
Performance Audit of the Personnel Department

OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR PERSONNEL AND HIRING DEPARTMENTS TO EXPEDITE THE CLASSIFIED CIVIL SERVICE HIRING PROCESS

NOVEMBER 2013

Audit Report

Office of the City Auditor
City of San Diego



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THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

November 27, 2013

Honorable Interim Mayor, City Council, and Audit Committee Members
City of San Diego, California

Transmitted herewith is a performance audit report on the Personnel Department's hiring process for classified employees. This report was conducted in accordance with the City Auditor's Fiscal Year 2014 Audit Work Plan, and the report is presented in accordance with City Charter Section 39.2. The Results in Brief are presented on page 1. Audit Objectives, Scope, and Methodology are presented in Appendix B. Management's responses to our audit recommendations are presented after page 44 of this report.

We would like to thank staff from the Personnel Department for their assistance and cooperation during this audit. All of their valuable time and efforts spent on providing us information is greatly appreciated. The audit staff members responsible for this audit report are Shawneé Pickney, Alicia De La Garza, Matthew Helm, and Kyle Elser.

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Results In Brief

The City of San Diego (City) is a human capital driven organization. The City's Personnel Department (Personnel) is responsible for overseeing the City's civil service hiring process to ensure that the City's human capital needs are met in a timely and efficient manner. This multi-phase process, which must comply with Civil Service Rules, entails publicizing vacant positions, screening job applicants, assessing candidates' skills, placing qualified candidates on eligibility lists, and referring eligible candidates to hiring departments for interview consideration. Although Personnel oversees the entire hiring process, the hiring departments (into which candidates are placed) are also responsible for key phases within the hiring process.

Our audit focused on analyzing each step of the hiring process in order to determine if changes to the current processes could increase efficiency and timeliness. Although this report identifies areas where the hiring process and coordination between hiring departments has improved, we identified areas within the overall hiring process where Personnel could further reduce time screening candidates and reduce analysts' workload. These areas include:

- shortening the amount of time job announcements remain open;
- creating more narrow screening filters; and
- establishing assessment schedules with target timeframes.

Additionally, we identified areas where hiring departments can contribute to reducing hiring timelines. Currently, hiring departments are elongating the hiring process by requesting that Personnel fill vacancies before hiring departments are ready to actively interview candidates. By taking action, Personnel and hiring departments can reduce the amount of time it takes to hire employees.

The City's hiring needs will increase significantly over the next five years as over 3,000 employees become eligible for retirement. We found that the City's human capital management has a critical need for additional workforce planning and needs to take additional steps to actively recruit for high-need positions on an on-going basis through enhanced predictive recruiting efforts.

In order to assist Personnel and Citywide departments with addressing current and future human capital needs and improving the hiring process, we made six recommendations to address the issues identified in this report. Our recommendations are based on our analysis of the current hiring process and also on observations of successful practices employed by other municipal and private sector entities. Finally, we estimate that these recommendations, if implemented, could potentially reduce the current hiring timeframes by approximately 140 days from the current total of 280 days. Personnel and the Office of the Chief Operating Officer generally agreed with our recommendations.

Background

The Personnel Department (Personnel) provides supervision over the selection, promotion, and removal of all classified employees. According to the FY 2014 adopted budget, Personnel oversaw approximately 60 staff within its Classification and Liaison, Personnel, and Recruiting and Management divisions, accounting for approximately \$7 million in budgeted General Fund expenditures.

Personnel is governed by the City Charter mandated five member Civil Service Commission (CSC), which is appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. Since its beginnings, the primary purpose of the CSC was to safeguard against a “spoils” system, in which influence rather than merit determined who gained City employment. The CSC establishes personnel policy, and conducts day-to-day personnel activities through its staff within Personnel. The day-to-day activities include implementation of the City’s Civil Service Rules, which are incorporated in the Municipal Code and have the force and effect of law. The Civil Service Rules are intended to ensure equal employment opportunities for all candidates applying to classified positions within the City.

Hiring Process for Classified Positions

Based on our review of governing literature and conversations with Personnel, the hiring process for classified positions can be divided into three segments:

Personnel recruiting and certification of eligible lists:
Personnel screens for and refers the qualified applicants to hiring departments to fill identified vacancies;

Hiring department selection process: Departments interview applicants, conduct applicant reference checks, and extend job offers; and

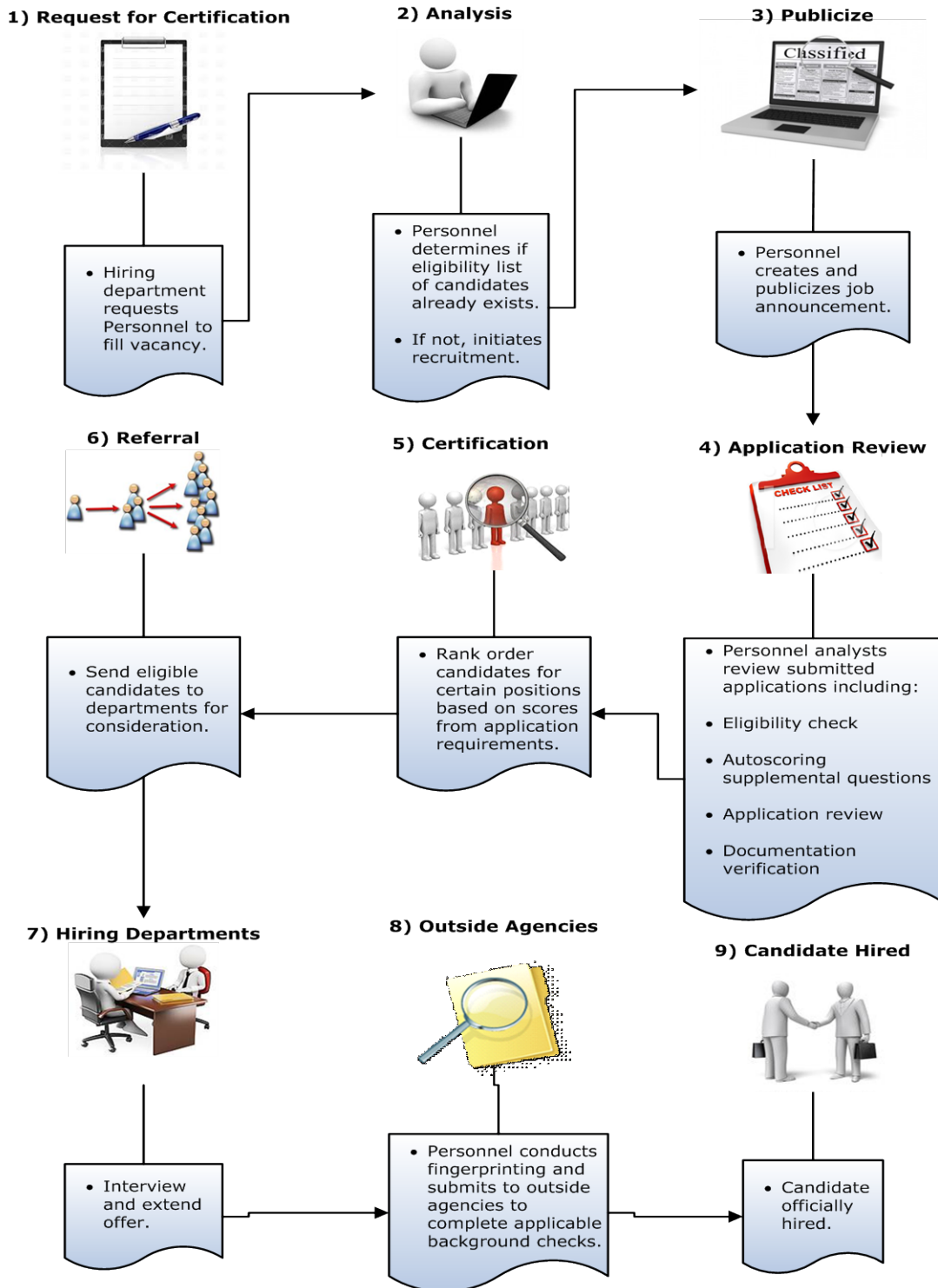
Background checks and evaluations: Personnel conducts fingerprinting and submits to outside agencies (e.g. Department of Justice, FBI, and Police Department checks), evaluates the results, and, when necessary, schedules medical evaluations.

Personnel's hiring process involves screening applicants and referring candidates to hiring departments. Between January 1, 2013 and September 1, 2013, Personnel received more than 1,000 requests to fill vacancies from hiring departments and 39,000 candidate applications. Personnel referred more than 79,000 applicants leading to over 1,400 hires.¹ Personnel completes these actions through the NEOGOV workforce management system. Implemented in 2011, NEOGOV is designed to automate the entire hiring process. *Exhibit 1* shows the typical steps for filling classified vacancies through the City's civil service process. In summary, there is shared accountability between Personnel and the hiring departments throughout the hiring process. The flow of applicants is dependent upon the ability of these entities to communicate and coordinate regarding the type of recruitment and timeframe necessary for meeting vacancy needs.

¹ The 79,000 applicants referred include both new applicants and those who were already on current eligibility lists. Additionally, Personnel may refer the same applicant to different hiring departments, each of which is considered a different referral.

Exhibit 1

City of San Diego Civil Service Hiring Process



Source: OCA-generated based on the Civil Service Rules and communications with Personnel management.

