# Department of Code Compliance

CITY OF DALLAS

Department of Code Compliance
Action Plan Briefing

presented to the

Dallas City Council
Quality of Life Committee

August 15, 2006

Code Compliance
Quality Assurance Team
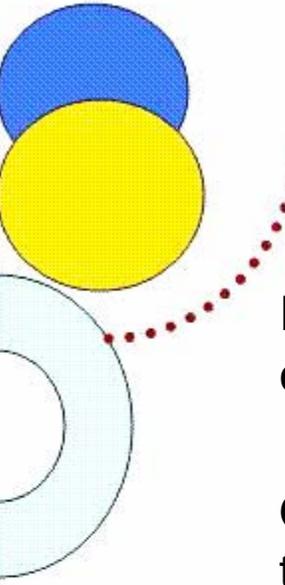
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In April & September of 2004, the Public Safety Committee issued a charge to improve 311 services to the citizens of Dallas.

On November 17, 2004, recommendations were made for improving the Department of Code Compliance, field enforcement organization.

Fixing 311 and creating a user friendly government are two components of the City Council's key focus areas (Staff Accountability and Neighborhood Quality of Life).

This briefing presents actions taken by the Department of Code Compliance relative to the above referenced recommendations.

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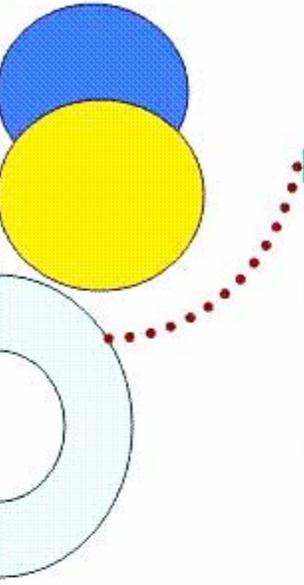
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RECOMMENDATION 1: Complete fixes to 311 system to ensure that
every request gets assigned to an Inspector.

CODE ACTION: Completed Short-term fixes to the 311 System:

» Formed Quality Assurance Team to monitor, troubleshoot, maintain and develop configuration of system applications, ensuring that service requests flow effectively.

» Backlog of 16,800 unassigned service requests were eliminated.

» Overdue service requests were reduced from 85,765 on 10/31/04 to 1,113 as of May 31, 2006

» Unassigned service request average was reduced to 5.61 daily as of May 31, 2006. (Monitoring is performed daily.)

CIS ACTION: Complete fixes to 311 System in the long term by:

» Communications Information Services (CIS) was requested to evaluate and implement a software solution to provide a long term solution.

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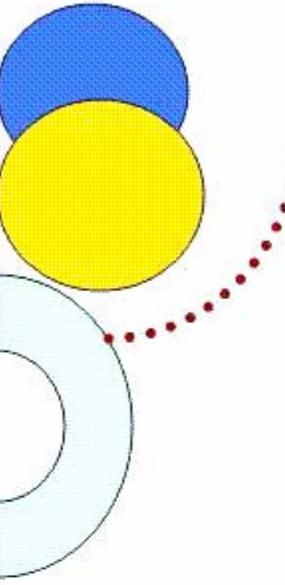
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CODE ACTIONS OF RECOMMENDATION 1: (Continued)

CODE ACTION: 311 System quality assurance actions of Code Compliance:

» Compiled list of known user errors. Conducted 15 training sessions targeted to address the identified errors.

» Developed 10 data entry Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for each Code service request type.

» Administered competency test to assess Inspectors' accurate usage of the 311 System and Standard Operation Procedures.

» Providing refresher classes as needed. (24 sessions conducted)

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RECOMMENDATION 2: Provide citizens with updates on progress for certain cases.

CODE ACTION: Configured service request to inform and update citizens regarding case resolution expectations by:

>> Configured service request flex questions to provide 311 call takers with Estimated Response Times (ERT) and Service Level Agreements (SLA).

>> Configured service requests to provide updates to citizens requesting service request progress or resolutions.

>> Revised Code Compliance e-mail confirmation message to include a phone contact for the Code Compliance Department.

>> Developed configuration concept to automatically assign customer contact request activities to Inspectors.

>> Developed methods to provide updated e-mail and letters regarding a report of actions taken by staff towards resolving service requests.

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RECOMMENDATION 3: Ensure that Code Department Managers can get useful performance data from the 311 database.

CODE ACTION: Conducting mandatory CRMS/Mobile Data Terminal training sessions for all Code Inspectors and Animal Services Officers twice a year. To date, 14 classes conducted, 121 Inspector's/Officer's trained.

CIS ACTION: Communication and Information Services (CIS) was requested to develop and purchase a software program that will summarize daily field activities compared to established performance standards, and thereafter, train Code staff on the use of the software program.

» To improve the accuracy of current Crystal reports, Code Compliance consulted and made configuration recommendations to CIS.

» Code Compliance developed a new geographical layer to enhance the 311 System's Statistical Overview report, which provides statistics within the Inspector's assigned areas.

