



Internal Audit – Complaints Received January 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014

Item 8
September 23, 2014
**Corporate Affairs and Audit
Committee**

To: Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee **Report:** CAAC:2014-38
From: Chief Internal Auditor
Date: September 12, 2014 Page 1 of 5
Strategic Plan Priority: **Service Excellence:**
• Demonstrate Value for Money and Public Accountability

PURPOSE:

To provide the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee (“the Committee”) with a statistical report with respect to complaints received by the Internal Audit Department for the period of January 1, 2014 to June 30, 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Committee receive this report for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Complaints Received

The Investigations Unit of the Internal Audit Department is tasked with the responsibility of reviewing and investigating complaints received about Toronto Community Housing (“TCHC”) staff, tenants, and contractors. Complaints are received from several sources, including:

- The ‘Do What’s Right’ Hotline (“the Hotline”);
- EasyTrac;
- The City’s Fraud and Waste Hotline;
- Staff and/or other internal sources; and
- Other means (e.g. letters, emails, telephone calls).

Complaint Data

The Committee requested that complaint data be reported to the Committee on a semi-annual basis.

Attachment 1 to this report sets out an overview of the nature and scope of complaints that have been received for the first six months of 2014 (“2014 YTD”), with comparative data for the same time period in 2013 (“2013 YTD”).

The attachment sets out a number of reporting parameters with respect to the complaints received, as discussed below:

Source of Complaints – Gross (Table 1)

The data shows that for 2014 YTD there has been decrease in the gross number of complaints received – a decrease of 19 or 3.4%. The decrease in the number of complaints received continues the trend that was started in 2013, though not as severe. The decrease was noted in basically all of our complaint sources (Hotline, City Fraud Hotline, etc.).

The tenant section of the Hotline opened January 1, 2012 after a public awareness campaign directed towards the tenant population. It has now been 2 ½ years since the opening of the Hotline and we have not publicized the Hotline during that time period. This may be one of the reasons for the decline in complaints received. Consideration will be given to introducing another awareness campaign about the Hotline.

There was, however, a significant increase in the number of complaints by Letter/Email (from 16 in 2013 YTD to 35 in 2014 YTD). We have no explanation for this increase.

It is interesting to note that the Hotline consistently produces approximately 50% of the complaints received. The TCHC EasyTrac system remains a significant source of complaints (approximately 30% – 31%).

Net Complaints Received (Table 2)

Following the trend of 2013 YTD, approximately 38% of the gross complaints received:

- Are not fraud related; or
- Were reported more than once; or
- Do not pertain to a TCHC tenant, building or staff member; or
- Reported an unidentifiable address or tenant.

This percentage is consistent with previous years.

It should be noted that despite the decrease in ‘gross’ number of complaints received in 2014 YTD, the actual number of ‘net’ complaints received increased marginally.

With respect to the type of ‘disqualifying’ complaints, there was a significant increase in the number of complaints that were received more than once. We record every time a complaint is received. There have been a number of instances where a Hotline complaint from the internet portal was submitted 3 – 6 times within a couple of minutes of each other. Though we do not know exactly why these occurred, we suspect that the complainant may have pushed the ‘submit’ button several times in a

row resulting in numerous duplicate submissions. Such actions will skewer the number of duplicate complaints received.

Who the Complaints are About (Table 3)

This identifies, on a net complaint basis, who the complaints were about – staff, tenants, contractors or other. Approximately 90% of net complaints received in 2014 YTD were about tenants. This statistic has been consistent since the inception of the Hotline.

It is noted that complaints received about TCHC staff continued the downward trend that was started in 2013 YTD (24 complaints received 2104 YTD, 32 received in 2013 YTD, and 48 received in 2012 YTD).

Nature of Complaints (Table 4)

This sets out, on a net complaint basis, the broad subject matter of the complaints received. For staff and tenant complaints, the data is further broken down to more specific subject matters:

Staff

A 'Staff Performance Complaint' is one which relates to a performance issue about a staff member (e.g. the carpets are dirty but nothing has been done). These complaints are not reviewed by the Investigations Unit – they are forwarded to the appropriate Operating Unit for follow up.

'Staff Complaints – Other' include all other complaints received about a staff member. In 2014 we have been coordinating our review of Staff – Other complaints with the Human Resources Department.