IBA Reports Cite
Citywide Vacancy Issues

As a result of questions raised by Councilmembers during the FY 2013 budget process, the Office of the Independent Budget Analyst (IBA) released two reports² in CY 2013 related to the City's civil service hiring process and the length of time taken to fill vacant positions. Per conversations with management within City departments, the IBA identified reasons for delays in filling vacancies, which include, but are not limited to:

Vacancy savings: Positions are unfunded in the budget to account for savings that routinely occur due to turnover and attrition. A department must monitor hiring, salaries and wages, and, all budget expenditures to keep within the department's bottom line budget; thus, a department may keep a position vacant, which would lead to vacancy savings; and

A lengthy hiring process: This includes the time taken by Personnel to generate certified lists of eligible candidates; the time taken by hiring departments to interview and select candidates from the certified lists; as well as the time taken for background checks and the employee's transition to the new job. The reports note that there is no standard timeframe for the hiring process, but departments expressed that the hiring process could take three to six months, with longer timeframes possible.

Moreover, the reports indicate that the timeframes for developing certified lists of eligible applicants depend on numerous factors, including:

- the workload of Personnel analysts;
- the number of applicants; and
- when necessary, completing additional screening tools, such as written exams, physical ability tests, and other assessments.

² IBA Reports: General Fund Vacancy Status No. 13-14 and City of San Diego Civil Service Hiring No. 13-30.

In addition to requiring online-only submission of applications, in order to address issues related to vacancy delays, Personnel began implementing process improvements such as reinstating predictive recruiting, where Personnel proactively develops new eligibility lists before old eligibility lists expire.

Audit Results

Finding 1: Opportunities Exist for Personnel to Shorten Timeframes within Various Phases of the Hiring Process

The City of San Diego is a human capital driven organization. Municipal employees execute the City's core functions keeping residents safe, infrastructures sound, and communities livable. Prospective employees must demonstrate to Personnel their ability to complete the tasks of these jobs competently, as Personnel is the gatekeeper for ensuring that the City of San Diego hires the best candidates available. To ensure that the City hires the most qualified candidates, Personnel oversees the City's Civil Service Hiring Process. This process entails publicizing vacant positions, screening job applicants, assessing candidates' skills, placing qualified candidates on eligibility lists, and referring eligible candidates to hiring departments for interview consideration. Based on applicants that we randomly sampled for our review,³ we found that the start-to-finish hiring process for selected classifications averaged approximately 280 days. Of this total, it took Personnel an average of 170 days (61 percent of the total time) to complete its screening and referral responsibilities. Additionally, it took hiring departments an average of 110 days (39 percent of the total time) to interview and extend offers of employment to candidates. In contrast, federal guidelines encourage agencies to hire new employees within 80 days, with most federal agencies hiring new employees within 100 days.

Although this report identifies areas where the hiring process and coordination between hiring departments has improved, we have identified areas within the overall hiring process where Personnel could further reduce time screening candidates and reduce analysts' workload. These areas include:

³ We reviewed a random sample of 215 classified City employees hired between January 1, 2013 and September 1, 2013 to determine the average length of time taken by the City to hire new employees. See Appendix B for details.

- shortening the amount of time job announcements remain opened;
- creating more narrow screening filters; and
- establishing assessment schedules with target timeframes.

Federal guidelines indicate that the relationship between Personnel and hiring departments is critical. The ongoing monitoring and refinement methods for recruitment and hiring a capable and committed workforce requires a collaborative effort. In this regard, we also identified areas where hiring departments can contribute to reducing hiring timelines. Currently, hiring departments are elongating the hiring process by requesting that Personnel fill vacancies before hiring departments are ready to actively hire candidates. Through better coordination, Personnel and hiring departments can reduce the amount of time it takes to hire employees.

Personnel Should
Shorten the Length of
Time Job
Announcements Remain
Open

Personnel posts job announcements on the City's website through NEOGOV to advertize open positions. We found that there are no position-specific target timeframes that allows Personnel to estimate the amount of time needed to fill positions. Certain positions fill quickly and do not need to be publicized for extended periods of time to attract potential applicants, while other positions need a longer job announcement period to capture a larger pool of applicants.

Personnel should shorten the length of time job announcements remain open in order to decrease the amount of time analysts spend reviewing applications for one position. Personnel received over 34,000 job applications for positions publicized between January 1, 2013 through August 1, 2013, all of which needed to be reviewed by analysts. By decreasing the length of time job announcements are publically posted, Personnel can improve hiring efficiency by identifying quality applicants in the shortest amount of time possible. Federal guidelines indicate that Personnel is responsible for finding the balance between providing the public with adequate notice of the job announcement and determining the amount of time needed to meet recruitment needs.

In order to fill vacant positions within City Departments, the City's Civil Service Rules require the Personnel Director to provide public notice of all examinations in advance of the last date for filing applications. Public notice explains to job seekers when, where, and how to apply for classified positions in the City.

Based on the applicants we sampled, we found that the average length of time job announcements remained open was about 52 days. We reviewed other entities' hiring practices and found that the length of time for publicizing job openings typically ranges between 5 to 12 days.

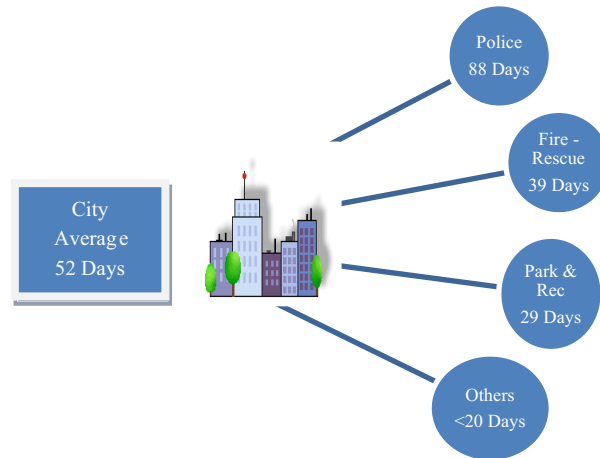
According to Personnel, various factors that are considered when determining the amount of time a job posting remains open include:

- historical data on prior recruitments for a position;
- difficulty recruiting for some job positions; and
- accommodating requests from hiring departments to leave positions open for a specified amount of time.

As displayed in *Exhibit 2*, of the positions we reviewed, the positions with the highest averages are within the Police, Fire-Rescue, and Park and Recreation Departments.

Exhibit 2

Departments with the Longest Job Publication Averages



Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce management system.

Personnel has flexibility in terms of more clearly defining the announcement period. The Personnel Index Code D-1 Section II(A)(2) specifies that Personnel shall publicize job openings for at least five days prior to closing the job announcement. However, Personnel has discretion in terms of the conditions by which application submittal ends. We found that other entities post announcements for a set number of days and/or establish a specific number of applications received. Personnel should use this latitude to determine the most appropriate length of time needed to secure qualified applicants. Keeping publicized positions open for periods longer than needed results in an increased number of applications that analysts must review for a single position.

Personnel Should
Enhance Screening
Protocols to Reduce the
Pool of Applicants to
those with the Greatest
Chances of Success

Personnel can reduce workloads and increase the quality of applicant pools by refining its applicant screening process. Large pools of applicants create an increased administrative workload for analysts. For each candidate, analysts must review submitted documentation and, when applicable, schedule individual examinations, respond to individual candidate appeals, and remain in contact with candidates throughout the hiring process.

By enhancing their screening protocols, Personnel can maximize the amount of time analysts spend reviewing applications to focus on those applicants more likely to progress past subsequent examination phases. Based on our observations, analysts have the capacity within NEOGOV to set up screening filters to at least partially eliminate applicants who would not pass minimum requirements. By enhancing screening filters for the Police Recruit position, we estimate that Personnel could reduce the number of applicants reviewed by analysts by at least 70 percent. We also reviewed Applicant Flow Reports for both the Lifeguard I and Police Sergeant positions and found that Personnel could reduce the number of applicants reviewed by analysts by at least 50 percent.

The Civil Service Rules require Personnel to ensure that all job applicants meet general eligibility requirements related to, but not limited to, citizenship, residency, and the prerequisites outlined in the job announcement. However, these requirements alone are not enough to reduce the pool of applicants to those with the strongest chances of success. More robust eligibility filters included in Personnel's screening procedures would allow Personnel to vigorously screen for knowledge and skills at the outset of reviewing applications instead of during latter phases.

Based on our review of Applicant Flow Reports within NEOGOV, we found that, for some job positions, the eligibility filters in the initial screening phase are too broad. According to Personnel, screening must be job-related, justifiable, and keeping with the minimum qualifications, yet not be so stringent to have an adverse impact. As a result, almost every candidate proceeded to the next stage of the hiring process.

For example, we reviewed applications submitted for the Police Recruit position since the City implemented the NEOGOV workforce management system in June 2011. As seen in *Exhibit 3*, 15,466 candidates applied for the Police Recruit position and approximately 99 percent (15,456) of the applicants passed the initial screenings.

