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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

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Room 400, City Hall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Tuesday, June 8, 2010
1:50 p.m.

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PRESENT:

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COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER, CHAIR

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COUNCILMAN DARRELL CLARKE

12

COUNCILMAN WILLIAM K. GREENLEE

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COUNCILMAN JAMES KENNEY

14

COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO, JR.

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RESOLUTION 100263 - Resolution authorizing
City Council's Committee on Public Safety to
hold a public hearing to investigate and
determine the cause of the repeated failures
of the City of Philadelphia's Police
Department Radio System.

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RESOLUTION 100272 - Resolution authorizing
Council's Committee on Public Safety to hold
public hearings for applicants seeking
nomination to serve on the Police Advisory
Commission...

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COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Hi. Good

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afternoon, everyone. The City Council

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Committee on Public Safety is in a public

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hearing to testify on Resolution 100263

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concerning the police radio system.

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Before we begin, however, we

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are going to recess briefly and go into a

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public meeting so that we may consider

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the Committee's recommendations with

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respect to Resolution 100272 concerning

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the Police Advisory Commission.

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Joining us today in this

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afternoon's meeting are Councilman Frank

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Rizzo to my left, Councilman Bill

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Greenlee to my left, Councilman Darrell

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Clarke to my left, and I am Councilwoman

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Donna Reed Miller, Chair of this

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Committee.

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We will now ask the Clerk to

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read the title of Resolution 100272.

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THE CLERK: Resolution

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authorizing Council's Committee on Public

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Safety to hold public hearings for

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applicants seeking nomination to serve on

1 6/8/10 - PUBLIC SAFETY - RES. 100263
2 the Police Advisory Commission, and
3 further authorizing the Committee to
4 provide a report to the Committee of the
5 Whole setting forth its recommended list
6 of nominations for submission to the
7 Mayor.

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
9 you.

10 We have circulated to members
11 of this Committee a report setting forth
12 21 recommended nominees for eventual
13 submission to the Mayor. Before I ask
14 the Clerk to read the report into the
15 record, I would like the record to
16 reflect that the pool of applicants was
17 very, very impressive. There were 50
18 applicants seeking 21 positions. We were
19 blessed with a variety of talents,
20 experiences and remarkable diversity, and
21 with applicants who showed a great
22 willingness to contribute to this
23 exceptionally important commission.

24 I was honored to participate in
25 this process. I believe that my

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2 colleagues share that feeling. I
3 particularly enjoyed personally welcoming
4 and hearing from many of the applicants
5 at our public hearing in this Chamber
6 last week on June 1st.

7 So after due deliberation and
8 this Committee having had the opportunity
9 to review the initial applicants, along
10 with the written testimony and letters of
11 recommendations, I would ask the Clerk to
12 read the report into the record.

13 THE CLERK: Committee on Public
14 Safety report on Resolution 100272. We
15 hereby submit to the Committee of the
16 Whole the following recommended list of
17 nominations for the Police Advisory
18 Commission for submission to the Mayor
19 pursuant to Executive Order 8-93:

20 Terrance H. Barnes; Rachel E.
21 Branson; Jamira Burley; Ronald A. Burton;
22 Devon Cade; Robert S. Cavanaugh; Mujeeb
23 Chaudhary; James C. Crumlish, III; Rodney
24 Lee Dunn; Cheryl L. Haynes; Cassandra C.
25 Hines; Edward James, Jr.; Keith E. Kunz;

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2 Elizabeth Mell; Andrea Nicole Phillips;
3 Curtis M. Pontz; Oscar Rosario; Robert P.
4 Shine, Sr.; Joi C. Spraggins; Joseph T.
5 Stapleton; and Louis Troup, Jr.

6 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
7 Councilmember Greenlee, could I please
8 have a motion pursuant to Resolution
9 100272 reporting the Committee's
10 recommendations for the Police Advisory
11 Commission.

12 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
13 you, Madam Chair. I move the adoption of
14 the recommendations.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Do I hear
16 a second?

17 (Duly seconded.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
19 you. All in favor?

20 (Aye.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Opposed?

22 (No response.)

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
24 you. The report has been adopted with a
25 favorable recommendation.

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2 Councilmember Greenlee, may I
3 please have an additional motion
4 instructing the Chief Clerk to distribute
5 copies of this report to all members of
6 City Council at the close of this
7 meeting.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: So moved,
9 Madam Chair.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
11 you.

12 (Duly seconded.)

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All in
14 favor?

15 (Aye.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: The
19 motion has been adopted.

20 The next step is that our
21 recommendations will be provided to
22 Council's Committee of the Whole, which
23 will consider our report. If the
24 Committee of the Whole concurs, it will
25 then recommend that the full Council

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2 submit these names to the Mayor. If the
3 Council concurs, the Mayor will then
4 select seven Commission members and two
5 alternatives from that list.

6 This concludes our public
7 meeting, and we will now return to our
8 public hearing on Resolution 100263
9 concerning the Police Department Radio
10 System.

11 Will the Clerk please read the
12 title of the resolution.

13 THE CLERK: Resolution 100263,
14 resolution authorizing City Council's
15 Committee on Public Safety to hold a
16 public hearing to investigate and
17 determine the cause of the repeated
18 failures of the City of Philadelphia's
19 Police Department Radio System.

20 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
21 you. Will you please call the first
22 panel of witnesses forward.

23 THE CLERK: Panel No. 1:
24 Joseph James, for Verizon Douglas
25 Sullivan and Douglas Smith, and for

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2 Motorola Jacqueline Wasni.

3 (Witnesses approached witness
4 table.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Hi. Have
6 a seat. Councilman Rizzo has some
7 comments before we start your testimony,
8 but don't forget to pull the mike up
9 close so we can hear you and state your
10 name and any other identifying
11 information you'd like to state.

12 Councilman Rizzo.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you,
14 Madam Chair.

15 And, Verizon, Motorola, thank
16 you for being here today.

17 Good afternoon, Madam Chair and
18 fellow Committee members. The purpose of
19 this hearing this afternoon is to
20 investigate and determine the cause of
21 the recent problems associated with the
22 police, fire and municipal radio system.
23 The incidents in question occurred on
24 March 24th, April 12th and April 13th,
25 respectively.

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2 Even a single incident is
3 unacceptable. The safety and well-being
4 of residents and visitors alike, as well
5 as the brave police officers and
6 firefighters who place themselves in
7 harm's way each and every day are
8 paramount.

9 After a history of such radio
10 communication problems going back a
11 number of years, members of both Police
12 and the Fire Departments have had their
13 confidence in the radio communication
14 eroded. It is critical that this is
15 resolved.

16 We look forward to hearing from
17 all relevant parties today who will
18 explain the cause of the incidents but,
19 most importantly, what is being done to
20 prevent any such occurrences in the
21 future.

22 Welcome, Allan Frank, Chief
23 Technology Information Officer, Joe
24 James, one of his deputies, and Deputy
25 Mayor Gillison, our Public Safety Deputy

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2 Mayor overseeing Fire and Police. I
3 appreciate your presence here today.

4 Mr. James.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We
6 appreciate your presence. So all three
7 of you guys want to testify or you're
8 there to answer questions?

9 MR. FRANK: I'm here to answer
10 questions. Joe James will be giving
11 testimony.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
13 All right. Thank you. Proceed with your
14 testimony.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
16 Good afternoon and thank you. My name is
17 Joseph James, Deputy Chief Information
18 Officer for the Division of Technology.
19 Also with me is Allan Frank, the Chief
20 Technology Officer, and Deputy Mayor
21 Everett Gillison and George Westerman,
22 the 800 megahertz system manager.

23 I'm here today to discuss the
24 City of Philadelphia's 800 megahertz
25 digital radio system, the circumstances

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2 that affected the Philadelphia Police and
3 Fire Department March 24th, 2010, April
4 12th and April 13th, 2010.

5 The City's current 800
6 megahertz digital radio system was
7 implemented in 2000, and last year began
8 the process to upgrade the system to
9 enhance radio channel capacity, ensure
10 reliable operation and system processing
11 speed.

