

Memorandum



Date: November 20, 2006

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: Customer Request Management System Audit – Follow-Up Audit Results

We performed follow-up work on the Customer Request Management System Audit issued in August 2004. The purpose was to determine whether management had implemented the five recommendations in the original audit report. The follow-up audit showed that management implemented four recommendations; however, management did not implement the recommendation to stop Dallas Water Utilities from being charged for indirect costs associated with processing customer service requests because management did not agree with the recommendation.

The following summarizes the original recommendation, management's response and our follow-up work.

1. The main objective of consolidating all service request calls into one system was not achieved.

We recommended the City Manager require that:

- A. All future contracts for goods and/or services have clear and concise measures of performance stated so that the risk of payment for non-performance is shifted to the vendor. These measures need to accurately reflect business needs. **(Implemented)**

Since we could not examine all contracts, we selected the Request for Competitive Sealed Proposal #BFZ0608 (RFCSP) because it solicits bids to provide an enterprise-wide billing system, "Pay 1", to replace the current Customer Information Accounting and Billing System (CIABS). The proposal describes specific performance standards and metrics, or ways to quantify the performance, for each standard, and provides for credits to the City for each occurrence of non-performance by the vendor.

- B. Communication and Information Services (CIS) review the possibility of developing a useful interface with CIABS. If this development cannot be reasonably accomplished, then the future replacement system for CIABS should address integration with CRMS. **(Implemented)**

CIS did look into technology that would link CIABS with CRMS. Due to a decision to proceed with a replacement of CIABS, it was decided that spending several hundred thousand dollars for an interim solution was not in the best financial interest of the City. The new system, "Pay 1", will have a direct interface with the Customer Request Management System (CRMS). "Pay 1" was presented to the City Council for approval on October 25, 2006.

2. Processing Customer Service Requests has cost Dallas Water Utilities an additional \$359,539 in the last two years.

We recommended that the City Manager either:

- A. Remove the indirect cost rate on Dallas Fire Rescue charges to Dallas Water Utilities, or return the cost centers to Dallas Water Utilities until an effective interface between CRMS and CIABS is provided. **(Not Implemented)**

Dallas Fire and Rescue (DFR) continues to bill Dallas Water Utilities (DWU) for indirect costs as directed by the Office of Financial Services, and the cost centers have not been returned to DWU. The original goal for the CRMS was to have one consolidated call center. Part of the consolidation included transferring DWU Customer Service into the 311 / 911 call center. The indirect cost assessed to DWU did not enable any increase in their call-handling ability. The expected benefit for DWU was dependent on the successful interface between CIABS and CRMS software, which did not happen; however, DWU has been avoiding rental expense and telephone equipment and switches expense due to the physical consolidation. "Pay 1," the enterprise billing system was presented to the City Council on October 25, 2006 for approval and will have the CRMS interface that CIABS lacked. The effect will be that the DWU Customer Service Unit in the call center will no longer have to use two different software systems to answer billing or service questions from citizens.

3. Staff reductions have limited the ability of City Departments to respond to customer service requests.

We recommended the City Manager require that:

- A. Either the service level agreements be revised to provide effective communication to the citizens to effect closure of service requests or provide adequate staff to meet the service level agreements. **(Implemented)**

Department configuration managers were instructed to review with their Directors the service level agreements (SLAs) statements on all service requests (SRs) to determine if response timeframes were realistic for resolving, completing, and closing specific SRs. Modification of any SLAs required written approval of an Assistant City Manager. All configuration changes were completed in December 2004.

Additional configuration script changes were made in an effort to effectively communicate and educate citizens about SR response timeframes and to establish realistic expectations.

- SLA response days were added to service requests and appear at the top of each SR making it immediately available as information for the call center to provide to citizens. The final SLA statements remain at the end (bottom) of the SR thus reinforcing efforts to communicate response time information to citizens.*
- Service request E-mail confirmations were added to the most frequently used SRs and includes SLA information.*
- Service request E-mail confirmations were added to all SRs on the Web. The SLA response time is included in this e-mail.*
- Estimated response times (ERTs) were added to the most frequently used service requests to communicate when the initial action would occur.*
- A new procedure has been configured on CRMS that has made it easier for Departments to respond to citizens who request to be contacted. This automated procedure captures the citizen's preferred method of contact (e-mail, letter, or telephone) and when they want to be contacted.*

B. The Departments and the 311 Center maintain up-to-date scripts.
(Implemented)

Several procedures have been implemented to ensure that service request scripts and other information are updated on CRMS:

- *A new service request has been developed for CRMS department configuration managers to request approval from the CRMS team to make needed configuration changes. This SR is also used by the call center to notify the CRMS team of service request script/configuration problems. The CRMS team ensures that the call center is trained and*

informed of service request script/configuration changes.

- *The CRMS team has created a “help desk” to assure that script changes are assigned to the appropriate department configuration manager and are completed accurately and timely.*
- *The CRMS team has partnered with CIS to standardize service request configurations to ensure accurate data is reported. Bi-weekly meetings are held and a 311 system (CRMS) Standard Operating Procedure is being developed.*
- *A 311 Program Administrative Directory has been drafted.*

We appreciate management’s cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me at 214-670-3223 or you may contact Audit Manager Gary Lewis at 214-670-5347.

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City Auditor

C: Mary K. Suhm, City Manager
Fire Chief Eddie Burns, Sr.