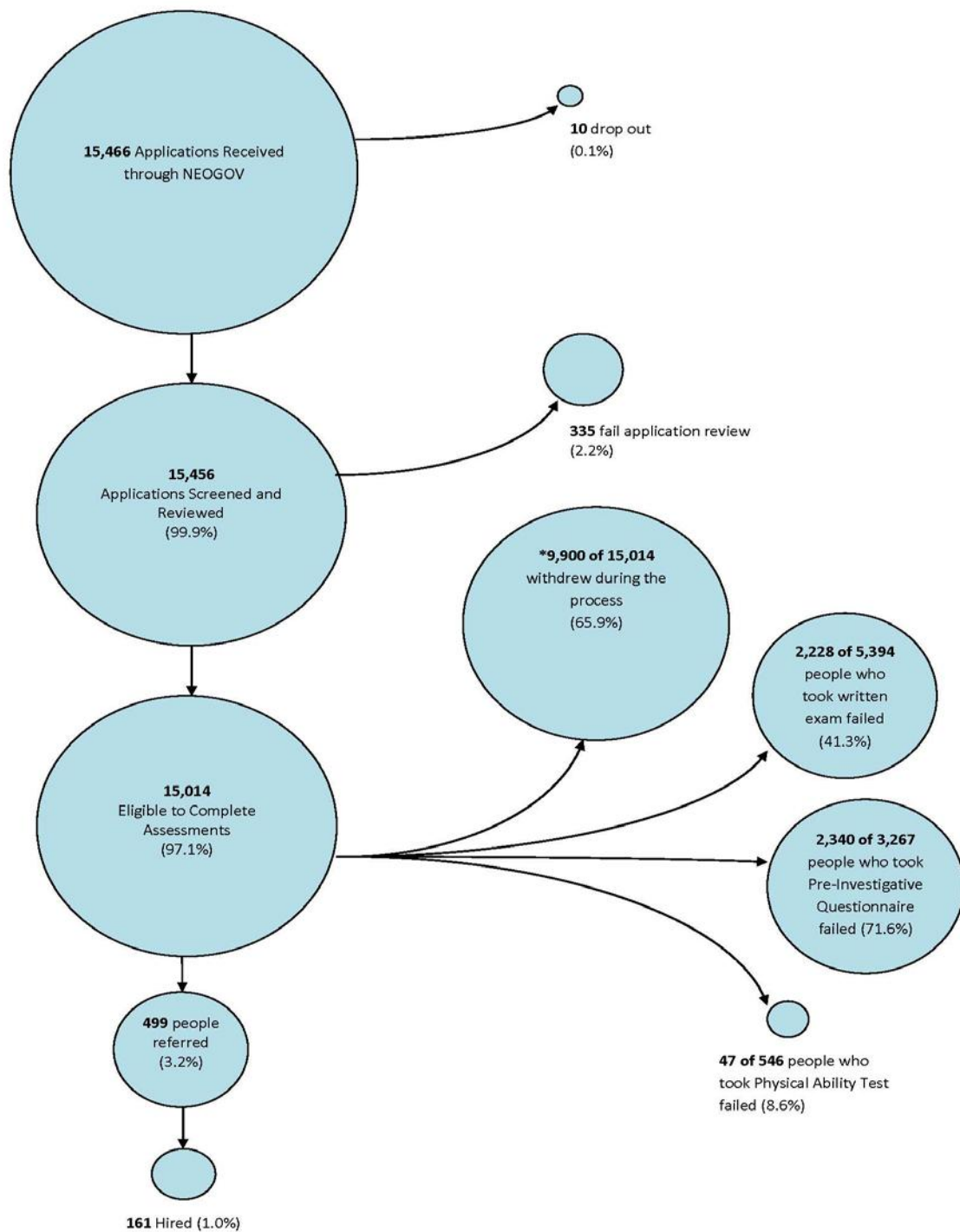
Furthermore, as shown in *Exhibit 3*, of the over 15,000 Police Recruit candidates eligible to complete assessments, more than 9,000 applicants withdrew their applications before completing the first test, which is the Written Exam. Of those candidates completing the Written Exam, approximately 41 percent failed. Additionally, of those candidates completing the Pre-Investigative Questionnaire (PIQ), which is administered by the Police Department, approximately 72 percent failed.

Federal hiring guidelines suggest that if the number of applicants is very high, entities should consider using a hurdle approach in which the first assessment reduces the number of applicants who will continue in the selection process. Moreover, the county entity we interviewed uses the hurdle approach and indicates that this practice is a major driver in decreasing the amount of time taken to hire new employees. As seen in *Appendix C*, for the Police Recruit position, if Personnel used the Written Exam and the PIQ as initial screening tools, we estimate that Personnel could reduce the number of applicants reviewed by analysts from approximately 15,000 applicants to approximately 898, a 94 percent decrease. Using the Written Exam and the PIQ as initial screening tools would require coordination with the Police Department, as they administer the PIQ.

By not narrowing the pool of applicants sooner in the hiring process, analyst workload increases, and City resources, including staffing and finances, are depleted. Time and money are spent reviewing applications and assessing candidates who may not progress past subsequent examinations.

Exhibit 3

Percentage of Police Recruits Passing Application Review



*Note: Calculation is approximate due to applicants appealing and being reinstated during different phases of the hiring process.

Source: OCA-generated from Applicant Flow Report data within the NEOGOV workforce system.

Recommendation #1	<p>In order to refine the applicant screening process, Personnel should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create additional screening filters to increase the number of qualified applicants while simultaneously decreasing the number of less qualified candidates for review. (Priority3)
<p>Personnel Should Establish Assessment Schedules that Limit the Variability of when Candidates Will Complete All Required Examinations</p>	<p>A critical step in the hiring process involves applicants completing required assessments, which include, but are not limited to, written exams, physical ability tests, and interviews. We found that variability in scheduling assessments significantly delays the hiring process. Personnel should establish assessment schedules that limit the variability of when candidates will complete all required assessments. By developing an assessment schedule, Personnel can enhance applicant flow, thereby decreasing the likelihood of candidates seeking employment elsewhere.</p> <p>The Civil Service Rules provide flexibility to the Personnel Director regarding the methods used to assess requisite job skills. Additionally, the Civil Service Rules allow the Personnel Director to establish minimum performance levels for each part of the application process. Although the assessments are conducted under the direction of the Personnel Director, some assessments occur in partnership with hiring departments, which provide staff to complete additional applicant screenings and assist with assessment facility logistics. Moreover, candidate follow-through regarding appearing for assessments is also critical to the flow of the hiring process. Given the coordination that must occur between all stakeholders in the hiring process, Personnel would benefit from explicitly stating timeframe expectations for itself, hiring departments, and applicants.</p> <p>Based on the applicants we sampled, we found that the average length of time for candidates to complete the assessment phase of the hiring process was approximately 75 days.⁴ Part of the 75 days included delays in sending scheduling notifications to candidates. Also, according to</p>

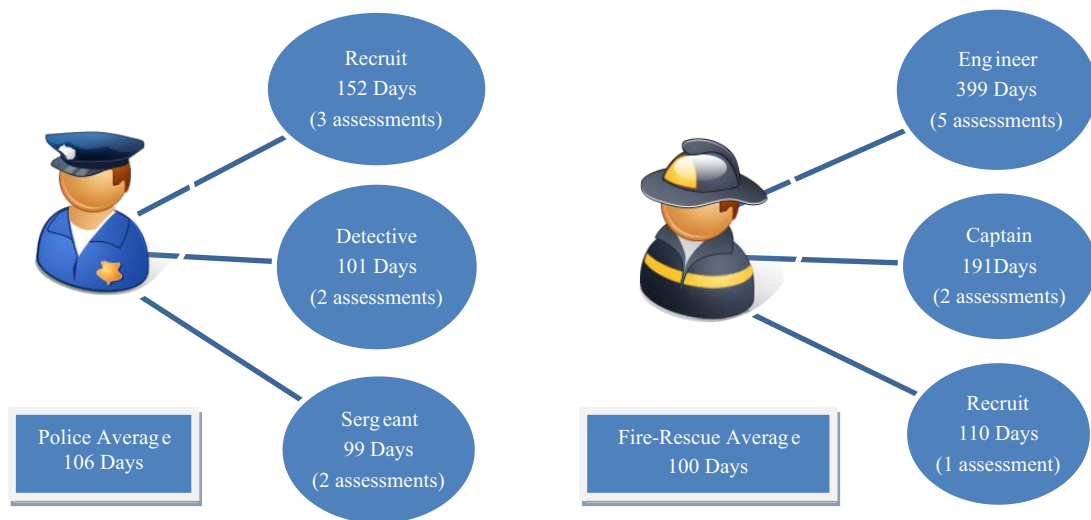
⁴ The average includes positions without assessments.

Personnel, this time period includes accommodating the special requests of hiring departments to delay exams for candidates.

Exhibit 4 shows that the positions that are increasing the average length of the assessment phase are within the Police and Fire-Rescue Departments.

Exhibit 4

City Positions with the Longest Assessment Period Averages



Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce management system.

Currently there is no established timeframe by which Personnel can expect all candidates applying for a specific position to complete assessments. For example, applicants applying for Police Recruit positions are allowed to self-schedule the date of their Written Exam, which is the first exam in a series of three. Our estimates indicate that, on average, after the Application Review was completed, it took Personnel approximately 25 days to send notification to candidates to schedule their Written Exam. Furthermore, the average amount of time between analysts completing the Application Review and the candidate completing the Written Exam was 67 days.

Our analysis showed prolonged scheduling for applicants applying for Fire Engineer positions, which is a position with a

series of five exams. Our estimates indicate that, on average, after the Application Review was completed, it took Personnel approximately 72 days to send notification to candidates of their first scheduled exam. Furthermore, our estimates indicate that on average, the amount of time between analysts completing the Application Review and the candidate completing the last exam in the series was approximately 232 days.