12 The incidents that occurred are
13 of very serious concerns to the City,
14 Verizon and Motorola. Since the last
15 incident on July 22nd, 2008, Motorola has
16 deployed significant resources to the
17 City to identify the root cause of
18 trouble and implement a solution. The
19 800 megahertz digital radio system is
20 designed and constructed as a very
21 complex radio system and is dependent
22 upon the Motorola radio infrastructure
23 and the Verizon telecommunications
24 network. Since the last incident, there
25 has not been a similar incident or a

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2 repeat of circumstances that occurred,
3 and the incidents in March and April have
4 no relationship to the past issue.

5 The incident on March 24th has
6 been identified as a failure of Verizon
7 network equipment which affected both the
8 Philadelphia Police and Fire Department.
9 The equipment failure caused eight of the
10 City's ten radio tower sites to go off
11 the air, disrupting the ability of users
12 to communicate. The maximum amount of
13 downtime was 20 minutes.

14 The incident on April 12th
15 appears to be a shared outage of Verizon
16 and Motorola equipment that affected the
17 Fire Department North Fire console for
18 approximately 24 minutes. The fire
19 dispatch was hearing tones that impaired
20 their ability to use the primary dispatch
21 console and required the dispatcher to
22 move to a back-up console to communicate
23 with units in the field.

24 Finally, the third incident on
25 April 13th was a Motorola-specific issue

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2 caused by a damaged radio antenna that
3 caused the Victory Garden site to be off
4 air, so when Motorola technicians
5 attempted to do a preventative
6 maintenance task at that 31st and Grays
7 Ferry site, it affected police units'
8 radio coverage in the southern part of
9 the City. The Grays Ferry site needed to
10 be taken off the air to reprogram and the
11 Motorola team expected the Victory Garden
12 site to provide overlapping coverage, but
13 they were unaware of the damage to the
14 antenna at the Victory Garden site. The
15 incident caused a 13-minute loss of radio
16 coverage for only police units dependent
17 upon those two sites for coverage. Once
18 the Motorola team was made aware of the
19 loss of coverage, the Grays Ferry site
20 was restored and subsequently repair was
21 done to the Victory Garden antenna to
22 ensure complete overlapping radio
23 coverage.

24 In conclusion, as in the past,
25 what we have learned is the need to

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2 constantly train all users in the
3 fail-safe measures built into the design
4 of the system and conduct specific
5 training for police and fire personnel on
6 the radio systems back-up features. Both
7 Verizon and Motorola responded quickly in
8 reacting to the incidents, and years of
9 experience working together were evident
10 in the short duration of the incidents.
11 Since the incident occurred, the City
12 team is reviewing all aspects of the
13 current and new system in an effort to
14 anticipate, prevent and react to
15 incidents that may occur in the future.
16 The Division, Verizon, along with
17 Motorola, do not believe the radio system
18 poses a risk to City users.

19 I'm now available to answer any
20 questions you may have.

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER:
22 Councilman Rizzo.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I think one
24 of the points that has to be made -- and
25 I think Deputy Mayor Gillison is the

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2 appropriate person or Commissioner
3 Gaittens -- some of the things that
4 happen behind the scenes when there's
5 problems with the system, I think it's
6 important that we for the record
7 indicated that it costs the City a lot of
8 inconvenience, not just the danger
9 associated with the lack of the
10 communication system working properly,
11 but if you could just explain for the
12 record what happens and what the Police
13 Department and Fire Department do when
14 the system is acting up.

15 DEPUTY MAYOR GILLISON: I'll be
16 glad to, and you are absolutely right,
17 Councilman. Again, thank you very much.
18 Everett Gillison, Deputy Mayor for Public
19 Safety.

20 As I have made clear, whenever
21 there is a problem with the radios, the
22 Police Department especially immediately
23 recalls all single-person units and
24 immediately begins to double up. That
25 causes us an operational impact that is

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2 well in excess of whatever time the radio
3 is down. So even though directly the
4 radio might be out for ten minutes, 15
5 minutes, by the time we recall all
6 officers from the field, put them in
7 two-person cars and then go through our
8 back-up procedures, we could actually be
9 in that mode for up to eight hours, a
10 full shift.

11 I'll actually defer the fuller
12 explanation to Deputy Commissioner
13 Gaittens, because I'm sure he can
14 actually give you the hands-on of what
15 the procedures are, but I can tell you,
16 operationally it is a nightmare.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And also I
18 don't think we need to get into the real
19 detail of it, but I think that, from what
20 I've learned, that it slows down the
21 9-1-1 response --

22 DEPUTY MAYOR GILLISON:
23 Absolutely.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: -- because
25 you're down to half as --

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2 DEPUTY MAYOR GILLISON: Half as
3 many bodies.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Two officers
5 have to show up when normally it would be
6 one, and then the backlog starts. It's a
7 significant problem. Like you used the
8 word "nightmare." People don't
9 understand why when they call 9-1-1
10 there's a delay in the response.

11 DEPUTY MAYOR GILLISON: That's
12 correct, and one of the things, as we all
13 are aware -- and I know that we have made
14 it very plain and very simple. When
15 these things happen, we go by our
16 protocols. Our protocols call for us to
17 double up, to make sure that the safety
18 of the officers is paramount, the safety
19 of the firefighters are paramount. We do
20 whatever we can to remedy this, and we
21 try to make sure that the communications
22 are clear so that when we do get the "all
23 clear" sign, that we don't have to keep
24 the officers in.

25 But as you're aware, there has

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2 been a history, so there is this
3 confidence issue that we're trying to
4 build up again. But it does take the
5 Commissioner some time to remedy and now
6 a double-up situation. And it's not just
7 turning it over and saying that we're
8 going to -- Okay, all clear, let's now
9 stop the bringing them in, let's stop the
10 double-up. It takes time to bring
11 everyone in, re-get them back out and
12 push them back out on another time.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And plus the
14 fact that you want to be confident that
15 whatever the problem was --

16 DEPUTY MAYOR GILLISON: Has
17 been remedied.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: -- has been
19 resolved and back to normal operations.

20 Mr. James, I know that we're in
21 the midst right now of an upgrade and I'd
22 like to know, in our meetings you
23 explained to me, which I understand, but,
24 again, for the record, that you believe
25 that this upgrade will be very helpful in

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2 resolving some of these issues that we
3 have experienced, and that's a good thing
4 and I think people need to hear that.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

6 Thank you very much, Councilman. Yes.
7 The intent of the upgrade is to upgrade a
8 ten-year-old radio system that was
9 designed with a certain amount of
10 technology and infrastructure, which
11 today with the newer systems is going to
12 provide the kind of reliability that we
13 expect the radio system to have. Some of
14 the inherent features in the system which
15 are not features that are seen by many of
16 the users happen in the network behind
17 the system, and some of the problems that
18 we've experienced back in 2003 and 2004
19 with the controller rolling will be
20 avoided with the redundancy and the
21 reliability of the newer equipment, as
22 well as we have a ten-year infrastructure
23 that's time for it to be replaced. And
24 the technology has advanced, so it's more
25 along an Internet-based protocol, which

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2 provides a certain amount of efficiency
3 of the ability. It can route those
4 messages and communications, which in the
5 past would be reflected in officers
6 getting busy signals or bonks because
7 they're not able to communicate. The
8 system is much faster. It's much more
9 reliable, and I believe it's going to
10 provide them the types of system that we
11 can look to to get another ten years out
12 of.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, I
14 think that this time around I'm seeing a
15 different relationship between the people
16 that make this system work and to also
17 support it. And I understand that
18 there's even the technology -- Mr. Frank
19 might want to elaborate on it, but I
20 understand that we might even go into a
21 new area, if you permit me to discuss
22 that, where the T1, the telephone company
23 lines, will be the secondary, the backup,
24 and microwave will be the primary. And I
25 think that the users need to hear this,

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2 because you're doing everything humanly
3 possible to avoid the problems of the
4 past by using some of the technologies
5 that have developed over the past ten
6 years that will make this a better
7 system.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
9 That's correct.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: This is
11 about making the people that are using
12 the system, our police and our
13 firefighters and other municipal workers,
14 have confidence, like Mr. Gillison just
15 said, again in their communication
16 system, and I believe that from what
17 you've told me privately and now
18 publicly, that even some of the
19 additional enhancements will do just
20 that.

