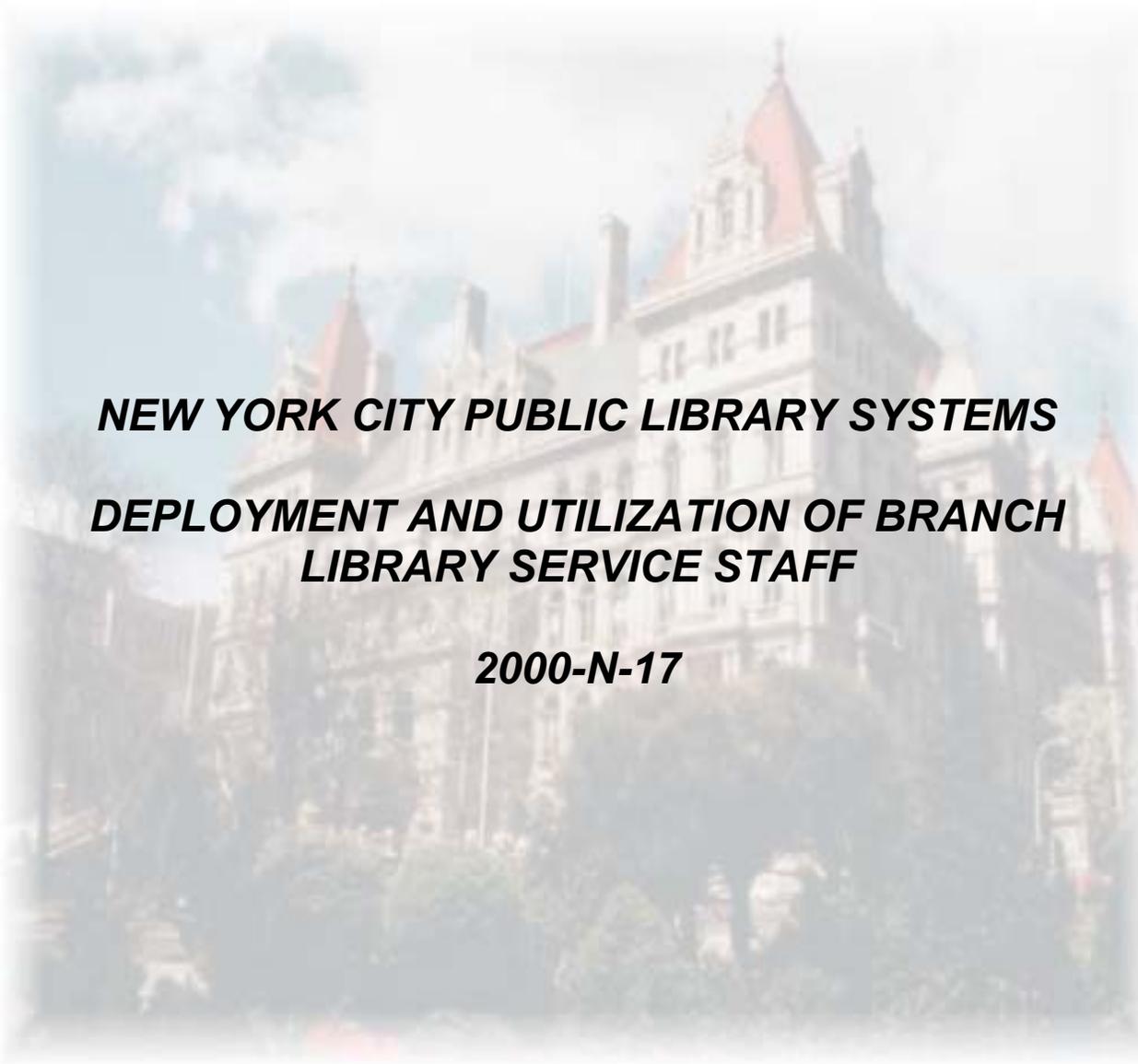


# ***NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER***

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**H. Carl McCall  
STATE COMPTROLLER**



## ***NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS DEPLOYMENT AND UTILIZATION OF BRANCH LIBRARY SERVICE STAFF***

***2000-N-17***

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**DIVISION OF MANAGEMENT AUDIT AND  
STATE FINANCIAL SERVICES**

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Albany, NY 12236



**H. Carl McCall**  
**STATE COMPTROLLER**

**Report 2000-N-17**

Mr. Samuel C. Butler  
Chairman of the Board of Trustees  
The New York Public Library  
Fifth Avenue & 42nd Street  
New York, New York 10018-2788

Mr. Albert Wiltshire  
President of the Board of Trustees  
The Brooklyn Public Library  
Grand Army Plaza  
Brooklyn, New York 11238-5619

Ms. Patricia Flynn  
President of the Board of Trustees  
The Queens Borough Public Library  
89-11 Merrick Boulevard  
Jamaica, New York 11432

Dear Mr. Butler, Mr. Wiltshire, and Ms. Flynn:

The following is our report addressing the policies and practices used by the New York Public Library, the Brooklyn Public Library, and the Queens Borough Public Library to deploy branch library service staff and to monitor their utilization.

This audit was performed under the State Comptroller's authority as set forth in Article X, Section 5 of the State Constitution and Article II, Section 8 of the State Finance Law. Major contributors to this report are listed in Appendix A.

*Office of the State Comptroller*  
*Division of Management Audit*  
*and State Financial Services*

February 19, 2002

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**Division of Management Audit and State Financial Services**

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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

### ***NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS DEPLOYMENT AND UTILIZATION OF BRANCH LIBRARY SERVICE STAFF***

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#### ***SCOPE OF AUDIT***

New York City (City) area residents can access citywide public library services through three independent systems: the New York Public Library (NYPL), serving the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island; the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL); and the Queens Borough Public Library (QBPL). Total annual expenditures for the three systems are about \$428 million. The City provides most of the libraries' operating funds (about \$246 million in the 1999-2000 fiscal year). The City also provides contributed services such as rent and energy. In addition, the library systems collect revenue in the form of donations and fines and receive grants from private sources, New York State, and the Federal government.

