NYC TRANSIT CAN BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO HELP POINT CALLS BY IMPROVING OPERATIONS – FINAL

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New York City Transit (NYC Transit) has intercoms located within all its subway stations that allow the public to report an emergency or request information. These "Help Points," developed and installed by a private company, are attached to columns or standalone posts. The Help Point system was first introduced in stations in 2011 and is currently being upgraded as part of a capital program. Given the more recent introduction of Wi-Fi internet service throughout the system that can provide riders with other communication tools, the Office of the MTA Inspector General (OIG) initially reviewed whether the public continues to use the Help Point system. OIG determined that the Help Point system does still generate a high number of calls. During a six-month period in 2023, OIG determined that NYC Transit received 140,698 Help Point calls, an average of 23,450 calls a month. Of these calls, 70% came in on the emergency line and 30% on the information line. Due to the high usage, OIG then focused its efforts on the types of calls received by NYC Transit and whether NYC Transit was able to handle these calls promptly and efficiently.

A. Summary of Findings

- **Almost three-quarters of Help Point calls were not from customers in need of assistance or information.** OIG found that 50% of all Help Point calls were labeled "mischief calls," and another 22% were calls made by agency personnel testing the system. Only the remaining 28% of calls were from customers seeking emergency assistance or information. While this percentage of "real calls" was surprisingly low, it still amounted to 39,742 calls in six months.

- **Many customer calls were not answered or were unacceptably delayed.** NYC Transit did not answer 1,198 calls (1.7%) made to the emergency line. Emergency calls from customers in need of assistance included concerns such as reporting the presence of an injured passenger, a customer being threatened or harassed, or an unauthorized person on the tracks. For the emergency calls it did handle, the agency answered only 75% of them within 15 seconds – a lower rate than the 90% standard for 911 call centers and certainly

lower than the agency's stated goal of answering all calls immediately. In addition, during the six-month period, 2,762 calls (7%) made to the information line were not answered. OIG identified several causes for these delays, including staffing level fluctuations, organizational restructuring, inadequate performance by call center employees, and lack of accurate operational information to support better managerial oversight of this important function.

- **Emergency calls are not prioritized over information calls**. Emergency calls are addressed at the same speed – and with the same delays – as information calls.

- **NYC Transit was unaware of the extent of problems with the Help Point system.** NYC Transit did not know, analyze, or review its performance statistics. When OIG began this audit, NYC Transit did not know how many calls were coming in from Help Points, the split between emergency and information calls, or the magnitude of the mischief calls.

B. Summary of Recommendations

This report details the areas in which the agency can improve the performance of its Help Points call-management system and describes the causes of the system's performance shortfalls. The report concludes that NYC Transit can improve performance by working to reduce unnecessary call traffic, analyzing its own performance data to identify areas needing improvement, managing the call center with greater attention to response time, and prioritizing emergency calls. Given the changing nature of technology and the challenges of managing the Help Point system, NYC Transit would benefit from evaluating alternatives to Help Points in the future. This report makes nine recommendations with specific actions addressing each of these areas.

C. Summary of Agency Response

NYC Transit accepted all nine recommendations, stating that it would decrease unnecessary demand on the system by working to deter mischief calls and by increasing the efficiency of its maintenance tests. The agency asserted that it would also improve operations of its call center to increase coverage and decrease the time to answer calls. NYC Transit also agreed to leverage its call system data to better assess how to improve customer service and call center performance. And finally, NYC Transit will conduct a pilot project to determine the efficiency of placing non-emergency calls on hold to assess whether the next call in the queue is an emergency. If successful, this will become standard procedure.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Help Point Equipment

A Help Point intercom is an interactive communication device that allows subway customers in stations to contact NYC Transit personnel. NYC Transit currently has multiple Help Point intercoms installed in every subway station, and a total of 3,016 Help Points across the system's 472 stations. Each Help Point device has two buttons:

- a RED EMERGENCY button to be used only in an urgent situation
- a GREEN INFORMATION button to ask for travel information

Figure 1: Help Point in Station

B. Installation & Upgrade Projects

Help Points cost $252.7 million to install; installations began in 2011 and were completed by 2018. As of mid-2024, another capital project estimated to cost $79.2 million is underway to upgrade multiple communication systems, including Help Points, station booth equipment, and customer assistance intercoms.[1] The upgrade, which began in 2018, was initially expected to be completed by the end of 2020, but is now projected to be completed by the end of 2024.