21 Mr. Frank.

22 MR. FRANK: Yeah. This is
23 Allan Frank, Chief Technology Officer.

24 Yeah. I independently
25 looked -- I wanted to also hear the

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2 explanations and feel that we're solving
3 the right problems with correcting and
4 the replacement of the system.

5 From my perspective, when we
6 talk, for instance, about these T1 lines
7 and the need for secondary connections
8 between antennas and our sites, this
9 really, if you think about it, we're
10 replacing the guts of a radio, and the
11 things that are falling apart that cause,
12 in my view, the situations last month
13 were pieces not associated directly with
14 the radio itself that's being upgraded.

15 Lines go down. And so one of
16 the things that we did differently is
17 besides just relying on what Motorola is
18 doing or Verizon is doing in terms of the
19 new upgrade, we, both Deputy Mayor
20 Gillison and I, wanted to look at what
21 were all the possible weak links that
22 could cause any sort of disruption, not
23 just the radio itself, and what we in
24 fact found was the need to have these
25 secondary back-up lines from the Verizon

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2 T1 lines to microwave. And, again, that
3 is the weak link. And I know there's
4 been a lot of technical jargon about
5 antennas. The bottom line is, it looks
6 like because of the winter, one of the
7 antennas at the base cracked,
8 effectively, and because we have
9 redundancy, frankly, with how our
10 antennas work, we didn't know this one
11 was actually down at the time.

12 So my point is is that I think
13 the big difference since I've come into
14 the City, not only have I seen obviously
15 everybody's working together, is that we
16 now also have focused on not just the
17 radio as the weak link but all the crazy
18 parts around it and making sure
19 immediately that we're remediating that.
20 So with the turn-on of the new radio
21 system, we're also making sure the
22 antennas, the connections and anything
23 else that wasn't directly a part of the
24 Motorola radio itself.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, thank

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2 you very much for that, and we're looking
3 forward to having those enhancements.

4 Thanks, Madam Chair.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
6 you, Councilman Rizzo.

7 I do want to note that
8 Councilman Jim Kenney, a member of this
9 Committee, has joined us in the hearing.

10 Since we purchased EarthLink's
11 equipment or wires or fiberoptic,
12 whatever we did, how will this help or
13 will it not even have an impact on police
14 radio?

15 MR. FRANK: Well, we obviously
16 haven't technically purchased it yet, but
17 over a period of time, there's a couple
18 of pieces that we look at. First of all,
19 there is a redundancy. It's a data
20 communication network, so that we would
21 have any number of options on how we
22 could use that data communication network
23 to directly have a conversation between
24 any two points. I think that in
25 itself -- we obviously have some work to

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2 do, but, I mean, that in itself gives us
3 a level of redundancy. And anybody that
4 even at home, you have people that are
5 able to listen to the radio over the
6 Internet or voice, we can use it much the
7 same way.

8 So for us, it is another form
9 of communication, very critical
10 communication, that the police and other
11 public safety entities would be able to
12 use.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And I
14 just want to reemphasize, I pretty much
15 feel that when we go to use our phone, we
16 want it to work and particularly in a
17 situation of emergency. So I just agree
18 that the Police Department and the Fire
19 Department needs to have that confidence
20 that when they need their radio, it's
21 going to work.

22 You did say that the weather
23 caused structural failure at one of these
24 yards or one of the towers. How
25 routinely are they inspected?

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2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: The
3 antennas, based on the experience that
4 we've had, they're inspected twice a
5 year, and there's also monitoring
6 equipment that's at the site to monitor
7 the antennas to determine its ability to
8 work properly.

9 This particular incident was
10 one of those unique situations where even
11 the monitoring equipment that was in
12 place to monitor the usability of that
13 antenna did not detect that there was a
14 structural failure. And so we sweep the
15 antennas twice a year, and just in our
16 discussions when we talked about it being
17 preventive and being more proactive,
18 based on this kind of weather that we had
19 this past summer (sic), we're probably
20 going to change that depending on the
21 weather conditions so if we have the kind
22 of storms that we had this year, we'll
23 probably even do more preventive
24 maintenance on those antennas just to
25 make sure the condition of them are

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2 operating.

3 MR. FRANK: If I could add one
4 point. That was a question that we
5 asked. Twice a year. And then I asked,
6 Well, what dates. And we got hit with an
7 incredible winter. We ended up doing it
8 in December, which is kind of at the
9 front end of the winter.

10 So even these little things
11 make a difference, as Deputy James said,
12 is that going forward, we will still
13 continue to have these multiple times per
14 year tests, but in the case of a major
15 event like we've had, we'll go out and do
16 more checks.

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Probably
18 like if we have a snowstorm or a series
19 of snowstorms like we did this past
20 winter, probably like right after a
21 snowstorm. I mean, the snowstorms cause
22 a lot of damage to lots of things. One
23 year I had an ice storm actually crack a
24 swimming pool and caused about \$750,000
25 worth of damage. So I guess we learn as

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2 we go along, but prevention is best, if
3 we could set up a system where we're out
4 there checking to see what's going on.

5 MR. FRANK: I think it's also
6 important to note that the life of these
7 antennas -- we also said, Well, how long
8 do they last. Guess what? The answer is
9 ten years. So the fact is is that we
10 happen to be at the point where we are
11 replacing radio and now we got to replace
12 everything else.

13 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: So when
14 you say you're going to upgrade, that
15 sounds to me -- and you may have answered
16 this in your testimony, but when you're
17 going to upgrade, does that mean that
18 you're replacing the entire system or
19 you're going to, what, just replace all
20 the parts that need to be replaced?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: It
22 was largely replacing the internal parts
23 from the controllers and most of the
24 equipment that is out at the tower sites.
25 The parts that we're talking about right

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2 now were not envisioned as part of that
3 upgrade as far as the antennas. So
4 that's one of those things that kind of
5 has grown out of this discussion, is that
6 the original plan was to replace
7 everything. That really did not fall
8 within the realm of what we were going to
9 need or afford. And then the second
10 thing was, well, now that we've had this
11 kind of experience, let's look at, as
12 Mr. Allan said, all of the other pieces
13 that don't appear to be that critical as
14 a failure point right now, but could be a
15 potential failure point and now we got to
16 put a plan together to replace them.

17 MR. FRANK: So I think for the
18 Council -- I mean, this is a big point.
19 I think we've all been focusing on the
20 guts of the radio, and we'll get that
21 level of security and stability. When in
22 fact it's kind of like I had a V-8,
23 what's the life of the antenna, where are
24 these other pieces. Even the air
25 conditioning that requires -- and even

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2 the battery back-ups have a life of ten
3 years.

4 So what Deputy Mayor Gillison
5 and I have done is gone through all of
6 these line of questioning and basically
7 made the decision that we really want to
8 make sure that all the antennas and all
9 these other kind of ancillary pieces that
10 are also at end of life are dealt with
11 concurrently now with the radio upgrade,
12 because, I mean, clearly these are all
13 mechanical parts that are at end of life.

14 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
15 right. Thank you.

16 Any other questions for these
17 witnesses?

18 (No response.)

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
20 you. Thank you for coming in.

21 MR. FRANK: Thank you.

22 THE CLERK: Panel 2: Verizon,
23 Douglas Sullivan and Douglas Smith, and
24 also from Motorola, Jacquelyn, will you
25 please come up. The three of you can

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2 come up together.

3 (Witnesses approached witness
4 table.)

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Hi. Good
6 afternoon. Please state your name for
7 the record and speak directly into the
8 mike.

9 MS. WASNI: Jackie Wasni with
10 Motorola.

11 MR. SULLIVAN: Doug Sullivan
12 with Verizon.

13 MR. SMITH: And Doug Smith with
14 Verizon.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Welcome.
16 Thank you for coming. You can proceed
17 with your testimony, and we can get
18 Verizon to go first and then we'll have
19 Motorola. Thank you.

