



CITY OF ATLANTA

City Auditor's Office
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Performance Audit:

Work Order Management

What We Found

City departments reported resolving most of their service requests within performance targets between October 2014 and March 2015, but more than 20% of service requests appear to have been closed without actual resolution. The Department of Public Works' internal assessment identified broken and inconsistent business processes, incorrect information from ATL311, and potential data manipulation as factors contributing to early closure of service requests. Our telephone survey confirmed residents' perceptions that service requests had been closed without resolution of the problem; early closure wasn't limited to public works.

Staff in public works and watershed management perceives that problems with ATL311 affect their ability to complete service requests promptly. The incompatible GIS records between the ATL311 and work order management systems affected over one-quarter of sampled requests. Duplicate service requests affected fewer records, but were a bigger problem in some business units than others. ATL311 customer service representatives entering incorrect problem types did not appear to be significant.

We found a lack of uniform processes across business units to standardize work order management despite consultants recommending doing so. Differences in how business units use the work order management system affect performance reporting, monitoring, and controls. Departments' dependence on manual processes and delayed data entry also weakens monitoring and tracking.

The majority of department service requests in our scope period were generated outside of ATL311, which could limit ATL311 leveraging cooperation in process standardization. Implementing recommendations to standardize and control processes across business units requires top-down direction. Strong change management can encourage departmental adoption of new technologies and processes.

Why We Did This Audit

We assessed potential barriers to the ability of the ATL311 system and departments to effectively address citizen-reported problems. The audit focuses on various stages of the service request and work order processes, including issue identification at intake and departmental feedback, integration of systems, controls to ensure accuracy in tracking and reporting, and departmental adoption of proposed process improvements.

What We Recommended

To standardize and control processes across business units, the chief operating officer should:

- Lead efforts for the Department of Watershed Management, Department of Public Works, and other departments that respond to service requests to design, document, and implement a standardized work order management process as previously recommended by the city's consultant, including developing resolution, activity, and department codes that facilitate reporting and tracking, and implementing controls to ensure that dates are valid and sequential
- Assist departments that respond to service requests in analyzing gaps between existing processes and the standardized process and to identify resources necessary to bridge the gaps
- Work with departments to develop and document consistent performance reporting
- Review departmental standard operating procedures

To improve the likelihood that departmental users accept new technologies and processes, the chief operating officer should:

- Establish a change management team including Atlanta Information Management (AIM) and representatives from departments to improve configuration and monitor process for change adoption
- Work with AIM and departmental stakeholders to identify a mobile application that meets user needs, obtain proper hardware, and train staff to use the mobile technology
- Work with AIM and departments to evaluate the viability of loading assets and asset locations into Siebel from Hansen

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