



# Memorandum

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To: John Renfrow, Director  
Miami-Dade County Water & Sewer Department

From: Christopher R. Mazzella  
Inspector General

Date: February 1, 2010

Re: WASD's Updated Response to Complaints Regarding Donation Projects,  
Ref IG09-13

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The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is in receipt of your updated response dated January 20, 2010 regarding Miami-Dade County Water & Sewer Department's (WASD) continued implementation of our recommendations and the reforms taking place in the New Business Division. Your response demonstrates WASD's resolve to fix this broken process and we are hopeful that your cures will provide the accountability that this business division requires.

OIG Contract Oversight Specialist John Canepari will be contacting New Customer Division Interim Chief Manager Jose Soto directly to obtain a copy of the updated procedures manual and to schedule attending one of the training sessions mentioned in your response. Should you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

cc: Honorable Carlos Alvarez, Mayor  
Howard Piper, Special Assistant to the County Manager  
Jose Soto, New Customer Division Interim Chief

CM/td

# Memorandum



**Date:** January 20, 2010

**To:** Christopher Mazzella, Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General

**From:** John W. Renfrow, P.E., Director  
Miami-Dade Water and Sewer Department 

**Subject:** Updated Response to Complaints Regarding Donation Projects IG09-13

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Pursuant to your request the following report is an updated version of our initial response dated on September 21, 2009 regarding the referenced subject.

At this time, we are pleased to inform you that during the last quarter of 2009 we have completed several staff training, and business systems improvements within the New Customer Division that will ensure a more standardized business with our customers.

Please feel free to call me, if you have any further questions regarding this updated report.

c: Howard Piper  
Special Assistant to the County Manager

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**UPDATED RESPONSE TO O.I.G. RECOMMENDATIONS**  
**January, 20, 2010**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Evaluate NBD document control practices, in conjunction with the internal controls review recommended by the task force, to ensure that the distribution and retrieval of original documents is controlled and that procedures provide for the safekeeping of original NBD records.

**Comments:** *Agreement files and their contents are now secured in locked cabinets and access to the files is controlled via an Office Support Specialist 2 and the New Business Manager. The requester must sign a check-out log. (See attachment #1 New Business Agreement Log WASD.) This is to assure that the location of an agreement file is always known. In addition to Letters of Credit, which have always been kept in the safe, all Maintenance Bonds for Agreement Projects are now also secured in the safe. A log is now kept and updated. (See attachment #2 Safe Inventory – Maintenance Bonds and Letters of Credit.) Additionally, D.O.T. restoration Bonds are now also logged and kept in the safe. (See attachment #3 Safe Inventory D.O.T. Restoration.)*

2. Review all NBD DSI files of service agreements entered into within the last 36 months to confirm that all documents have been obtained and all actions have been completed that are required to convey the subject donation projects. Any missing documents or incomplete actions should be remediated by prompt action to obtain the necessary documents and complete any outstanding tasks.

**Comments:** *A report of all agreements pending conveyance is available in real time in DSI. This report changes daily, including all new agreements for which conveyance documents have just been prepared and deleting all agreements for which conveyance has been completed. (See attachment #4 Pending Conveyance Report DSI.)*

*A report was recreated by MIS to identify all un-conveyed projects as of August 9, 2009. A total of ~~sixty-three (63)~~ projects appeared on this report dating back to 1996. Efforts to complete conveyance included multiple phone calls, e-mails, letters, and certified letters. Developers and/or their agents, contractors, and clerical staff were contacted, sometimes repeatedly. Specific letters, approved by the County Attorney's office, have been sent to current owners and new owners of properties for projects needing easements to be provided as part of the conveyance.*

*As a result of these actions, as of 1-4-10, ~~sixty-three (63)~~ of these projects have been conveyed, and continuous daily contact by e-mails, phone calls, and in person requests are made to the Developers, Contractors, Engineers, Architects, and property owners to obtain the remaining required documents. (See attachment #5 Projects Pending Conveyance as of 8-9-09.) A point needs to be reached wherein WASD follows thru with legal action on parties who fail to comply with its efforts. (See response for paragraph 3.*

3. Assess each of the twenty-five (25) projects, where meters were prematurely installed (see page 7) to immediately obtain the necessary documents and complete any outstanding tasks.