20 MR. SULLIVAN: Thank you, Madam
21 Chair.

22 My name is Doug Sullivan. My
23 business address is 7550 Teague Road,
24 Second Floor, Hanover, Maryland. I am a
25 Regional Vice-President for Customer

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2 Service for Verizon Business, and I'm
3 responsible for providing customer
4 service for over 1,000 large business and
5 institutional customers throughout North
6 and South America, including the City of
7 Philadelphia. My team's responsibilities
8 include service management, technical
9 service management, and project
10 management, and service ordering. I have
11 14 years' experience with Verizon and
12 assumed the current responsibilities in
13 January of 2008.

14 I've been asked to appear here
15 to address recent incidents that have
16 impacted the operation of the City of
17 Philadelphia's 800 megahertz emergency
18 dispatch radio system. The radio system
19 itself, as you know, is provided by
20 Motorola. Verizon provides the City with
21 a high-capacity and fiberoptic
22 telecommunication services that support
23 the radio system.

24 I'd like to first provide you
25 with a high-level description of the

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2 Verizon support network design and
3 configuration. The Motorola equipment
4 utilized for the City's 800 megahertz
5 system is connected throughout the City
6 via Verizon's high-capacity circuits.
7 These circuits, commonly referred to as
8 T1s, feed off of fiber-based technology
9 backbone network known as SONET rings.
10 This SONET fiber backbone is engineered
11 in a ring configuration in order to
12 provide survivability against service
13 interruptions in the event of a fiber cut
14 or other type of impediment. If a cut or
15 other problem occurs which prevents
16 traffic from routing in one direction of
17 the ring, the system is designed to
18 automatically reroute traffic in the
19 other direction so that the transmission
20 of the communication is not interrupted.
21 In addition, SONET rings guard against
22 service interruptions which might
23 otherwise result from a transmission
24 failure at one location or node of the
25 ring. Therefore, if one node goes down

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2 and does not take down the whole ring,
3 the SONET ring will retain its
4 transmission functionality despite the
5 loss of node.

6 The Verizon network
7 architecture and equipment providing
8 connectivity for the City's 800 megahertz
9 radio system are comprised of two SONET
10 rings and 90 T1s. Thirty of these 90 T1s
11 utilize public network infrastructure in
12 addition to the SONET. Verizon has
13 deployed the same SONET technology for
14 many of today's fortune 1000 networks
15 with great success and proven operational
16 reliability.

17 The SONET fiber technology used
18 for the 800 megahertz system was
19 originally put in place by Verizon to
20 provide data connectivity to hundreds of
21 City of Philadelphia sites and has been
22 in operation for many years. The City's
23 SONET fiber infrastructure was expanded
24 to incorporate the T1 circuit
25 requirements for the Motorola-provided

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2 800 megahertz system.

3 Verizon's SONET networks are
4 proactively monitored 24 hours a day,
5 seven days a week. Our service
6 performance for these types of networks,
7 including the one provided to the City,
8 is excellent and reflects the fact that
9 we are extremely vigilant and proactive
10 in quickly investigating and fixing even
11 the smallest anomalies that are detected
12 in the network, even ones that are not
13 service impacting. In fact, the 90 T1
14 circuits Verizon provided to the City for
15 the 800 megahertz network have a measured
16 overall reliability rate, which is
17 determined on the basis of operating
18 versus down time, of over 99.9 percent
19 for the past six months.

20 With this information as a
21 backdrop, I will now address the two
22 recent 800 megahertz system service
23 incidents that involved Verizon. Verizon
24 has provided the City with detailed root
25 cause analyses that explain each incident

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2 and include chronologies of all pertinent
3 events. I will provide a brief overview
4 of each incident, and then we'll be happy
5 to address any follow-up questions that
6 you may have.

7 On March 24th at approximately
8 4:00 p.m., multiple T1 circuits
9 supporting the 800 megahertz radio system
10 were reported as being out of service,
11 causing an initial outage of
12 approximately ten minutes. Ultimately,
13 14 of the 16 radio system's remote tower
14 T1s were affected. Verizon isolated the
15 trouble to a network timing distribution
16 module card in the Verizon Locust Central
17 Office K34 Electrical Digital Access
18 Cross Connect System, or DACS. The
19 National Transport Network Operations
20 Center, the Locust Central Office and
21 Advanced Technical Support were all
22 engaged to diagnose the issue. While the
23 card that failed did restore, Verizon
24 nonetheless identified a spare card and
25 had it sent to the Locust Central Office

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2 for replacement. Before the maintenance
3 activity of replacing the card could be
4 scheduled, a subsequent three-minute
5 outage occurred shortly before 10:00 p.m.
6 that same evening. The card was replaced
7 approximately one hour later and all
8 associated alarms were resolved.

9 On April 12th, two T1 circuits
10 between the City and the Fire
11 Administration Building were reported as
12 out of service. Verizon technicians were
13 dispatched to both sites, and their
14 investigation found a possible timing
15 issue with the T1 circuits. On these
16 circuits, timing is provided by the
17 City-supplied terminating equipment.
18 With the City's consent, its equipment
19 was disconnected in the T1 -- so the T1
20 circuits could be intrusively tested.
21 Upon insertion of the technician's T1
22 test equipment into both CSUs, or Channel
23 Service Units, all alarm indications
24 immediately cleared. Head-to-head
25 testing was performed on the circuits and

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2 they were found to be error free.

3 Throughout the testing process, no
4 trouble was found within the Verizon
5 network on either circuit, and upon
6 reconnection to the City's equipment, the
7 circuit restored and remained alarm free.

8 As indicated by the trouble
9 diagnoses and corrective actions it took
10 in resolving these two incidents, Verizon
11 remains firmly committed to ensuring the
12 City's radio system is as reliable and
13 dependable as possible. We recognize the
14 extreme importance of the critical
15 support system which is vital to the
16 efficient operation of the City's public
17 safety personnel and the protection and
18 well-being of its citizens. As part of
19 the commitment, Verizon has worked
20 previously with the Department of Public
21 Property and more recently with the
22 Department of Technology to provide
23 recommendations to optimize the
24 resiliency and redundancy of the network
25 supporting the radio system. These

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2 recommendations have included a fully
3 redundant SONET solution that would
4 include the elimination of carrier
5 systems, which have been a common source
6 of failure in the support network.
7 Additionally, Verizon has taken numerous
8 steps to optimize its network in support
9 of our commitment to provide exceptional
10 service and reliability. A complete
11 audit of all T1s supporting the radio
12 system was conducted to ensure adherence
13 to industry standards. Electrical
14 grounding verification was performed at
15 each of the 13 sites in support of the
16 network. Verizon terminating equipment
17 was connected to existing Uninterruptible
18 Power Sources, or UPS, equipment. Four
19 redundant T1s, along with switching gear,
20 were provisioned and installed between
21 City Hall and Domino Lane to provide an
22 additional level of diversity. And,
23 lastly, alarming equipment was set up for
24 the primary and secondary circuits
25 between City Hall and Domino Lane.

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2 In partnering with the City and
3 Motorola and in an effort to continue to
4 optimize the radio system support
5 network, Verizon is moving forward with
6 providing additional levels of diversity
7 from the Locust K34 DACS equipment, along
8 with providing assigned resources that
9 will review the overall design of the
10 support network to identify any
11 additional opportunities for network
12 hardening.

13 I will now be happy to address
14 any questions that the Committee may
15 have. Thank you.

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We'll
17 hear from Motorola and then we'll have
18 questions.

19 MS. WASNI: Good afternoon,
20 Madam Chair and members of the Public
21 Safety Committee. Once again, my name is
22 Jackie Wasni. I'm the Territory
23 Vice-President for Motorola Sales and
24 Services in the Midatlantic region, with
25 responsibility for all government and

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2 commercial business. This includes the
3 City of Philadelphia, which I've had the
4 pleasure of working with since 2005.

5 I was asked and have prepared a
6 statement regarding the recent resolution
7 and radio system incidents which occurred
8 on March 24th, April 12th and April 13th,
9 and with your approval, I am prepared to
10 read these into the testimony.

11 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Yes,
12 ma'am. Please proceed.

13 MS. WASNI: Motorola
14 appreciates this opportunity to present
15 the facts surrounding the recent radio
16 system incidents. I will discuss what
17 happened, Motorola's response, what we
18 believe caused the issue and the impact
19 to the radio system. I will also discuss
20 performance and operational changes in
21 our response, where warranted, to address
22 these issues in the future.