[1] Customer assistance intercoms were the prior generation of such devices before Help Points, and they still exist in many locations and will remain in service.

C. How Calls are Handled

Within the subway Operations Control Center, a Stations call center (OCC Stations) answers calls from the station booths, Help Points, elevator intercoms, and other customer assistance intercoms. Emergency calls from Help Points go directly to OCC Stations. In contrast, information calls are first routed to the local station booth; if the call is not answered at the booth, the system forwards the call to OCC Stations. At the call center, the system routes calls to the "most available" phone operator.[2] If the operator does not answer the call within about 15 seconds, the system forwards the call to the next most available phone operator.

Upon answering a call, the operator classifies the call using categories defined by OCC Stations. Examples of some of the more commonly noted categories for *emergency* calls are:

- Ill or unconscious customer
- Injured customer
- Threatened or harassed customer
- Unauthorized person on the track

Examples of some of the more commonly noted categories for *information* calls are:

- Fare inquiry
- Lost property
- Disruption in service
- Reporting unauthorized sale of swipes

III. FINDINGS

A. Almost Three-Quarters of Help Point Calls Were Not from Customers

OIG analyzed Help Point system data for May to October 2023 and found that NYC Transit received 140,698 Help Point calls, an average of 23,450 calls a month. During the six-month period, 98,162 calls (70%) were to the emergency line, and 42,536 calls (30%) were to the information line.

[2] "Most available" operator means that if there are two available operators – one who was on the phone one minute ago and one who was on the phone two minutes ago – the system would forward the call to the operator who was last on the call two minutes ago, because they were not taking calls for more time and hence were more available.

OIG grouped calls received by OCC Stations into three types:

- **Customer Calls** – customers calling NYC Transit in need of travel information or emergency assistance
- **Equipment Checks** – Stations employees pressing the Help Point buttons to test if the equipment worked properly
- **Mischief Calls** – prank calls

This high-level analysis proved very revealing. A full 50% of all Help Point calls during the period were mischief calls. An additional 22% were made to test the system, and only 28% of calls were from customers seeking emergency assistance or information. Thus, 72% of all Help Point calls were not from customers seeking assistance. These numbers are illustrated in the figures below.

Figure 2: Types of Help Point Calls for May to October 2023

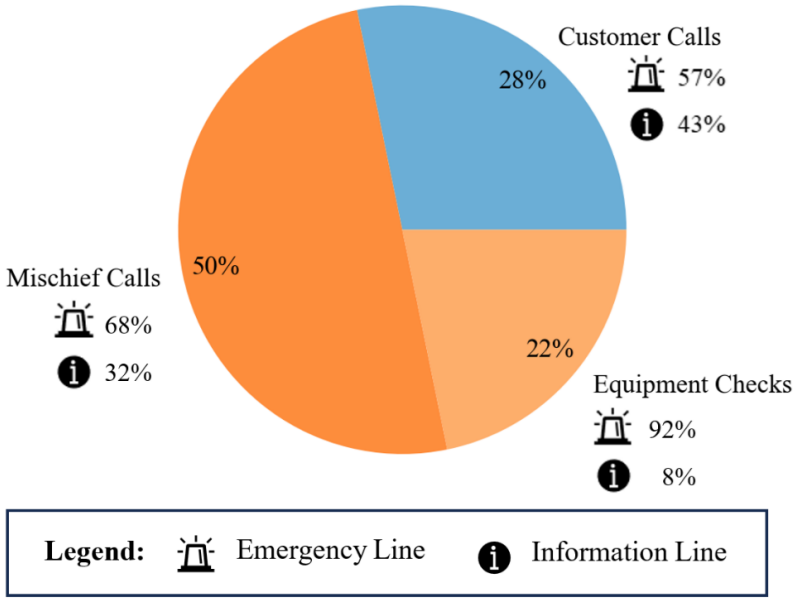

Figure 3 illustrates a breakdown of how the calls in each category were received. For example, the largest group of calls were mischief calls coming in on the emergency line: 34% of all calls during the period.