**Comments:** *Out of the 25 projects where meters were set, 11 have been conveyed as of 1-4-10. A report was created noting all previous requests for conveyance documents such as phone calls, e-mails, and letters. Additional actions included sending new letters developed by the County Attorney for projects requiring easements. Of this group, 14 are remaining. The breakdown is as follows:*

Schools	7
Government	4
Private	3
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Total	14

*For the schools, meetings take place every Wednesday with the School Board Project Manager. Documents have been provided and the remaining documents required are continuing to be addressed. The Governmental entities have received certified letters. Two of the four are the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts. All documents have been provided with the exception of one which is being addressed. For the three types of cases involving private ownership entities, certified letters have been sent requesting all needed documents. A meeting took place on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and attended by the County Attorney, the Assistant Director of Quality Assurance & Performance Auditing and New Business Staff. Consensus was reached and decision made to categorize and evaluate the remaining project cases with unconveyed facilities. A follow-up meeting will be held wherein the Assistant Director of Quality Assurance & Performance Auditing will evaluate the various case scenarios in order to make a determination on the best practices that will be implemented in each case in the most expedient way and at least cost for all concerned and to also determine if any further legal action is required in certain cases. Approaches discussed for consideration as potential business decisions covering the various cases include; assumption of those facilities in service and operational such as a sewer laterals, fire lines and/or water service located within the right-of-way; providing assistance with easement descriptions; and litigation. In any event, the County attorney will continue to be consulted in all decisions.*

- 4. Immediately act on the recommendations contained in the task force report for evaluating WASD policies and procedures, especially to determine whether the current policies and procedures represent “best practices” for the described activities necessary for the setting of meters on donation projects. WASD should decide whether its policies and procedures will stand as written or whether to revise them to allow for non-standard meter installations and, if so, who is authorized to approve deviations from required protocols and, just as important, how to document a deviation.**

**Comments:** *As recommended in the task force report, the Standard Operating Procedure Manual of the New Business Section has been revised. Review with the Supervisors has been done and training with all staff is being scheduled for the first and second quarter of fiscal year 2010.*

*It has been decided that non-standard meter installations can be approved for those specific cases, such as schools and projects of public benefit, provided that all health, safety, inspection approvals, and financial issues have been satisfied. If all fees have been paid, and the State of Florida Health and Rehabilitative Service clearance has been provided, approval will be in the form of a memorandum signed by the New Business Manager. Once executed, this document will be placed in the New Account Work Form packet and will be scanned into the DSI agreement in the New Business*

*Database system. A copy will be given to the Supervisor 1 in charge of conveyance, to keep track of any such exceptions, for follow up purposes. This policy and procedure is being incorporated into the new Standard Operation Procedures.*

5. **Even for standard meter installations, establish a documented approval path in the CIS system indicating the NBD Representative responsible for authorizing a meter to be set; establishing adequate supervisory sign off or review of such actions; and ensuring that an adequate audit trail is established to review such actions in the future.**

**Comments:** *A revised New Account Form was created to include a box for supervisory sign-off on all meter sets. The revised form was put into immediate use. A further revision was then added to include a box for verification of the conveyance status of a particular project by the NBR, including providing the DSI screen print with the system notation "Okay to Set Meters". (See attachment #6 New Account Form.)*

6. **Accelerate efforts to achieve continuous tracking of donation projects by establishing unique identifying designators. Current WASD's DSI system tracks projects for an Agreement number. However, WASD's CIS does not use this reference number and instead uses a project's address as a project identifier.**

**Comments:** *A meeting has been scheduled for mid-January, 2010, with the Business Process Chief and Computer Services Manager to proceed with the implementation of a new field in the CIS system that will accommodate our Agreement Number as a unique identifier connecting the property address in CIS to the property in DSI. A new reconciliation process has already been instituted with DSI's IS2 component and CIS. The same automated cross-referencing process may be possible in the future as a post-auditing feature for meter sets related to conveyance once this unique identifier is in place.*

7. **Efforts to promote integrity and boost morale within the Division:**

**Comments:** *Following items have been implemented:*

*Extensive Staff training in multiple areas (see attachment #7 Training)*

*Customer Satisfaction Surveys are reviewed and employee is nominated for a Pebble if customer specifically notes their excellent customer service*

*Recognition in the Splash of meritorious customer service*

*Supervisors consistently counseling employees with sub-standard productivity in order to assist employees to improve their productivity*

*A team evaluates projects which include participation by the New Business Representative (NBR) and is inclusive of all manager levels to include the Division Chief.*

*Supervisors teaching and mentoring employees*

*Performance measures are currently being re-evaluated and will be updated by the quarter of this fiscal year in order to monitor work processes and specifically, the non-standard meter installation process and Conveyance Unit overall performance.*