The NYPL operates 85 branch libraries while the BPL operates 59 branches and the QBPL operates 62. The branches are generally open at least six days a week and the majority provide 40 or more service hours per week. During fiscal year 1999-2000, about 40.1 million people visited the three library systems and the cumulative circulation of borrowed items was about 41 million. Based on estimates provided to us by the three library systems, branch library service staff (librarians and their support staff) accounted for about \$32 million, \$24.4 million and \$23 million of personal service costs for the NYPL, QBPL, and BPL systems, respectively.

We audited the three public libraries' policies and practices for deploying branch library service staff and for monitoring the utilization of these staff for the period July 1, 1998 through March 30, 2001. Our performance audit addressed the following question:

- Are adequate policies and practices in place for deploying branch library service staff and for monitoring the utilization of these staff?

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## **AUDIT OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The workload of the service staff at the branch libraries of the three systems varies widely in terms of cumulative circulation of items per service employee. For example, among all three systems, there were 21 branches with cumulative circulations of more than 30,000 items per service employee and 15 with cumulative circulation of fewer than 6,000 items per service employee. (See Exhibits A, B and C.)

Using regression analysis, we measured the correlation that existed between branch library service staffing, cumulative circulation, and hours of operation for each of the three systems. Our analysis showed that branch library service staffing correlated highly (about 92.3 percent) with cumulative circulation and hours of operation at the QBPL. This high correlation indicates that most of the differences in staff deployment among branches in this system can be attributable to variances in cumulative circulation and hours of operation. This high correlation may be attributable to the formal guidance that this library system has provided for determining the proper number of service staff to deploy at branches. At the NYPL and the BPL, where such formal guidance had not been established, the correlation of staffing to cumulative circulation and hours of operation was fairly high, but not as high as at QBPL (63.9 percent at NYPL and 70 percent at BPL). Accordingly, there is opportunity for NYPL and BPL and, to a lesser extent, QBPL to identify other factors, including improvement opportunities, which are influencing branch library staff deployment. In response to our observations, NYPL compiled a regression analysis, taking into account additional factors and adjusting for additional staffing at regional libraries and borough offices. This resulted in an 86 percent correlation between staffing and the various factors. We recommend that each library system establish and adhere to a formal, documented methodology which considers cumulative items of circulation, hours of operation, and any other significant common factors that might apply for determining the base-line deployment of branch service staff.

In response to our observations, officials of the library systems pointed out that a variety of factors that can cause variation in service staff deployment among branch libraries. These factors include the availability of special programs, the design and layout of the library buildings, customer demographics, the presence of special collections, etc. We understand that many factors unique to particular branch libraries can influence optimal service staff deployment. However, we recommend that the library systems periodically review the utilization of branch library service staff so that such unique factors can be evaluated and so that adjustments to base line staff deployments can be identified and implemented where appropriate. We found no documentation in support of the completion of such periodic monitoring. Consequently, there is increased risk that branch library service staffing may not be optimally efficient.

We also recommend that officials of the three systems should meet to identify, discuss and share policies and practices for deploying branch library service staff and for monitoring their utilization.

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***Comments of BPL, NYPL and QBPL Officials***

Officials of the three library systems generally agreed with the recommendations made to their respective organizations.

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## ***Exhibit A***

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New York Public Library – Annual Circulation per Service Employee - FY 2000

## ***Exhibit B***

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Brooklyn Public Library – Annual Circulation per Service Employee - FY 2000

## ***Exhibit C***

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Queens Borough Public Library – Annual Circulation per Service Employee - FY 2000

## ***Appendix A***

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Major Contributors to This Report

## ***Appendix B***

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Comments of Brooklyn Public Library Officials

## ***Appendix C***

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Comments of New York Public Library Officials

## ***Appendix D***

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Comments of Queens Borough Public Library Officials

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Background

New York City (City) area residents can access citywide public library services through three independent systems: the New York Public Library (NYPL), which serves the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island; the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL); and the Queens Borough Public Library (QBPL). These systems offer free access to books and non-print materials, reference services, and other resources; operate educational programs for adults and children; and provide adult literacy training and job information services, among other functions. The NYPL operates 4 research library centers and 85 branch libraries (branches). Five of NYPL's branches, located in Manhattan, serve as the branch system's Central Library Unit. NYPL also maintains 3 borough offices and 14 regional libraries that schedule staffing for the branches in their region. In addition to their central libraries, the BPL operates 59 branches, while the QBPL has 62. All branches, except for one in the QBPL system, are open at least six days a week. The majority of the branches provide 40 or more service hours per week.

The NYPL, BPL, and QBPL were founded in 1895, 1897, and 1907, respectively. The systems are funded and operate as three separate and distinct not-for-profit corporations; and they serve users representing all age, social, and economic groups within the City. The libraries they administer are considered a particularly valuable educational and recreational resource for the City's more than 1 million public and private elementary and high school students. Access to library facilities and services is considered an important part of the quality of life for New York City residents. It has become even more significant as patrons increasingly rely on the libraries for Internet access, as well as the more-traditional library services.

According to the officials of the three library systems, significant numbers of staff have been lost to other municipal and school libraries that pay higher salaries. In an effort to recruit and retain librarians, whose career ladder ranges from library information assistant to regional librarian, NYPL negotiated its own salary agreement with the New York Public Library Guild.

Ratified in April 2001, the contract between NYPL and the 500 librarians it employs includes a provision intended specifically to stem the loss of librarians: It allows entry-level employees to be promoted to senior librarian after just nine months, instead of the previously-required two years. The contract also contains several concessions intended to increase productivity and improve staff allocation. For example, NYPL management can now assign a newly promoted senior librarian to whatever branch it determines to be the most appropriate. Until this new contract took effect, librarians could insist on staying at their assigned branch after they were promoted. This negotiation did not affect the work agreements of the BPL and QBPL, even though their librarians belong to the same union.