Figure 3: Types of Help Point Calls, including Emergency vs. Information

	Grouped by Subcategory		Grouped by Category	
Call Subcategory	**No. of Calls**	***Percent***	**No. of Calls**	***Percent***
Mischief Emergency	47,496	*34%*	70,308	*50%*
Mischief Information	22,812	*16%*		
Equipment Check Emergency	28,240	*20%*	30,648	*22%*
Equipment Check Information	2,408	*2%*		
Customer Emergency	22,426	*16%*	39,742	*28%*
Customer Information	17,316	*12%*		

This high volume of calls from people *not* seeking assistance burdens OCC Stations. In addition, it contributes to delays in answering actual customer calls – or encourages callers to abandon their efforts without reaching OCC Stations at all.

OIG identified two factors that contributed to the high number of non-customer assistance calls, including some factors related to agency operations. OIG believes that some of the unnecessary calls could be curtailed.

1. Wasteful Equipment Checks

NYC Transit policy requires that Stations personnel test each of the more than 3,000 Help Points weekly.[3] OCC Stations staff must answer each of these test calls. Because the system cannot differentiate between test calls and customer calls, it simply adds every call to the incoming queue. As a result, OCC Stations employees' workload increases, potentially taking resources away from true customer calls.

However, with the new capital upgrade nearing completion, there are opportunities for NYC Transit to use new managerial reports and improved technology to reduce the number of test calls without risking Help Point performance. For example, Help Points that customers have regularly and successfully used to call the Operations Control Center do not require weekly tests because it is evident that they are operational. NYC Transit could run reports to identify intercoms that have *not* been used during a given period and then identify, for each Stations inspection cycle, which Help Points need to be inspected and which ones can be skipped. Specifically, the agency should be able to generate a report showing which Help Points have not recently transmitted viable calls and might have a maintenance problem, and then direct Stations personnel to inspect only the units identified on that report.

[3] Around 90% of the time, Stations personnel test the Help Points equipment by only pressing the Emergency button. Approximately 10% of the time, the personnel also press the Information button.

2. Unaddressed Mischief Calls

As noted above, half of the calls received by OCC Stations were mischief calls. NYC Transit employees told OIG that they knew these calls were frequent but did not know the magnitude of the problem. In addition, call center operators stated that they often recognize the voices of some callers who make multiple prank calls in a day, sometimes for multiple days in a row. The operators categorize all prank calls as mischief calls.[4]

OIG identified several opportunities for NYC Transit to reduce the number of mischief calls. First, the call data revealed discernable trends that OCC Stations could act on. For example, many of the mischief calls occurred mid-afternoon or during late-night hours. OCC Stations personnel agreed that this is possibly due to young people taking the subway after school, or impaired individuals taking the subway or sheltering in stations overnight. Perhaps cameras could provide information on who is making inappropriate calls to OCC Stations. These facts also indicate that NYC Transit should coordinate its efforts more closely with the NYC Police Department (NYPD) and intervention specialists working for NYC Transit or New York City's social service agencies. By using identified trends to proactively place law enforcement or intervention specialists where mischief calls are very likely to recur, these joint efforts may be able to prevent or deter inappropriate behavior or to quickly react to it once it happens.

In addition, NYC Transit should place a sign or sticker on each Help Point warning against misuse. This warning should include the potential consequences for falsely reporting an emergency.

B. Some Calls are Not Answered or are Unacceptably Delayed

OIG learned that OCC Stations requires its operators to answer all Help Point calls "immediately." Industry standards and guidelines for call center performance provide more nuanced criteria. The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) standards state that 90% of all 911 calls should be answered within 15 seconds and 95% answered within 20 seconds.[5] NENA does not allow for any acceptable rate for abandonment of 911 calls.[6] For

[4] Based on operator-entered data, OIG's analysis found that in about 10% of the mischief calls, the operator answered the call but did not hear anyone speak.