The number of Staff complaints received in 2014 YTD have marginally decreased from that in 2013 YTD.

Tenants

Complaints about tenants have been broken down into five main subject areas. Cumulatively, the three main tenant subject areas:

- Unreported members in a unit;
- A unit/room being sublet; and
- Unreported income or assets

represent approximately 79% of all net complaints received by TCHC. This is consistent with prior reporting periods.

Market Rent Units operate under different rules and regulations than RGI units. As such they are forwarded directly to the appropriate Operating Unit for follow up.

Distribution by Operating Unit (Table 5)

This shows the number of net complaints received within a particular operating unit ("OU").

This allows the reader to compare (i) an OU's % of Complaints Received to (ii) that OU's number of units as a % of Total TCHC units. For example, Operating Unit G (Willowdale Don Valley) contains 4.1% of TCHC's units and for 2014 YTD it has 9.2% of the complaints received.

We are not aware of any particular reason why one OU has more complaints (on a % basis) than other OUs. Nor do we know why a particular OU is in the 'green' (less % of complaints than their population) for one time period and be in the 'red' (more % complaints than their population) for the next time period.

Hotline Usage (Table 6)

Actually two tables (Table 6a and Table 6b), they show how complainants have been accessing the Hotline.

Nearly 79% of the Hotline complainants have chosen to remain anonymous in YTD 2014 (Table 6a). This a slight decrease over that for YTD 2013 (83.5%).

There has been a 20% decrease in the number of complaints received from the Hotline internet portal. As noted above, a new awareness campaign for the Hotline program may increase usage of the internet portal.

Status of Complaints Received (Table 7)

This table sets out the status of a complaint received during 2014 YTD and 2013 YTD, as at August 15, 2014.

It should be noted that these are cumulative status results for the time periods in question. For example, if a 2013 YTD complaint was closed in 2014, that status will be reflected in the 2013 YTD column. As such, there will always be a proportional difference between the current year results and the previous year results because the previous year results have had a longer time period to review and conclude the matter. This explains why the 2014 YTD Closed Files of 110 is lower than 2013 YTD's 165 Closed Files.

As noted in previous reports, we have been assigning significantly more complaint reviews to operating unit and/or departmental staff. As such, the number of files in the current year that have not yet been assigned has steadily decreased from 189 (40.5%) in 2012 YTD¹ to 48 (15.5%) in 2013 YTD² to 16 (5.0%) in 2014 YTD.

The Investigations Unit is very much appreciative of the assistance and work conducted by field and departmental staff in this regard.

At the end of a review, a complaint is deemed to be either 'unfounded' (i.e. the allegations have not been confirmed or proven) or 'founded' (i.e. the facts have been confirmed). For 2014 YTD, we are finding that out for every three complaint files closed, approximately two of them have been 'unfounded' and one has been 'founded'. This is consistent with prior reporting periods.

¹ Data from Q2 2013 report to the Committee.

² *Ibid.*

Future Complaints Statistics Reports to the Committee

Complaints statistics have been reported to the Committee since the tenant Hotline commenced operation on January 1, 2012 – 2 ½ years ago. The matters being reported has been fairly consistent over that time, with small incremental amendments.

We are planning to review the nature, type and structure of this reporting over the upcoming months. We hope to have a new reporting format in place for the 2014 year end report.

In that regard, I would appreciate receiving suggestions from Committee members about what they would like to see, or not see, in future reports.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

The review and investigation of complaints about staff, tenants and contractors is an integral part of Toronto Community Housing’s risk management strategy. Regular updates to the Committee about complaints received will assist in the identification and mitigation of risks faced.

“Michael Vear”

Michael Vear
Chief Internal Auditor

Attachment: 1: Internal Audit – Complaints Received January 1, 2014 – June 30, 2014

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Attachment 1
Internal Audit - Complaints Received
January 1, 2014 - June 30, 2014

Table 1
Source of Complaints - Gross

- this shows the sources of ALL complaints received

	2014		2013		Change 2013 to 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Fraud Hotline	264	48.4	285	50.4	-21	(7.4)
EasyTrac	173	31.7	170	30.1	3	1.8
Other						
City Fraud Line	15	2.7	21	3.7	-6	(28.6)
Call In	4	0.7	7	1.2	-3	(42.9)
Staff/Internal	55	10.1	64	11.3	-9	(14.1)
Letter/Email	35	6.4	16	2.8	19	118.8
Walk In	0	0.0	2	0.4	-2	(100.0)
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	546	100.0	565	100.0	-19	(3.4)
	546	100.0	565	100.0	-19	(3.4)

