

AUDIT REPORT



CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
BUREAU OF MANAGEMENT AUDIT
WILLIAM C. THOMPSON, JR., COMPTROLLER

Follow-up Audit Report on the Effectiveness of the Child Support Helpline of the Administration for Children's Services

MJ03-085F

June 10, 2003



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
1 CENTRE STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007-2341

WILLIAM C. THOMPSON, JR.
COMPTROLLER

To the Citizens of the City of New York

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In accordance with the Comptroller's responsibilities contained in Chapter 5, § 93, of the New York City Charter, my office has audited the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to determine whether it has implemented the six recommendations made in a previous audit of the Child Support Helpline of the ACS Office of Child Support Enforcement. The mission of ACS is to provide protective and supportive services for New York City's children and families. The ACS Office of Child Support Enforcement Services offers services to the public to ensure that legally responsible parents provide financial child support. Our audit resulted in the findings and recommendations that are presented in this report. The findings and recommendations were discussed with City officials; their comments were considered in the preparation of this report.

Audits such as this provide a means of ensuring that City resources are used effectively, efficiently, and in the best interest of the public.

I trust that this report contains information that is of interest to you. If you have any questions concerning this report, please e-mail my audit bureau at audit@comptroller.nyc.gov or telephone my office at 212-669-3747.

Very truly yours,

William C. Thompson

William C. Thompson, Jr.

Report: MJ03-085F
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***The City of New York
Office of the Comptroller
Bureau of Management Audit***

**Follow-up Audit Report on the
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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This is a follow-up audit to determine whether the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) has implemented the six recommendations made in a previous audit of the Child Support Helpline of the ACS Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). In this report, we discuss the six recommendations from the prior audit in detail, as well as the current status of each recommendation.

In Fiscal Year 2001, our office conducted an audit to evaluate whether the OCSE Child Support Helpline (Helpline) was in compliance with the Citywide Customer Service Initiative, which set a telephone standard requiring calls to be answered in three rings or less, with a hold time of not more than two minutes after calls are answered. The audit also determined whether the Helpline was achieving its mission of providing accurate and useful telephone information to callers. The audit found a number of weaknesses. Of 147 calls made by auditors to the Helpline requesting operator assistance, 99 (67%) were disconnected by the Helpline because the system had insufficient resources (staffing, system capacity) to handle the volume of calls received. In regard to the Helpline's Automated Call Distribution (ACD) system, calls transferred from the hold-queue¹ to operators' lines could not be sent back to the queue if operators were unavailable. As a result, those calls remained in limbo unless the operators returned or the callers hung up. In addition, there was evidence that the Helpline staff was not being used efficiently. OCSE did not ensure that the 14 available operator stations were fully staffed during all hours that operator assistance was provided. Finally, the audit found that the Helpline did not ensure that there were enough operators on the Helpline to assist those callers who were still on hold when the Helpline operator assistance ended at 5:00 p.m.

Of the six recommendations we made in the previous audit, OCSE implemented one, partially implemented three, and was unable to implement two. The six recommendations and their status are as follows:

¹ The hold-queue is a function of the ACD system that maintains (holds) a number of waiting calls until those calls can be routed to an available operator.

1. “Increase the number of operators on the Helpline to shorten the hold time for callers who opt to speak to an operator. Also, increase the size of the hold-queue so that calls are not disconnected when operator assistance is requested.” **IMPLEMENTED**
2. “Attempt to increase callers’ use of the automated attendant. To accomplish this, ACS should:”
 - “Conduct a survey of callers who opt to speak with an agent and walk-in customers to determine why they did not use the automated attendant.
 - “Based on the information obtained from the survey, modify the automated attendant to address the concerns raised by Helpline callers.” **PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED**
3. “Program safeguards in the ACD system to prevent calls from being lost if operators neglect to put their lines in the ‘not ready’ mode. Such safeguards might include a system default in which the system puts an operator’s line in ‘not ready’ mode if a call transferred to that line goes unanswered for five rings or more. The system would then transfer the unanswered call back to the hold-queue to be answered by the next available operator.” **UNABLE TO IMPLEMENT**
4. “Modify the ACD system so that total call volume to the Helpline is counted and properly categorized, including calls requesting operator assistance, so that the agency can properly determine workload.” **UNABLE TO IMPLEMENT**
5. “Allocate staff based on workload figures to provide optimum coverage during Helpline hours, with a concentration on periods with the heaviest volume. To accomplish this, the agency should consider limiting the use of flex time. For example, the agency could assign operators, on a rotating basis, to work on the Helpline at set hours to ensure that there are an adequate number of operators (1) when the Helpline’s operator assistance feature opens at 8:30 a.m., and (2) to handle the remaining calls requesting operator assistance when the feature closes at 5:00 p.m.” **PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED**
6. “Analyze, on an ongoing basis, operator efficiency in answering calls requesting operator assistance and take steps to improve efficiency where feasible (e.g., hire more operators, expand or simplify choices available through automated attendant to minimize the number of callers requesting operator assistance).” **PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED**

In this follow-up audit we found that OCSE has made some improvements in the Child Support Helpline system by hiring more operators and increasing the size of the hold-queue. As a result, more calls are answered by operators and more calls requesting operator assistance are accepted in the ACD system. In addition, OCSE has improved the Helpline’s overall efficiency since the previous audit in regard to the number of calls answered per operator and the number of

calls accepted per operator station. However, there are areas that still need improvement. The percentage of calls abandoned by callers has increased. Based on our calls to the Helpline, we found many of the same weaknesses that emerged in the previous audit, albeit to a lesser degree. Table I, below, shows a comparison of calls we made during the previous and follow-up audit.

TABLE I

Comparison of Calls Made to OCSE Child Support Helpline
Previous Audit and Follow-up Audit

	Previous Audit		Follow-up Audit		% Increase (Decrease) Follow-up vs. Previous Audits
	All calls	%	All Calls	%	
Total # of Calls	147		71		
Disconnected when Operator Assistance Requested	99	67%	17	24%	(43%)
Transferred for Operator Assistance ¹	48	33%	54	76%	43%
• Immediately Transferred to an Operator's Line	3		36		
• Place in Hold Queue Before Being Transferred to Operator's Line	45		18		
➤ On Hold more than 2 minutes	41	91%	10	56%	(35%)
When Call Transferred to an Operator's Line:					
• Picked up by Operator within 30 rings	33	69%	10	19%	(50%)
• Not Picked up by Operator within 30 rings	15	31%	44	81%	50%

¹Transferred for operator assistance—includes all calls that were not disconnected by system.