[5] NENA Standard for 9-1-1 Call Processing, NENA-STA-020.1-2020, section 2.2.1, issued April 16, 2020. According to its website, NENA is a "non-profit professional organization solely focused on 9-1-1 operations, technology, education, and policy issues." https://www.nena.org/page/who-we-are (last visited July 26, 2024).

[6] An abandonment rate is traditionally defined as the percentage of customers who hang up before they get connected with an agent. Since the Help Point system does not allow for a customer to cancel or hang up a call, for purposes of this report, OIG interprets an abandoned call as a call that gets disconnected by the system prior to reaching an operator.

regular, non-emergency customer service calls, OIG identified guidelines published by the Service Quality Measurement (SQM) Group – a recognized firm that provides quality assurance software for call centers. Their industry survey concludes that 80% of calls should be answered within 20 seconds and sets a 6% call abandonment rate.[7]

To determine whether OCC Stations was answering Help Points calls timely, OIG analyzed the six months of Help Points emergency and information calls and compared these data sets to the NENA standards and SQM customer service guidelines, respectively.[8]

1. Emergency Calls

OIG found that NYC Transit did not meet the NENA standards for emergency calls. While OCC Stations operators answered 98.3% of emergency calls, they did not answer the remaining 1.7% (1,198 calls). Additionally, many calls were unacceptably delayed. OCC Stations answered only 75% of calls within 15 seconds, well below the NENA standard of 90%, and only 82% of calls within 20 seconds, below NENA's 95% guideline. In fact, the call center took from more than one minute to three minutes to answer 6% of the emergency calls, as Figure 4 shows, and more than three minutes to answer 1% (820) of those calls.

Figure 4: Distribution of Emergency Queue Time[9]

Queue Time	No. of Calls[10]	*Percent*
15 seconds or less	52,336	*75%*
16 seconds – 1 minute	12,600	*18%*
Over 1 minute – 3 minutes	4,166	*6%*
Over 3 minutes	820	*1%*

[7] The SQM Group, a North American call center software company, conducted research on the topic and issued call center guidelines based on this research. These guidelines cite a 6% call abandonment rate as the most common but state that a rate of 5% or lower is considered a "world-class target." https://www.sqmgroup.com/resources/library/blog/industry-standards-top-call-center-kpis (published January 19, 2023) and https://www.sqmgroup.com/resources/library/blog/call-center-metrics-and-world-class-targets (published December 27, 2021).

[8] Equipment check calls from MTA employees were excluded in this analysis.

[9] "Queue time" indicates the entire time a caller waits for their call to be answered, including ring time.

[10] This table includes all calls that were on queue, regardless of whether they were eventually answered. The unanswered calls are included in this table and are represented in all three categories due to a glitch in the system to be discussed later in this report.

2. Customer Information Calls

Regarding customer information calls, NYC Transit had a mixed performance. OCC Stations did not answer 7% (2,762 calls) of these calls – above the SQM guidance of a 6% maximum call abandonment rate. However, the call center did meet the guidance of answering at least 80% of calls within 20 seconds: Stations personnel answered 83% of the information calls within that timeframe. However, some callers experienced significant delays. The call center answered 5% of the calls after more than one minute to three minutes of wait time, as Figure 5 shows, and 1% of those calls (330) after more than three minutes.

Figure 5: Distribution of Information Queue Time

Queue Time	No. of Calls[11]	*Percent*
15 seconds or less	30,730	*77%*
16 seconds – 1 minute	6,959	*17%*
Over 1 minute – 3 minutes	2,109	*5%*
Over 3 minutes	330	*1%*

C. Many Factors Have Caused the Poor Response Times

The agency's poor performance in answering Help Point calls is a multifaceted issue, spanning several different areas of concern and causal factors. The causes OIG identified, discussed below, include shortcomings of the system, inadequate agency procedures, and the high demands on the system.