According to Personnel, accommodating special requests by hiring departments can delay the assessment process. For example, in 2012, Personnel received requests from the Fire-Rescue Department regarding alternative scheduling options for Fire Engineer candidates. The candidates were at varied stages of the process, which required Personnel to coordinate with key stakeholders to receive the required assistance and equipment to complete testing.

Based on our review of successful practices in other organizations, Personnel has flexibility in terms of how it can schedule assessments. For example, Personnel could establish recurring monthly examination schedules or outline the total number of days a candidate has to complete an exam once scheduled. A separate schedule to accommodate candidates who need to make up assessments can be developed as necessary. Additionally, coordination between Personnel and hiring departments can strengthen efforts to reduce the amount of time taken to hire new employees. Based on our review, other organizations utilize service level agreements to establish hiring timeframe expectations for Human Resources Offices and hiring departments.

By not developing an assessment schedule, Personnel and hiring departments do not have agreed upon recruitment and hiring goals. The variability with testing schedules can hinder applicant flow, thus increasing the risk of candidates applying and accepting employment elsewhere. It can also cause logistical issues because testing dates are unpredictable.

Opportunities Exist for
Personnel to Decrease
the Amount of Time
Taken to Refer
Candidates after
Assessments are
Completed

Once assessments are completed, eligible candidates are one step closer to being referred to hiring departments for employment consideration. During this period, Personnel has an opportunity to decrease the overall amount of time taken to refer candidates to hiring departments after completion of assessments. By establishing assessment completion timelines applicable to all candidates, Personnel can reduce the amount of time analysts wait for a group of eligible applicants to move to subsequent phases of the hiring process.

After analysts complete application reviews and candidates have passed all required assessments, if any, Personnel prepares to refer candidates. According to the Civil Service Rules, Personnel must certify a list of eligible candidates who are referred to hiring departments for consideration.

There are two steps within the hiring process where Personnel prepares candidates for referral:

- Hold for Promulgation to Promulgation: This is the period where a candidate has completed all assessments and is waiting to be placed on the eligible list; and
- Promulgation to Refer: This is the period where a candidate has been placed on the eligible list and is waiting for the list of candidates to be certified for referral to the hiring departments.

Based on the applicants we sampled, we found that the average length of time taken for Personnel to place candidates on an eligible list was 23 days from the candidate completing their last exam. We have identified this block of time as a stalled period where applicants are waiting with no movement in the hiring process. Federal guidelines advise Human Resources Offices to place their candidates on an eligibility list during the 15-day Application Review process.

It is important to note that federal positions may not have as many assessments as some of the City's classified positions. However, in those cases where there are no assessments, Personnel should aim to place candidates on an eligible list within the federal guideline of 15 days. For those positions with assessments, Personnel should mirror the federal practice of

having a timeline for placing candidates on an eligible list, with the amount of time based upon the resources needed for administering each assessment.

Once candidates have been placed on an eligible list, it is Personnel's goal to refer candidates to the hiring departments within 10 business days. Personnel identifies this time as the certification period. Based on the applicants we sampled, we found that the overall average length of time for Personnel to refer candidates was more than 30 days.⁵ We should note that there were instances where Personnel did meet its 10 day certification deadline for referring candidates. However, upon review, we found that assessment scheduling was one of the main causes for delays in moving candidates forward. In total, the average amount of time between when candidates completed their last assessment, if any, and when candidates are referred to hiring departments is at least 53 days. *Exhibit 5* illustrates the disparities in timing between applicants submitting an application and being placed on an eligible list for three police recruits. In this example, Personnel did meet its 10 day certification goal for these applicants.

⁵ In many instances, candidates may be referred to multiple departments, and not all referrals lead to hires. Personnel requested that we calculate certification as the amount of time between promulgation and Personnel's first referral (35 days). However, we calculated certification as the time between promulgation and the date of the referral that led to the candidate's hire (62 days). We maintain that this is the most accurate indicator to reflect the amount of time taken to move candidates through the hiring process.

Exhibit 5

Police Recruit - Days for Certification

Recruit	Application Received	Promulgation Date (Moved to Eligible List)	Referred to Department	Days to Certify (Refer Eligible Candidates to Department)
#1	2/13/12	2/11/13	2/13/13	2
#2	7/5/12	2/11/13	2/13/13	2
#3	5/2/12	2/11/13	2/13/13	2

Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce management system.

However, as seen in *Exhibit 6*, Personnel completed the Application Review for Recruit #3 on May 13, 2012. However, Recruit #3 did not complete the self-scheduled Written Exam until September 12, 2012, which is approximately 4 months later. Additionally, for Recruits #1 and #3, it took Personnel over 25 days to send out scheduling notifications after completing the application review.

Exhibit 6

Police Recruit Assessment Scheduling

Recruit	Application Received	Application Review Completed	Notice Sent to Recruit to Self-Schedule	Days between Application Review Completed and Notice Sent	Written Exam Completed	Days between Application Review Completed and Written Exam Completed
#1	2/13/12	8/2/12	8/28/12	26	10/10/12	69
#2	7/5/12	9/13/12	9/26/12	13	10/19/12	36
#3	5/2/12	5/13/12	6/22/12	40	9/12/12	122

Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce management system.

Based on our analysis, we could not determine whether the delay in Personnel sending notification resulted from facility logistical issues or as a result of analyst workload. However, we do maintain that establishing an assessment schedule would minimize the variance in applicants scheduling exams and analysts sending out notifications.

Also, as seen in *Exhibit 7*, we observed delays in Personnel placing candidates on the eligibility list. All three recruits successfully completed the last exam, which is the Physical Abilities Test (PAT), on three separate dates in October and November 2012 and January 2013. All three candidates were ready to be placed on the eligibility list within 19 days of completing the PAT.

Exhibit 7

Police Recruit: Waiting for Promulgation

Recruit	Written Test Completed	Pre-Investigative Questionnaire (PIQ) Completed	Physical Ability Test (PAT) Completed	Hold For Prom	Days Between PAT and Hold For Prom	Promulgation Date (Moved to Eligible List)	Days between Hold for Prom and Prom
#1	10/10/12	10/20/12	11/17/12	12/3/12	16	2/11/13	70
#2	10/19/12	10/20/12	10/20/12	10/30/12	10	2/11/13	104
#3	9/12/12	9/29/12	1/19/13	2/7/13	19	2/11/13	4

Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce management system.

We identified this hold for promulgation period as a phase of the hiring process in which recruits are waiting and without movement in the hiring process. In the cases of Recruits #1 and #2, they were ready for movement to the eligibility list at least 2 months prior to the February 11, 2013 date. All recruits were moved to the eligibility list four days after Recruit #3 was ready for placement on the eligibility list.

Without an assessment schedule, candidates that complete assessments timely are waiting for other applicants to complete requisite exams, which could lead to candidates accepting positions from competitors with a more streamlined hiring process. Additionally, by not having an automated assessment schedule, analysts must constantly track applicants at varying stages of the hiring process, thereby increasing their administrative workload.

Recommendation #2

In order to decrease timelines within various phases of the hiring process, Personnel should:

- Establish overall target timeframes based on the individual phases of the hiring process, differentiated as needed for specific classifications. These target timeframes should include:
 - The length of time job announcements should remain open;
 - Assessment schedules that outline target timeframes for completion and reoccurring assessments, when applicable; and
 - The length of time for Personnel to refer candidates after applicants successfully pass all screening requirements. (Priority3)

Recommendation #3

In order to continuously monitor performance, Personnel should:

- Periodically evaluate and review its performance in meeting target timeframes to determine if opportunities for improvement exist. (Priority3)

Hiring Departments are
Delaying Completing
Interviews and
Extending Job Offers
After Receipt of Eligible
Lists, Thereby
Elongating the Hiring
Process

Based on the applicants we sampled, we found that the average length of time taken by City hiring departments to interview and extend offers of employment after receipt of the list of eligible candidates was 110 days. Federal guidelines recommend that hiring departments review applications and conduct interviews, extend offers, complete necessary clearances, and have selectees begin employment within 44 days of receiving the list of eligible candidates—66 days less than the City's hiring departments average length of time.

To compete for the best potential employees available, hiring departments need to be as efficient as possible to prevent other prospective employees with faster hiring processes from enticing high quality candidates. The longer it takes to fill an open position, the longer hiring departments must operate without a full set of resources, which could strain existing resources or result in increased workload—both of which affect the City's ability to serve and respond to its citizens properly.

After certification, Personnel refers the lists of eligible candidates to hiring departments. The departments are then responsible for filling mission-critical and commonly filled positions. In order to be able to hire the highest quality candidates that have been certified, and to ensure that City programs are fully staffed as to minimize disruptions in operations, it is in the best interest of the City to extend employment offers in the least amount of time possible.

There are two factors that are possible contributors to the delay, which include a lack of pre-established timelines for hiring departments to follow when filling openings and hiring departments making requisitions before being ready to hire.

Currently, hiring departments have latitude in deciding when to begin interviewing candidates. The Civil Service Rules require hiring departments to request a list of eligible candidates from Personnel, but Rules do not specify any timeframe for interviewing and hiring candidates, other than the expiration of the eligibility list. Federal guidelines advise Human Resources Offices to develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) with timelines for reviewing applications,

conducting interviews, and making hiring selections. The Civil Service Rules provide the Civil Service Commission and Personnel with the authority for creating these SOPs.