We found that OCSE did not make the necessary changes to the ACD system that would make it easier to assist callers and help OCSE identify the true workload involving calls requesting operator assistance. Moreover, the agency did not always use its operators efficiently; the operator stations were staffed at only 77 percent capacity on average during our observations. As a result, a high percentage of calls that are made to the Helpline are still not being answered. During the course of the follow-up audit, we made 71 calls to the Helpline requesting operator assistance. Of those 71 calls, 17 (24%) were disconnected when we requested operator assistance. In addition, 44 (81%) of the remaining 54 calls were allowed to ring at least 30 times (approximately three minutes) once they were transferred to the operator lines.

To address the issues that still exist, we are making the following recommendations, some of which we made in our earlier audit. ACS should:

- Require that coordinators and supervisors monitor operators' lines to ensure that operators do not neglect to put their lines in "not ready" mode when they leave their stations.
- Devise a method to compile and analyze data regarding unsuccessful attempts of callers to obtain operator assistance. This information could be used to help determine the actual volume of calls requesting operator assistance and to identify areas where improvement is needed regarding Helpline's efficiency in answering those calls.
- Allocate staff assignments based on workload figures (determined upon implementation of recommendation #2) to provide optimum coverage during Helpline hours, with concentration on periods with the heaviest volume. To accomplish this, the agency should consider both limiting the use of flextime and altering the lunchtime schedule. For example, the agency could assign operators, on a rotating basis, to work on the Helpline at set hours to ensure that there are an adequate number of operators (1) when the Helpline operator assistance feature opens at 8:30 a.m., and (2) to handle the remaining calls requesting operator assistance when the feature closes at 5:00 p.m.
- Continue to analyze, on an ongoing basis, operator efficiency in answering calls requesting operator assistance and take steps to improve efficiency where feasible.
- When funding becomes available, conduct a survey of Helpline callers to ascertain the demand for making operator assistance available during evening hours (e.g., 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., or 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) for those persons who work during the hours that the Helpline currently provides operator assistance. If the feedback is positive, ACS should consider conducting a pilot study to determine whether expanding operator assistance to evening hours materially reduces the number of abandoned calls.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The mission of the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) is to provide protective and supportive services for New York City's children and families. The ACS Office of Child Support Enforcement Services (OCSE) offers services to the public to ensure that legally responsible parents provide financial child support.

In 1994, OCSE installed the Child Support Helpline (Helpline) system. The purpose of the Helpline is to enable child support clients and respondents to obtain basic child support information without traveling to OCSE offices. All calls made to the Child Support Helpline are tracked by the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. In 1999, OCSE added an Automated Call Distribution (ACD) system to enable customers to speak directly to a Helpline telephone representative (operator). The Helpline's automated attendant is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Helpline hours for operator assistance are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

In an effort to provide adequate service to persons who call the customer service helplines that various City agencies use, the Mayor's Office of Operations established the Citywide Customer Service Initiative that set a telephone service standard requiring calls to be answered in three rings or less, with a hold-time of not more than two minutes after the calls have been answered.

Objective

The objective of this audit was to determine whether the Administration for Children's Services has implemented the six recommendations made in an earlier report, *Audit Report on the Effectiveness of the Administration for Children's Services' Child Support Helpline* (MJ01-135A, issued May 23, 2001).

Scope and Methodology

The time period reviewed in this audit was July 2002 through January 2003.

To determine the implementation status of the recommendations, we interviewed the OCSE Director of Enforcement and Customer Services, the Director of Customer Services and the Helpline's telephone inquiry coordinators and supervisors. In addition, we interviewed the Project Manager of a computer systems consultant firm hired by OCSE.

We made a series of phone calls to the Child Support Helpline for operator assistance. From July 9 to 11, 2002, we made a total of 46 calls. From December 11 to 13, 2002 and on January 3 and 6, 2003, we made an additional 25 calls to the Helpline. We then compared the results of our calls from the previous audit to the follow-up audit.

To get an understanding of OCSE staffing of operators, we obtained a list of Helpline operators OCSE hired since March 2001. We then compared the number of active operators between the current audit and the previous audit. We also made a series of observations at the Helpline Call Center during various times of the day to observe the staffing levels at operator stations.

We reviewed a number of reports generated by the system, including the Daily ACD-Qstats Reports, Daily ACD Performance Reports and Daily ACD Delay Before Abandon Reports. We reviewed the reports to establish a correlation between the size of the hold-queue, the number of operators, the number of calls accepted and answered by the ACD system, and the number of calls abandoned by callers.

Finally, on October 3, 2002, we conducted a one-day survey of child support customers attending the Helpline Walk-In Customer Center. We asked the walk-in customers a series of questions relating to their experiences in dealing with the Helpline.

This 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 audit responsibilities of the City Comptroller as set forth in Chapter 5, §93 of the New York City Charter.

Discussion of Audit Results

The matters covered in this report were discussed with ACS officials during and at the conclusion of this audit. A preliminary draft was sent to ACS officials and was discussed at an exit conference on April 9, 2003. On April 30, 2003, we submitted a draft report to ACS officials with a request for comments. We received written comments from ACS on May 23, 2003. In its response, ACS generally agreed with the audit's findings and recommendations, and stated:

“ACS was pleased to have confirmation from the Comptroller's audit report that (1) Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) has made improvements in the Child Support Helpline system by hiring more operators and increasing the size of the hold-queue. As a result, more calls are answered by operators and more calls requesting operator assistance are accepted in the Automated Call Distribution (ACD) system; and (2) OCSE has improved the Helpline's overall efficiency since the previous audit in regard to the number of calls answered per operator and the number of calls accepted per operator station. ”

The full text of the ACS comments is included as an addendum to this report.

RESULTS OF FOLLOW-UP AUDIT

Previous Finding: “Significant Percentage of Calls Requesting Operator Assistance Were Disconnected and Average Hold Time Exceeds Two-Minute Customer Service Initiative Standard.”

The previous audit found that calls to the Helpline requesting operator assistance were disconnected by the system because there were insufficient resources (i.e., staffing levels and system capacity) to handle the volume of calls received. Overall, of the 147 calls we made to the Helpline, 99 (67%) were disconnected. For calls we made that were not disconnected by the system, the average amount of time on hold was six minutes—four minutes longer than the Customer Service Initiative Standard.

