Audit of the Unified Call Center

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July 2024

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July 10, 2024

Honorable, Mayor Cavalier Johnson
The Members of the Common Council
City of Milwaukee

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

The attached report summarizes the results of the Audit of the Unified Call Center (UCC). The scope of the audit was to review service requests submitted to the UCC from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023.

The audit objectives were to evaluate the management processes for requests from all points of contact and determine if requests were assigned within a timely manner (in accordance with UCC's policies and procedures).

The controls surrounding UCC service request routing, employee training, management reporting, and staff monitoring are adequately designed and operating effectively. The audit determined that the UCC uses their call handling metrics to properly monitor monthly and annual call handling performance, employee training and oversight, and to ensure UCC shifts are properly staffed to meet call handling goals. Internal Audit found that the UCC department call handling goals are met and service requests are properly routed to the appropriate City department.

Appreciation is expressed for the cooperation extended to the auditors by the personnel of the Unified Call Center.

Sincerely,

Adriana Molina
Audit Manager

AMM:alg/bb

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Audit Report Highlights

Audit of the Unified Call Center

Overview

The controls surrounding the Unified Call Center (UCC) service request routing, call handling targets, employee training, management reporting, and staff monitoring are adequately designed and operating effectively. Internal audit found that the UCC department call handling goals are met and service requests are properly routed to the appropriate City department.

Audit Highlights

Service Request Routing: Service requests received by the UCC from all forms of contact are routed to the correct department for processing.

Monitoring with performance data: The UCC manager effectively uses call handling metrics to monitor UCC performance on both department and individualized level. The data is used to communicate with the Chief Information Officer and the Policy and Administration Manager. Furthermore, shifts are adequately staffed based on data trends.

Policies and procedures: Policies and procedures are extensive and thoroughly written for all UCC processes and positions. The UCC manager continuously updates procedures as needed.

Staff training: The training procedures are adequately designed to monitor new staff progress and to provide coaching for UCC employees beyond the initial point of hire.

<h1 style="text-align: center">I. Audit Scope, Objectives, and Methodology</h1>

Scope

The scope included service requests submitted to the UCC from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023.

Objectives

The objectives of the audit were as follows:

- Evaluate the management processes for requests from all points of contact.
- Determine if requests are assigned within a timely manner (in accordance with UCC's policies and procedures).

Methodology

Audit methodology included developing an understanding of the processes and controls over UCC requests from all points of contact, employee access controls, performance objectives, and management reporting. The audit program was developed using criteria outlined by the UCC's policies and procedures.

The audit procedures developed to evaluate the processes and controls to meet the audit objectives included process walkthroughs, inspection of relevant control documentation, and the testing of the following controls:

- Internal Audit met with the UCC Manager to gain an understanding of UCC processes and verified through inspection of documentation for the following processes: monthly reporting to upper management, shift staffing calculations, adequate access controls for all UCC staff, and staff training and monitoring.
- Internal Audit tested a sample of 25 30-minute call handling metrics to verify call handling targets are met and obtained justification for target shortfalls.
- Internal Audit tested a sample of 25 requests sent to the UCC and verified that the requests were routed to the correct department for processing.

Compliance Statement

The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We

believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

II. Organization and Fiscal Impact

The UCC was established in 2012 by the Mayor and Common Council and is a part of the Information Technology and Management Division (ITMD). ITMD's 2023 adopted budget was $11.5M.[1] The UCC's mission is to provide the public with access to City information and non-emergency services through a single, multi-channel point of contact that includes the Call Center, online service request system (known as Click4Action), e-mail, and the MKEmobile application. The UCC helps agencies improve service delivery by allowing them to focus on their core missions and manage field-level work more efficiently.[2] The UCC receives approximately 800-1,000 phone calls and 300 online requests a day. Shown below is a visual for all the channels an individual is able to contact the UCC.

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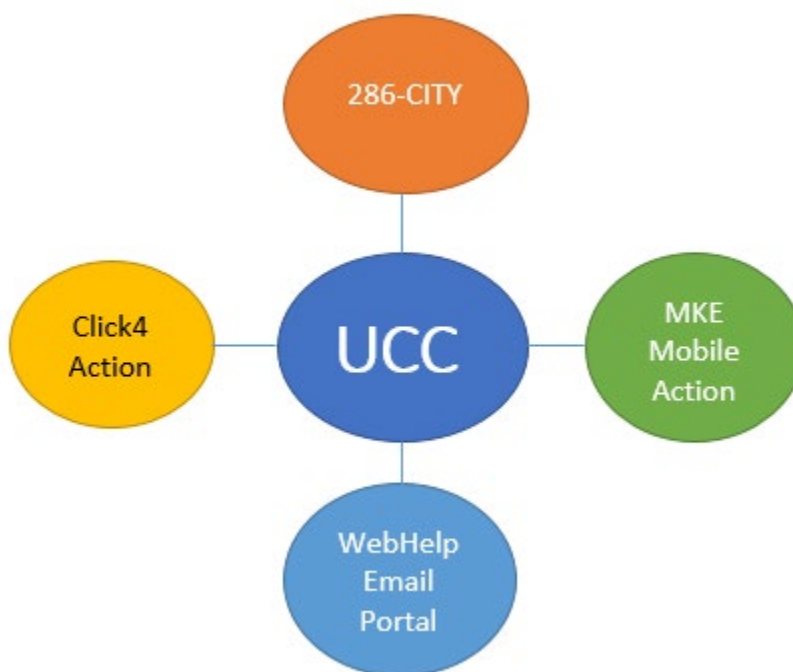
[1] City of Milwaukee. (n.d.). 2023 Adopted Budget Book. Retrieved June 28, 2024, from https://city.milwaukee.gov/doa/budget/Milwaukee-Budgets
[2] City of Milwaukee, "About Us," accessed June 25, 2024, https://city.milwaukee.gov/ucc/About-Us.

