



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
City of Chicago



REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL:

***DEPARTMENT OF STREETS AND SANITATION
GARBAGE COLLECTION PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT
FOLLOW-UP INQUIRY***

SEPTEMBER 2016

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OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
City of Chicago

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To the Mayor, Members of the City Council, City Clerk, City Treasurer, and residents of the City of Chicago:

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) has completed a follow-up to its April 2015 audit of the Department of Streets and Sanitation's (DSS) Garbage Collection Performance Measurement. OIG concludes that DSS has begun to implement corrective actions related to the audit findings.

The purpose of the 2015 audit was to determine DSS's ability to measure the performance of, and to exercise quality control over, garbage collection operations. Our audit found that,

- 1) gaps in DSS's performance data and measurement significantly limited the Department's ability to measure performance in support of maximizing utilization of resources; and
- 2) the supervisory process established in DSS's "Quality Control" Order 14-001 did not provide reasonable assurance of compliance with all of the Order's goals.

Based on the results of our audit, OIG recommended that DSS systematically assess data on garbage collection operations that are not captured by GPS, review its 40-minute time per alley performance standard and the number of assigned alleys per route, create an inventory of carts per household, and update Order 14-001 to clarify the Department's expectations for Division Superintendents' quality control responsibilities.

In April 2016, OIG inquired with DSS regarding the status of the corrective actions the Department had committed to implementing in its response to OIG's audit, as well as any other actions it may have taken. Based on the Department's response, we conclude that DSS has begun to implement the corrective actions related to the first audit finding and fully implemented the corrective actions related to the second finding. OIG urges the Department to continue working to resolve the findings noted in our original audit.

We thank the staff and leadership of DSS for their cooperation during both the original audit and the follow-up inquiry.

Respectfully,

Joseph M. Ferguson
Inspector General
City of Chicago

staffing levels to align assignments with the 300-minute time in alley standard; and

- d. more precisely measure the number of households and the corresponding number of carts that require City refuse service in each division.

Status of Corrective Action: **Pending Implementation.** DSS responded, in summary, as follows:

- a. On May 1, 2015, DSS issued an addendum to Quality Control Order 14-001, requiring that all breaks, in-between loads, and special assignments be fully documented on truck sheets, and that a Division Superintendent or Assistant Division Superintendent review each truck sheet for compliance. The addendum also requires Division Superintendents to conduct two random audits per shift, comparing GPS data to information recorded on truck sheets, and report the results to the Deputy Commissioner. DSS has recently modified its truck sheets to facilitate electronic data collection and storage. However, the Department has yet to undertake a systematic assessment of data captured on the truck sheets in order to inform operational decisions about staff levels and resource allocations.
- b. In response to our original audit, DSS stated that it had adjusted its time per alley performance standard to 32 minutes and that it will continue to review the metric to ensure use of the “most appropriate performance measurement tools.” Subsequent to submitting its response, DSS has been “revising collection routes in accordance with the new 32 minute standard,” and intends to “regularly monitor the time per alley, along with a full review of the metric annually.”
- c. In response to our original audit, DSS stated that it had improved the efficiency of its operations by decreasing the average daily crew deployment from 352 to 310 trucks, while also increasing from 10 to 11 the average number of alleys serviced per day. In response to OIG’s follow-up inquiry, DSS stated that it has further decreased the daily crew deployment to 300 trucks, and plans to reach 292 deployments by the fall of 2016. These improvements have allowed DSS to redirect 52 crews to support other services, such as recycling and rodent control.

CITY OF CHICAGO OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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- administrative and criminal investigations;
- audits of City programs and operations; and
- reviews of City programs, operations, and policies.

From these activities, OIG issues reports of findings and disciplinary and other recommendations to assure that City officials, employees, and vendors are held accountable for the provision of efficient, cost-effective government operations and further to prevent, detect, identify, expose, and eliminate waste, inefficiency, misconduct, fraud, corruption, and abuse of public authority and resources.

AUTHORITY

The authority to produce reports and recommendations on ways to improve City operations is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code § 2-56-030(c), which confers upon the Inspector General the following power and duty:

To promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness and integrity in the administration of the programs and operations of the city government by reviewing programs, identifying any inefficiencies, waste and potential for misconduct therein, and recommending to the mayor and the city council policies and methods for the elimination of inefficiencies and waste, and the prevention of misconduct.