Total expenditures for the three systems are about \$428 million annually, including expenditures related to grants for research libraries. The majority of the libraries' funding comes from the City - about \$246 million in operating aid for the 1999-2000 fiscal year. The libraries also receive contributed services such as rent and energy from the City. In addition, the libraries also receive funding from New York State, the Federal government, and private grants; smaller amounts of revenue are derived from donations and fines. During the 1999-2000 fiscal year, more than 40.1 million people visited the three systems; and the cumulative circulation (the total number of items borrowed in a given year) totaled about 41 million. The three systems had a total of more than 3,900 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees during that period. The following table summarizes pertinent program and fiscal data as reported by New York City's three library systems for the 1999 - 2000 fiscal year in the Mayor's Management Report:

Library	In Thousands				Program Attendance	City Funding (Millions)	Total FTE Staff
	Service Population	Cumulative Circulation	Reference Transactions	Visits			
NYPL	3,070	12,842	6,619	14,201	513,841	\$119.5	1,665
BPL	2,301	10,917	5,918	8,989	676,708	\$64.5	1,197
QBPL	1,952	17,239	2,960	16,948	597,459	\$61.7	1,102

Branch libraries in the three systems are staffed with librarians and their support staff (office aides or office associates). Based on estimates provided to us by the three systems, for fiscal year 1998-99 these library service staff accounted for about \$32 million, \$24.4 million and \$23 million of personal service costs for the NYPL, QBPL and BPL systems, respectively. The American Library Association (ALA) provides general guidance and some oversight of library operations throughout the United States. Although the ALA recommends that libraries establish staffing and workload standards or guidelines, it does not prescribe specific workload levels or staff-allocation standards. Recent nationwide surveys of library operations have not addressed this issue specifically. Industry standards indicate that, while it is advisable to have staffing and workload standards for individual systems, library systems across the country are too diverse for the establishment of a uniform set of formal standards.

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### ***Audit, Scope, Objective and Methodology***

**W**e audited the policies and practices of the three New York City public library systems for deploying branch library service staff and for monitoring the utilization of these staff. Our audit covered the period July 1, 1998 through March 30, 2001. The objective of our performance audit was to determine whether these policies and practices adequately assured cost effective operations. To accomplish our objective, we interviewed appropriate NYPL, BPL, and QBPL officials and staff. We also reviewed relevant library procedures and practices, as well as other data and documentation that were significant and relevant to our audit objective.

We used regression analysis to determine the relationship that existed between staffing, circulation, and hours of service for the branches. Regression analysis is a statistical methodology used to examine the relationship between two or more sets of data when it is believed that one set of data (the independent variable) influences another set of data (the dependent variable). Regression analysis produces what is known as a coefficient of determination. The higher the coefficient of determination, the more direct the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. A coefficient of 70 percent or more indicates a relatively high correlation between the dependent and the independent variable(s).

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Such standards require that we plan and perform our audit to adequately assess those operations of the New York City library systems, which are included within our audit scope. These standards also require that we understand the libraries' internal control structure and compliance with those laws, rules and regulations that are relevant to the operations included in our audit scope. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, the evidence supporting transactions recorded in the accounting and operating records and applying such other auditing procedures as we consider necessary in the circumstances. An audit also includes assessing the estimates, judgments and decisions made by management. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our findings, conclusions and recommendations.

We use a risk-based approach when selecting activities to be audited. We therefore focus our audit efforts on those activities we have identified through preliminary survey as having the greatest probability of needing improvement. Consequently, by design, finite audit resources are used to identify where and how improvements can be made. We devote little audit effort to reviewing operations that may be relatively efficient and effective. As a result, our audit reports are prepared on an "exception basis." This report, therefore, highlights those areas needing improvement, and generally does not address activities that may be functioning properly.

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### ***Responses of BPL, NYPL, and QBPL Officials***

A draft copy of this report was provided to BPL, NYPL, and QBPL officials for their review and comment. Their comments were considered in preparing this report and are included as Appendix B, Appendix C and Appendix D, respectively.

Within 90 days after release of the final audit report, we request that the Presidents of the BPL and the QBPL and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the NYPL report to the State Comptroller, advising what steps were taken to implement the recommendations contained herein, and where the recommendations were not implemented, the reasons therefor.

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## STAFF DEPLOYMENT AND MONITORING OF UTILIZATION

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Each library system should follow its own policies and practices that provide for a formal methodology for determining a base line deployment of branch library librarians, aides and support staff (service staff). Such a methodology would allocate service staff among branches after taking into account specific factors such as branch library cumulative circulation, hours of operation, special programs, etc. Policies and practices should also provide for monitoring the utilization (workload) of branch library service staff to determine where adjustments are needed to the base line deployments determined by the formal methodology. For example, the monitoring should identify how unique branch library factors such as special programming, building layout, customer demographics etc., are affecting service staff utilization.

The assumptions, factors and outcomes of the staff deployment methodology, as well as any adjustments to the deployment based on monitoring of actual utilization, should be supported with documentation. Such policies and practices promote accountability for publicly funded resources and help to ensure that customer needs are met effectively and efficiently.

We found that the workload, in terms of cumulative circulation, varied considerably within each library system and across the three systems. For example, there were 21 branches throughout the systems with 30,000 cumulative circulation items per service employee and 15 branches with cumulative circulation items of fewer than 6,000 items per service employee. However, in general, there were no current, documented methodologies explaining the deployment of branch library service staff. Consequently, it was not clear whether these variances were justified or whether they indicated the potential for improved efficiency and effectiveness of operations and customer service.