Attachment 1
Internal Audit - Complaints Received
January 1, 2014 - June 30, 2014

Table 2
'Net' Complaints Received

- this table eliminates duplicate complaints, complaints about non-TCH properties, and non-fraud related complaints to arrive at the 'true' (or 'net') number of complaints received

	2014		2013		Change 2013 to 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total Complaints Received 'Gross' (Table 1) (A)	546	100.0	565	100.0	-19	(3.4)
Other Matters						
Item Reported is Not Fraud	73	13.4	126	22.3	-53	(42.1)
Item Reported More Than Once	105	19.2	83	14.7	22	26.5
Not a TCH Tenant or Unit	32	5.9	28	5.0	4	14.3
Address Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total Other Matters (B)	210	38.5	237	41.9	-27	(11.4)
'Net' Complaints Received (A) - (B)	336	61.5	328	58.1	8	2.4

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Internal Audit - Complaints Received
January 1, 2014 - June 30, 2014

Table 3
'Net' Complaints Received Were About

- this table identifies if the 'net' complaints received were about Staff, Tenants, Contractors, or Other

	2014		2013		Change 2013 to 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Staff	24	7.1	32	9.8	-8	(25.0)
Tenants	305	90.8	294	89.6	11	3.7
Contractors	2	0.6	2	0.6	0	0.0
Other	5	1.5	0	0.0	5	-
Total 'Net' Complaints	336	100.0	328	100.0	8	2.4

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Internal Audit - Complaints Received
January 1, 2014 - June 30, 2014

Table 4
Nature of Complaints

- this sets out the general nature of the 'net' complaints received

	2014		2013		Change 2013 to 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Staff						
Staff Performance Complaints	5	1.5	9	2.7	-4	(44.4)
Staff Complaints - Other	18	5.4	21	6.4	-3	(14.3)
Waste	0	0.0	2	0.6	-2	(100.0)
Total Staff Complaints	23	6.8	32	9.8	-9	(28.1)
Tenants						
Unreported Extra Members in Unit	150	44.6	131	39.9	19	14.5
Unit/Room Being Sublet	63	18.8	70	21.3	-7	(10.0)
Unreported Income	52	15.5	59	18.0	-7	(11.9)
Miscellaneous Fraud	30	8.9	14	4.3	16	114.3
Over housed Unit	8	2.4	8	2.4	0	0.0
Market Rent Units	9	2.7	13	4.0	-4	(30.8)
Total Tenant Complaints	312	92.9	295	89.9	17	5.8
Contractor	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	-
Total 'Net' Complaints	336	100.0	328	100.0	8	2.4

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Internal Audit - Complaints Received
January 1, 2014 - June 30, 2014

Table 5
Distribution by Operating Unit

- this shows the distribution of the 'net' complaints received by Operating Unit (OU)

- it also compares (i) the OU's % of Complaints Received to (ii) the OU's number of units as a % of Total TCH units