From October 30 to November 15, 2000, we made 97 test calls to the Helpline requesting operator assistance. In that test, 76 (78%) calls were disconnected when we requested operator assistance. In 18 (19%) calls, callers were placed on hold an average of 15 minutes before being transferred to an operator’s line—13 minutes beyond the two-minute standard set by the Citywide Customer Service Initiative. Operators actually answered the transferred calls in only nine instances; the remaining nine calls went unanswered. (An additional three calls were disconnected because OCSE had not made the appropriate adjustment in the system for Eastern Standard Time; as a result, the Helpline system erroneously shut down the operator assistance function one hour early.)

OCSE officials cited low staffing as the major reason for the high number of disconnected calls. In December 2000, OCSE hired an additional 20 operators, bringing the total to 27. In February 2001, we made an additional 50 calls to the Helpline to ascertain whether the additional operators improved the service. While service did improve, the weaknesses found during the first set of calls remained. Of the 50 calls, 20 (40%) were disconnected when we requested operator assistance. Of the 30 calls that were not disconnected, three were immediately answered by an operator, but 27 calls were placed on hold an average of six minutes before being transferred to an operator’s line. Operators actually answered only 17 of the remaining 27 transferred calls.

In the previous audit we made two recommendations to ACS regarding calls to the Helpline requesting operator assistance.

Previous Recommendation #1: “Increase the number of operators on the Helpline to shorten the hold time for callers who opt to speak to an operator. Also, increase the size of the hold-queue so that calls are not disconnected when operator assistance is requested.”

Previous Agency Response: “The number of operators on the Helpline was increased from a low of 7 to 27 . . . The hold queue was increased from 10 to 15 in March 2001, thus ensuring that callers are not disconnected when operator assistance is requested.

ACS considers recommendation number one to have been implemented, as citywide standards are now being met.”

Current Status : IMPLEMENTED

Since the previous audit, OCSE has increased the number of operators assigned to the Helpline. In March 2001, OCSE hired 20 operators to bring the total number of operators to 27. According to the OCSE Director of Customer Services, there were 20 Helpline operators on staff in May 2002. Between June and August 2002, OCSE had hired an additional 21 operators to replace operators that either resigned or retired, to bring the total to 41. Of the 41 operators, OCSE assigned 33 to available operator workstations, and eight operators as “floaters.” The floaters replaced regular operators that were either absent or assigned to other duties, such as assisting walk-in customers.

In addition to increasing the number of operators, OCSE adjusted the ACD system to increase the size of the hold-queue. In March 2001, OCSE increased the number of calls that can be placed in the hold-queue from 10 to 15. This allowed more calls to be accepted by the system, thus reducing the number of disconnected calls.

As a result of both the staff increases and the increased capacity of the hold-queue, more calls were connected to the system and more callers were transferred to operator lines. To determine the effect these changes have made in service, we reviewed reports generated by the ACD system and performed an analysis of calls transferred to operators’ lines before and after the changes were made. Table II, below, shows the comparison between the number of calls accepted and answered by the ACD system in January 2001 and September 2002.

TABLE II

**Comparison of Calls Accepted and Calls Answered
Before and After Increases in the Number of Operators and Hold-Queue**

	January 2001 (Previous Audit)	September 2002 (Follow-up Audit)	Percentage Difference
Calls Accepted	15,225	41,183	170%
Calls Answered	10,444	24,483	134%
Calls Abandoned by Callers	4,781 (31% of accepted calls)	16,700 (41% of accepted calls)	
➤ Calls Abandoned After 2 Minutes	3,299 (69% of abandoned calls)	7,168 (43% of abandoned calls)	

As shown in Table II, a comparison of two monthly totals of calls accepted by the ACD system before and after the increases in the number of operators and the size of the hold-queue revealed a 170 percent increase in calls accepted by the ACD system. In addition, there was a 134 percent increase in calls answered by the system. As a result, more callers were connected to the system and spoke to Helpline operators. Nevertheless, the increase in the number of calls accepted by the Helpline system does not mean that all callers that attempt to reach a Helpline

operator are successful. Table II also shows that the percentage of calls that were abandoned increased from 31 percent during the previous audit to 41 percent in this follow-up audit. Additionally, the percentage of abandoned calls that were on hold for two minutes or longer, although lower than what we found in the previous audit, continued to be high at 43 percent. (This issue is discussed further beginning on page 17 of this report.)

Previous Recommendation #2: “Attempt to increase callers’ use of the automated attendant. To accomplish this, ACS should:

- “Conduct a survey of callers who opt to speak with an agent and walk-in customers to determine why they did not use the automated attendant.
- “Based on the information obtained from the survey, modify the automated attendant to address the concerns raised by Helpline callers.”

Previous Agency Response: “OCSE already obtains and keeps data which reflect the reasons that walk-in customers utilize the Walk-In Center and why customers who call, ask to speak with an operator.

“OCSE plans to revise/optimize the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) script to improve service. This may involve the hiring of a consultant, research on other scripts in use, and a survey of data on call/visit reasons and customer concerns, in order to develop the best script possible.”

Current Status : PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

At the exit conference for this audit, OCSE officials acknowledged that the IVR has not undergone any major changes since the last audit. The IVR has the same choices that callers may respond to as it did in the previous audit. However, officials stated that they tried to obtain proposals to modify the IVR. Officials provided a copy of an internal purchase requisition, dated March 6, 2003, that would allow OCSE to contract for an upgrade to the system.

Regarding a survey of callers, OCSE does survey callers who want to speak to an operator, as well as walk-in customers. However, the purpose is to identify the reasons callers need assistance rather than to identify ways to increase use of the Helpline’s automated attendant.

In order to get an idea of the child support customer’s point of view regarding the service provided by the Helpline, we conducted our own survey of customers visiting the Walk-In Center, at 151 West Broadway in Manhattan. On October 3, 2002, we asked 60 walk-in customers if they were aware of the Helpline and, if so, whether they had attempted to call the service prior to coming to the center. (See Appendix A for a chart summarizing the results of our survey.) Of the 60 customers, 43 (72%) were aware of the Helpline. Of these, 29 had not tried to call it before coming to the Center; 15 (52%) of them did not try to call because of previous bad experience. (The remaining 14 had various other reasons for not calling the

Helpline, including the belief that their situations could only be handled in person at the Walk-In center.) One customer told us that he “always spends all day on the phone with no one answering.” Another customer said that he previously called the Helpline 10 times and received a busy signal each time.

