



October 2015

Why OCA Did This Study

In accordance with the City Auditor's Fiscal Year 2015 Work Plan, we conducted a performance audit of the Code Enforcement Division's operations to evaluate its:

- (1) Response times for high-priority violations,
- (2) Process and techniques to maximize efficiency and effectiveness, and
- (3) Use of appropriate performance metrics.

What OCA Recommends

OCA made [twelve recommendations](#) intended to improve Code Enforcement Division's (CED) operations, all of which management agreed to implement. Key recommendations include:

- Assign and track the priority of each code enforcement case and assign initial inspection due dates based on priority. Generate management reports to track performance in meeting initial response goals;
- Revise the Intake Procedures Manual to establish responsibilities for entering complaints in the tracking system and procedures for supervisory review;
- Develop a systematic framework for assessing fines, penalties and re-inspection fees;
- Specify the types of violations in which an Administrative Citation Warning or equivalent should be sent prior to the first inspection;
- Establish policies and procedures to input investigator actions into PTS and revise the methodology for calculating the "Percent of Investigator Actions Completed On-Time" performance metric;
- Revise CED's performance metrics to include measures of response times and time to achieve compliance; and
- Ensure CED is actively participating in the configuring of the project tracking system recently procured by Development Services Department.

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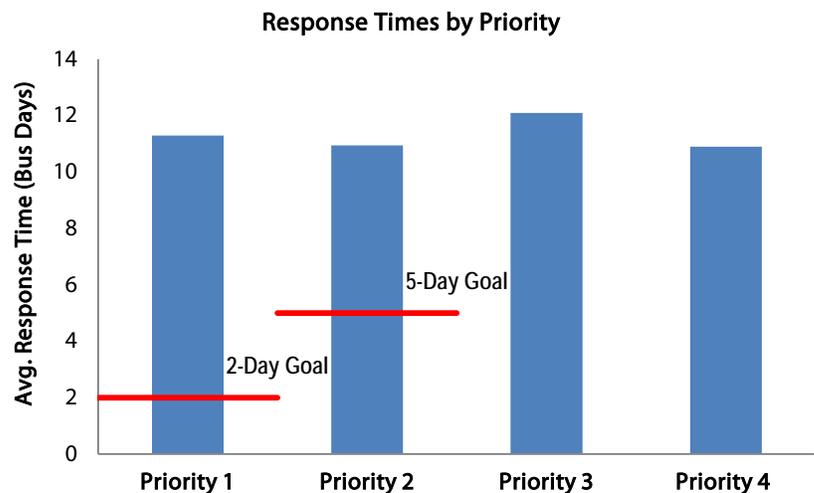
Code Enforcement Division

Improvements in Division Procedures, System Capabilities, and Performance Measurement are Needed to Increase Program Effectiveness and Reduce Response Times for High-Priority Cases

What OCA Found

The City's Code Enforcement Division (CED) is essential for safe and healthy living and for the protection of property values. Responding to, addressing, and resolving code violations in a timely manner are imperative to enhancing the quality of life in our local communities. We found that improvements in division procedures, system capabilities and performance measurement will increase program effectiveness and reduce response times for high-priority cases. Specifically, we found issues in the following areas:

Response Times: CED only achieves its response time goal of two business days for Priority 1 violations 29 percent of the time and only meets its response time goal of five business days for Priority 2 violations 59 percent of the time. As shown below, CED's average response times for high-priority and low-priority cases are nearly identical, which indicates that investigators are not responding to high-priority violations with greater urgency than lower-priority violations. Delays in the intake process also slow the response to many complaints, regardless of priority.



Efficiency and Effectiveness: We found that CED can be more effective and improve consistency in the issuance of fines and penalties by adopting a more systematic enforcement framework. In addition, CED can increase efficiency by consistently mailing Administrative Citation Warnings to responsible parties prior to the first inspection for some lower-priority cases.

Performance Measurement: Project Tracking System (PTS) data is not reliable for monitoring performance. In addition, the current methodology used by CED to calculate its only performance metric, "Percent of Investigator Actions Completed On-Time," inadvertently overstates CED's performance. Also, this metric does not capture important aspects of program performance, including response times and the amount of time required to achieve compliance.

Tracking System: Upgrades to PTS are necessary to improve CED's case management in the short-term, but CED ultimately needs to replace PTS with a system that is adapted specifically for code enforcement purposes and meets modern code enforcement needs.