



*The City of New York
Office of the Comptroller
Bureau of Financial Audit
EDP Audit Division*

William C. Thompson, Jr.
Comptroller

**Audit Report on the
Development and Implementation
Of the Police Department's
Auto Pound System**

7A02-061

June 25, 2002

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The NYC Police Department's (NYPD) Property Clerk Division (Division) accepts, catalogs, safeguards, stores, and produces for the court property that is in the custody of NYPD. Vehicles, parts, motorcycles, and marine craft are stored by NYPD at three vehicle storage sites—College Point, Queens; Gowanus, Brooklyn; and, Erie Basin, Brooklyn. Those vehicle-related types of items, when received, are inspected and entered into the NYPD Auto Pound computer system. In 2000, as part of the Year 2000 remediation, it was decided to upgrade the Auto Pound system to allow the NYPD Support Services Bureau to monitor the three vehicle storage sites from One Police Plaza by linking the sites into one network. NYPD contracted with Information Builders Inc., at a cost of \$249,200, to design and implement the upgraded system.

Objective

Our objectives were to determine whether:

- a structured methodology was followed when the upgraded Auto Pound system was developed;
- the upgraded Auto Pound system meets user needs;
- the upgraded system allows for future enhancements and further upgrades; and,
- users are satisfied with the system.

Scope and Methodology

Our fieldwork was conducted from October 2001 to April 2002. To achieve our objectives we reviewed and analyzed:

- task orders defining deliverables;
- purchase orders and voucher information pertaining to the upgrade; and,
- the *Requirements Design and Specifications* document.

In addition, we interviewed NYPD officials, verified that the system met design specifications, and conducted a user satisfaction survey.

We used Comptroller's Internal Control and Accountability Directive #18 (Directive 18), *Guidelines for the Management, Protection and Control of Agency Information and Information Processing Systems* as the criterion for this audit. Since the City does not have a formal System Development Methodology, we also used the National Institute of Standards and Technology Special Publication #500-233, *A Framework for the Development and Assurance of High Integrity Software* (NIST), to assess whether a system development methodology had been followed.

The audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing Standards (GAGAS) and included tests of the records and other auditing procedures considered necessary. This audit was performed in accordance with the City Comptroller's audit responsibilities as set forth in Chapter 5, § 93, of the New York City Charter.

Results in Brief

Our user satisfaction survey indicated that the upgraded Auto Pound system meets user needs and that users were generally satisfied with the system. In addition, the upgraded system allows for future enhancements and further periodic upgrades. However, the methodology used by NYPD in the creation of the upgraded Auto Pound system did not ensure that all needed aspects of the system were provided or developed. Also, users stated that they had problems accessing the system and entering data, and complained about the system's slow response time. Had NYPD used an independent quality assurance individual, these problems could have been identified and resolved during the development of the system. Finally, NYPD does not ensure that inactive users are eliminated from the system, and it does not have a complete, formally approved Disaster Recovery Plan for the system.

Recommendations

The report contains seven recommendations, including that NYPD should:

1. Meet with system users and resolve the problems identified in this report.

2. Develop written security policies and procedures for Auto Pound. These procedures should require that access to the system be terminated for inactive users.
3. Develop a formal Disaster Recovery Plan for the Auto Pound system and ensure that it is tested in accordance with Directive 18.
4. Use an independent quality assurance individual for all future system development projects.

Agency Response

The matters covered in this report were discussed with officials from NYPD during and at the conclusion of this audit. A preliminary draft was sent to NYPD officials and discussed at an exit conference held on May 24, 2002. On May 30, 2002, we submitted a draft report to NYPD officials with a request for comments. We received a written response from NYPD on June 18, 2002.

In its response, NYPD agreed to implement three of the report's recommendations, pertaining to: following a formal system development methodology on future system development projects; using an independent quality assurance individual on future projects; and obtaining any missing documents for Auto Pound, as required by the task orders. NYPD responded that it had taken actions independently of the audit to address the remaining four recommendations, pertaining to developing procedures for disaster recovery, maintenance, and system security; and meeting with users to resolve the system problems identified in this report.