means the OU's % of Complaints Received is LESS than it's % of Total TCH units

means it is GREATER than

	2014			2013			Change 2013 to 2014	
	<u>Complaints</u> No.	%	% of Total Units	<u>Complaints</u> No.	%	% of Total Units	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
OUA - Seniors & Single Family East	12	3.6	11.6	13	4.0	13.3	-1	(7.7)
OUB - Seniors & Single Family West	14	4.2	11.0	20	6.1	11.0	-6	(30.0)
OUC - Weston/Rexdale	14	4.2	4.5	21	6.4	5.4	-7	(33.3)
ODU - York Black Creek	23	6.8	6.1	19	5.8	6.1	4	21.1
OUE - Etobicoke South High Park	17	5.1	7.3	24	7.3	7.3	-7	(29.2)
OUF - Yorkdale Lawrence	20	6.0	3.7	6	1.8	3.7	14	233.3
OUG - Willowdale Don Valley	31	9.2	4.1	27	8.2	4.1	4	14.8
OUH - Scarborough	8	2.4	3.9	11	3.4	5.1	-3	(27.3)
OUI - Scarborough Southwest	21	6.3	5.8	37	11.3	5.8	-16	(43.2)
OUI - Grange Bathurst St Lawrence	25	7.4	6.3	21	6.4	6.3	4	19.0
OUI - Central Sherbourne	18	5.4	5.8	34	10.4	6.7	-16	(47.1)
OUL - Don Valley Beaches	17	5.1	5.2	14	4.3	5.2	3	21.4
OUM - Central Parliament	13	3.9	3.2	12	3.7	3.2	1	8.3
OUI - Contract Managed West	26	7.7	6.6	14	4.3	5.7	12	85.7
OUI - Contract Managed Central	23	6.8	4.8	12	3.7	4.0	11	91.7
OUI - Contract Managed East	29	8.6	10.1	17	5.2	7.1	12	70.6
Community Safety Unit	0	0.0	N/A	0	0.0	N/A	0	0.0
Housing Connections	0	0.0	N/A	8	2.4	N/A	-8	(100.0)
Rent Supplement	4	1.2	N/A	0	0.0	N/A	4	0.0
Staff and Other Non-OU	21	6.3	N/A	18	5.5	N/A	3	16.7
Total 'Net' Complaints	336	100.0	100.0	328	100.0	100.0	8	2.4

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Table 6
Hotline Usage

- these two tables show how complainants have been accessing the Do What's Right Hotline
- Table 6a analyzes whether or not complainants choose to remain anonymous
- Table 6b shows how complainants access the Do What's Right Hotline (e.g. internet, telephone etc.)
- Tables 6a and 6b are based on the 'gross' number of complaints received on the Do What's Right Hotline (refer Table 1)

	2014		2013		Change 2013 to 2014	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Table 6a - Anonymous vs. Not Anonymous						
Anonymous	207	78.4	238	83.5	-31	(13.0)
Not Anonymous	57	21.6	47	16.5	10	21.3
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	264	100.0	285	100.0	-21	(7.4)
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Table 6b - Method Used to Access Hotline						
Internet	95	36.0	120	42.1	-25	(20.8)
Telephone	169	64.0	165	57.9	4	2.4
Email	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Letter	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
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	264	100.0	285	100.0	-21	(7.4)
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Table 7
Status of Complaints Received

- for 'net' complaints received up to June 30 of the year noted, this sets out the status of the complaint, cumulatively as at August 15, 2014.

Tenants		Complaints Received	Closed				In Progress		To Be Assigned	
			Unfounded No.	%	Founded No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Unreported Extra Members in Unit	2014	150	33	22.0	11	7.3	102	68.0	4	2.7
	2013	131	36	27.5	19	14.5	72	55.0	4	3.1
Unit/Room Being Sublet	2014	63	13	20.6	10	15.9	38	60.3	2	3.2
	2013	70	33	47.1	13	18.6	14	20.0	10	14.3
Unreported Income	2014	52	9	17.3	6	11.5	31	59.6	6	11.5
	2013	59	20	33.9	5	8.5	8	13.6	26	44.1
Miscellaneous Fraud	2014	30	8	26.7	6	20.0	13	43.3	3	10.0
	2013	14	8	57.1	3	21.4	1	7.1	2	14.3
Overhoused Unit	2014	8	3	37.5	0	0.0	5	62.5	0	0.0
	2013	8	3	37.5	5	62.5	0	0.0	0	0.0

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Internal Audit - Complaints Received
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Table 7 (cont'd)
Status of Complaints Received

		<u>Complaints Received</u>	<u>Closed</u>				<u>In Progress</u>		<u>To Be Assigned</u>	
			<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Staff										
Other	2014	18	4	22.2	7	38.9	6	33.3	1	5.6
	2013	21	13	61.9	5	23.8	3	14.3	0	0.0
Waste	2014	0	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
	2013	2	2	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Contractor	2014	1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0
	2013	1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0
Other	2014	0	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
	2013	0	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Total	2014	322	70	21.7	40	12.4	196	60.9	16	5.0
Total	2013	306	115	37.6	50	16.3	99	32.4	42	13.7

NB: 2014 and 2013 Total Complaints Received will not agree to Table 4 because this table does not include Staff Performance Complaints nor Market Rent Complaints. These complaint types are automatically referred to an Operating Unit.