Using regression analysis, we measured the correlation that existed between staff deployment (dependent variable) and the cumulative circulation of items of branch operations (independent

variables) for the branches of each of the three library systems. We also used regression analysis to measure the correlation of staff deployment to the combined independent variables of cumulative circulation and hours of branch operation. From our analyses, we conclude that each library system, to varying extents, has the potential to more adequately assure that branch library service staff are correctly deployed to maximize cost effectiveness of operations. We also conclude that officials of the three library systems should meet to identify, discuss and share best practices for deploying branch library service staff and for monitoring their utilization. The following paragraphs present our regression analyses and the results of our follow up with each of the three library systems.

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### ***New York Public Library***

We reviewed the staffing at 72 of the 85 NYPL branches as of December 31, 2000. (We excluded from our review the five facilities that are part of the NYPL's Central Library operation and the eight branches that were either closed or providing limited service at temporary locations.) The 72 branches had been assigned a total of 334.5 full time equivalent (FTE) librarians and 398.5 FTE support staff. Generally, the NYPL assigned from one to ten FTE librarians and from 1.5 to 15.5 FTE support staff to each branch. Overall, the branches averaged 4.6 FTE librarians and 5.5 FTE support staff. Cumulative circulation per service staff ranged from a 38,372 items per service employee at the New Amsterdam branch to 4,769 items per service employee at the Francis Martin branch for the 1999-2000 fiscal year. (See Exhibit A.) The median circulation per service employee was 10,005 items.

We found that the NYPL had not established a formal, documented methodology for allocating service employees among its branches. According to NYPL officials, branch staffing decisions take into account factors such as the available budget; facility size and layout, including the number of floors; hours of operation; the number of service points (reference and circulation desks); service population demographics; attendance statistics; circulation; programming; reference use; outreach activities; region-wide responsibilities of staff in regional libraries, and electronic resources. They stated that the process includes meetings at the regional libraries level followed by a borough office review and a sign-off by the Director of the Branch Libraries. In addition, coverage re-allocations are

indicated on regional schedules, which cover two-week periods. NYPL officials told us that the regional schedules are sent to the borough offices, and that a designated regional staff member informs the borough office of any deviations. However, NYPL officials have not maintained minutes or other records in support of these procedures and the resulting decisions.

Our regression analysis of the NYPL branches showed that for the 1999-2000 fiscal year, the correlation between staffing and cumulative circulation was 43.2 percent, indicating that 43.2 percent of the difference in staffing can be explained by differences in circulation. Our regression analysis for staffing, circulation, and hours of service showed a correlation of 63.9 percent. Because 63.9 percent of the staffing differences were attributable to circulation and hours of operation, the 36.1 percent balance is attributable to other factors that may indicate improvement opportunities.

NYPL officials indicated that our work prompted them to compile a regression analysis for regional libraries and borough offices. This analysis used a formula that considers various factors, such as cumulative circulation, hours of service, number of floors, and regional or borough classification. Based on this analysis, officials stated that they would adjust staffing for a regional library or borough office by an additional six individuals for the administrative component. This resulted in an 86 percent correlation between staffing and the various factors. According to NYPL officials, this regression analysis provides a good starting point for branch library staffing requirements.

NYPL officials emphasized that there are a variety of factors that need to be taken into account when determining the deployment of branch library service staff. For example, they explained that the size of the building (square footage and number of floors), the number of service points, the number of students in the service population, and facility renovations must also be considered. They also indicated that staff redeployments might be necessary due to vacancies in some branch locations. We agree that these factors and potentially many others impact on efficient staff deployment. We also understand that it may be difficult to incorporate all such factors into a formal methodology for staff deployment. Consequently, we recommend that such factors that may be unique to particular branches be considered during the periodic monitoring of branch library service staff utilization. In this way,

the need for redeployment of staff can be identified, assessed and documented.

We observed that the NYPL's automated personnel system is able to provide management with up-to-date staffing summaries, including FTE staffing levels for the branches. Such reports are useful in implementing periodic monitoring of the utilization of branch library service staff. However, generally such reports are not produced and reviewed on a routine basis by central management and there is no documentation in support of periodic monitoring of service staff utilization. During our audit we noted instances where the utilization of branch library service staff warranted monitoring. For example:

- The Throgs Neck and West Farms branches had similar staffing as of January 2001. However, the cumulative circulation of Throgs Neck was more than twice that of West Farms. The cumulative circulation of West Farms was also significantly less than the median workload for NYPL branches.
- The circulation for the Bloomingdale branch was about 54 percent greater than that of the Kingsbridge branch for the 1999-2000 fiscal year, but the branches had similar staffing patterns.

NYPL officials reported that West Farms required more staff because it has one more floor than Throgs Neck. They also reported that Kingsbridge staff often are assigned to work at other locations within various regions and accordingly, are not always available to the Kingsbridge branch.

NYPL officials advised us that they would continue to look at ways of quantifying staff allocation factors and then applying them in a more formal manner. NYPL management agreed to formally document staff changes, monitor workloads, and meet with other City library officials to discuss staffing issues.

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## ***Brooklyn Public Library***

**W**e reviewed the staffing of the 59 BPL branches as of December 4, 2000. (We did not review the business library staffing because of its unique purpose.) The 58 branches had been assigned a total of 313 FTE librarians and 328 FTE support staff, with a range of 4 to 13 librarians and 4 to 14

support staff per branch. Overall, the branches averaged 5.40 FTE librarians and 5.66 FTE support staff. During the 1999-2000 fiscal year, the ratios of cumulative items of circulation to branch library service staff ranged from 30,003 items per service employee at the Borough Park branch to 4,821 items per service employee at the Bedford branch. (See Exhibit B.) The median circulation per service employee for that year was 12,036 items.

We found that the BPL had not established a formal, documented methodology for allocating service employees among its branches. In an effort to determine whether six-day service would be feasible throughout the system, BPL did conduct two staffing studies in 1997 for both the Central Library and its branches. Although these studies did not establish staff-allocation standards, they did address factors that could affect overall activity and staffing requirements for service employees at branches. These included cumulative circulation, daily attendance, reference inquiries, program attendance, square footage, and hours of service. The study concerning branches resulted in a determination of the optimum staffing levels that would be required to operate each one. However, according to BPL officials, budgetary limitations prevented them from providing staff at the suggested levels.