Our survey showed a level of frustration by the walk-in customers in dealing with the Helpline. Given these negative perceptions of the Helpline, it is essential for OCSE to obtain a better understanding of customers’ concerns about getting information through the Helpline, so as to make further improvements in its operation.

* * * * *

Previous Finding: “Calls Transferred to operator lines remain in limbo when operators do not answer calls.”

During the previous audit, operators did not answer 15 (33%) of 45 test calls that were transferred from the hold-queue to operators’ lines. (The callers abandoned the calls after 30 rings, or a little more than three minutes.) The only options available to a caller whose call remained unanswered after being transferred to an operator’s line was to either (1) stay on the line in hope that the operator will eventually answer the call, or (2) hang up and try again. This condition existed because when a call was transferred from the hold-queue to an operator’s line, only the operator to whom the call was assigned could respond to it. If the operator is not available to answer the call or is not picking it up, the system will not transfer the call to the next available operator. As a result, callers may remain in limbo while their calls go unanswered.

OCSE officials stated that they plan to instruct operators and supervisors to follow procedures by either logging off the system if they are not available to answer calls or put their lines in “not ready” mode.

In the previous audit we recommended that ACS program safeguards in its ACD system to prevent calls from being lost when operators do not answer.

Previous Recommendation #3: “Program safeguards in the ACD system to prevent calls from being lost if operators neglect to put their lines in the ‘not ready’ mode. Such safeguards might include a system default in which the system puts an operator’s line in the ‘not ready’ mode if a call transferred to that line goes unanswered for 5 rings or more. The system would then transfer the unanswered call back to the hold queue to be answered by the next available operator.”

Previous Agency Response: “On 12/01/00, OCSE met with ACS/MIS to provide them with specifications for a system upgrade/overhaul. OCSE will include safeguards to prevent calls from being lost when transferred and modify the Automated Call Distribution System so that total call volume to the Helpline is counted and properly categorized. These modifications will be included in the specifications already prepared to upgrade the Call Center System (such controls and features are not possible with the current Call Center System).”

Current Status: UNABLE TO IMPLEMENT

OCSE has made no changes or safeguards to prevent calls from being lost if operators neglect to put their lines in the “not ready” mode. As a result, the conditions found during the previous audit still exist. Of the 71 calls we made to the Helpline during the course of this follow-up audit, 54 (62%) were transferred to operator lines. (The remaining 17 were disconnected by the system because the system was at full capacity.) However, of the 54 calls, operators failed to answer 44 (81%) within 30 rings. In order to speak with an operator, a caller would either have to remain on the line in the hope that an operator would eventually pick up the line, or hang up and start the process all over again.

At present, OCSE has not programmed any safeguards in the system to prevent calls from being lost if operators neglect to put their lines in the “not ready” mode. When the operator signals the “not ready” mode, the calls that were initially sent to that particular operator from the hold-queue are routed to another operator. OCSE officials told us that because the ACD system is old, they are unable to adjust it to transfer calls to available operators when the initial operator has neglected to place the line in the “not ready” mode.

OCSE officials told us that the system is antiquated and currently cannot be modified. To address this problem, officials told us that they have plans to install a new system that will be able to better monitor all calls received. Officials told us that they spoke with the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) regarding a new system and showed us a copy of a formal bid proposal that was drafted as a step toward renovating the system. For now, they said, there is little they can do to modify the system as it exists.

In the meantime, OCSE should take steps to ensure that Helpline coordinators (responsible for the overall management of the Helpline) and supervisors monitor operators to make certain that calls are placed in the “not ready” mode when operators are unavailable to answer calls transferred to their lines. That would permit callers to be placed in the hold-queue and wait for the next available operator. Although this may increase callers’ time on hold, it would at least prevent calls from going into limbo.

* * * * *

Previous Finding: “OCSE did not ensure that operator stations were fully staffed during all hours that Helpline’s operator assistance features is in operation.”

Due to a funding delay, ACS was unable to install additional phone lines for operator stations to accommodate the operators hired in December 2000. Overall, the stations could only accommodate roughly half of the Helpline’s operators. However, although the agency had more operators than stations during the course of the audit, they nevertheless did not ensure that all operator stations were fully staffed during all hours that the Helpline assistance was in operation. During the previous audit, we observed that the average number of the Helpline operator stations staffed was only 79 percent of full capacity.

In the previous audit, we also found that the agency did not ensure that there were enough operators on the Helpline to assist those callers who are still on hold when the Helpline's operator assistance ends at 5:00 p.m. As a result, callers are effectively abandoned and forced to call another day.

In the previous audit we made two recommendations to ACS regarding operator efficiency in receiving calls to the Helpline.

Previous Recommendation #4: “Modify the ACD system so that call volume to the Helpline is counted and properly categorized, including calls requesting operator assistance, so that agency can determine true workload.”

Previous Agency Response: See response to Previous Recommendation #3.

Current Status: UNABLE TO IMPLEMENT

As discussed earlier in this report, because of the increased number of operators on staff, coupled with the increase in the size of the hold-queue, there has been a rise in the number of calls that were accepted by the ACD system. However, there is still an unknown number of calls that are disconnected by the system. This occurs because the ACD system still does not track the number of calls that are disconnected when the system reaches its capacity. During the course of the follow-up audit, we made 71 calls to the Helpline requesting operator assistance. Seventeen (24%) of the 71 calls were disconnected by the system. This was a noticeable decrease from the calls we made during the previous audit, when 67 percent of the calls were disconnected by the system. This is attributable to the increased size of the hold-queue and the fact that there are more operators available to answer calls. Nevertheless, OCSE still does not know if it is serving all of the customers that attempt to call the Helpline for operator assistance, because the system still does not track all the calls to the Helpline.

Currently, the system can provide only the number of calls accepted into the system. However, this statistic is somewhat misleading because the number of calls accepted by the system during a period directly correlates to the number of operator stations open during that period. If more operator stations are open, the system will report more calls answered (assuming that a sufficient number of calls requesting operator assistance come into the Helpline). This point is illustrated further in Table III below.

TABLE III

Scenario Illustrating Difference Between Actual Workload and Reported Workload

Time of Day:	10:00 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
Calls requesting operator assistance (actual workload):	50	35
Stations open:	10	20
Calls accepted by ACD = # of open stations plus up to 15 calls in hold queue (reported workload):	25	35
Calls not accepted by ACD:	25	0

In the scenario illustrated in Table III, the ACD reported a higher workload (i.e., calls accepted) at 11:00 than at 10:00 because more operator stations were open, although there were actually fewer calls requesting operator assistance at that time.

