

## **ROLE 2: ASSESS PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

***Practice 2a. Test relevance or reliability: Test or certify performance measurement relevance, reliability, or both.***

**Phoenix, Arizona, City Auditor** (<http://phoenix.gov/AUDITOR>): The City Manager Executive Report is issued monthly, with citywide and department-specific performance measurements presented in graphic form with written comments and highlights at the end of each department's section. The City Auditor Department has played a role in this report for six years. Annually, audit staff ask each service department which graphs of measures they want to add, delete, or modify in the report. Audit staff will validate performance measurement data for the new graphs. The focus of their review is on the methods of data collection by the departments.

In 2001-02, the City Auditor Department validated all the graphs in the City Manager Executive Report in preparation for the report being published on the Internet. The following year, 25 percent of the graphs were validated. Although they have a formal audit program for this validation process, they don't have specific detailed steps because their detailed steps depend on what they find when they start testing. The Auditor Department's experienced auditors can best determine how to perform the testing in each case. Their audit program simply tells them to determine if the data gathering methods appear reasonable and to test a few months worth of data in the report to make sure it was reported accurately. Auditors ask themselves, "Is the graph showing the citizens what the data is really measuring? Is it accurate? Are any necessary disclosures needed?" An example of a disclosure is a footnote to say reported data are estimated, as in the case of park attendance records. During the validation process, auditors share any concerns they have with the applicable department liaison and work with the department to determine any needed changes or corrections. Auditors verify that changes have been made correctly before the City Manager Executive Report is issued by the City Clerk Department.

Beginning 2003-04, validation auditing has become part of the City Auditor Department's work plan for continuous auditing. Each year they expect to spend about 300 hours auditing 80 to 100 indicators (about 25 percent of those reported). In selecting measures to audit, they focus on those for which questions were raised or data gathering problems were identified in the past, and those for which the coordinator or contact in the operating agency has changed. Also, some measures are selected randomly.

In a separate review process, every two years the City Auditor Department gathers all of the performance measures used by city departments and analyzes what percent are outcome measures, to help management determine if performance measurement is becoming more results-oriented. Not all performance measures are expected to represent outcomes, as other forms of measurement are also considered important for sound management and policy. But this review helps determine if departments' overall measurement approaches are relevant to a focus on results that the City intends to strengthen and maintain.

The *City Manager Executive Report* is available from the web pages of the City Manager (<http://phoenix.gov/CITYGOV/citymgr.html>) and City Auditor (<http://phoenix.gov/AUDITOR>).