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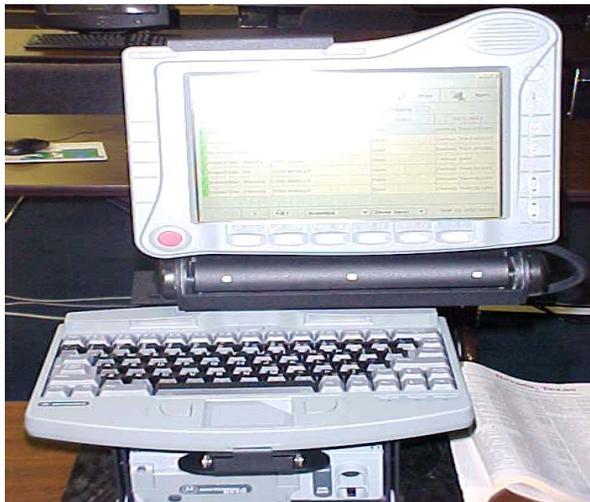
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RECOMMENDATION 4: Hold the department accountable for its effectiveness in resolving Code cases.

CODE ACTION: Conducting field audits on Code Inspectors to ensure compliance with the Code Department's Standard Operating Procedures.

The Department has implemented performance logs to measure and evaluate the number of field inspections and animal services responses performed daily, weekly and monthly.

Ensure accountability and effectiveness by:

» Use of Crystal reports to reflect staff's performance. Reports for Code Districts and Inspectors are readily accessible, to include 26 reports accessible for use by Code staff and Animal Services.

» Weekly reports to managers regarding overdue service requests

» Individual performance plans were updated to reflect performance standards

» Performance reporting changes were clearly communicated to all code personnel.

» Averaging 15.9 days from complaint to case closure for the first six months of FY05-06. (FY02-03 average was 64.4)

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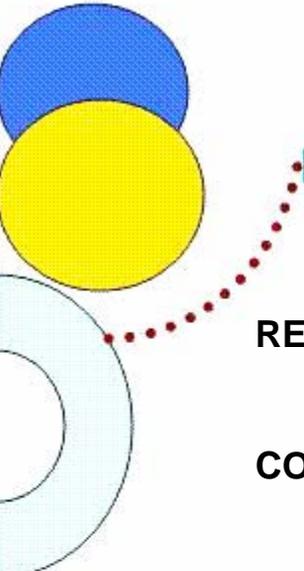
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RECOMMENDATION 5: Regularly conduct surveys to measure citizen satisfaction with quality of life in Dallas.

CODE ACTION: The Strategic Customer Services Department determines citizen satisfaction by:

> » Conducting routine feedback by conducting surveys from 5% of citizens submitting service requests each quarter. Code Quality Assurance Team provided 106 responses to web feedback requests.
> » November 2005, Code held a Code Summit for key citizens and neighborhood associations to obtain feedback regarding the delivery of services.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Increase coordination between City Attorney's Office and Code Compliance Department.

CODE ACTION: Coordination between the City Attorney's Office and Code Compliance enhanced by:

> » Conducting monthly meetings to identify inter-departmental issues, resolve overlap of responsibilities and Chapter 54 issues, including the discussion of equipment needs, training needs and designating threshold for transferring service requests.
> » Configured service request to assign to the appropriate Manager and Assistant Director for review and referral to the City Attorneys Office.

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RECOMMENDATION 6: (Continued)

CODE ACTION:

» Configured process for inter-departmental documentation on service requests.

» Configured a process for service request activities to generate an appropriate referral for service requests.

» Developed new service requests for Municipal Court Attorney's to prosecute and track civil citations.

» Developed a new service request to document Community Prosecutor's code actions.

» Developed a new service request to document Chapter 54 civil suits by City Attorneys.

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RECOMMENDATION 7: Once department is fully staffed and trained, actively manage the flow of requests from Council to staff.

CODE ACTION: Code Compliance filled vacant Inspector's positions and trained new staff.

STRATEGIC CUSTOMER SERVICE ACTION: Strategic Customer Services (SCS) completed training and encourages Council staff to voluntarily use the 311 system. SCS briefed the 311 Call Takers, Council Assistants and City Manager's Office regarding policy:

» Initial inspections will be conducted within the allocated Estimated Response Time (ERT).
» Re-inspections will be conducted within the allocated times.
» Cases will be updated within 48 hours of initial inspections.
» Cases will be addressed within the allocated Service Level Agreement (SLA).

CODE ACTION: As of May 31, 2006, only 0.1% of Code cases had not been resolved within the allocated Service Level Agreement (SLA).

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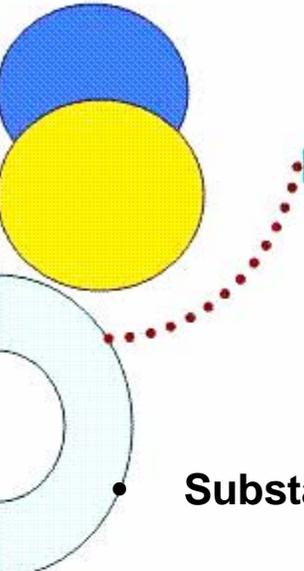
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Summary

- **Substantially improved Customer Service:**

  - Dramatically improved response times on service requests. During the first 6 months of FY 05-06, staff averaged 15.9 days from complaint to closure vs. 64.4 days in FY 02-03
  - Providing responses to citizens regarding status on service requests
  - Improved quality and consistency of responses recorded on 311 System through establishing standards and training staff
  - Eliminated backlog of overdue service request while achieving a 0.1% overdue rate on current service requests

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