The full text of the NYPD's comments is included as an addendum to this report.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The New York City Police Department (NYPD) protects lives and property; responds to emergency calls; investigates reported crimes; apprehends violators; and deals with conditions that affect the quality of life in the City. NYPD also responds to emergencies and disasters; keeps order at public events, demonstrations, and civil disturbances; intervenes in family disputes; refers people in distress to appropriate social service agencies; hires, trains, and supervises City School Safety Agents; and works in partnership with communities to enhance crime prevention.

NYPD's Property Clerk Division (Division) accepts, catalogs, safeguards, stores, and produces for the court property that is in the custody of NYPD. When no longer required, the Division returns the property to its legal owner or otherwise legally disposes of it. With the exception of serological evidence, which is retained by NYPD's Forensic Investigation Division, the Division receives all evidence related to crimes, including cash, jewelry, weapons, and vehicles.

Vehicles, parts, motorcycles, and marine craft are stored by NYPD at three vehicle storage sites—College Point, Queens; Gowanus, Brooklyn; and, Erie Basin, Brooklyn. Those vehicle-related types of items, when received, are inspected and entered into the NYPD Auto Pound computer system. The original Auto Pound system was a stand-alone computer system that did not electronically link the three vehicle storage sites and was not Year 2000-compliant. In 2000, as part of the Year 2000 remediation, it was decided to upgrade the Auto Pound system to allow the NYPD Support Services Bureau to monitor the three vehicle storage sites from One

Police Plaza by linking the sites into one network. NYPD contracted with Information Builders Inc., at a cost of \$249,200 to design and implement the upgraded system.

Objectives

Our objectives were to determine whether:

- a structured methodology was followed when the upgraded Auto Pound system was developed;
- the upgraded Auto Pound system meets user needs;
- the upgraded system allows for future enhancements and further upgrades; and,
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Our fieldwork was conducted from October 2001 to April 2002. To achieve our objectives we reviewed and analyzed:

- task orders defining deliverables;
- purchase orders and voucher information pertaining to the upgrade; and,
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In its response, NYPD agreed to implement three of the report's recommendations, pertaining to: following a formal system development methodology on future system development projects; using an independent quality assurance individual on future projects; and obtaining any missing documents for Auto Pound, as required by the task orders. NYPD responded that it had taken actions independently of the audit to address the remaining four recommendations, pertaining to developing procedures for disaster recovery, maintenance, and system security; and meeting with users to resolve the system problems identified in this report.

The full text of the NYPD's comments is included as an addendum to this report.

**OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
NEW YORK CITY**

DATE FILED: June 25, 2002

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our user satisfaction survey indicated that the upgraded Auto Pound system meets user needs and that users were generally satisfied with the system. In addition, the upgraded system allows for future enhancements and further periodic upgrades. However, the methodology used by NYPD in the creation of the upgraded Auto Pound system did not ensure that all needed aspects of the system were provided or developed. Furthermore, users stated that they had problems accessing the system and entering data, and complained about the system's slow response time. Had NYPD used an independent quality assurance individual, these problems could have been identified and resolved during the development of the system. Finally, NYPD does not ensure that inactive users are eliminated from the system, and it does not have a complete, formally approved Disaster Recovery Plan for the system.

System Development Methodology

NYPD did not employ a formal system development methodology when it developed the upgraded Auto Pound system. Instead, NYPD's "task orders" defined the segments of the project. Directive 18 states that following "a formal system development methodology to manage the development process" can help "insure the success of system development projects." Because NYPD did not use a formal system development methodology, certain important components needed by and/or related to the system were not provided or developed. For example, the task orders did not include training and maintenance manuals, training schedules, and a user guide. Also, certain required items were never delivered. The task orders required that Information Builders (the software developer for Auto Pound) deliver an *Architecture/Infrastructure Assessment*, a *Detailed Development Project Plan*, test cases and scenarios, and a detailed implementation plan. However, Information Builders never provided these documents.

User Satisfaction Survey

Our survey revealed that users are generally satisfied with the system.¹ Specifically:

- 100% of the users found the data to be generally accurate;
- 90% of the users found the screens are easy to work with; and,
- 75% of the users found the system to be user friendly.