As we stated for previous recommendation #3, the current system currently cannot be modified, according to OCSE officials. However, in order to effectively administer the Helpline, it is critical that OCSE obtain as accurate a picture as possible of the total call volume so that it can meet that demand. If modifying the system to determine the total number of callers requesting operator assistance is not feasible at this time, OCSE could try alternate means to determine merely the number of callers who are *unable* to obtain operator assistance.

Officials stated that it might be possible to perform a system test whereby all calls referred for operator assistance are counted by the ACD system. However, this test would require that the hold-queue be disabled, which would result in the system disconnecting all calls that are not immediately transferred to an operator's line. If OCSE were to try this method, then we would recommend that it plan it so that, to the extent possible, any disruption to the Helpline be minimized. OCSE could review the results of these tests to get a better idea of the system's true workload and devise ways to modify the Helpline system to better serve the callers—whether it be by further increasing the numbers of operators or workstations, or modifying the hold-queue. Such efforts could serve to improve the system while it is being overhauled.

Previous Recommendation #5: “Allocate staff based on workload figures to provide optimum coverage during Helpline hours, with a concentration on periods with the heaviest volume. To accomplish this, the agency should consider limiting the use of flex time. For example, the agency could assign operators, on a rotating basis, to work on the Helpline at set hours to ensure that there are an adequate number of operators (1) when the Helpline's operator assistance feature opens at 8:30 a.m., and (2) to handle the remaining calls requesting operator assistance when the feature closes at 5:00 p.m.”

Previous Agency Response: “OCSE agrees with the need to ensure adequate staffing throughout the day and perhaps limiting of flextime may be an option in achieving this end. OCSE is evaluating the limiting of flextime and other alternative methods to determine the most efficient way to ensure adequate staffing throughout the day. This will involve research and analysis of union contract, personnel policies and procedures, and other considerations.”

Current Status: PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

Our review of OCSE's current allocation of operator assignments revealed that the agency still does not ensure that the Helpline is adequately staffed throughout the period that it is in operation. Although OCSE has increased the number of operator stations, it still does not ensure that there is optimum coverage during the day. We conducted 18 random observations of the Helpline call center and observed that only 26 (77%) of the 33 operator stations on average were staffed during various periods of Helpline operation. This was despite the fact that the number of operators on the staff more than doubled (from 20 to 41) nearly two months prior to our observations.

OCSE has increased both the number of operator stations and the number of operators since the previous audit. However, it is still not utilizing its operators efficiently to ensure that the operator stations are staffed at full or nearly full capacity during the hours for operator assistance. Table IV, below, shows the results of our observations.

TABLE IV

Observation at the Helpline Telephone Call Center
October 29, 2002 through November 8, 2002

#	Date of Observation	Time Observation Started	Time Observation Ended	Number of Operators on Duty	Total Number of Operator Stations	Percentage of Staffed Stations
1	10/29/02	3:45pm	3:50pm	25	33	76%
2	10/29/02	4:25pm	4:30pm	11	33	33%
3	10/30/02	11:15am	11:20am	28	33	85%
4	10/30/02	12:10pm	12:15pm	22	33	67%
5	10/31/02	12:41pm	12:46pm	24	33	73%
6	10/31/02	1:25pm	1:30pm	13	33	39%
7	11/1/02	1:20pm	1:25pm	13	33	39%
8	11/1/02	2:00pm	2:05pm	26	33	79%
9	11/1/02	2:15pm	2:20pm	30	33	91%
10	11/4/02	10:35am	10:40am	31	33	94%
11	11/4/02	11:15am	11:20am	33	33	100%
12	11/6/02	9:30am	9:35am	32	33	97%
13	11/6/02	10:10am	10:15am	33	33	100%
14	11/7/02	3:30pm	3:35pm	31	33	94%
15	11/7/02	4:25pm	4:30pm	19	33	58%
16	11/8/02	2:10pm	2:15pm	26	33	79%
17	11/8/02	2:25pm	2:30pm	29	33	88%
18	11/8/02	2:45pm	2:50pm	33	33	100%
Averages:				26	33	77%

As shown in Table IV, stations were staffed at 77 percent of capacity, on average, during our observations. In only three instances did we observe that all 33 stations were 100 percent staffed. We made four observations during the lunch period (12 noon to 2:00 p.m.); on average, only 18 (55%) out of the 33 stations were staffed at those times. Moreover, on three different periods, we observed instances where the staffing levels were below 40 percent. This means that despite increased resources (staffing and operator stations) since the last audit, the Helpline was still operating at less than half of capacity.

OCSE officials told us that they have not made any changes to their operator flextime or lunchtime schedules since the previous audit. However, at the exit conference, OCSE officials stated that they had a Labor-Management meeting with both union officials representing operators and representatives from the City's Office of Labor Relations. OCSE provided us with minutes of the July 24, 2002, meeting in which they discussed the elimination of flextime for operators. However, the meeting ended with Management stating that they would hold off on implementing any changes for the present.

Nonetheless, OCSE will continue to be hindered in its ability to allocate staff based on workload until it is able to determine the actual call volume to the ACD.

* * * * *

Previous Finding: “31 percent of the callers who chose to speak to a Helpline operator hung up before their calls reached a Helpline operator.”

According to OCSE records, during January 2001, 4,781 (31%) of the 15,225 calls accepted by ACD were abandoned by callers before they received operator assistance. Of the calls that were abandoned, 3,299 (69%) were abandoned after the two-minute hold-time standard.

We were unable to determine the reasons that callers abandoned calls (this information was not available through the system), but we believe it was highly unlikely that all the calls were abandoned because operators were delayed in answering calls—31 percent of the calls that were abandoned during January 2001 were below the two-minute hold time standard threshold. Nevertheless, based on our audit, we believe that the program weaknesses cited were factors contributing significantly to the high percentage of abandoned calls.

As discussed during the previous audit, the effect of the Helpline’s not providing adequate service is that callers are inconvenienced in regard to both time and money. Since the Helpline is open during working hours for most persons, callers must take time out of their workday to call the Helpline and try to get through to an operator.

In the previous audit we made two recommendations to ACS regarding operator efficiency in receiving calls to the Helpline.