Moreover, hiring departments are requesting a list of eligible candidates from Personnel prior to being in a position to actively interview candidates. For example, as displayed in *Exhibit 8*, the Police Department submitted a request for Personnel to fill a vacant classified position, known as a Request for Certification (RFC) in September 2011. Personnel referred Recruit #4 to the Police Department as an eligible candidate in July 2012. However, the Police Department did not extend an offer to this candidate until approximately seven months later, in February 2013.

We observed similar cases within the Fire-Rescue Department. Fire-Rescue submitted a RFC in November 2011. Personnel referred Recruit #5 to the Fire-Rescue Department as an eligible candidate in May 2012, but the department did not extend an offer of employment until approximately 10 months later, in March 2013.

Exhibit 8

Days between Personnel Referral and Hiring Department Offer of Employment



Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce management system.

When hiring departments submit RFCs, Personnel is obligated to begin recruitment without discretion as to when the recruitment will lead to an offer. As a result, if hiring departments request a list of eligible candidates before they are ready to hire, Personnel expends valuable time and staff resources that could have been targeted towards ready-to-fill positions. Also, by not immediately interviewing candidates when referred, hiring departments are depleting the time of a candidate's eligibility for consideration without having to reapply. Once the candidate's eligibility expires, the candidate, if still interested, must begin the recruitment process again.

According to federal guidelines, it is imperative to an effective hiring process that Personnel and hiring departments engage with each other collaboratively with open communication and

shared accountability. In order to foster communication, other organizations have regular meetings with hiring department staff and have placed analysts onsite within the departments. Personnel would benefit from advanced planning that explicitly states target timeframe expectations for itself and hiring departments.

By not completing interviews and extending an offer within a pre-established amount of time of receiving a list of eligible candidates, hiring departments increase the risk of applicants applying and accepting employment elsewhere because the hiring timeline is too variable. Additionally, by requesting eligible candidates before intent to actively hire, hiring departments increase the workload of Personnel analysts because time is spent reviewing applications for candidates who will not be immediately vetted by hiring departments. Furthermore, without clearly established timeframes, hiring departments and Personnel cannot be held accountable to complete the hiring process timely.

Recommendation #4

In order to decrease timelines within the hiring department's portion of the hiring process, Personnel in collaboration with the Chief Operating Officers should:

- Require that hiring departments not submit Requests for Certification forms until departments are ready to actively fill positions; and
- Establish target timeframes for extending offers of employment upon receipt of referred candidates. (Priority 3)

Personnel and Key Hiring Departments Have Cited Recent and Proposed Improvements to the Hiring Process and Coordination

Officials from Police and Fire-Rescue cited several recent positive developments related to the hiring process and coordination with Personnel. Police and Fire-Rescue indicated that regular and day-to-day communication with Personnel on hiring issues has increased significantly in the past three months.⁶ As a result, both Police and Fire-Rescue have collaboratively made progress with Personnel in resolving hiring issues that had been problematic in the past. For

⁶ In September 2013, Personnel commenced monthly meetings with SDPD on hiring and recruiting issues.

example, both departments indicated that Personnel's timeliness has improved with respect to providing the departments with certified lists of candidates, which has shortened hiring timeframes.

More specifically, the Police official indicated that the department had made several suggestions to Personnel in July 2013 regarding process improvements—all of which Personnel has implemented. For example, Personnel agreed to remove a redundant step in the Police civilian employee background check process, and modified other processes related to police recruit testing. Additionally, Personnel partnered with Police at a recent police officer recruiting event to expedite the application process for potential recruits contacted at the event. Fire-Rescue also noted recent improvements. Notably, the Fire-Rescue representative indicated Personnel provided training to the department on the Civil Service hiring process, which improved Fire-Rescue Human Resource's understanding of the overall process and division of responsibilities between the department and Personnel.

Personnel has proposed other changes to improve the hiring process—several of which may require additional resources. For example, in April 2013, Personnel submitted a memo to Councilmember Lightner requesting the reinstatement of the Outstation Program, which would co-locate additional Personnel analysts in certain hiring departments. Further, the Personnel Director has also proposed modifications to the Civil Service Rules related to candidate appeals. According to Personnel, modifying the Rules could eliminate bottlenecks in phases of the hiring process. Lastly, Personnel has proposed a "one-stop shop" to expedite the portions of the hiring process related to background checks, fingerprinting and other final candidate processing requirements.

Finding 2: Workforce Planning and Continued Predictive Recruiting are Essential for Filling High Need Positions

The City's hiring needs will increase significantly over the next five years as over 3,000 employees become eligible for retirement. Workforce planning and predictive recruiting are essential tools for ensuring retirement and high need vacancies are filled in a timely manner.

Workforce planning is an essential piece of the hiring process. Hiring departments should be assessing their needs regularly and communicating the outcomes to Personnel. According to federal guidelines, Personnel and hiring departments need to be held accountable for the ongoing monitoring and refinement of human capital approaches to recruit and hire a capable and committed City workforce. A workforce development plan would serve as a guiding document to keep Personnel focused on its goal of securing a diverse and productive workforce.

Predictive recruiting— which is the practice of initiating recruitment procedures for certain job classifications four to six weeks before the current list expires— is also essential in filling ongoing and upcoming vacancies. Personnel currently uses this process for classifications that are in high demand, including Police Officer, Clerical Assistant II, and Engineering positions. By strengthening predictive recruiting efforts through strategic planning and workforce analysis, Personnel can actively plan for filling vacancies resulting from retirements and those in highly critical positions.

The City Needs to Address Impending Retirement Vacancies

According to data provided by Personnel, within the next five years, the City will have over 3,000 employees eligible for retirement, with 40 percent of those eligible being within the Police (871) and Fire-Rescue (372) departments. It is critical that the City prepare for the loss of talent and knowledge that may occur due to significant portions of its workforce becoming eligible for retirement. Similar to what federal guidance recommends, the City could strategically use predictive recruiting as a planning tool to determine the critical skills and

competencies necessary to achieve programmatic goals that are tailored to address current or future identified gaps in human capital. However, federal guidelines also encourage a formalized workforce plan. Effective workforce planning would enable Personnel to:

- link workforce requirements directly to the City's mission and annual business plans;
- develop a comprehensive picture of where gaps exist between competencies the workforce currently possesses and future competency requirements;
- identify and implement gap reduction strategies, especially for mission critical occupations;
- make decisions about how best to structure departments and deploy the workforce; and
- identify and overcome internal and external barriers to accomplishing strategic workforce goals.

Moreover, federal guidelines stress that effective workforce planning is a collaborative effort that requires the participation of executive leadership, management, employees, and staff responsible for financial management and acquisition, as well as human resources. This partnership is especially vital for the City's emerging workforce needs. As displayed in *Exhibit 9*, we reviewed Applicant Flow Reports within NEOGOV, which tracked the total number of applications received by Personnel since the implementation of the workforce management system in 2011. We found that, for the Police and Fire Recruit positions, the City hires approximately one percent of the applicants to each position.

*Exhibit 9*Candidates Hired Since Implementation of NEOGOV in 2011
(June 2011 -September 2013)

Position	Number of Applicants	Number Hired	Percentage Hired
Police Recruit	15,466	161	1%
Fire Recruit	4,927	60	1%

Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce management system.

Given these statistics, as seen in *Exhibit 10*, in order to meet anticipated workforce needs resulting from eligible retirements as well as normal attrition, the City needs to at least double its current amount of employees hired per year.

Exhibit 10

Years to Fill Retirement Vacancies in Non-Administrative Safety Positions

Department	Position	Retirees in Non-Administrative Positions*	Current Average Hired Per Year	Years to Fill Vacancies at Current Rate	Number Needed to Fill Vacancies within 5 Years
Police	Recruit	707	69	10.2	141.4
Fire-Rescue	Recruit	279	26	10.8	55.8

Note: We reviewed impending retirements for non-administrative safety positions within the Police and Fire-Rescue Departments to estimate the number of recruits necessary for succession planning over the next five years.

Source: OCA-generated from data provided by Personnel Department.

According to Personnel, the recruitment efforts to fill the impending vacancies are dependent upon available resources. Most notably, for Police Recruit positions, the Police Department can only recruit and hire for what is allocated in the City's budget. For example, if the Police Academy is only held twice a year with space for only 40 cadets, the Police Department would only be able to recruit for 80 cadets within the year. Therefore, it is imperative that both Police and

Personnel are proactive in planning for filling the retirement vacancies.

Without a workforce development plan, the City may not have the resources to fill vacant positions in business critical positions. Additionally, Personnel is unable to properly prioritize its predictive recruiting efforts and ensure that its staff time and resources are maximized and properly allocated.

Recommendation #5

In order to provide input to the City's workforce planning, the Chief Operating Officers should:

- Direct all applicable hiring departments to assess current and future workforce needs. The results of these assessments should be communicated to Personnel for inclusion in a workforce development plan. (Priority 3)

Recommendation #6

In order to tailor predictive recruiting efforts towards high-need, hard-to-fill, and ready-to-fill positions, Personnel should:

- Develop a workforce development plan, based on input from the hiring departments, that tailors predictive recruiting efforts toward high-need, hard-to-fill, and ready-to-fill positions. (Priority 3)

Conclusion

While Personnel is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the City's civil service hiring process, how quickly candidates progress through each phase is dependent upon an efficient use of available time and resources. Moreover, shortening the length of time taken to hire new employees is not the sole responsibility of Personnel, but instead requires cooperation from hiring departments. To that end, we identified areas within the hiring process where both Personnel and the hiring departments could reduce hiring timelines, reduce the number of applicants reviewed by analysts, and ensure the City continually has a diverse and productive workforce.