23 It's very important for me to
24 tell you and all first responders in the
25 City that Motorola has and continues to

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2 remain committed to supporting the City
3 of Philadelphia and to ensuring that we
4 are doing everything possible to maintain
5 your mission-critical radio system and to
6 improving any aspects that are creating a
7 lack of confidence in the system.

8 As one of the largest cities in
9 North America and one of our largest
10 public safety customers, I want to assure
11 you of our commitment and of Motorola's
12 dedication, resources and support.

13 As you know, Motorola is
14 currently working per a 2009 contract to
15 upgrade the City's radio system. These
16 incidents, however, occurred on the
17 City's Legacy existing system, which was
18 installed in 2000.

19 I'd like to proceed with the
20 incident on March 24th first.

21 On March 24th, 2010, Motorola
22 responded to two alarms resulting from
23 telephone circuit, or T1, interruptions
24 to the radio system. On March 24th, the
25 first impact occurred at 4:00 p.m. when

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2 eight of the ten radio system remote
3 sites went offline on both the A and the
4 B systems due to a condition we call
5 "site unknown." You have ten sites
6 simulcasting at the same time throughout
7 the City. The impact was reduced
8 coverage in areas of the City. A radio
9 user on the street impacted would see an
10 "out of range" indication on their
11 portable radio.

12 Connectivity was restored after
13 ten seconds and all sites were back
14 online. We did not receive any
15 indication that a user was impacted, and
16 this event went largely unnoticed.

17 Our service team responded to
18 the alarm and worked cooperatively with
19 Verizon to understand that there was a T1
20 connectivity issue. The same day the
21 second alarm occurred at 10:00 p.m. when
22 once again eight of ten radio system
23 remote sites went offline on both the A
24 and the B systems due to the "site
25 unknown" condition, this time for

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2 approximately four minutes. After four
3 minutes, connectivity was restored and
4 all sites were back online. Our service
5 team again responded to the alarm and
6 worked cooperatively with Verizon to
7 understand that this was another
8 telephone connectivity T1 issue.

9 Our service team has a close
10 working relationship with Verizon,
11 remained in communication with Verizon
12 and was apprised of their status and
13 their corrective actions. The eight
14 sites impacted were Police Academy,
15 Southampton, Engine 9, Ford and Belmont,
16 31st and Grays Ferry, Victory Garden
17 streets and highway, and Bustleton, and
18 Hoffnagle.

19 Are there any questions with
20 the first incident, or would you like to
21 save the questions for the end?

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We want
23 to save questions for the end.

24 MS. WASNI: Okay. The second
25 incident, on April 12th at 12:07 a.m.,

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2 Motorola's Network Operation Center
3 opened a case for primary and secondary
4 T1 connectivity issues at dispatch. Our
5 Network Operation Center is located in
6 Schaumburg, Illinois, and that's at our
7 headquarters where we monitor your system
8 for alarms 24/7. Motorola Service was
9 paged and en route to dispatch by
10 approximately 12:10.

11 At 12:20, we received a service
12 case opened by the Fire Dispatch
13 Supervisor that reported all consoles not
14 working on the north fire band. An
15 audible tone burst was being made over
16 the north fire channel radios and
17 consoles. Our reports show that the T1
18 links were reported stable at 12:22 a.m.

19 With our service technicians
20 from Motorola already en route, our
21 service manager dialed into the system
22 and determined that the tones could be
23 stopped by resetting a card in the
24 system. This card was the card that
25 controls the T1 link timing. The tone

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2 burst ended immediately upon resetting
3 this card at 12:32, and the system then
4 returned to normal operation.

5 At 1:30 a.m., a Motorola system
6 technologist arrived on site and
7 inspected the hardware with a focus on
8 the T1 timing cards. He also called
9 Verizon technicians to come to the site.

10 At 5:30 a.m., Verizon arrived
11 and tested the T1 links and found no
12 issues. Motorola technicians stayed at
13 the site to monitor until 8:00 a.m.
14 After monitoring the system, the primary
15 card was replaced with a spare card and
16 continued monitoring. All hardware
17 tested is functioning.

18 In summary, Motorola replaced a
19 T1 timing card in the system. There was
20 no impact to the radio system other than
21 the tone burst on the fire consoles. We
22 understand there was no fire in process
23 at the time on the north fire band at the
24 time of this incident and it was limited
25 to the A system.

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2 The third incident occurred on
3 April 13th when the Police South and
4 Southwest Units reported an "out of
5 range" on their portable radios for
6 approximately 13 minutes. This occurred
7 at 10:02 a.m. during the time Motorola
8 had planned a maintenance repair on the
9 site at 31st and Grays Ferry and planned
10 to take this site off the air for
11 approximately ten minutes. The nearby
12 site, Victory Garden near the airport,
13 had a broken antenna. With one site
14 offline, there's not much impact to
15 coverage due to the overlap of simulcast
16 coverage designed into your system.
17 Because of the antenna issue at Victory
18 Garden, there was an impact to coverage
19 in the southernmost locations and the PD
20 portable radios in those areas displayed
21 an "out of range."

22 So two minutes into the
23 scheduled repair at 31st and Grays Ferry
24 at 10:02 a.m., police supervisors
25 reported that an "out of range" was

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2 occurring near the airport. We could not
3 back out of the repair at 31st and Grays
4 Ferry until the maintenance work was
5 finished. The maintenance was completed
6 at approximately 10:12 a.m., and 31st and
7 Grays Ferry site went back to full
8 capacity at 10:13 a.m. And at this time,
9 all police portable units reconnected to
10 the system and were operating normally.

11 Upon leaving Grays Ferry, the
12 Motorola maintenance team proceeded to
13 check nearby sites and system alarm
14 information for facts as to what occurred
15 and went to Victory Garden within the
16 hour. Upon inspection, all Victory
17 Garden site equipment was working
18 properly, with the exception of the
19 fiberglass antenna. We found the antenna
20 to be damaged and not working. Stress
21 fractures were found toward the bottom of
22 the antenna and water had collected in
23 the base. The other two transmit and the
24 receive antenna at Victory Garden were
25 not impacted.

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2 Motorola, as part of our
3 maintenance contract since 2007, is
4 required to check all antenna and lines
5 in the City twice a year. It takes a
6 team approximately four days to check one
7 site. We call this sweeping the site.
8 We last swept Victory Garden site in
9 December 2009, at which time no issues
10 were reported. Between December 2009 and
11 April 2010, the antenna suffered damage.
12 The good news, though, is that due to the
13 overlap in simulcast coverage in the
14 system, with ten sites there was no
15 reported coverage issue prior to the
16 April 13th incident.

17 So to summarize thus far,
18 Motorola was scheduled to take one site
19 off the air and the bad antenna at
20 Victory Garden contributed to a broader
21 coverage issue. This coverage issue was
22 felt by police for approximately 13
23 minutes, impacting coverage and
24 presenting an "out of range" to the PD
25 radios on the B system. There was also

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2 an impact to six fire channels at that
3 site on the fire system A, but due again
4 to our system design and simulcast voting
5 technology, no impact was reported by the
6 Fire Department.

7 At 9:00 a.m. on April 14th,
8 Motorola's tower crew replaced the
9 antenna at Victory Garden, checked all
10 components and verified that all
11 equipment was working properly. No other
12 issues were found and Victory Garden site
13 was back in optimal operating condition.

14 I would like to speak to the
15 Motorola lesson learned from this
16 incident.

17 To avoid this situation in the
18 future, Motorola is amending its service
19 and maintenance operational procedures to
20 include a five-minute pre-maintenance
21 work outage to test coverage prior to
22 starting a repair. Today, Motorola and
23 the City have an existing procedure
24 established whereby we schedule planned
25 outages by coordinating in advance with

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2 the City. Also in our existing
3 procedure, five minutes prior to the
4 start of any scheduled maintenance, we
5 verify that we can proceed. We do this
6 to make certain that the activity level
7 in the City has not increased due to a
8 sudden emergency, causing us to postpone
9 the work. We followed this procedure on
10 April 13th and received the City's
11 approval to proceed at 10:00 a.m.