However, the survey also showed that:

- 70% of the users found it difficult to access the system;
- 60% of the users found it difficult to enter a case in the system; and,
- 45% of the users stated that the system is slow.

¹ The survey results are based on responses from 20 of the 141 Auto Pound users, as of March 1, 2002.

Lack of an Independent Quality Assurance Individual

An independent quality assurance individual was not used to monitor the development of the Auto Pound system. Comptroller's Directive 18, § 9.5.1, states that engaging "an independent quality assurance consultant to assist the agency monitor and review the work of the development and integration team" can help "insure the success of system development projects." A quality assurance individual could have detected and then solved the problems noted above.

OTHER ISSUES

System Security Standards

NYPD has not developed formal security procedures for the Auto Pound system. According to NYPD's Computer System Manager, although no written procedures exist, access to the Auto Pound system should be terminated for any employee who has not used the system for 90 days. However, a random check of users who had access to the system on November 9, 2001, revealed that two individuals who had been retired for longer than 90 days (one individual retired on March 25, 2001, the other on June 17, 2001) still had access to Auto-Pound. One of these individuals had total system access, which permits the individual to make unauthorized changes to data and even to add or delete users. The other retired employee is still an authorized system user, which permits him to make unauthorized changes to data. The failure to delete access for these individuals violates Directive 18, which requires "deactivation of inactive user accounts and accounts for employees whose services have terminated."

Disaster Recovery Plan

NYPD does not have a complete, formally approved, and periodically tested Disaster Recovery Plan for the Auto Pound system. Directive 18, §10.1, states: "A formal plan for the recovery of agency operations and the continuation of business after a disruption due to a major loss of computer processing capability is an important part of the information protection plan." In addition, Directive 18 states: "periodic reviews and updates are necessary to insure that the business recovery plan remains current. A comprehensive test should be conducted annually." Since the system contains evidence that may be critical to court proceedings, it is important that NYPD develop a Disaster Recovery Plan for the Auto Pound system.

Recommendations

NYPD should:

1. Meet with system users and resolve the problems identified in this report.

Agency Response: “The recommendation is not necessary because it calls for an action, policy or practice that was planned or existed independent of the audit.

“The Department’s Management Information Systems Division has resolved all problems with the Auto Pound system that have been identified by Support Services Bureau -- the owner of the system. Valid user concerns are addressed by the Auto Pound supervisors and/or the computer manager. Auto Pound personnel make routine requests for support help by telephone to MISD. Serious concerns and complicated requests are forwarded through the commanding officer of the Property Clerk Division to MISD.

“In addition, the results of the audit’s survey of system users are, on the whole, positive: the audit concluded that the system is meeting user needs; data was found to be accurate; and screens were found to be user friendly and easy to work with. Some users surveyed indicated that the system’s speed was slow. MISD and Information Builders have responded to similar comments since the system’s inception and have reduced individual screen entries from 30 seconds to 5-7 seconds.

“The existing procedure described above has identified user problems with the Auto Pound system. However, the audit user-survey response may provide information on related issues, e.g. training. Therefore, we are requesting that the Comptroller provide us with copies of the completed questionnaires for review.”

Auditor Comment: We would like to point out that the results of our survey, and the questionnaire used to complete the survey, were provided to NYPD. Nevertheless, we will again provide NYPD copies of these documents so that it can resolve the system problems identified in the audit.

2. Insist that Information Builders provide all the documents required by the task orders.

Agency Response: “The Department’s Management Information Systems Division will review the documents provided for the Auto Pound system and request Information Builders provide any missing documents needed to support the Auto Pound system. This will be completed in the first quarter of FY 03.”

3. Develop formal maintenance procedures for the Auto Pound system.

Agency Response: “The recommendation is not necessary because it calls for an action, policy or practice that was planned or existed independent of the audit.

“The Department’s Management Information Systems Division does have formal maintenance procedures in place. For application changes, MISD requires that the Support Services Bureau submit a written request to the Commanding Officer of MISD. The job is assigned to the Systems Development Section for review and evaluation; a project plan is created with milestones and a time frame. For system maintenance, every Tuesday morning the Systems Programming Section updates applications that were modified and tested the previous week. These application changes are logged in the System Programming Section and the System Development Section.”