Our regression analysis of the BPL branches showed that for the 1999-2000 fiscal year, the correlation between staffing and cumulative circulation was 69 percent, indicating that 69 percent of the difference in staffing can be explained by differences in cumulative circulation. Our regression analysis for staffing, cumulative circulation and hours of service showed a correlation of about 70 percent. Because 70 percent of the staffing differences were attributable to cumulative circulation and hours of operation, the balance (30 percent) could be attributed to other factors that may include improvement opportunities.

BPL management indicated the size of the building (square footage and number of floors), the number of service points, the number of students in the service area population, and facility renovations are also factors that need to be considered in assessing staff deployment. Officials also indicated that staffing adjustments might be necessary due to vacancies in some branch locations. We agree with BPL officials that many factors impact on staffing. Therefore, as presented in our findings to NYPL, we also recommend that BPL consider such unique

factors during the periodic monitoring of branch library service staff utilization. We noted that BPL presently does not have documentation in support of periodic monitoring of staff utilization. During our audit we noted instances where the utilization of branch library service staff warranted monitoring. For example:

- The annual cumulative circulation of the Greenpoint branch was approximately two and one half times greater than the Dekalb branch for the 1999-2000 fiscal year, but each branch had been assigned nine service staff.
- The Borough Park and Midwood branches had similar sized buildings and cumulative circulation statistics. Yet, 14 service staff were assigned to Borough Park and 17 service staff were assigned to Midwood.

BPL officials reported that Dekalb residents primarily visit the library for staff intensive services such as homework assistance whereas Greenpoint experiences a high use of its collections. However, Greenpoint was subsequently assigned an additional librarian. BPL officials also reported that Midwood had recently reopened after renovation and a higher level of use of this library had been anticipated. BPL officials indicated that they would consider equalizing the staffing level of Midwood with Borough Park after a review of all variables.

BPL officials stated that, they accept our recommendations and plan to formalize their approach for allocating staff to branch libraries. This standardization of policies will be completed by June 30, 2002. They also indicated that they would try to arrange discussions with NYPL and QBPL officials during which best practices for the staff allocation function can be identified.

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### ***Queens Borough Public Library***

**W**e reviewed the staffing at all 62 QBPL branches as of December 14, 2000. The branches had been assigned a total of 272 FTE librarians and 288 FTE support staff, with a range of one to 17 librarians and one to 23 support staff at the branches. Overall, the branches averaged 4.39 FTE librarians and 4.65 support staff. (See Exhibit C.)

According to QBPL officials, staff allocation at each branch is based mainly on cumulative circulation, pursuant to certain

formal guidelines. For example, guidelines specify that a site with a cumulative circulation of:

more than 300,000 should be allocated 6 to 11 librarians and 6 to 13 support staff;

100,000 to 300,000 should be allocated 3 to 5 librarians and 3 to 5 support staff; and

fewer than 100,000 should be allocated 1 to 2 librarians and 1 to 2 support staff.

We compared the staffing for 61 of the 62 branches as of December 14, 2000 to QBPL's established criteria. (We excluded the Flushing branch from the analysis because the prescribed staffing criteria could not reasonably be applied to the Flushing branch, which had an annual circulation of about 1.4 million items.) For the 61 branches we included in our analysis, the staff allocations for 52 sites (85 percent) were within QBPL's guidelines. Just nine varied from the staffing guidelines, as summarized by the following table:

Branch	Actual Staffing as of 12/14/2000		Staffing Allocation Per QBPL Guidelines		Actual Staffing over the Guideline Amounts	
	Librarian	Support Staff	Librarian	Support Staff	Librarian	Support Staff
Langston Hughes	6	4	2	2	4	2
Astoria	3	2	2	2	1	0
St. Albans	2	3	2	2	0	1
Rochdale Village	3	3	2	2	1	1
South Ozone Park	3	3	2	2	1	1
East Elmhurst	3	2	2	2	1	0
Laurelton	4	4	2	2	2	2
Steinway	6	5	5	5	1	0
Queens Village	6	6	5	5	1	1

Although the staffing of 85 percent of QBPL's branches was within the ranges prescribed by management, there was a wide range among the branches in the ratios of cumulative circulation to the numbers of service employees. For the 1999-2000 fiscal year, the ratios ranged from a cumulative circulation of 41,977 items per service employee at the Sunnyside branch to 7,102 items per service employee at the Langston Hughes branch. (See Exhibit C.) Since QBPL's median circulation per service

employee was 25,468, we questioned whether the prescribed ranges in the guidelines could be overly flexible.

However, our regression analysis of the QBPL branches for the 1999-2000 fiscal year showed that 91.5 percent of the difference in staffing is, in fact, explained by a difference in cumulative circulation. Our regression analysis for staffing, cumulative circulation, and hours of service showed a correlation of about 92.3 percent, again a high rate. Thus, 7.7 percent of the differences in staffing among the branches was attributable to other factors that may include improvement opportunities.

QBPL officials state that these other factors affecting the number of service employees allocated to a particular branch include the number of service points, after hours use by students, daily attendance, the number of students in the service area population, latchkey attendance, reference statistics, demographics, a building's size and layout (area and number of floors), and facility renovations. QBPL officials told us that unique collections, resources, and use patterns could affect the amount of reference and research assistance required at a particular branch. They said that they also rely on demographics and patron needs as part of their effort to allocate resources to meet community needs, and indicated that the QBPL has extensive collections that correspond to the interests of the borough's diverse population. Officials further indicated that language differences and skills could influence the placement of staff.