First, Personnel would benefit from developing an overall target timeframe that provides guidance regarding the total time necessary to fill position vacancies. The target timeframes should include the:

- amount of time vacancies should be publicized;
- completion dates for candidate assessments when applicable;
- amount of time Personnel has to refer eligible candidates to hiring departments; and
- amount of time hiring departments have to extend an offer of employment to referred candidates.

Secondly, to reduce the number of applicants reviewed by analysts, Personnel should create more narrow screening filters to at least partially reduce the pool of applicants to those with the greatest chances of success. Personnel should reexamine the screening tools available within the NEOGOV workforce management system to vigorously screen for knowledge and skills at the outset of reviewing applications instead of during latter phases. Moreover, a reexamination related to the order of assessments may provide additional opportunities for Personnel to further narrow the pool to the most qualified applicants.

Lastly, given the fact that the City's hiring needs will increase significantly over the next five years due to impending retirements, it is critical that the City formalize a workforce development plan. Hiring departments should be assessing their human resource needs regularly and communicating the outcomes to Personnel. A workforce development plan would serve as a guiding document to keep Personnel and hiring departments accountable for the ongoing monitoring and refinement of human capital approaches to recruit and hire a capable and committed workforce.

The City's ability to attract and hire qualified candidates depends on Personnel and hiring departments engaging in hiring as a collaborative process with open communications and shared accountability. Through better coordination and planning, Personnel and hiring departments can reduce the amount of time it takes to hire new employees.

Other Pertinent Information

The scope of our audit was to examine each phase of the City of San Diego's overall hiring process for classified employees as it pertains to departments Citywide. However, we also note that the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) and several City Council members have raised a number of concerns specific to the recruitment and hiring of police officers. While our analysis and resulting recommendations address issues relevant to police officer recruitment and hiring, we acknowledge that, given the unique requirements of the police officer hiring process, additional, SDPD-specific studies should be considered.

It is also important to note here that SDPD commissioned a comprehensive study⁷ from the RAND Corporation, which was issued in 2008. The RAND report provides an examination of SDPD's hiring process. Importantly, RAND makes 15 recommendations to SDPD to enhance the department's recruitment and hiring processes. While Personnel must necessarily play a significant role in police officer hiring, there may be additional opportunities for SDPD to revisit the RAND recommendations. By doing so, SDPD could determine whether it could further enhance the recruiting and hiring processes that are under the department's purview.

⁷ Greg Ridgeway et. al., *Strategies for Improving Officer Recruitment in the San Diego Police Department* (RAND Center on Quality Policing, 2008)

Recommendations

We made six recommendations which are intended to improve the efficiency of the classified civil service hiring process:

Recommendation #1

In order to refine the applicant screening process, Personnel should:

- Create additional screening filters to increase the number of qualified applicants while simultaneously decreasing the number of less qualified candidates for review. (Priority3)

Recommendation #2

In order to decrease timelines within various phases of the hiring process, Personnel should:

Establish overall target timeframes based on the individual phases of the hiring process, differentiated as needed for specific classifications. These target timeframes should include:

- The length of time job announcements should remain open;
- Assessment schedules that outline target timeframes for completion and reoccurring assessments, when applicable; and
- The length of time for Personnel to refer candidates after applicants successfully pass all screening requirements. (Priority3)

Recommendation #3

In order to continuously monitor performance, Personnel should:

- Periodically evaluate and review its performance in meeting target timeframes to determine if opportunities for improvement exist. (Priority3)

- Recommendation #4 In order to decrease timelines within the hiring department's portion of the hiring process, Personnel in collaboration with the Chief Operating Officers should:
- Require that hiring departments not submit Requests for Certification forms until departments are ready to actively fill positions; and
 - Establish target timeframes for extending offers of employment upon receipt of referred candidates. (Priority3)
- Recommendation #5 In order to provide input to the City's workforce planning, the Chief Operating Officers should:
- Direct all applicable hiring departments to assess current and future workforce needs. The results of these assessments should be communicated to Personnel for inclusion in a workforce development plan. (Priority3)
- Recommendation #6 In order to tailor predictive recruiting efforts towards high-need, hard-to-fill, and ready-to-fill positions, Personnel should:
- Develop a workforce development plan, based on input from the hiring departments, that tailors predictive recruiting efforts toward high-need, hard-to-fill, and ready-to-fill positions. (Priority3)

Appendix A: Definition of Audit Recommendation Priorities

DEFINITIONS OF PRIORITY 1, 2, AND 3 AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Office of the City Auditor maintains a classification scheme applicable to audit recommendations and the appropriate corrective actions as follows:

Priority Class	Description	Implementation Action
1	Fraud or serious violations are being committed, significant fiscal or equivalent non-fiscal losses are occurring.	Immediate
2	A potential for incurring significant or equivalent fiscal and/or non-fiscal losses exist.	Six months
3	Operation or administrative process will be improved.	Six months to one year

Appendix B: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Objectives The purpose of this audit was to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the Personnel Department's recruitment and hiring process for classified employees. We reviewed the individual phases of the City's civil service hiring process to determine if areas for operational efficiency improvements exist. Specifically, we:

- identified and reviewed source documentation that governs the City's civil service hiring process or provides background insight on the subject matter (Objective 1);
- evaluated the hiring experience of a random sample of new City employees by determining the average length of time for completing the hiring process (Objective 2); and
- compared the hiring process in the City of San Diego with other entities to determine if the City's procedures are in alignment with industry practice (Objective 3).

Scope & Methodology To address Objective 1, we reviewed source documentation that governs the City's hiring process and defines the roles and responsibility of the Personnel Department, which include the:

- City of San Diego City Charter;
- City of San Diego Municipal Code;
- City of San Diego Administrative Regulations;
- City of San Diego Personnel Regulations; and
- City of San Diego Civil Service Rules.

Additionally, we reviewed the *"General Fund Vacancy Status"* and *"City of San Diego Civil Service Hiring"* reports completed by the Office of the Independent Budget Analyst during CY 2013. In order to avoid duplication of efforts, during our preliminary scoping and research phase, we considered the areas of concern and the recommendations noted in the reports. Moreover, we interviewed management and analysts within Personnel to gain insight on day-to-day operations and procedures.

To address Objective 2, we reviewed a randomly selected sample of 215 classified City employees hired between January 1, 2013 and September 1, 2013 to determine the average length of time the City took to hire them. Most notably, we analyzed the process by dividing the hiring cycle into smaller segments to identify potential problem areas. From our sample, we traced the applicant's progress within the hiring cycle in NEOGOV and reviewed the hiring process from job posting to employee hire.

Based on our sample, we were able to determine the average amount of time taken by the City to hire new employees. We also analyzed whether Personnel had established concrete timelines for applicants and hiring departments to complete their respective portions of the hiring process. Furthermore, we interviewed management and analysts within Personnel to gain insight on the delays identified and to discuss possible resolutions.

In order to provide a baseline for target timeline expectations, we evaluated Personnel's hiring process against federal guidelines and other public and private organizations. Most notably, we compared the City's hiring timelines to the Federal Government's End-to-End hiring process. Under the End-to-End policy reform initiative, hiring agencies are encouraged to hire employees within 80 days. However, there is flexibility in terms of adjusting certain phases within the hiring process to best meet the City's hiring needs. Based on a survey of agencies implementing the government initiative, at least 80 percent hire new employees within 100 days.

To address Objective 3, we interviewed management and analysts within public and private entities to identify successful practices that shorten the timeframe for hiring new employees. While not all entities that we examined follow the equivalent of the City's Civil Service Rules, to the maximum extent possible, we identified practices with relevance to the City.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix C: Police Recruit Assessments as Screening Tools

Based on our review of Applicant Flow Reports within the NEOGOV workforce management system, we found that, for some job positions, the eligibility filters in the initial screening phases are too broad. For example, as seen in *Exhibit 3*, Personnel received approximately 15,466 applications for the Police Recruit position. Personnel analysts reviewed 15,456 of those applications, which accounts for approximately 99 percent of the applications received. Eligibility filters used prior to the analysts reviewing applications and scheduling assessments for applicants who pass initial screenings include:

- Auto Scoring—which screens for citizenship, residency, and the prerequisites outlined in the job announcement; and
- Supplemental Questions—which are additional job screening questions that require applicants to demonstrate their experience and skills.

During our analysis of the Applicant Flow Reports, we observed that, for some job positions, a high percentage of applicants were failing subsequent assessments. As seen in *Exhibit 3*, approximately 41 percent of the applicants who took the Written Exam failed. Also, approximately 72 percent of those completing the Pre-Investigative Questionnaire (PIQ) failed. Federal hiring guidelines suggest that if the number of applicants for a job position is very high, entities should consider using a hurdle approach in which the first assessment reduces the number of applicants who will continue in the selection process.