12 As I stated, because
13 maintenance had already begun at the time
14 we became aware of the "out of range"
15 issue, we could not fall back and turn
16 the site on until the work was complete.
17 However, with a five-minute
18 pre-maintenance coverage check, this
19 situation would have been quickly
20 corrected two minutes into the check. At
21 10:02 a.m. when the "out of range" calls
22 came to our attention, we could have
23 reinstated 31st and Grays Ferry and
24 eliminated the problem.

25 Also in the future we will work

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2 with the City to schedule these sorts of
3 repairs at off-peak hours to eliminate
4 major operational issues.

5 And, finally, all antenna and
6 lines are currently in the process of
7 being inspected at this time. These
8 inspections are being coordinated with
9 the City. Since this event, we've
10 already finished the Police Academy site,
11 and that inspection showed no issues.

12 We do regret that this incident
13 occurred. We responded as quickly as
14 possible to restore the 31st and Grays
15 Ferry site and to replace the Victory
16 Garden antenna once the issues were
17 identified.

18 And that concludes my
19 testimony.

20 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
21 you. Thank you very much.

22 Councilman Jim Kenney.

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you,
24 Madam Chair.

25 Certainly any incident is

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2 unacceptable, both to us and to you. I
3 mean, you don't ever want to be in a
4 situation where you have to come to
5 hearings like this and respond to
6 incidents, and so I guess the goal is 100
7 percent up time.

8 I'm curious as to in other
9 cities that you provide similar service
10 to, comparable cities with comparable
11 size or larger, police and fire
12 departments. Do you have numbers on the
13 number of incidents in a year that happen
14 in other cities and the appropriate
15 related response times to correcting it?
16 So give me an example of a city that you
17 provide service in, other than
18 Philadelphia.

19 MR. SULLIVAN: For instance,
20 the City of New York or City of
21 Baltimore.

22 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Say
23 Baltimore. New York is another whole
24 thing. Baltimore say for example. How
25 many incidences were there last year in

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2 Baltimore or in the last couple years?

3 MR. SULLIVAN: Councilman, I
4 don't have that information with me. I
5 can certainly take that as a follow-up
6 item.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: It would be
8 interesting to know what other cities
9 experience. I mean, I'm sure that
10 there's not one -- how many cities do you
11 provide service in?

12 MR. SULLIVAN: I actually have
13 a responsibility for a limited area of
14 the overall Verizon, but --

15 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: What's your
16 area?

17 MR. SULLIVAN: I support the
18 Pennsylvania and Delaware from a
19 government and education perspective, and
20 then Enterprise customers all throughout
21 North and South America, but your
22 question --

23 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I guess the
24 request would be to provide through the
25 Chair a number of similar cities both

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2 Verizon and Motorola provide this service
3 to, and over the past five years or so
4 how many annual incidents are there and
5 what are the corresponding response
6 times, so to speak, to getting it back up
7 and running. I'm just curious as to how
8 it relates to our situation.

9 Certainly the two that we've
10 had recently are upsetting to Fire and
11 Police personnel and to City government
12 in general and we want to try to avoid
13 those in the future, but I'm just curious
14 as to, considering the fact that this is
15 technology, some different levels of age.
16 I understand the Legacy system is a
17 ten-year-old system.

18 MS. WASNI: That's right.

19 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So we get a
20 better idea as to how we can keep
21 upgrading our stuff so that we don't -- I
22 assume the antenna was a snow-related
23 issue perhaps over the course of that
24 winter?

25 MR. WASNI: We believe it was

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2 weather related, yes.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: There was a
4 lot of snow. So maybe we need to look at
5 protocols that require us to go after
6 major snow events or major wind events,
7 those kind of things, to keep up with it.
8 Because I don't know of any system that's
9 100 percent perfect, although, again, the
10 goal -- and we need to strive to be that,
11 because those folks sitting here need to
12 be safe and obviously we don't want to
13 see any one incident.

14 MR. SULLIVAN: Absolutely,
15 Councilman. We remain committed to
16 providing the utmost resilient and
17 diverse network so that we can minimize
18 or remove those. But to your point,
19 equipment will fail at some point and we
20 will encounter outages, and that's where
21 I think having a structure as we've
22 talked -- as has been identified
23 previously. With a new system and with a
24 back-up, the intention I believe is to
25 help minimize even the few impacts.

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2 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: I do think
3 in addition to keeping up with our
4 equipment, I mean, I do think the
5 protocols on response are as important to
6 continue to monitor and change, because
7 if, for example, the issue with the
8 antenna was weather related, then when
9 weather happens, we need to take that
10 into account and put that into the list
11 of protocols we need to follow. If,
12 again, the equipment maintenance or
13 whatever you're doing in one spot -- I
14 mean, you made that clear in your
15 testimony that those changes have been
16 made, but I guess it's an ongoing process
17 to try to keep up with both the equipment
18 age and with how we respond to down time.

19 MR. SULLIVAN: Absolutely.

20 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: But I would
21 be interested in seeing other comparable
22 cities' annual down time versus up time
23 and the average response time to those
24 down times.

25 I also found the testimony very

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2 interesting in how complicated the
3 equipment and the technology is to
4 respond to that. I mean, I'm not a
5 techie by any stretch. I can get on the
6 Internet. But I do recognize the
7 critical nature of and the knowledge
8 needed to respond to these things so that
9 our folks are not going 10, 13, 14
10 minutes in the dark.

11 But I do appreciate your
12 testimony and any information you can
13 provide on that.

14 MS. WASNI: If I could just
15 comment, please, in response. It was
16 mentioned in Joe James' testimony
17 previously that the system has been in
18 place since the year 2000, and it is a
19 highly sophisticated and intelligent
20 radio system. Every radio system
21 Motorola puts in is based on a certain
22 platform of technology, and many
23 throughout the United States are on
24 different platforms. It's hard to
25 compare apples and apples.

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2 I will tell you that our
3 service response time commitment to the
4 City is two hours. We typically beat
5 that on every occasion when we have a
6 service issue or a case that's opened,
7 and because we're doing so much
8 preventative maintenance through our
9 Network Operation Center, we have
10 statistics that show that 90 percent of
11 issues are solved prior to them being
12 even aware by the user. The preventative
13 maintenance, because of the tracking that
14 we're doing in the back room at our
15 center, really does help the preventative
16 maintenance.

17 I also just wanted to mention
18 for the record, because I don't think
19 it's been stated previously, is that your
20 radio system is really a workhorse. You
21 are processing over a million pushes to
22 talk for Police and Fire and City
23 activity on a monthly basis. In March,
24 1.2 million calls for service, and it's
25 escalating as you ramp up to the summer,

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2 1.3 million, 1.4 million pushes to talk,
3 pushes and chances to talk.

4 So we have statistics for all
5 of that. We have statistics for every
6 call for service, whether it was Motorola
7 initiated or customer initiated, and we'd
8 be happy to share that with you.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Is there
10 some effort that could be made with our
11 own personnel, additional training or
12 additional expertise that you guys could
13 impart to our folks who are City
14 employees that are handling this
15 equipment or dealing with this equipment?
16 Is there any type of -- I'm just kind of
17 throwing stuff out there -- as far as
18 training that they could receive to maybe
19 get ahead of the curve themselves or is
20 it all monitored internally by machine?

21 MS. WASNI: Well, I think it's
22 a partnership. It's a cooperative
23 effort. There's always training that can
24 be done, I think especially on the
25 upgrade where there are new things

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2 happening with the system, new features,
3 new functionality. We will increase the
4 training there, but there are zone watch
5 and system watch terminals that guide us
6 and give us all this information, and the
7 City is shared -- we share that
8 information with the City.

9 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: And this is
10 just a kind of forward-looking question.
11 We just had a recent hearing relative to
12 a purchase of a WiFi setup. I don't know
13 what the term of art is, but this WiFi
14 company. And I guess the goal is down
15 the road to have our mobile terminals in
16 our police cars and fire apparatus to be
17 able to hook up -- to be able to
18 communicate through the WiFi.