III. Audit Conclusions

The controls surrounding UCC service request routing, employee training, management reporting, and staff monitoring are adequately designed and operating effectively. The audit determined that the UCC uses their call handling metrics to properly monitor monthly and annual call handling performance, employee training and oversight, and to ensure UCC shifts are properly staffed to meet call handling goals. Internal audit found that the UCC department call handling goals are met and service requests are properly routed to the correct department.

Service Request Intake

The UCC receives service requests from the public through their Call Center, e-mail, online service request system and the MKEmobile App. Internal Audit randomly selected 25 requests to test to verify service requests were routed to the correct department. A random sample of requests was chosen as the testing method due to time efficiency and practicality. Internal Audit concluded that of the 25 randomly selected requests tested, the UCC is effectively receiving, inputting into the system, and ensuring they are directly routed to the appropriate department or provided with the inquired information.

The UCC receives most of their requests through their Call Center, receiving 800 to 1,000 phone calls a day. Internal Audit reviewed UCC call metrics and compared them to department call handling targets. When there are no special circumstances that may cause a spike in incoming calls for the Call Center, the UCC Call Center is generally meeting call handling targets. Special circumstances include high call volume, short staffing, weather events, call routing to the UCC from other departments, etc. Per the UCC procedures, the target for the average speed of answer is 60 seconds. The call handling targets are meant to keep an efficient workflow for the Call Center with the understanding that peak call times may affect the goals, but the average time of all calls should level out on an annual basis. The average speed of answer of all calls in 2023 was 68 seconds.

Avg Speed Answered (Seconds)

Total Calls
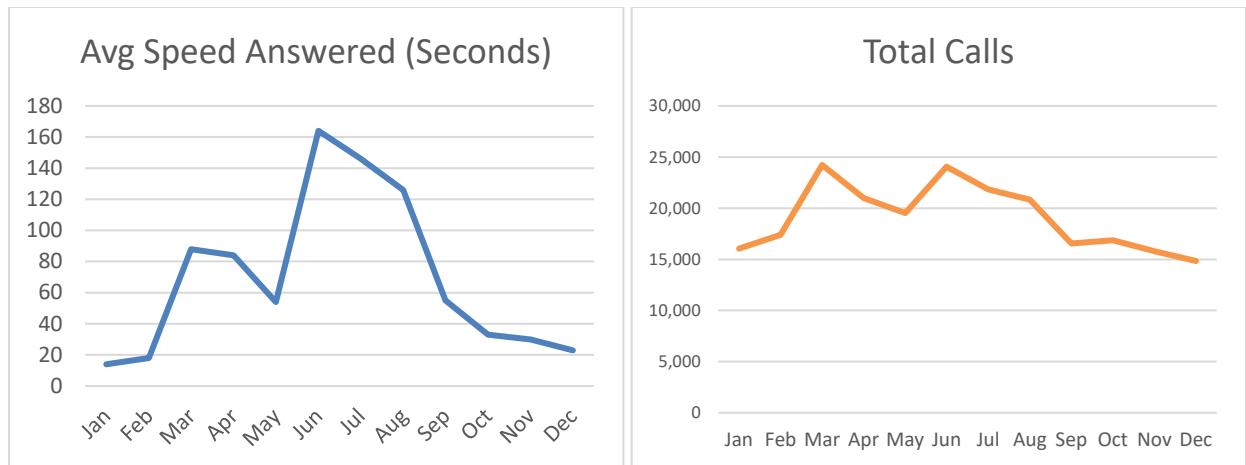
Performance Monitoring

The UCC manager effectively uses the department call data for continuous monitoring of various processes. The call handling data is used by UCC supervisors on a monthly basis to review the performance of UCC agents, ensuring the efficiency of the Call Center, and providing coaching to agents who underperform. The UCC manager meets monthly with the Chief Information Officer and the Policy and Administration Manager to provide Call Center performance reports. Additionally, the data is also used to ensure the UCC shifts are adequately staffed to meet performance objectives based on annual trends.

Policies and Procedures

The UCC has policies and procedures in place for all UCC positions, processes, and programs used. The UCC manager creates and edits the policies and procedures as needed, ensuring that all processes are up-to-date for UCC agents to reference.

Staff Training

The training procedures are adequately designed to monitor new staff progress and to provide coaching for UCC employees beyond the initial point of hire. UCC staff and temporary agents are trained on the most up-to-date policies and procedures.

July 10, 2024

Honorable Mayor Cavalier Johnson
The Members of the Common Council
City of Milwaukee

Dear Mayor and Council Members:

 With this letter, the Office of the City Comptroller acknowledges receipt of the preceding report, which communicates the results of the Audit of the Unified Call Center. I have read the report and support its conclusions.

 As the City Comptroller, I was not involved in any portion of the work conducted in connection with the audit. At all times, the Audit Division worked autonomously in order to maintain the integrity, objectivity, and independence of the audit, both in fact and in appearance.

 Sincerely,

Bill Christianson, CPFO
Comptroller

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