Auditor Comment: We made numerous requests for the Auto Pound System maintenance procedures during the audit fieldwork, at the exit conference, and after the draft report was issued. However, NYPD did not provide these procedures. Therefore, we repeat our recommendation.

4. Develop written security policies and procedures for Auto Pound. These procedures should require that access to the system be terminated for inactive users.

Agency Response: “The recommendation is not necessary because it calls for an action, policy or practice that was planned or existed independent of the audit.

“The Property Clerk Division developed a formal security procedure in Spring 2002 that addresses access to the Auto Pound computer application.”

Auditor Comment: As with the maintenance procedures, we made numerous requests for NYPD’s security policies and procedures for the Auto Pound System. However, these procedures were not provided. Therefore, we repeat our recommendation.

5. Develop a formal Disaster Recovery Plan for the Auto Pound system and ensure that it is tested in accordance with Directive 18.

Agency Response: “The recommendation is not necessary because it calls for an action, policy or practice that was planned or existed independent of the audit.

“The Department has awarded a contract to IBM that will establish a disaster recovery process for all essential non-SPRINT computer applications, including the Auto Pound system, and provide a disaster recovery site outside of the City. Should a disaster affect the mainframe data center at Police Headquarters, this recovery process would take place at the new recovery site. The IBM contract is in the final stages of the approval process.

“In addition, the Auto Pounds are able to continue their intake, release and forfeiture operations using a manual, paper-based system.”

Auditor Comment: During the audit, the MISD Computer Systems Manager stated that the Department did not have formal disaster recovery procedures for Auto Pound. In addition, NYPD officials never mentioned the IBM contract for developing a disaster recovery process nor the “paper-based system” that purportedly could be used in place of the system in the event of a disaster. In any case, we strongly recommend that NYPD expedite the approval of the IBM contract to ensure that a complete, formally approved disaster recovery plan is in place without further delay.

6. Follow a formal system development methodology for all future system development projects.

Agency Response: “We must further analyze/evaluate the recommendation.

“MISD will analyze its current systems development methodology in consideration of the Comptroller’s Directive #18 guidelines. Appropriate procedures will be adopted and a modified methodology will be applied to future system development projects. This work should be completed in the second quarter of FY 03.

“It should be noted that the Department did follow a formal system development methodology in developing a re-write of the Auto Pound system. The Support Services Bureau (SSB), Management Information Systems Division, and the vendor, Information Builders, conducted meetings to learn and document the functionality of the original system and identify desirable new functions. A great deal of time was spent on this phase of the project. At the conclusion of this phase, program specifications were developed, and Information Builders personnel, with the advice and assistance of SSB, completed the development at the College Point Auto Pound. The task order provides the tasks Information Builders agreed to complete for the Department based upon funding available in the NYPD Y2K budget.”

7. Use an independent quality assurance individual for all future system development projects.

Agency Response: “The Department’s Management Information Systems Division will request funding for a quality assurance individual in appropriate (high cost and/or complex) future system development projects. This will be implemented immediately.”



POLICE DEPARTMENT

Office of Management Analysis and Planning
One Police Plaza, Room 1403

ADDENDUM
Page 1 of 6

June 14, 2002

Mr. Roger Liwer
Assistant Comptroller for Audits
The City of New York
Office of the Comptroller
1 Centre Street, Room 1100
New York, N.Y. 10007

**Re: Auto Pound Computer System
Draft Audit Report
(Audit # 7A02-061)**

Dear Mr. Liwer:

We wish to thank the Comptroller for the opportunity to review this draft report concerning the Auto Pound computer system and comment upon the audit's methodology, findings, and recommendations. We have been conscientious in our review and, consequently, trust that our comments will be seriously considered by your office and be reflected in the audit's final report.

We agree with your conclusion that our Auto Pound computer system *"... meets user needs and most users were generally satisfied with the system. In addition, the upgraded system allows for future enhancements and further periodic upgrades."*

The new Auto Pound system has resulted in improved operations within the Property Clerk Division. The Police Department has replaced a limited stand-alone system with a computer network. This enables data to be shared among the geographically separated Auto Pound locations and Police Headquarters. The database system provides immediate access to entered data. Thus, police employees can obtain -- for Department use or to service the general public -- timely information pertaining to property held at any Auto Pound facility. The system is also a management tool, providing customized reports to supervisors and managers.