We agree with QBPL officials that many factors impact on staffing. Therefore, as we presented in our findings to the NYPL and the BPL, we also recommend that the QBPL consider such factors during the periodic monitoring of branch library service staff utilization to assess whether further staffing efficiencies can be obtained. We noted that the QBPL presently does not have documentation in support of periodic monitoring of staff utilization. During our audit we noted instances where the utilization of branch library service staff warranted monitoring. For example:

- The cumulative circulation of the Windsor Park branch was more than triple the circulation of the Langston Hughes branch during the 1999-2000 fiscal year. During that period Langston Hughes had ten service staff and

Windsor Park had eight. The cumulative circulation per employee and Windsor Park was 31,516 per employee and at Langston Hughes it was 7,102. Each branch had similarly sized buildings.

QBPL officials reported that Langston Hughes serves a broader community than its immediate surroundings, has a computer-assisted after-school learning environment for 100 children and has a unique book collection and art gallery which distinguish it from Windsor Park.

QBPL officials indicated that they would record additional information to document their decision-making processes. They also stated that they would meet with officials of the City's other two library systems to discuss staff allocation procedures.

### **Recommendations**

To NYPL, BPL, and QBPL:

1. Each system should establish and document its own policies and practices for periodically monitoring the utilization of branch library service staff and for making adjustments to staff deployments based on monitoring results.
2. Each system should identify and share best practices for deploying branch library service staff and for monitoring their utilization.

To NYPL and BPL:

3. Each system should establish its own formal, documented methodology for base line deployment of branch library service staff.

To NYPL:

4. Utilize the automated personnel system to obtain branch library service staffing information that central office management can use to support both a formal documented staff deployment methodology as well as documented monitoring of staff utilization.

**NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY  
ANNUAL CIRCULATION PER SERVICE EMPLOYEE – FY 2000**

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Cumulative Circulation</b>	<b>Librarians</b>	<b>Clerical Support</b>	<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>Annual Circulation Per Staff Person</b>
New Amsterdam	306,979	3.0	5.0	8.0	38,372
Todt-Hill Westerleigh Regional	481,178	7.0	12.0	19.0	25,325
Columbia	163,098	3.0	3.5	6.5	25,092
Richmondton	321,872	6.0	7.0	13.0	24,759
Huguenot Park	242,178	4.0	6.0	10.0	24,218
Dongan Hills	155,675	2.0	4.5	6.5	23,950
St. Agnes	292,349	6.0	7.5	13.5	21,655
67th Street	140,668	2.0	4.5	6.5	21,641
Tompkins Square	183,294	5.0	3.5	8.5	21,564
Epiphany	263,779	6.0	6.5	12.5	21,102
Seward Park**	474,076	10.0	12.5	22.5	21,070
Great Kills	120,309	3.0	3.0	6.0	20,052
Yorkville	205,923	5.0	6.5	11.5	17,906
Cooke Cathedral	102,676	3.0	3.0	6.0	17,113
Riverside	226,980	6.0	7.5	13.5	16,813
Spuyten Duyvil	153,770	4.0	6.0	10.0	15,377
Jefferson Market Regional	297,364	10.0	9.5	19.5	15,249
West New Brighton	102,559	3.0	4.5	7.5	13,675
Webster	122,776	5.0	4.0	9.0	13,642
Throg's Neck	102,521	4.0	4.0	8.0	12,815
Tottenville	96,037	3.5	4.0	7.5	12,805
58th Street	137,823	5.0	6.0	11.0	12,529
Parkchester Regional	192,896	6.0	9.5	15.5	12,445
Hamilton Fish Park	87,057	3.0	4.0	7.0	12,437
Fort Washington	177,626	7.5	7.0	14.5	12,250
St. George Library Center	197,660	8.0	8.5	16.5	11,979
Bloomingdale Regional	219,338	10.0	8.5	18.5	11,856
Columbus	76,899	3.0	4.0	7.0	10,986
Hudson Park	71,196	3.0	3.5	6.5	10,953
Port Richmond	81,758	3.0	4.5	7.5	10,901
Roosevelt Island	37,940	1.5	2.0	3.5	10,840
Baychester Regional	160,772	6.0	9.0	15.0	10,718
Van Nest	117,060	6.0	5.0	11.0	10,642
Woodlawn Heights	47,757	1.0	3.5	4.5	10,613
Eastchester	81,337	3.0	5.0	8.0	10,167
Aguilar	85,046	5.0	3.5	8.5	10,005
Jerome Park	65,032	3.0	3.5	6.5	10,005
Riverdale	103,152	5.0	5.5	10.5	9,824
Washington Heights	80,125	5.0	3.5	8.5	9,426
Clason's Point	82,478	4.0	5.0	9.0	9,164
96th Street Regional	166,474	10.0	8.5	18.5	8,999
Van Cortlandt	69,532	4.0	4.0	8.0	8,692
Allerton	93,579	5.0	6.0	11.0	8,507
Pelham Bay	93,251	5.0	6.0	11.0	8,477
South Beach	46,423	2.5	3.0	5.5	8,441
Kingsbridge Regional	142,763	8.0	9.0	17.0	8,398
Fordham Library Center	202,975	9.0	15.5	24.5	8,285