1. System Flaws and Dropped Calls

While the Help Points system is supposed to allow a call to ring indefinitely until an operator answers the call, at times a known technical glitch will cause the system to drop some calls. From May through October 2023, 3,960 calls (2.8% of the total volume) were dropped; this is the same as the total number of calls that were unanswered, because these calls should have rung until answered, no matter how long that would have taken.[12] This glitch prevents calls from reaching operators when they become available to take the next call. NYC Transit and its Help Points contractor are aware of this problem and have been actively working to fix it as the upgrade project continues.

[11] As with the previous table, this count includes all calls that were on queue, including those that eventually went unanswered.

[12] It is not possible for a caller to hang up or cancel their call. Therefore, the only possible explanation is that the system ultimately dropped the call.

2. Fluctuating Staffing Levels

As the General Superintendent in charge of OCC Stations informed OIG, the call center is budgeted for four operators per shift to answer Help Point calls. Typically, a fifth operator is also present, working overtime. However, when employees take time off, the actual staffing level during some shifts is only three or four operators. At these lower staffing levels, the call center has a reduced capacity to answer calls in a timely manner.

Staff availability also decreases during shift changes when each operator vacates their console, and the next operator prepares to take over. During these periods, OIG found that operators are somewhat less likely to answer calls. For example, during the six-month period, 288 calls were on queue for five minutes without ever reaching an operator before the call was dropped, and 170 of those calls, or 60%, occurred during a shift change – a much higher percentage than would be expected.[13]

3. Increased Call Volumes Due to Restructuring

OCC Stations operators answer calls originating from Help Points as well as from station booths, elevator intercoms, and older customer assistance intercoms. The General Superintendent of OCC Stations informed OIG that the volume of Help Points calls has increased in recent years. Until a few years ago, the MTA's Travel Information Center would answer all calls coming in on the Help Points information line that were not answered in the station booths. However, the MTA closed the Travel Information Center and redirected those Help Point calls to OCC Stations.

Further, in March 2023, the agency moved station agents out of the booths for much of their shifts. While station agents are often standing near their booths and can return in time to catch some incoming calls, they naturally miss more calls than in the past; those unanswered calls are then routed to OCC Stations. From May through October 2023, OCC Stations received 42,536 calls (30% of all calls) on the information lines – calls that formerly would not have come to OCC Stations. While the number of calls to OCC Stations has increased, the number of operators budgeted per tour has remained at four since at least 2019.

4. Lack of Call Prioritization

OCC Stations does not prioritize emergency calls over calls seeking information; instead, it handles all calls on a "first come, first served" basis. The system routes calls as they come in to the next most available phone operator. Even though each call is identified on the operator's

[13] In OIG's analysis, "shift change" is defined as 30 minutes before and after the start times of a shift.

screen as coming in on the emergency or information line, operators must answer the calls in the order in which they come in. The system does not allow the operator to answer the calls out of order. However, the system does allow an operator to put a call on hold to answer another call in the queue. Therefore, in theory, the operator could prioritize an emergency call by putting an information call on hold. However, after OIG discussed the possibility with the OCC Stations General Superintendent, she surveyed all three shifts of operators and learned that they do not use this feature to prioritize emergency calls; instead, they follow the "first come, first served" principle, as they were trained to do.

As a result, emergency calls are addressed at the same speed – and with the same delays – as information calls. Yet, since emergencies are more time-sensitive than requests for travel information, NYC Transit should prioritize emergency calls to enable a faster response. The agency should explore the possibility of reprogramming the Help Point call management system to allow emergency calls to take priority. If that is not feasible, NYC Transit should develop policies and procedures that would allow operators to put information-seeking customers on hold.

5. Inadequate Performance of Certain OCC Stations Operators

OIG analyzed the call data to see how well the individual operators were performing, e.g., how quickly they answered calls and how many calls they "missed."[14] An operator missing a call causes the system to forward the call to another operator, which increases the time it takes for a customer to receive the help they are seeking. The analysis revealed that the average rate for operators missing calls was 14%.[15] This rate varied widely among the operators; the operator with the highest rate missed 29% of the calls routed to them.