The audit report contains seven recommendations. The Department agrees to implement numbers two and seven, and research and evaluate number six. Although the remaining four recommendations are valid, the Department considers them unnecessary; we are doing what the Comptroller is requesting.

COURTESY • PROFESSIONALISM • RESPECT

Please refer to the attached Audit Implementation Plan for the Department's response to each of the Comptroller's recommendations.

We appreciate the Comptroller's efforts to conduct the audit and prepare the report. We hope your office found that the Department demonstrated its policy of cooperation with the Comptroller's office during the course of the audit.

If you have any questions concerning this response, please call Deputy Audit Coordinator Michael Manzollilo at 646-610-8365.

Sincerely,


Joanne Jaffe
Assistant Chief
Commanding Officer

Attachment
Copy: M. Manzollilo
Mayor's Office of Operations
2001-11-32

NYPD AUDIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Auditing Agency	NYC Comptroller
Audit Title/Subject	Development and Implementation of the Police Department's Auto Pound System
Audit #	7A02-061

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND NYPD EVALUATION OF EACH						
#	Recommendation	Category				
		"A" Agree; Will imple- ment.	"B" Agree; Can't imple- ment.	"C" Disagree; Won't imple- ment.	"D" Not Necessary; A Planned or Existing Practice.	"E" Requires Study.
1.	The NYPD should meet with the system users and resolve the problems identified in this report.				X	
2.	The NYPD should insist that Information Builders provide all the documents required by the task orders.	X				
3.	The NYPD should develop formal maintenance procedures for the Auto Pound system.				X	
4.	The NYPD should develop written security policies and procedures for the Auto Pound. These procedures should require that access to the system be terminated for inactive users.				X	
5.	The NYPD should develop a formal Disaster Recovery Plan for the Auto Pound system and ensure that it is tested in accordance with Directive 18.				X	
6.	The NYPD should follow a formal system development methodology for all future system development projects. [As per Comptroller's Directive 18]					X
7.	The NYPD should use an independent quality assurance individual for all future system development projects.	X				

Category "A"	We agree with the recommendation and have implemented or will attempt to implement.
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Recommendation #	2	Report Page #	6
Recommendation			
<i>The NYPD should insist that Information Builders provide all the documents required by the task orders.</i>			
Implementation Methods/Procedures and Projected/Actual Implementation Date			
<p>The Department's Management Information Systems Division will review the documents provided for the Auto Pound system and request Information Builders provide any missing documents needed to support the Auto Pound system; This will be completed in the first quarter of FY 03.</p>			

Recommendation #	7	Report Page #	6
Recommendation			
<i>The NYPD should use an independent quality assurance individual for all future system development projects.</i>			
Implementation Methods/Procedures and Projected/Actual Implementation Date			
<p>The Department's Management Information Systems Division will request funding for a quality assurance individual in appropriate (high cost and/or complex) future system development projects. This will be implemented immediately.</p> <p>The auditors stated that the employment of a quality assurance individual would have assisted the Department in the development of the Auto Pound system. The Department was unable to employ one because funds were unavailable. Despite this, we believe that important problems were still detected and corrected (as we indicate in our response to recommendation #1 below).</p>			

Category "D"	The recommendation is not necessary because it calls for an action, policy or practice that was planned or existed independent of the audit.
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Recommendation #	1	Report Page #	6
Recommendation			
<i>The NYPD should meet with the system users and resolve the problems identified [by the users] in this report</i>			
Explanation			
<p>The Department's Management Information Systems Division has resolved all problems with the Auto Pound system that have been identified by Support Services Bureau – the</p>			

owner of the system. Valid user concerns are addressed by the Auto Pound supervisors and/or the computer manager. Auto Pound personnel make routine requests for support help by telephone to MISD. Serious concerns and complicated requests are forwarded through the commanding officer of the Property Clerk Division to MISD.

In addition, the results of the audit's survey of system users are, on the whole, positive: the audit concluded that the system is meeting user needs, data was found to be accurate, and screens were found to be user friendly and easy to work with. Some users surveyed indicated that the system's speed was slow. MISD and Information Builders have responded to similar comments since the system's inception and have reduced individual screen entries from 30 seconds to 5-7 seconds.