Previous Recommendation #6: “Analyze, on an ongoing basis, operator efficiency in answering calls requesting operator assistance and take steps to improve efficiency where feasible (e.g., hire more operators, expand or simplify choices available through automated attendant to minimize the number of callers requesting operator assistance).”

Previous Agency Response: “On an ongoing basis, OCSE analyzes operator efficiency in answering calls, and where feasible takes steps to improve efficiency. OCSE has been doing this since 08/99 and will continue to do so. It is this process that enabled OCSE to implement current changes (i.e., increasing the number of telephone lines, increasing the number of operators, initiating changes to the Helpline script, and increasing the queue), and plan for future changes (i.e., further additional staffing and a new, redesigned Helpline system).”

Current Status: PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED

ACS has improved the efficiency of the Helpline since the previous audit in regard to the number of calls accepted per each operator station and the number of calls answered per

operator. However, there still remains room for significant improvement in regard to limiting the number of calls abandoned by callers. The percentage of calls abandoned by callers since the previous audit increased, from 31 percent to 41 percent. (The percentage of calls abandoned after two minutes decreased, from 69 percent to 43 percent.)

As stated previously, since the last audit OCSE has increased the number of operators and operator stations for the Helpline. This has resulted in the expected increase in the overall number of calls accepted by the ACD system and the number answered by operators. Table V, below, shows a comparison of these figures between the previous audit and this follow-up audit.

TABLE V

Helpline Resources of Volume of Calls
Previous vs. Follow-up Audits

Attribute	Previous Audit (January 2001)	Follow-up Audit (September 2002)	Difference	% Change
Number of Operator Stations	14	33	19	136%
Number of Operators	27	41	14	52%
Number of Calls Accepted by ACD	15,225	41,183	25,958	170%
Number of Calls Answered by Operators	10,444	24,483	14,039	134%
Number of Calls Abandoned by Callers	4,781	16,700	11,919	
• Percentage of All Calls Accepted by ACD ¹	31%	41%		
Number of Calls Abandoned After 2 Minutes	3,299	7,168	3,869	
• Percentage of All Abandoned Calls ²	69%	43%		

¹Number of calls accepted by ACD divided by the total number of calls abandoned.

²Number of calls abandoned after two minutes divided by the total number of calls abandoned.

As shown in Table V, the Helpline has significantly increased the volume of calls accepted and answered. However, there has also been a significant increase in the number of abandoned calls. This may indicate that the Helpline is still not capable of meeting the demand for people using it.

To determine whether the increased volume of calls accepted and answered were due solely to the increased number of stations and operators, we analyzed the overall figures per station and per operator. The results are shown in Table VI, below.

TABLE VI

Helpline Efficiency in Accepting and Answering Calls for Operator Assistance
Previous vs. Follow-up Audits

Attribute	Previous Audit (January 2001)	Follow-up Audit (September 2002)	Difference	% Change
Calls Accepted per Operator Station	1,088	1,248	160	15%
Calls Answered per Station	746	742	(4)	(1%)
Calls Answered per Operator	387	597	210	54%
Calls Abandoned per Station	342	506	164	48%
Calls Abandoned per Station After 2 Minutes	236	217	(19)	(8%)

As shown in Table VI, the Helpline's efficiency in regard to the number of calls answered by operators has significantly increased. This may be due to OCSE improving the ratio of operators to stations, as indicated in Table V. In the previous audit we found that the stations could accommodate roughly half of the Helpline's operators. In the previous audit, there were 27 operators for 14 stations, indicating a ratio of 1.9:1, as compared to the 41 operators for 33 stations in this follow-up audit, a ratio of 1.2:1. There has also been a moderate increase of 15 percent in the number of calls accepted per operator station. This can be attributed to OCSE's increasing the size of the hold-queue, from the 10-call capacity in the previous audit to the 15-call capacity in this follow-up audit.

Nevertheless, there remains significant room for improvement. The number of calls abandoned per station has increased almost 50 percent. The number of calls abandoned after two minutes, although slightly lower, remains high—more than 200 calls per station. Overall, 41 percent of the calls accepted into the ACD were abandoned by callers. According to the OCSE Director of Enforcement and Customer Services, the level of abandoned calls is due to the increased hold-queue. The director stated that because more calls are being accepted by the system, it is more likely that callers will abandon the calls because they are not able to speak to an operator. In a follow-up meeting, however, the director told us that the agency has identified an abnormality in abandoned calls. Since June 2002, the average length of calls that are abandoned has been a little over two minutes. (Before June 2002, the average length of calls varied, reaching a high of approximately 11 minutes in May 2002.) The director stated that the system itself might be disconnecting some calls that are reported as abandoned. He said that the agency is researching this issue.

The number of calls abandoned can be an indication of the Helpline's inability to accommodate all the callers seeking operator assistance. As noted previously, the Helpline is open during working hours for most persons. The high percentage of abandoned calls may be due in part to callers who take time out of their workday to call the Helpline being unable to stay on the line for a significant period of time. We are unable to determine the percentage of abandoned calls that fall under this category, however, because information regarding the reasons that callers abandon calls is not available through the system.

As we stated earlier, OCSE is unable to provide us with the total number of callers seeking operator assistance. However, knowing this figure is key to improving the Helpline's efficiency in answering calls.

Based on our audit testing, it appears that much remains to be done in order for the Helpline to accommodate all callers seeking operator assistance. As we stated earlier in the report, 17 (24%) of the 71 calls we made were disconnected by the system because the hold-queue was full. Furthermore, 44 (81%) of our remaining 54 calls were not answered within three minutes after being transferred for operator assistance.

Recommendations

The Administration for Children's Services should:

1. Require coordinators and supervisors to monitor operators' lines to ensure that operators do not neglect to put their lines in "not ready" mode when they leave their stations.

Agency Response: "OCSE coordinators and supervisors are encouraged and required to call operators' numbers to manually monitor calls for a number of items. OCSE will attempt to increase their manual efforts regarding the 'not ready' mode. In addition, OCSE will provide written notice to operators and meet with them regarding the importance of properly using the 'not ready' mode. A monitoring feature for this purpose is expected to be included in the upgraded system that OCSE expects to have in place by the end of Fiscal Year 2004."

2. Devise a method to compile and analyze data regarding unsuccessful attempts of callers to obtain operator assistance. This information could be used to help determine the actual volume of calls requesting operator assistance and to identify areas where improvement is needed regarding Helpline's efficiency in answering those calls.