As seen in *Exhibit C1*, we estimate that if Personnel used the PIQ as an initial screening filter, analysts would reduce their review workload by approximately 72 percent. Furthermore, if Personnel combined the Written Exam and the PIQ as initial screening filters, we estimate that Personnel could reduce the number of applicants reviewed by analysts by approximately 94 percent. We estimate that narrowing the eligibility filters using

either the PIQ or both the PIQ and the Written Exam combined would save at least 4,000 analysts review hours for the Police Recruit position.

By creating more robust screening filters, as seen in *Exhibits C2 and C3*, Personnel can maximize the amount of time analysts spend reviewing applications and focus on those applicants with the greatest chances of success.

Exhibit C1

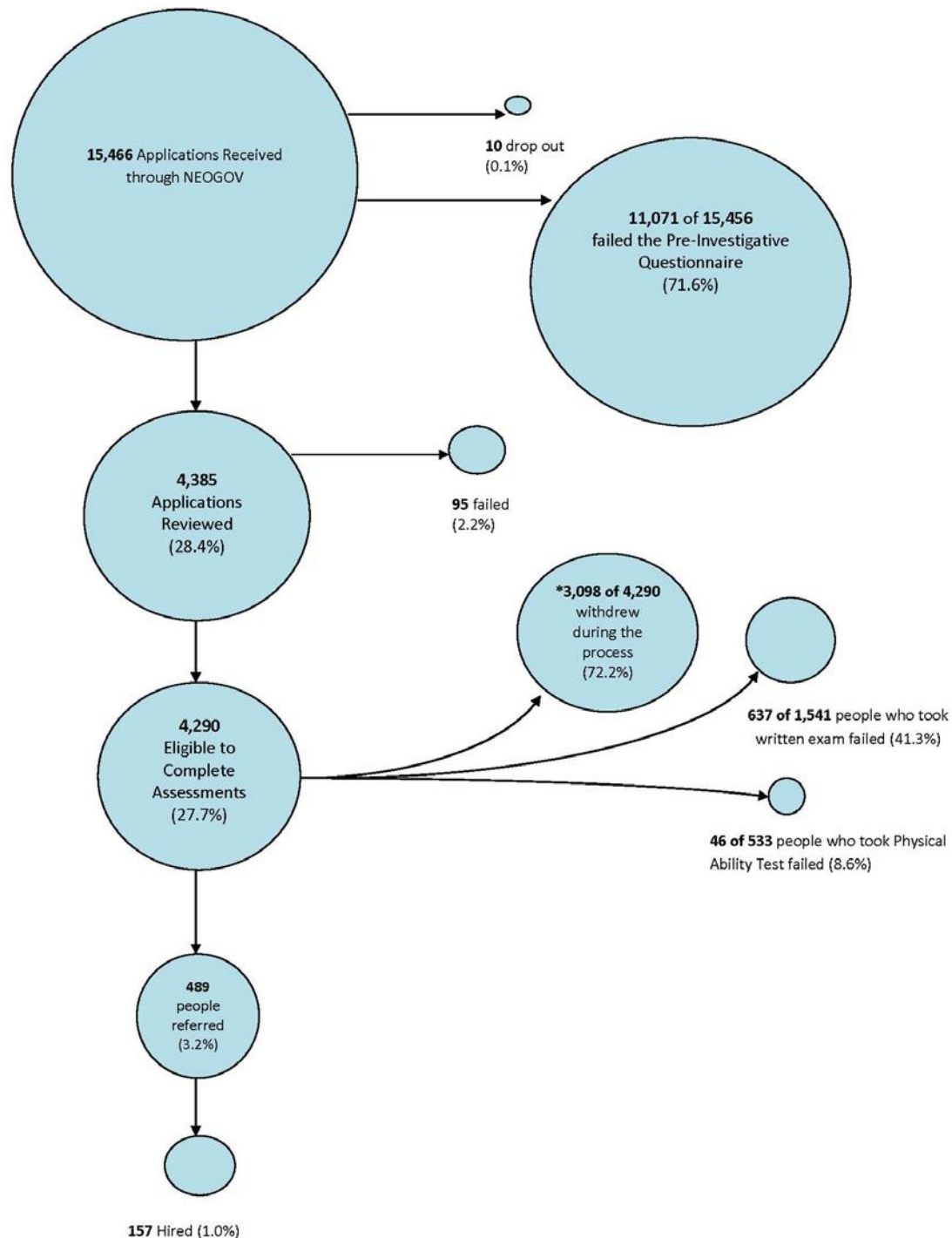
Decrease in Analysts Application Review with Initial Screening Tools

Current Application Review	With PIQ as an Initial Screening Filter	With PIQ and Written Exam as Initial Screening Filters
15,456 applications reviewed	4,385 applications reviewed (72% decrease)	898 applications reviewed (94% decrease)

Source: OCA-generated from data within the NEOGOV workforce system.

Exhibit C2

Police Recruit Pre-Investigative Questionnaire as an Initial Screening Tool

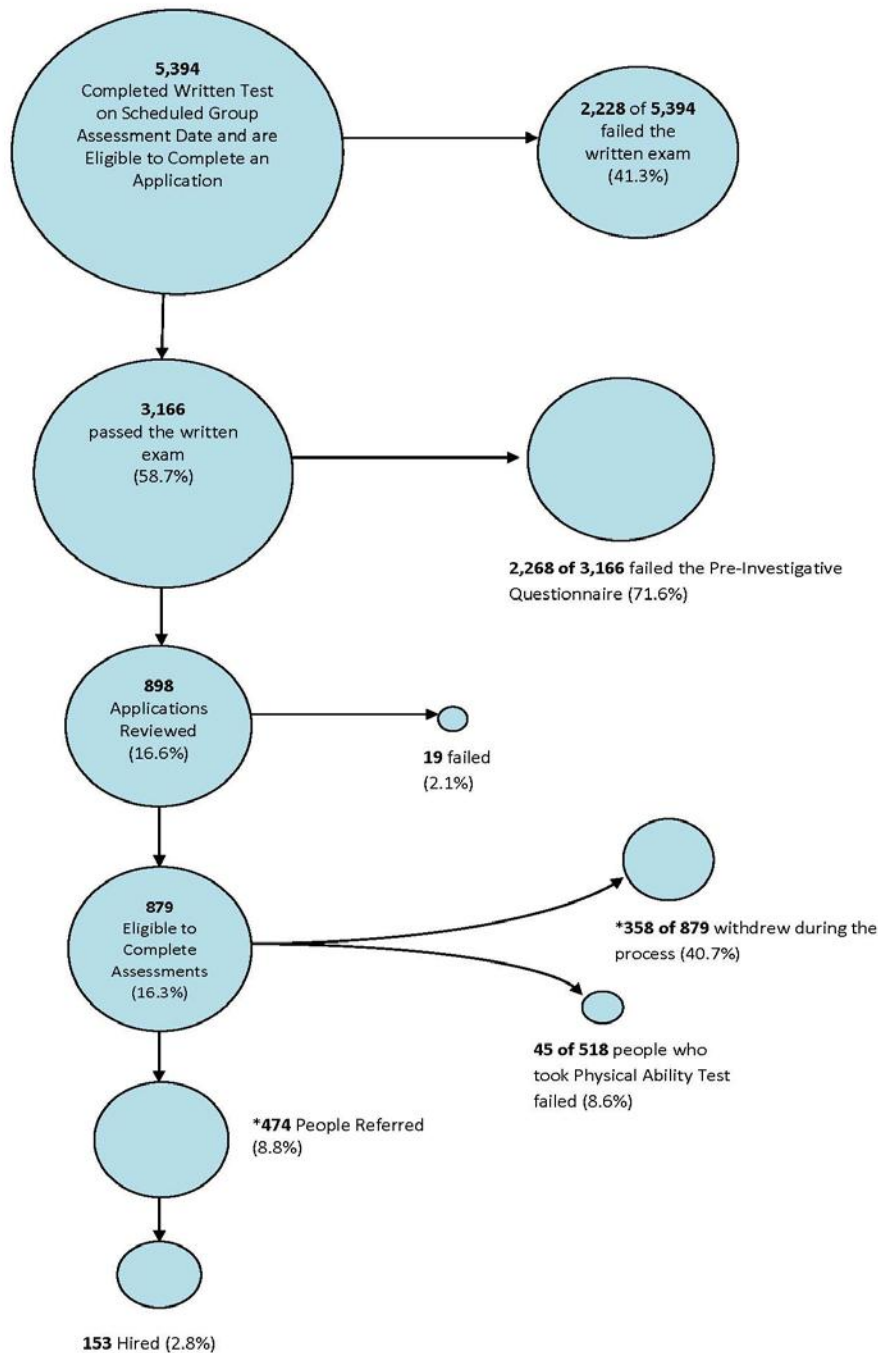


*Note: Calculation is approximate due to applicants appealing and being reinstated during different phases of the hiring process.

Source: OCA scenario generated from Applicant Flow Report data within the NEOGOV workforce system.

Exhibit C3

Police Recruit Written Exam and Pre-Investigative Questionnaire as Initial Screening Tools



*Note: Calculation is approximate due to applicants appealing and being reinstated during different phases of the hiring process.

Source: OCA scenario generated from Applicant Flow Report data within the NEOGOV workforce system.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: November 26, 2013

TO: Eduardo Luna, City Auditor

FROM: Hadi Dehghani, Personnel Director

SUBJECT: Management Response to the Performance Audit of the Classified Civil Service Hiring Process

The Personnel Department has reviewed the City Auditor's recommendations in the audit report on the Classified Civil Service Hiring Process. The data analyzed in this audit is based on selected samples from the application flow and processes which occurred in 2012, shortly after a new recruitment system (NEOGOV) was implemented. Since then, many process improvements have been introduced resulting in a substantial reduction of the hiring timeline in general, including that of Police Recruit.

