staffing plans and the formulation of a staffing policy. Minimal progress on recommendation
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	Minimal progress on recommendation
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	Operations and MPD Task Force discussing potential changes to the current model. Minimal progress on recommendation



Recommendations Summary Status			
Recommendation	OUC Response to Original Audit Recommendations	OUC Action Item ²	Status
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	Operations analyzing call volume data captured via ECaTS to establish and further refine staffing plans and the formulation of a staffing policy. Minimal progress on recommendation
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.	Existing business process and practices are being maintained. The OUC is complying with this recommendation
2	Continue regular in-depth analysis of the GIS, ALI, and MSAG data to ensure synchronization.	The Agency agrees with this recommendation.	



3. 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

OUC Roadmap

	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	

OUC Roadmap

	Recommendation		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	

OUC Roadmap

	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

OUC Roadmap

	Recommendation	Actions	Owner	Due Date	Notes
Staffing	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	

OUC Roadmap

	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 August 18, 2022, we sent a draft copy of this report to the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) for review and comment. OUC responded with comments on September 2, 2022. Agency comments are included here in their entirety.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of Unified Communications

Muriel Bowser
Mayor



Karima Holmes
Acting Director

September 2, 2022

Kathleen Patterson
District of Columbia Auditor
717 14th Street, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Patterson,

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Office of the DC Auditor's Office of Unified Communications 9-1-1 Operations Division Audit and Process Improvement Recommendations Follow-up Report which includes findings from an assessment of progress made by the agency between April 2021-May 5, 2022.

Immediately upon my appointment as Acting Director on March 7, 2022, I reviewed the audit and began forward progress on a roadmap for improvement. In the time since then, I also rounded out my executive leadership team with subject matter experts and we began to tackle the task list I developed to address the findings and recommendations in the report. Our roadmap was provided to the audit team during their May 2022 visit.

I am pleased to say that we have made continued strides since my return, which was shortly before the follow up assessment concluded, and I look forward to meeting with the audit team later this month to share my team's progress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karima Holmes".

Karima Holmes
Acting Director

cc: Chris Geldart, DMPSJ
Betsy Cavendish, EOM
Heather McGaffin, OUC



ODCA Response to Agency Comments

ODCA appreciates the response from OUC on this follow up report. We look forward to working together on completing the second part of the follow-up audit later this year.

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.

Office of the District of Columbia Auditor
717 14th Street N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005

Call us: 202-727-3600

Email us: odca.mail@dc.gov

Tweet us: https://twitter.com/ODCA_DC

Visit us: www.dcauditor.org



Information presented here is the intellectual property of the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor and is copyright protected. We invite the sharing of this report, but ask that you credit ODCA with authorship when any information, findings, or recommendations are used. Thank you.