The reasons for certain operators' poor levels of performance were not clear. However, OCC Stations officials told OIG that a contributing factor might be that managers assigned some of the operators additional duties, such as answering calls from the old customer information intercoms, which OIG's analysis did not account for. This additional workload would not have been captured in the Help Point data.

[14] A "missed" call occurs if an operator does not answer the call after it rings for approximately 15 seconds. After 15 seconds, the call routes to another operator. A missed call does not necessarily result in an unanswered call, but it does result in a longer queue time.

[15] Since many of the forwarded calls are eventually answered, the overall rate of unanswered calls by OCC Stations is lower than a given operator's "missed" rate. For example, if a call routes to three operators before it is finally answered by the third, the first two will have "missed" the call. Only the third is credited with answering.

OIG found that OCC Stations managers did not understand what was causing the inadequate performance levels because they had not been receiving or analyzing relevant operator performance data. This is discussed more fully in Finding D.

6. Lack of Policies and Procedures

In 2016, the MTA's internal auditors recommended that management develop formal policies and procedures for the Help Point program to ensure that all emergency calls would be answered in a timely manner. The agency agreed to do that by the end of that year. However, OCC Stations officials told OIG that eight years later, there are still no policies or procedures for the program: no written guidelines on how to answer calls, how quickly calls must be answered, which calls to prioritize, how managers should monitor operators' performance, or which analytical reports to run. Such tools help employees learn how to do their jobs and support managers in achieving their objectives. Further, the lack of standards and guidance has hindered OCC Stations' ability to identify and address the trouble areas, such as those laid out in this report.

D. Management Does Not Use Available Performance Information

To properly oversee and improve the OCC Stations call center, managers need accurate and timely data to know how well the call center and its operators are performing. Without this information, they cannot plan operational improvements or fully understand the issues they should address, such as frequently missed or delayed calls. Yet, OIG found that OCC Stations managers received almost no performance reports from the upgraded system for handling Help Points calls.

In fact, OIG's own analysis of the Help Point call management process was severely delayed due to the lack of performance information available from OCC Stations. At first, OIG received outdated information and then had to work with the contractor for months to develop reports that would answer fundamental performance questions. Additionally, OIG learned that although the system upgrade project had been going on since 2018, OIG – not NYC Transit – was the first group to request such data from the contractor.

The vendor installing the upgraded Help Point call management system is required by its contract to create up to 20 reports as requested by the agency. However, the project has been delayed for four years and the agency is only now creating a report list for the contractor. OIG learned that because the OCC Stations managers are relatively new in their current positions, they are not aware of what reports the previous call system had produced.

Additionally, while the contractor recently provided two data reports to OCC Stations, neither of these data reports include the call detail necessary to identify trends or patterns requiring managerial attention.

- The first report summarizes all calls received by the new system – not just Help Points – and aggregates the data by operator.[16] However, it only includes averages and totals while omitting the handling of individual calls. Thus, it does not identify such key issues as each operator's missed calls or calls with a long wait time.

- The second report shows the percentage of calls that are mischief calls. However, OCC Stations does not have analysts on staff who can break down the call statistics by such attributes as the station where the call originated or the general time of day, thereby limiting the agency's ability to develop effective responses.

OCC Stations managers need better management reports to help them improve oversight and call center performance. Additionally, useful reports and regular analytical review may allow the agency to identify areas that need NYPD officers and/or intervention specialists to assist, as mentioned above. In the future, this information could be used to evaluate whether the benefits of the Help Point system outweigh continued maintenance and additional investment in the system.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

NYC Transit should:

1. Use the Help Point system's reporting capability to target equipment checks so they are most productive. For example, for each of Stations' inspection cycles, the agency could create lists of Help Points with no recent call activity that, therefore, might be experiencing problems, and then inspect only those Help Points.

   Agency Response: Agreed. The agency stated that it "will request the Help Point … [contractor] to generate a report on [Help Point] activations that can be exported into a format that Stations Environment can utilize to identify [Help Points] with no recent call activity to assess whether Stations' regularly scheduled equipment checks can be targeted to just the [Help Points] with no activity."

[16] Station booth and elevator intercom calls are also received by operators under the new system and are included in this report.