19 I know myself when the Internet
20 goes down or your wireless goes down, I
21 mean, there's reason -- is that less
22 dependable or more difficult to determine
23 the problems when it's a WiFi-related
24 down time issue, or do you have
25 information on --

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2 MS. WASNI: Without knowing
3 exactly why and what type of exact system
4 it is, it's hard to say, but in any
5 private system, there is unique design.
6 In a commercial off-the-shelf system like
7 some WiFi systems are, they may not have
8 the public safety rigor built into it
9 with immediate access that's required
10 like it would be required in a
11 mission-critical system.

12 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: My question
13 is, for example, on these particular two
14 instances, you could identify the
15 equipment that failed. In a WiFi
16 situation, it could be weather related,
17 it could be satellite crossing some other
18 area cutting something off where you
19 can't get to the bottom of what it is.
20 So I guess the redundancy would be going
21 back onto the -- I guess having a
22 connection back onto the wired system as
23 opposed to the WiFi. Would that be the
24 solution to that or the backup to that?
25 And, again, I know you're talking in

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2 generalities and you're talking about
3 different systems and a system that
4 doesn't even exist yet here, but I'm just
5 trying to think ahead. As far as having
6 the WiFi is terrific, but if there's
7 anticipated other unknown down time
8 instances with that, how do we figure it
9 out?

10 MR. SULLIVAN: I think for the
11 architecture that have been discussed
12 just from the previous panel, there is an
13 overlap there, so you would have both a
14 primary service and a back-up service
15 that would provide some of the resiliency
16 that you'd be looking for to make sure
17 that you have maximum availability of the
18 service. The WiFi solution would be over
19 and above I believe what you're talking
20 about.

21 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: So they
22 would go hand in hand.

23 MR. SULLIVAN: Sort of a third,
24 if you would, because that's really not
25 as much your microwave or your land-based

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2 T1 issue.

3 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Okay. And
4 just if you get the other cities'
5 information, that would be interesting.

6 MR. SULLIVAN: Okay.

7 COUNCILMAN KENNEY: Thank you.

8 MR. SULLIVAN: Thank you,
9 Councilman.

10 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
11 you.

12 I actually wanted to know about
13 the other cities' information also, so
14 we'll look forward to getting that
15 information.

16 I'd also like to know -- I just
17 want everybody to understand this.
18 Motorola uses Verizon's lines, correct?

19 MS. WASNI: Correct.

20 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Can you
21 explain that structure so we're real
22 clear? And then you guys contract with
23 the City to provide the services. The
24 City owns the equipment or do you rent
25 the equipment? And how much does it cost

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2 for upgrade?

3 MS. WASNI: I'll try to address
4 the Motorola piece of that. There is an
5 interdependency between our equipment and
6 having the connectivity to the sites, and
7 the City actually chose back in 2000 when
8 the City came in to use Verizon to
9 provide that connectivity.

10 The transport is also a
11 decision of the City and they decided to
12 use the SONET and the fiber and the
13 things that were mentioned earlier for
14 the connectivity to our sites. So that
15 is a critical part of the system, and we
16 have specifications on the type of
17 reliability and up time that's required
18 so that our radio equipment continues to
19 have the heartbeat.

20 I would have to defer to
21 Verizon for the exact configuration of
22 their SONET and their T1 configuration.

23 MR. SULLIVAN: Thank you. From
24 a Verizon perspective, you mentioned the
25 upgrades and what could be deployed.

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2 Really I think to answer the question
3 most appropriately, we'd have to identify
4 that there are multiple ways in which we
5 could build out the network to make it
6 more resilient, and I'll just give a
7 couple examples, high-level examples.

8 Today, the Verizon network is
9 supported by two separate SONET rings.
10 There is a solution which can remove much
11 of the DACS or the connection between the
12 two SONET rings by having one SONET
13 infrastructure that would be deployed.
14 So that would be a change upon which
15 we've identified in the testimony.

16 We could also deploy multiple
17 nodes at some of the locations. We could
18 diversify some of the circuits so that
19 you minimize any potential impacts of it.
20 You don't have as much commonality. So
21 to the level and degree that you want
22 full redundancy, diversity or even
23 multiple entrances into each of the
24 locations, it really depends upon the
25 investment that would be necessary to do

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2 that.

3 Where we've done and some of
4 the things we've identified in the
5 deployment of additional T1s and looking
6 at the Uninterruptible Power Supply,
7 we've looked at points of failure that
8 could cause issues and have tried to
9 address those in collaboration both with
10 Motorola and with the City. We've worked
11 very closely. But there isn't one fix as
12 to an upgrade where I could just provide
13 you with one answer and say that this is
14 the absolute right approach. I mean, we
15 certainly have suggestions and we're
16 working very collaboratively in doing
17 that and identifying ways in which we can
18 make the system robust and to continue to
19 upgrade it and taking that into full
20 consideration with the plan to move
21 forward, I guess, with the microwave
22 solution.

23 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

24 One thing I'd like to receive as Chair to
25 distribute to members is a list of

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2 lessons learned, not just from Motorola
3 or Verizon but also the City of
4 Philadelphia as it relates to prevention.
5 And I just have one question for
6 Motorola.

7 I think you said push to talk?

8 MS. WASNI: Yes.

9 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: That is
10 what? Just a call coming in?

11 MS. WASNI: When an officer, a
12 police officer, or firefighter wants to
13 gain access to the system, they take
14 their portable radio and hit the side
15 bar, and that's considered a push to
16 talk.

17 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
18 And that can come from a firefighter,
19 police officer or a customer?

20 MS. WASNI: Any user on the
21 system.

22 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.
23 And who are users on the system other
24 than police and fire?

25 MS. WASNI: Well, you have the

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2 jail. You have the schools. In the City
3 of Philadelphia proper, those are the
4 people that are mainly using the system.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And how
6 many calls did you say we get a year? Or
7 you said we have --

8 MS. WASNI: On average in a
9 month, you're asking the system to
10 process over a million calls a month, and
11 it escalates as you get into the summer
12 months. So March, for example, was 1.2,
13 as I stated, and 1.3, 1.4 as you get into
14 the summer. So it is a very busy city.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Sounds
16 like it. Okay. Thank you.
17 Councilman Rizzo.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: This is
19 directed to Motorola.

20 Did I hear Technology, Joe
21 James, say that there was a device on
22 that antenna that was monitoring --

23 MS. WASNI: Yes.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I didn't
25 hear you mention the fact that that

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2 didn't work.

3 MS. WASNI: The fault monitor
4 was in service and did not have any
5 faults with it. This was, as Joe said, a
6 unique failure of the antenna. The
7 stress fractures allowed water into the
8 antenna, and we believe the water in the
9 antenna base -- this is a 22-foot
10 antenna, to give you some idea of its
11 size. And the base of the antenna had
12 water collection, and we think that
13 masked the ability for the fault
14 monitoring to catch the reflective power.

15 An antenna is a passive device.
16 It doesn't tell you when it's not
17 working. It just won't reflect the power
18 appropriately, and the state of the art
19 way to determine that is to have fault
20 monitoring capture that power and signal
21 that something is wrong.

22 This was a unique fault and it
23 did not trip the monitoring device, which
24 was working and is still working today.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Should also

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2 part of your list of things to do look at
3 fault monitoring that may be better
4 enhanced to identify the fault? You
5 speculated that that antenna was out for
6 many, many months because of the
7 overlap --

8 MS. WASNI: We have no idea.
9 We know that we checked it in December
10 2009, and we're not sure if it was
11 something where it was a weakening of
12 signal strength over time, but due to the
13 overlap in coverage, it was not detected.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But I cannot
15 imagine a fault detector not able to
16 detect a total outage of an antenna. At
17 some point, it was totally out of
18 service. I mean, that's unacceptable,
19 and I think that a fault monitor is
20 supposed to tell you when you have a
21 fault, no matter how unique it is. So I
22 don't think -- I think that's something
23 that you need to revisit to see if
24 there's any way that those fault monitors
25 can do a better job.

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2 MS. WASNI: We will revisit
3 that, Councilman.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Any other
6 questions for these witnesses?

7 (No response.)

8 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Seeing
9 none, thank you. Thank you very much for
10 attending.