Agency Response: "OCSE is exploring the feasibility of removing and restoring limits on the queue. An 'open' queue for a short period could create a sample to help determine operator demand. OCSE has requested that a feature to count call volume be included in the specifications for an upgraded call system."

3. Allocate staff assignments based on workload figures (determined upon implementation of recommendation #2) to provide optimum coverage during Helpline hours, with a concentration on periods with the heaviest volume. To accomplish this, the agency should consider both limiting the use of flextime and altering the lunchtime schedule. For example, the agency could assign operators, on a rotating basis, to work on the Helpline at set hours to ensure that there are an adequate number of operators (1) when the Helpline's operator assistance feature

opens at 8:30 a.m., and (2) to handle the remaining calls requesting operator assistance when the feature closes at 5:00 p.m.

Agency Response: “OCSE agrees with the need to ensure adequate staffing throughout the day. OCSE management has met with Labor representatives regarding the limiting of flextime and talks are ongoing. OCSE continues to evaluate different strategies to ensure adequate staffing throughout the day to determine the most efficient method.”

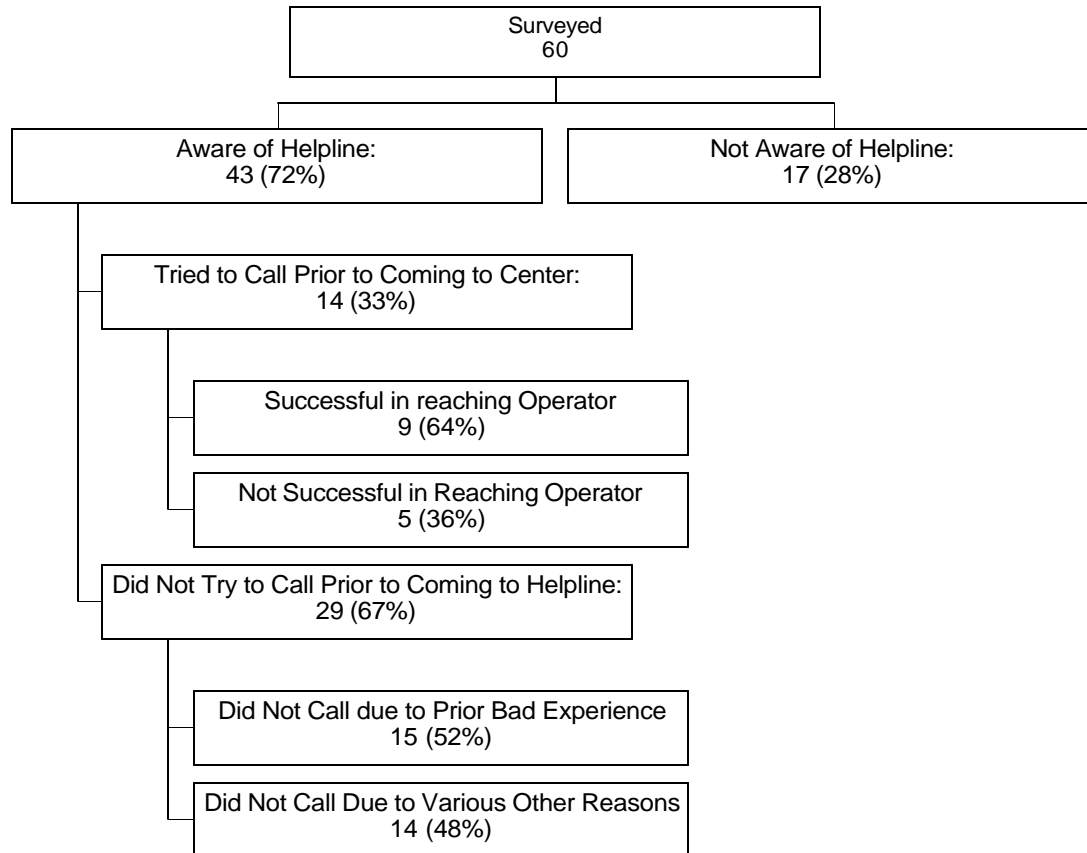
4. Continue to analyze, on an ongoing basis, operator efficiency in answering calls requesting operator assistance and take steps to improve efficiency where feasible.

Agency Response: “OCSE has been performing this analysis since the ACD system was installed and expects to continue to do so. OCSE analyzes operator efficiency in answering calls on an ongoing basis and, where feasible, takes steps to improve services.”

5. When funding becomes available, conduct a survey of Helpline callers to ascertain the demand for making operator assistance available during evening hours (e.g., 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., or 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) for those persons who work during the hours that the Helpline currently provides operator assistance. If the feedback is positive, ACS should consider conducting a pilot study to determine whether expanding operator assistance to evening hours materially reduces the number of abandoned calls.

Agency Response: “OCSE agrees that operator assistance outside of the normal business hours is potentially beneficial. If funding becomes available, OCSE would expect to explore the effects of expanding the operator assistance outside of normal business hours. However, State cooperation would be needed in providing CSMS computer services past normal business hours.”

Walk-in Customer Survey





ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
150 WILLIAM STREET - 18th FLOOR
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10038

WILLIAM C. BELL
Commissioner

May 21, 2003

Mr. Greg Brooks
Deputy Comptroller
Policy, Audits, Accountancy & Contracts
The City of New York Office of the Comptroller
Executive Offices
1 Centre Street, Room 1100
New York, NY 10007-2341

Re: NYC Comptroller's Follow-Up Audit Report MJ03-085F
Follow-up Audit on the Effectiveness of ACS' Child Support Helpline

Dear Mr. Brooks:

Thank you for sharing with us the Draft Report for the above captioned audit.

Attached is our response to your recommendations and our Audit Implementation Plans (AIPs). ACS looks forward to working with your office to improve the delivery of services to the children of the City of New York.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. C. Bell".

William C. Bell

Attachments

City of New York Office of the Comptroller
The Effectiveness of Child Support Helpline By
The Administration for Children's Services (ACS)
Audit Number MJ03-085F

Administration for Children's Services
Response to Recommendations
May 21, 2003

ACS was pleased to have confirmation from the Comptroller's audit report that (1) Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) has made some improvements in the Child Support Helpline system by hiring more operators and increasing the size of the hold-queue. As a result, more calls are answered by operators and more calls requesting operator assistance are accepted in the Automated Call Distribution (ACD) system; and (2) OCSE has improved the Helpline's overall efficiency since the previous audit in regard to the number of calls answered per operator and the number of calls accepted per operator station.