2. Develop a plan, in coordination with NYPD and/or intervention specialists, to deter mischief calls.

   Agency Response: NYC Transit accepted this recommendation and indicated that it will "have a discussion with [its] law enforcement and community outreach partners regarding the best ways to deter mischief calls." The agency, however, asserted that because it "does not allocate or control these resources, it cannot commit to developing a plan in coordination with those entities."

3. Establish an ongoing process for OCC Stations personnel to analyze call data for trends to guide proactive interventions with mischief callers.

   Agency Response: Agreed. NYC Transit stated that OCC Stations "will work with the [Help Point contractor] to generate a report identifying trends in mischief calls to be shared with the [agency's] Department of Security and NYPD to guide proactive interventions with mischief callers."

4. Place a sign or sticker on each Help Point warning against misuse, including the possible consequences for falsely reporting an emergency.

   Agency Response: The agency accepted this recommendation and stated that "while there are no rules of conduct which address the misuse of [Help Points], 21 NYCRR 1050.6(d)(2) states that 'All persons on or in any facility or conveyance of the authority shall ... obey any instructions on notices or signs duly posted on any authority facility or conveyance.' Consequently, should a sign or sticker be placed on the [Help Points] advising against the misuse of [Help Points], ignoring the posted notice could subject violators to a $50 fine. We will confer with our Legal Department and law enforcement partners to assess the utility of placing such a notice on the [Help Points] along with a warning that the failure to obey the notice may result in a $50 fine."

5. Develop and implement procedures to ensure adequate coverage of incoming calls during the periods before and after shift changes.

   Agency Response: Agreed. "OCC Stations Desk Managers … will be reminded to closely monitor the activities of personnel during the tour changes to expedite the log in and log out process and avoid delays in coverage of incoming calls during this period."

6. Explore reprogramming the Help Point call management system to allow emergency calls to take priority. If that is not feasible, develop a means to prioritize emergency calls over information calls by using the hold feature, and train the call center operators accordingly.

   Agency Response: Agreed. NYC Transit "intends to conduct a pilot to determine the efficiency of placing non-emergency calls on hold to assess whether the next call in the queue is an emergency. If the pilot illustrates that placing non-emergency calls on hold provides better response time for emergency calls than the current first in, first out process, we will make this the standard procedure for handling calls."

7. Create clear, written policies for answering calls and managing performance that include such guidelines as timeframes in which calls should be answered and requirements that managers review performance data to monitor call operator performance.

   Agency Response: NYC Transit accepted this recommendation. While the response did assert that elements of the Help Point system already have written training instructions for how to answer calls, the General Superintendent in charge of OCC Stations subsequently clarified that the contractor and the MTA are currently completing a more in-depth operating and maintenance manual.

   The agency also stated that it "does not agree that guidelines for timeframes in which [Help Point] calls should be answered should be created. As noted in the Report, OCC Stations Supervisors answer calls from station booths, elevator intercoms and other customer assistance intercoms in addition to the [Help Point] calls. Drafting a policy with guidelines for timeframes in which [Help Point] calls should be answered would create incentives to answer calls primarily from [Help Points], to the detriment of the Stations Supervisors' responsibilities related to the other types of calls."

   Regarding requiring managers to review performance data to monitor call operator performance, the agency stated that "OCC management currently generates annual call statistics reports for analysis and review with OCC Stations Supervisors during their Annual Supervisory Evaluations. OCC management will request from the [Help Point contractor] enhanced employee performance reports to supplement their regular review process."

8. Working with the systems contractor, develop regular reports on customer usage and operator performance that will help OCC Stations manage the call center effectively and efficiently.

   Agency Response: Agreed. The agency stated that "the suggested reports are pending with the [Help Point contractor]. As part of the [communication system upgrade] project, on-demand reports identified by OCC Management, inclusive of reports that will identify customer usage and operator performance evaluations, have been requested of the [Help Point contractor]."

9. Use the management information to evaluate the benefits of maintaining the Help Point system in the future or whether there are alternatives that should be considered.

   Agency Response: Agreed. NYC Transit stated that it "will use the management information to evaluate the future of the Help Point system."