The three examples used in Exhibits 5, 6 and 7 in the City Auditor's report are a very small sample of the total number of Police Recruit applicants referred to the Police Department at the time. These examples show one end of the spectrum where it took an extended period of time for an applicant to be referred to the department. Some of the reasons for this include applicants rescheduling their assessments, or verification of applicants' education as required under Peace Officer Standards Training (P.O.S.T.). The other end of the spectrum for the same timeframe can be seen in Attachment A wherein the application to referral process took considerably less time.

Table 1 below depicts all 499 Police Recruit candidates referred to the Police Department in 2012, including the three examples used in Exhibits 5, 6, and 7 of the City Auditor's report. It provides a more accurate reflection of the average time it took in 2012 for the Police Recruit process from application to referral. Table 2 below depicts the average time it took in 2013 for the Police Recruit process from application to referral showing a 30% improvement in the timeline.

Table 1
Police Recruit-T10027
Timeline from Application to Referral
Applied 1/1/2011 to 12/31/2012

Average Days from Application to Application Review	Average Days from Application Review to Self Schedule	Average Days from Self Schedule to Written Exam	Average Days from Written Exam to Physical Ability Test	Average Days from Physical Ability Test to Hold for Prom	Average Days from Hold for Prom to Promulgation	Average Days from Promulgation To Referral to Department	Total Average Days
14	26	35	18	66	30	3	192

Classified Civil Service Hiring Process

November 26, 2013

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Table 2

Police Recruit-T10289

Timeline from Application to Referral

Applied 1/1/2013 to 11/26/13

Average Days from Application to Application Review	Average Days from Application Review to Self Schedule	Average Days from Self Schedule to Written Exam	Average Days from Written Exam to Physical Ability Test	Average Days from Physical Ability Test to Hold for Prom	Average Days from Hold for Prom to Promulgation	Average Days from Promulgation To Referral to Department	Total Average Days
3	18	45	24	13	19	32	135

Detailed supporting data for Tables 1 and 2 is available and will be provided upon request.

The Personnel Department will continue to work with hiring departments to improve the hiring process.

Our response to each of the audit recommendations is documented below:

Recommendation #1

In order to refine the applicant screening process, Personnel should:

- Create additional screening filters to increase the number of qualified applicants while simultaneously decreasing the number of less qualified candidates for review.

Management Response: Partially agree

The Personnel Department will review the prospect of creating additional screening filters on a case-by-case basis to determine if they will be of assistance in managing the number of applicants for each job classification. When practical, Personnel will implement additional screening filters, as needed, for specific job classifications.

Date to be completed: November 30, 2014

Recommendation #2

In order to decrease timelines within various phases of the hiring process, Personnel should:

- Establish overall target timeframes based on the individual phases of the hiring process, differentiated as needed for specific classifications. These target timeframes should include:
 - a. The length of time job announcements should remain open;
 - b. Assessment schedules that outline target timeframes for completion and reoccurring assessments, when applicable; and
 - c. The length of time for Personnel to refer candidates after applicants successfully pass all screening requirements.

Management Response: Agree

Most of the recommendations in #2 have been implemented. Certain recruitments are left open for a longer period of time based on agreements with hiring departments or due to assessment components in the hiring process that are under the control of contracted consultants (e.g., promotional processes for sworn positions in the Police and Fire-Rescue departments). The Personnel Department agrees that timelines will be specifically set, while working with hiring departments, their requests for accommodation, testing logistics, and the job

Classified Civil Service Hiring Process

November 26, 2013

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classifications for which we are recruiting. For those target timeframes that fall outside of industry standards, Personnel will ensure that agreed upon target timeframes are acceptable to the relevant parties.

Date to be completed: November 30, 2014

Recommendation #3

In order to continuously monitor performance, Personnel should:

- Periodically evaluate and review its performance in meeting target timeframes to determine if opportunities for improvement exist.

Management Response: Agree

Date to be completed: November 30, 2014

Recommendation #4

In order to decrease timelines within the hiring department's portion of the hiring process, Personnel in collaboration with the Chief Operating Officer should:

- Require that hiring departments not submit Requests for Certification forms until departments are ready to actively fill positions; and
- Establish target timeframes for extending offers of employment upon receipt of referred candidates

Management Response: Partially agree

The Personnel Department agrees that hiring departments should not submit a Request for Certification form until they are ready to actively fill a position. However, if the vacant position is a classification that is currently not designated for predictive recruitment efforts, Personnel will work with the hiring department to ensure recruitment is initiated timely. The Personnel Department agrees with the goal of establishing target timeframes for extending offers of employment upon receipt of referred candidates by the hiring department.

Date to be completed: November 30, 2014

Recommendation #5

In order to provide input to the City's workforce planning, the Chief Operating Officer should:

- Direct all applicable hiring departments to assess current and future workforce needs. The results of these assessments should be communicated to Personnel for inclusion in a workforce development plan.

Management Response: Not applicable to the Personnel Department

Recommendation #6

In order to tailor predictive recruiting efforts towards high-need, hard-to-fill, and ready-to-fill positions, Personnel should:

- Develop a workforce development plan, based on input from the hiring departments that tailors predictive recruiting efforts toward high-need, hard-to-fill, ready-to-fill positions.

Classified Civil Service Hiring Process

November 26, 2013

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Management Response: Agree

The Personnel Department agrees with this effort in collaboration with the City's workforce planning as per recommendation #5 above.

The anticipated Citywide increase in hiring needs over the next five years, particularly in the Police and Fire-Rescue departments, will result in a further increase in workload for the Personnel Department. Additional resources are needed by the Personnel Department to continue to meet the increased work demands.

**City of San Diego
Personnel Department
Police Recruit Exam T10027
(2011-2012)**

Attachment A

Exhibit 5: Police Recruit - Days for Certification					
Recruit Number	Application Received	Promulgation Date (Moved to Eligible List)	Total Days between Application Received and Promulgation Date	Referred to Department	# Days to Certify (Refer Eligibles to Department)
11379303	1/31/2012	4/5/2012	65	4/5/2012	0
10753830	11/16/2011	1/26/2012	70	1/26/2012	0
12531241	11/17/2012	2/11/2013	84	2/13/2013	2

Exhibit 6: Police Recruit Exam Scheduling						
Recruit Number	Application Received	Application Review Completed	Notice Sent to Recruit to Self-Schedule	# Days between Application Review and Notice Sent	Written Exam Completed	Days between Application Review Completed and Written Exam Completed
11379303	1/31/2012	2/1/2012	3/2/2012	31	3/13/2012	11
10753830	11/16/2011	11/16/2011	11/23/2011	7	12/16/2011	23
12531241	11/17/2012	11/26/2012	11/26/2012	0	12/13/2012	17

Exhibit 7: Police Recruit - Waiting for Promulgation							
Recruit Number	Written Exam Completed	Pre-Investigative Questionnaire (PIQ) Completed	Physical Ability Test (PAT) Completed	Hold for Prom	# Days between PAT and Hold for Prom	Promulgation Date (Moved to Eligible List)	# Days between Hold for Prom and Prom
11379303	3/13/2012	3/13/2012	3/24/2012	4/3/2012	9	4/5/2012	2
10753830	12/16/2011	12/17/2011	12/17/2011	1/4/2012	17	1/26/2012	22
12531241	12/13/2012	12/14/2012	1/19/2013	2/7/2013	18	2/11/2013	4



**THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: November 26, 2013

TO: Eduardo Luna, City Auditor

FROM: Stacey LoMedico, Assistant Chief Operating Officer

SUBJECT: Chief Operating Officer Office's Response to the Performance Audit of the Personnel Department dated November 19, 2013

The Chief Operating Officer and I have reviewed the City Auditor's recommendations in the audit report of the Personnel Department. Within the audit there is a specific recommendation to City operations which is documented below.

Recommendation #5

In order to provide input into the City's workforce planning, the Chief Operating Officer should:

- *Direct all applicable hiring departments to assess current and future workforce needs. The results of these assessments should be communicated to Personnel for inclusion in a workforce planning assessment)*

Management Response: **Agree with recommendation.**

The Personnel Department's hiring process is a key component in ensuring City Departments are positioned to meet the goals and objectives of providing the services they are budgeted to provide each fiscal year.

In order to provide the most accurate assessment of what the City's workforce needs will be management will request departments provide their individual workforce needs based upon the adopted FY15 budget along with a 2-year assessment of anticipated retirements within their respective departments. It should be noted that providing a usable multiple year assessment for overall workforce needs is difficult in that while retirements may be known in advance most vacancies occur are due to other reasons such as promotions, discipline-related issues, health reasons, and employees who chose to voluntarily leave City workforce.

Estimated Date of Completion: September 2014

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at (619) 533-4548.

Stacey LoMedico
Assistant Chief Operating Officer

cc: Scott Chadwick, Chief Operating Officer
Hadi Dehghani, Personnel Director
Jeff Sturak, Financial Management Director
Ken Whitfield, Comptroller
Kyle Elser, Assistant City Auditor
Donna Wallace, Assistant Personnel Director
Matthew Helm, Audit Manager