Recommendation 1

OCSE coordinators and supervisors are encouraged and required to call operators' numbers to manually monitor calls for a number of items. OCSE will attempt to increase their manual efforts regarding the "not ready" mode. In addition, OCSE will provide written notice to operators and meet with them regarding the importance of properly using the "not ready" mode. A monitoring feature for this purpose is expected to be included in the upgraded system that OCSE expects to have in place by the end of Fiscal Year 2004.

Recommendation 2

OCSE is exploring the feasibility of removing and restoring limits on the queue. An "open" queue for a short period could create a sample to help determine operator demand. OCSE has requested that a feature to count call volume be included in the specifications for an upgraded call system.

Recommendation 3

OCSE agrees with the need to ensure adequate staffing throughout the day. OCSE management has met with Labor representatives regarding the limiting of flextime and talks are ongoing. OCSE continues to evaluate different strategies to ensure adequate staffing throughout the day to determine the most efficient method.

Recommendation 4

OCSE has been performing this analysis since the ACD system was installed and expects to continue to do so. OCSE analyzes operator efficiency in answering calls on an ongoing basis and, where feasible, takes steps to improve services.

Recommendation 5

OCSE agrees that operator assistance outside of the normal business hours is potentially beneficial. If funding becomes available, OCSE would expect to explore the effect of expanding the operator assistance outside of normal business hours. However, State cooperation would be needed in providing CSMS computer services past normal business hours.

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
AUDIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER'S FOLLOW-UP AUDIT ON
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACS' CHILD SUPPORT HELPLINE
AUDIT NUMBER: MJ03-085F

RECOMMENDATION 1: The Administration for Children's Services should require coordinators and supervisors to monitor operators' lines to ensure that operators do not neglect to put their lines in "not ready" mode when they leave their stations.

RESPONSIBLE MANAGER'S NAME: MICHAEL INFRANCO, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	DATES START	DATES END	DOCUMENTATION	COMMENTS
OCSE coordinators and supervisors are required to call operators' numbers to manually monitor calls for a number of items. OCSE will attempt to increase their manual efforts regarding the "not ready" mode. In addition OCSE will provide written notice to operators and meet with them regarding the importance of properly using the "not ready" mode. A monitoring feature for this purpose is expected to be included in the upgraded system that OCSE expects to have in place by the end of Fiscal Year 2004.	Anthony Defazio, Director Enforcement and Customer Services	Ongoing	Continuing	In progress	6/30/04

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
AUDIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER'S FOLLOW-UP AUDIT ON
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACS' CHILD SUPPORT HELPLINE
AUDIT NUMBER: MJ03-085F

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Administration for Children's Services should devise a method to compile and analyze data regarding unsuccessful attempts of callers to obtain operator assistance. This information could be used to help determine the actual volume of calls requesting operator assistance and to identify areas where improvement is needed regarding Helpline's efficiency in answering those calls.

RESPONSIBLE MANAGER'S NAME: MICHAEL INFRANCO, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	DATES		DOCUMENTATION	COMMENTS
		START	END		
OCSE is exploring the feasibility of removing and restoring limits on the queue. An "open" queue for a short period could create a sample to help determine operator demand.	Frank Olton, Director Fiscal and Enforcement Services	7/1/03	1/31/04		
OCSE has requested that a feature to count call volume be included in the specifications for an upgraded call system.	Ann Martinez, Deputy Associate Commissioner OCSE Management and Administrative Services	In Progress	6/30/04		

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
AUDIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER'S FOLLOW-UP AUDIT ON
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACS' CHILD SUPPORT HELPLINE
AUDIT NUMBER: MJ03-085F

RECOMMENDATION 3: The Administration for Children's Services should allocate staff assignments based on workload figures (determined upon implementation of recommendation #2) to provide optimum coverage during Helpline hours, with a concentration on periods with the heaviest volume. To accomplish this, the agency should consider both limiting the use of flex time and altering the lunchtime schedule. For example, the agency could assign operators, on a rotating basis, to work on the Helpline at set hours to ensure that there are an adequate number of operators (1) when the Helpline's operator assistance feature opens at 8:30 a.m., and (2) to handle the remaining calls requesting operator assistance when the feature closes at 5:00 p.m.

RESPONSIBLE MANAGER'S NAME: MICHAEL INFRANCO, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	DATES		DOCUMENTATION	COMMENTS
		START	END		
OCSE management has met with Labor representatives regarding the limiting of flextime and talks are ongoing. OCSE continues to evaluate different strategies to ensure adequate staffing throughout the day to determine the most efficient method.	Anthony Defazio, Director Enforcement and Customer Services	Ongoing	Continuing		

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
AUDIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER'S FOLLOW-UP AUDIT ON
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACS' CHILD SUPPORT HELPLINE
AUDIT NUMBER: MJ03-085F

RECOMMENDATION: 4. The Administration for Children's Services should continue to analyze, on a ongoing basis, operator efficiency in answering calls requesting operator assistance and take steps to improve efficiency where feasible.

RESPONSIBLE MANAGER'S NAME: MICHAEL INFRANCO, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	DATES		DOCUMENTATION	COMMENTS
		START	END		
OCSE analyzes operator efficiency in answering calls on an ongoing basis, and where feasible, takes steps to improve service.	Celeste Lewis, Acting Director Customer Services	08/99	Continuing		OCSE has been performing this analysis since 08/99 and expects to continue to do so.

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
AUDIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER'S FOLLOW-UP AUDIT ON
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ACS' CHILD SUPPORT HELPLINE
AUDIT NUMBER: MJ03-085F

RECOMMENDATION 5: The Administration for Children's Services should, when funding becomes available, conduct a survey of Helpline callers to ascertain the demand for making operator assistance available during evening hours (e.g., 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., or 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) for those persons who work during the hours that the Helpline currently provides operator assistance. If the feedback is positive, ACS should consider conducting a pilot study to determine whether expanding operator assistance to evening hours materially reduces the number of abandoned calls.

RESPONSIBLE MANAGER'S NAME: MICHAEL INFRANCO, ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	DATES START END	DOCUMENTATION	COMMENTS
If funding becomes available, OCSE would expect to explore the effect of such a service expansion. However, State cooperation would be needed in providing CSMS computer services past normal business hours.	Anthony DeFazio, Director Enforcement and Customer Services	Depends on funding and staffing N/A		OCSE agrees that operator assistance outside of normal business hours is potentially beneficial.