

EMERGENCY SUPPORT RESPONSE TEAM RECEPTION CENTRE MANAGEMENT AUDIT

Recommendation

That the September 4, 2024, Office of the City Auditor report OCA02609, be received for information.

Report Purpose

Information only.

Executive Summary

This report presents the results of the Emergency Support Response Team Reception Centre Management audit.

REPORT

The Emergency Support Response Team (ESRT) provides social services to people who are displaced from their homes during an emergency or disaster. This support is intended to meet immediate needs such as shelter, food, and clothing.

The objective of this audit was to determine whether ESRT plans for and operates reception centres to effectively support displaced persons.

Overall, the Office of the City Auditor (OCA) found that ESRT does plan for and operate reception centres to effectively support displaced people. In particular the OCA found ESRT:

- Has documented and sufficiently detailed roles and responsibilities for most roles involved with reception centre activations, allowing them to efficiently onboard new ESRT members in order to bring those members up to speed for reception centre operations.
- Uses experience with past activations and completion of additional emergency management training for scheduling shifts for key roles at reception centres, to effectively match the right people up with the right roles.
- Has exceeded their targeted number of City staff trained to work in the reception centres, helping to ensure that adequate supply of trained staff are available for future activations.

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- Manages the amount of staff required to operate the reception centres by using documented criteria to schedule shifts, ending shifts early during slow periods, and adjusting the total personnel on site to match the number of services they are providing.
- Informally identifies opportunities for improvement and generally implements the key opportunities that they identify.
- Collects and tracks the required information that the Financial Services Branch needs to prepare a submission for reimbursement by the Province.

However, the OCA also found the following areas where ESRT can improve its effectiveness:

- The documentation for a few key roles did not fully capture the breadth of their responsibilities or specific training preferences.
- ESRT relies on staff members' home position supervisors to monitor and approve timesheets for hours worked during reception centre shifts, which could be done in addition to hours worked in their home position. In order to accurately approve time, home position supervisors need access to hours worked at the ESRT reception centre, as well as an understanding of the expectations around not working on earned days off, maximum daily hours, and required rest time between shifts. This information was not readily available to home position supervisors.
- ESRT does not have a formal process to evaluate every reception centre activation, and there was one instance where ESRT did not fully implement a key opportunity for improvement as they originally intended.

The OCA made the following recommendations to ESRT:

1. Identify and document the full list of responsibilities and training requirements for key roles during a reception centre activation.
2. Provide home position supervisors with sufficient information of ESRT's expectation of their oversight, and access to the reception centre shift information.
3. Implement a post-activation process that evaluates activations for lessons learned and tracks implementation of identified opportunities for improvement.

Policy

Bylaw 16097, Audit Committee Bylaw, section 14(d) states that "Committee will review all reports from the City Auditor dealing with completed audit projects."

Attachment

1. Emergency Support Response Team Reception Centre Management Audit Report