**Exhibit A**

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Cumulative Circulation</b>	<b>Librarians</b>	<b>Clerical Support</b>	<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>Annual Circulation Per Staff Person</b>
Wakefield	66,266	3.0	5.0	8.0	8,283
High Bridge	65,547	3.0	5.0	8.0	8,193
Morrisania	49,861	3.0	3.5	6.5	7,671
Stapleton	53,523	3.5	3.5	7.0	7,646
Sedgwick	51,970	3.0	4.0	7.0	7,424
Grand Concourse	62,453	4.0	4.5	8.5	7,347
Macomb's Bridge	10,286	0.0	1.5	1.5	6,857
115th Street	47,619	3.0	4.0	7.0	6,803
Woodstock	52,748	4.0	4.0	8.0	6,594
Melrose	68,915	5.0	5.5	10.5	6,563
Westchester Square	61,868	4.0	5.5	9.5	6,512
Castle Hill	52,302	3.0	5.5	8.5	6,153
Mosholu	55,095	4.0	5.0	9.0	6,122
Hunt's Point Regional	89,185	7.0	8.0	15.0	5,946
Hamilton Grange	63,710	6.0	5.0	11.0	5,792
Tremont	42,629	4.0	3.5	7.5	5,684
Countee Cullen Regional	79,424	7.0	7.0	14.0	5,673
Belmont Regional	82,460	7.0	8.0	15.0	5,497
West Farms	48,957	4.0	5.0	9.0	5,440
Edenwald	46,044	3.0	5.5	8.5	5,417
City Island	39,407	4.0	3.5	7.5	5,254
125th Street	28,347	3.0	2.5	5.5	5,154
Harlem	27,925	2.0	3.5	5.5	5,077
Soundview	44,790	4.0	5.0	9.0	4,977
Francis Martin Regional	81,069	9.0	8.0	17.0	4,769
<b>72 BRANCHES*</b>	<b>8,846,410</b>	<b>334.5</b>	<b>398.5</b>	<b>733.0</b>	<b>12,069</b>
FTE Staff Per Branch		4.6	5.5	10.2	

\*Does not include:

- 1) Donnell Center, Performing Arts, Mid-Manhattan, Library for the Blind, and the Science, Industry and Business Library.
- 2) Chatham Square Regional, Ottendorfer, and Kip's Bay, which were closed to the public for renovations during FY 2000.
- 3) NYPL's Early Childhood Resource and Information Center (ECRIC).
- 4) Muhlenberg, George Bruce, New Dorp Reg., Mott Haven, and Inwood Reg (provided limited service at temporary locations during FY 2000).

\*\* Staffing as of 1/27/2001 included the re-assignment of Chatham Square staff to Seward Park during the branch's renovation.

**BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
ANNUAL CIRCULATION PER SERVICE EMPLOYEE – FY 2000**

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Cumulative Circulation</b>	<b>Librarians</b>	<b>Clerical Support</b>	<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>Annual Circulation Per Staff Person</b>
Borough Park	420,047	7	7	14	30,003
Mckinley Park	411,473	5	5	14	29,391
Sunset Park	285,510	6	5	11	25,955
Brighton Beach	269,675	6	5	11	24,516
Midwood	420,557	8	10	18	23,364
Gerritsen Beach	240,601	5	6	11	21,873
Ryder	299,952	7	7	14	21,425
Greenpoint	192,561	4	5	9	21,396
Homecrest	226,830	5	6	11	20,621
Flatlands	259,485	7	6	13	19,960
Sheepshead Bay	217,785	5	6	11	19,799
Kings Bay	270,136	7	7	14	19,295
Fort Hamilton	154,180	4	4	8	19,273
Bay Ridge	268,225	7	7	14	19,159
Windsor Terrace	210,050	5	6	11	19,095
Ulmer Park	187,252	5	5	10	18,725
Kings Highway	499,938	13	14	27	18,516
Brooklyn Heights	239,501	6	7	13	18,423
Kensington	225,599	6	7	13	17,354
Mill Basin	222,764	6	7	13	17,136
Mapleton	323,168	4	4	19	17,009
Highlawn	226,615	7	7	14	16,187
Park Slope	193,887	7	6	13	14,914
Cortelyou	162,082	5	6	11	14,735
Crown Heights	141,799	4	6	10	14,180
Canarsie	122,407	4	5	9	13,601
New Utrecht	246,756	10	9	19	12,987
Jamaica Bay	136,140	6	5	11	12,376
Paerdegat	122,148	4	6	10	12,215
Leonard	94,854	4	4	8	11,857
Carroll Gardens	94,484	4	4	8	11,811
Gravesend	129,503	6	5	11	11,773
East Flatbush	114,149	5	5	10	11,415
Clarendon	111,845	5	5	10	11,185
Rugby	109,054	5	5	10	10,905
Spring Creek	106,022	4	6	10	10,602
Cypress Hills	93,985	4	5	9	10,443
Dyker (bookmobile)	92,066	4	5	9	10,230
Bushwick	80,371	4	4	8	10,046
Eastern Parkway	86,231	4	5	9	9,581
Brower Park	74,642	4	4	8	9,330
Coney Island	93,148	5	5	10	9,315
Arlington	74,415	4	4	8	9,302
Saratoga	71,111	4	4	8	8,889
Flatbush	88,734	5	5	10	8,873
Dekalb	77,714	4	5	9	8,635
Pacific	68,524	4	4	8	8,566

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Cumulative Circulation</b>	<b>Librarians</b>	<b>Clerical Support</b>	<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>Annual Circulation Per Staff Person</b>
Macon	67,894	7	7	8	8,487
Washington Irving	83,863	5	5	10	8,386
Williamsburgh	96,117	8	4	12	8,010
Brownsville	59,688	4	4	8	7,461
Clinton Hill	70,445	5	5	10	7,045
New Lots	74,680	6	5	11	6,789
Stone Avenue	59,590	4	5	9	6,621
Marcy	63,118	8	11	10	6,312
Walt Whitman	42,569	4	4	8	5,321
Red Hook	39,111	4	4	8	4,889
Bedford	38,567	4	4	8	4,821
<b>58 BRANCHES*</b>	<b>9,553,617</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>641</b>	<b>14,904</b>
FTE Staff Per Branch		5.40	5.66	11.05	

\*We did not review the business library staffing as it served a different purpose than the other branches.