The existing procedure described above has identified user problems with the Auto Pound system. However, the audit user-survey responses may provide information on related issues, e.g. training. Therefore, we are requesting that the Comptroller provide us with copies of the completed questionnaires for review.

Recommendation #	3	Report Page #	6
Recommendation			
<i>The NYPD should develop formal maintenance procedures for the Auto Pound system.</i>			
Explanation			
<p>The Department's Management Information Systems Division does have formal maintenance procedures in place. For application changes, MISD requires that the Support Services Bureau submit a written request to the Commanding Officer of MISD. The job is assigned to the Systems Development Section for review and evaluation; a project plan is created with milestones and a time frame. For system maintenance, every Tuesday morning the Systems Programming Section updates applications that were modified and tested the previous week. These application changes are logged in the System Programming Section and the System Development Section.</p>			

Recommendation #	4	Report Page #	6
Recommendation			
<i>The NYPD should develop written security policies and procedures for the Auto Pound. These procedures should require that access to the system be terminated for inactive users.</i>			
Explanation			
<p>The Property Clerk Division developed a formal security procedure in Spring 2002 that addresses access to the Auto Pound computer application.</p> <p>When an employee is assigned to the Auto Pound, the College Point Auto Pound computer manager issues a Novell access code to the employee. This gives the employee access to the basic Auto Pound intranet applications. The Auto Pound supervisor prepares a memorandum to the MISD Integrity Control Officer requesting a CESN access code for the new employee. Activity under this code is monitored by MISD.</p> <p>When an Auto Pound employee is transferred or retires, the Auto Pound computer manager purges the local Novell access code from the Auto Pound LAN system. The Auto Pound supervisor then prepares a memorandum to the MISD Integrity Control Officer requesting the employee's removal from the application's user privilege list.</p> <p>MISD has a RAC-F feature that automatically revokes user privileges. In adherence with NYC policy, passwords will automatically expire after a set time interval, the</p>			

NYPD has set this for 90 days. Affected employees must formally re-apply for access. This feature would have prevented the two retired employees identified in the audit report from gaining access to the mainframe computer and, therefore, the Auto Pound system.

Finally, all transactions on the Auto Pound application maintain a trail as an integrity feature.

Recommendation #	5	Report Page #	6
Recommendation			
<i>The NYPD should develop a formal Disaster Recovery Plan for the Auto Pound system and ensure that it is tested in accordance with the Comptroller's Directive 18.</i>			
Explanation			
<p>The Department has awarded a contract to IBM that will establish a disaster recovery process for all essential non-SPRINT computer applications, including the Auto Pound system, and provide a disaster recovery site outside of the City. Should a disaster affect the mainframe data center at Police Headquarters, this recovery process would take place at the new recovery site. The IBM contract is in the final stages of the approval process.</p> <p>In addition, the Auto Pounds are able to continue their intake, release, and forfeiture operations using a manual, paper-based system.</p>			

Category "E"	We must further analyze/evaluate the recommendation.
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Recommendation #	6	Report Page #	6
Recommendation			
<i>The NYPD should follow a formal system development methodology for all future system development projects [as provided for in Comptroller's Directive 18].</i>			
Explanation and Projected Completion of Analysis/Evaluation			
<p>MISD will analyze its current systems development methodology in consideration of the Comptroller's Directive #18 guidelines. Appropriate procedures will be adopted and a modified methodology will be applied to future system development projects. This work should be completed in the second quarter of FY 03.</p> <p>It should be noted that the Department did follow a formal system development methodology in developing a re-write of the Auto Pound system. The Support Services Bureau (SSB), Management Information Systems Division, and the vendor, Information Builders, conducted meetings to learn and document the functionality of the original system and identify desirable new functions. A great deal of time was spent on this phase of the project. At the conclusion of this phase, program specifications were developed, and Information Builders personnel, with the advice and assistance of SSB, completed the development at the College Point Auto Pound. The task order provides the tasks Information Builders agreed to complete for the Department based upon funding available in the NYPD Y2K budget.</p>			