



Canadian Union of
Public Employees

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**SERVING OUR
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1942**

July 26, 2011

Councillor Ainslie, Chair
And Members, Government Management Committee
100 Queen Street West
10th Floor, West Tower
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor Ainslie
And Members, Government Management Committee,

Re: Item Number GM6.1 Core Service Review

On behalf of Local 79 I wish to address the KPMG option to consider outsourcing some 311 activities to the private sector.

311 is rapidly becoming the standard approach for municipalities to give a single-point-of-access to non-emergency program and service inquiries for all residents, businesses and visitors.

I am pleased that KPMG acknowledge that all but one of the cities used for the jurisdictional review, Montreal, Boston, Philadelphia and Melbourne, provide this service at the City level, and Barcelona provides the service through a City ABC. The service is available 24/7, 365 days a year in these jurisdictions.

The City of Toronto appears to be appropriately proud of its 311 service and describes it as *the largest, most exciting customer service improvement undertaken by the City of Toronto since amalgamation.*

Just think of that. The largest, most exciting customer service improvement undertaken by the City of Toronto since amalgamation!

The City further boasts that *311 improves accessibility to non-emergency City services and information and increases the City's effectiveness in responding to public inquiries. Customer service representatives are available to assist 24 hours a day, seven days a week.*

According to the City of Toronto's website:

- 311 Toronto is the largest end-to-end service integration system in North America.
- The 311 Knowledge Base holds 15,000 answers to a possible 13,800 questions.
- The Contact Centre is expecting to receive 48,000 inquiries per week when fully operational.

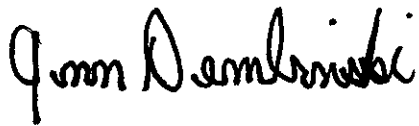
CUPE 79

- Prior to the launch of 311, there were 251 inquiry lines in place to access City services at nine call centre operations at 26 locations.
- More than 100 highly trained customer service representatives work from the 311 Contact Centre.
- There are 100 workstations in the Contact Centre.
- IP Telephony or Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) technology is used in the Contact Centre.
- In its first year, 311 staff resolved 75 per cent of all calls at the first point of contact, reducing the number of calls transferred.
- Service can be provided in more than 180 languages using a telephone interpretation service; TTY service for hearing impaired is also available.

Despite presenting the option of outsourcing some 311 activities to the private sector, KPMG concedes that if a contractor is housed outside Toronto, it may be more difficult to train staff adequately and that privacy concerns could be an issue. Local 79 would suggest to you that staff training and privacy concerns are huge issues!

Local 79 wonders why the City would even contemplate for one moment that their successful, and valued, 311 service should be operated in any other way than a 100% directly run and operated City service!

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Dembinski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ann Dembinski
President