**QUEENS BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
ANNUAL CIRCULATION PER SERVICE EMPLOYEE – FY 2000**

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Cumulative Circulation</b>	<b>Librarians</b>	<b>Clerical Support</b>	<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>Annual Circulation Per Staff Person</b>
Sunnyside	335,813	4	4	8	41,977
Elmhurst and Elmhurst ALC	702,118	7	10	17	41,301
Briarwood	277,491	3	4	7	39,642
Court Square	116,851	1	2	3	38,950
Flushing and Flushing ALC	1,477,248	17	23	40	36,931
Bellerose	361,277	5	5	10	36,128
Hillcrest	419,592	6	6	12	34,966
Broad Channel	67,142	1	1	2	33,571
Mitchell Linden	261,200	4	4	8	32,650
Richmond Hill	324,156	4	6	10	32,416
Douglaston	191,640	3	3	6	31,940
Whitestone	255,230	4	4	8	31,904
Ridgewood	286,901	4	5	9	31,878
Bayside	505,274	8	8	16	31,580
Windsor Park	252,130	4	4	8	31,516
Howard Beach	220,378	3	4	7	31,483
Rego Park	438,989	7	7	14	31,356
Auburndale	399,735	6	7	13	30,749
Maspeth	242,064	4	4	8	30,258
Jackson Heights	566,596	11	8	19	29,821
Forest Hills	473,193	8	8	16	29,575
Kew Gardens Hills/Vleigh	353,899	6	6	12	29,492
Queensboro Hill	265,022	4	5	9	29,447
Lefferts	382,384	6	7	13	29,414
Fresh Meadows	381,398	6	7	13	29,338
Glen Oaks	244,173	4	5	9	27,130
East Flushing	188,825	3	4	7	26,975
Broadway	456,547	8	9	17	26,856
Corona	186,492	3	4	7	26,642
Ozone Park	211,439	4	4	8	26,430
McGoldrick	308,646	6	6	12	25,721
Bay Terrace	201,711	4	4	8	25,214
Middle Village	150,817	3	3	6	25,136
Woodhaven	196,547	4	4	8	24,568
North Hills	145,971	3	3	6	24,329
North Forest Park	194,304	4	4	8	24,288
Woodside	214,461	5	4	9	23,829
Poppenhusen	138,854	3	3	6	23,142
Glendale	156,608	3	4	7	22,373
Steinway and Steinway ALC	245,574	6	5	11	22,325
Queens Village	266,753	6	6	12	22,229
Far Rockaway	196,461	5	4	9	21,829
Lefrak City	174,598	4	4	8	21,825
Cambria Heights	101,190	3	2	5	20,238
East Elmhurst	98,312	3	2	5	19,662
Seaside	175,788	4	5	9	19,532
Baisley Park	76,213	2	2	4	19,053
St. Albans	93,074	2	3	5	18,615
South Jamaica	70,179	2	2	4	17,545
Pommonok	139,042	4	4	8	17,380

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Cumulative Circulation</b>	<b>Librarians</b>	<b>Clerical Support</b>	<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>Annual Circulation Per Staff Person</b>
Queensbridge*	34,469	*	2	2	17,235
Arverne	67,931	2	2	4	16,983
Hollis	117,076	3	4	7	16,725
South Ozone Park	96,974	3	3	6	16,162
Rochdale Village and Rochdale Village ALC	95,525	3	3	6	15,921
Rosedale	121,141	4	4	8	15,143
South Hollis	57,980	2	2	4	14,495
Astoria	71,205	3	2	5	14,241
Peninsula and Peninsula ALC	111,578	4	4	8	13,947
Laurelton	99,258	4	4	8	12,407
Ravenswood*	72,844	4	2	6	12,141
Langston Hughes	71,017	6	4	10	7,102
<b>62 Branches</b>	<b>15,207,298</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>27,156</b>
FTE Staff Per Branch		4.39	4.65	9.03	

\*The staff at Ravenswood rotates between Ravenswood and Queensbridge.

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## MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS REPORT

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Jerry Barber  
Brian Mason  
Tom Trypuc  
Christine Chu  
Orin Ninvalle  
Mostafa Kamal  
Wayne Scully  
Matricia Madory

**Brooklyn  
Public  
Library**

December 6, 2001

Mr. Tom Trypuc  
New York State  
Office of the State Comptroller  
123 William Street, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10038-3804

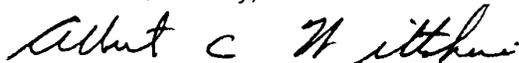
Dear Mr. Trypuc:

Thank you for providing BPL with a copy of the Comptroller's final consolidated report on New York City Libraries -- Staff Development and Utilization (2000-N-17).

As noted in an earlier acceptance letter from Executive Director Gómez, BPL accepts the recommendations noted in the report. Consequently, by June 30, 2002, we plan to formalize BPL's current approach for allocating staff to branch libraries. This standardization of policies and procedures will include variance reporting and periodic testing to ensure that staffing is appropriately allocated.

Additionally, BPL will seek to resume with New York City Public Library and with Queens Borough Public Library its discussions about staffing allocation methodologies. This will be especially valuable since, as noted in the audit report, there are no uniform industry standards established for staffing allocations in libraries.

Yours truly,



Albert C. Wiltshire  
President

cc: Martín Gómez, Executive Director  
Siobhan Reardon, Deputy Executive Director  
Sofia Sequenzia, Deputy Director for Public Service  
Barbara Osborne Harris, Chief, Neighborhood Services  
Rhea Brown Lawson, Chief, Central Library  
John Vitali, Director of Finance

# The New York Public Library

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188 Madison Avenue, 5th floor, New York, NY 10016-4314

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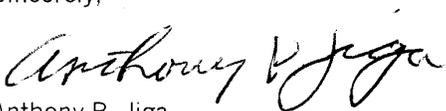
January 18, 2002

Mr. Jerry Barber  
Audit Director  
Office of the State Comptroller  
A.E. Smith State Office Building, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Albany, NY 12236

Dear Mr. Barber:

This letter responds to your letter of November 15, 2001 that accompanied the draft audit report *Deployment and Utilization of Branch Library Service Staff (2000-N-17)*. Library management expressed its response to your preliminary audit findings in a detailed letter dated August 8, 2001. Your subsequent draft report accurately reflects the Library's comments. The Library appreciates the time and effort the State Comptroller's staff put into its audit.

Sincerely,

  
Anthony P. Jiga