11 MS. WASNI: Thank you.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Will the
13 Clerk please read the third panel.

14 THE CLERK: Third panel:
15 Eugene Blagmond and Bill Gault. Eugene
16 Blagmond is from the FOP Lodge No. 5 and
17 Bill Gault is the President IAFF Local
18 22.

19 (Witnesses approached witness
20 table.)

21 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Hi. Good
22 afternoon. We can just go in order that
23 you were called, and don't forget the
24 mike. Proceed with your testimony.

25 MR. BLAGMOND: Good afternoon.

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2 Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, members of
3 the Committee.

4 FOP President John McNesby and
5 the 14,500 members would like to thank
6 you for this public hearing on the
7 opportunity to address the police radio
8 system. It's very important regarding
9 the seemingly endless problems and
10 failures and total lack of consistency
11 regarding the operation of the police
12 emergency services radio system.

13 This hearing is a direct result
14 of the failures of the radio system in
15 the Police Department on April 13th,
16 2010. On that date, officers reported
17 that they could not hear dispatchers and
18 could not communicate with dispatchers or
19 any other patrol officers on the street.
20 The Department implemented the
21 all-too-familiar redeployment of officers
22 into two-person units, and for a time
23 officers only responded to priority
24 assignments.

25 These radio problems are

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2 nothing new. Our officers, the men and
3 women of the Police Department, have had
4 little or no confidence in this radio
5 system since the City of Philadelphia
6 first contracted with Motorola in 1999.

7 Since 1999, we have had two to
8 three dozen radio failures, ranging from
9 isolated incidents of officers on the
10 street unable to communicate to
11 widespread outages impacting the entire
12 Police Department. These radio failures
13 have placed police officers in danger
14 numerous times. Many officers have
15 turned to their radios when they were
16 needed the most and in situations where a
17 police officer's or civilian's life was
18 in danger.

19 Quite frankly, this emergency
20 services radio system is a boondoggle of
21 intense proportions. The radios have
22 failed in Port Richmond in which two
23 firefighters lost their lives in 2004.
24 The radios failed when a police officer
25 was shot during a drug raid in 2007. In

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2 2008, the Police Commissioner was unable
3 to communicate with police radio while in
4 a volatile situation on the street in
5 North Philadelphia.

6 The radio system initially cost
7 the taxpayers \$62 million. Since the
8 initial contract, the City has been
9 forced to upgrade the system several
10 times, increasing the original price of
11 the radio system to numbers in excess of
12 perhaps a hundred million dollars. After
13 this, the radios still do not work.

14 Our members are not
15 communication technicians or engineers.
16 However, we have become very familiar
17 with the technology of the radio system,
18 from tower sites, T1 lines, fixed
19 repeaters, card racks and trunk lines to
20 interoperability. We don't know what all
21 these terms mean, but we do know that
22 officers on the street have absolutely no
23 confidence in this system.

24 We don't know what the answer
25 to the problem is. We've been

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2 shareholders and participants on the
3 issue from the very beginning. We have
4 proceeded to arbitration. We have
5 participated in media and public
6 education campaigns. We have testified
7 in front of legislative bodies and public
8 hearings, and we have had corporate
9 representatives from both Motorola and
10 Verizon attend our general membership
11 meetings to address members directly
12 regarding these issues.

13 To illustrate that there may be
14 no end in sight to this problem, Lodge 5
15 leadership was meeting last Wednesday
16 regarding testimony for this very hearing
17 when we were notified of a radio failure
18 of the radio system once again. Our
19 members are stuck on the streets without
20 the vital communication lifeline that
21 they need to protect the public.

22 As we previously stated, we
23 don't know what answers are to this
24 longstanding problem, but we are glad to
25 have a seat at the table.

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2 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
3 you.

4 Mr. Gault.

5 MR. GAULT: Thank you,
6 Councilwoman. I don't have a prepared
7 speech written like that.

8 Radios are our lifeline. If
9 they don't work, we die. We've buried
10 guys. Motorola has paid out. We've even
11 gone so far as we're currently in
12 arbitration. We still have a contract.
13 They keep cutting us. Communication is
14 our most important thing. Now we're
15 communicating before we even get there,
16 while we're driving.

17 If the radios don't work, the
18 job is not going to get done, civilians
19 are going to die, we're going to get
20 wounded, maybe die. This has been going
21 on a long time, and we're talking about
22 \$165 million, of which we're all
23 taxpayers too. And sitting here playing
24 the blame game is just a waste of time.
25 Fix it.

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2 Our radio room is trying.

3 Commissioner, he's trying. But what's
4 going on here? They're blaming weather?
5 We were in the weather. We were working.
6 We're out there every day. All we have
7 is that radio. Now, all the cops, this
8 is what we're using now, our phones.

9 You paid a lot of taxpayers'
10 money and we didn't get a bang for the
11 buck and now we get a lot of blame game.
12 Please, we're begging you, just fix it.
13 That's all.

14 Thank you very much for
15 listening. I could bring in a bunch of
16 stories, a bunch of guys, a bunch of
17 wounded people. We could parade it all
18 day and bring the media in. It serves no
19 purpose. You's have the power. You's
20 can get it done. Please.

21 Thank you for your time,
22 Council. I'll answer any questions you's
23 have.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
25 you.

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2 MR. GAULT: Thank you.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: You know,
4 I know you realize this is troubling to
5 us as it is to you. I mean, I'm not a
6 firefighter, I'm not a police officer,
7 I'm not out needing that radio, but I
8 know when an emergency happens and I need
9 to be able to get in touch with someone,
10 it's important that I'm able to do that.
11 So I know that yours is triple, ten times
12 the need as my personal needs in that
13 regard.

14 We would love to fix this.
15 I've been here since 1996 and this has
16 always been an issue at one point or
17 another, the failure of the police radio.
18 I would love to see it repaired. It's
19 very complicated. All I know is that I
20 was going to call my Internet provider
21 and my telephone provider last week,
22 because every other day at home when I
23 went to make a phone call, I couldn't use
24 my phone. I'm like, What is going on
25 here? So finally I talked to my daughter

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2 that's way more technical than I am, and

3 she said you need to call your provider.

4 And I just won't name the provider, but

5 that was just a normal needing to use the

6 phone to make a phone call.

7 So, again, the fact that when

8 you guys are pushing to talk -- that's a

9 new term I just learned today. When you

10 are pushing to talk, you expect it to

11 work, and I empathize.

12 MR. GAULT: Councilwoman

13 Miller, on the push to talk issue, while

14 we were presenting our case on the

15 radios, we were asking for repeaters put

16 on our fire engines and ladder trucks. A

17 repeater will just be an antenna or a

18 disc to send a signal. I'm trying to get

19 too geeky. But the signal is bouncing

20 the satellites to the towers back and

21 forth and all. So we had to ask in

22 arbitration, using our tax dollars

23 against us and our dues money on one

24 side, for repeaters on fire trucks. And

25 while the City was up in the 24th floor

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2 of the Sheraton Hotel, 17th and Race, the
3 radios bonked.

4 Press to talk is when we push
5 the button to speak. "Engine 1 to
6 radio." It goes ehhhh, ehhhh. It bonks.
7 You can't get through. That's what
8 happened to the guys he's talking about
9 on Belgrade Street. When it gets
10 overloaded, nothing gets through.

11 There's dead spots. Our radios
12 don't work in the subway. They don't
13 work in elevators. They don't work in
14 high rises. Some floors around the City
15 they don't work. They don't work in the
16 Elevated.

17 The system is very complicated,
18 and it doesn't seem like a lot of thought
19 was put into getting it.

20 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, I
21 would hope with the upgrades and I would
22 guess -- I'll just ask the question and
23 we can have Motorola, Verizon or the City
24 answer.

25 Will the upgrades help this

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2 system work in elevators, a high rise and
3 all the names that Mr. Gault -- or all
4 the situations Mr. Gault named? We're
5 spending a lot of money. To me it should
6 work everywhere.

7 (Witness approached witness
8 table.)

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
10 Again, Deputy Commissioner Joe James with
11 the Division of Technology.

12 In respect to the question, the
13 upgrade will not change the coverage of
14 the radio system. The radio system was
15 designed with a 95 percent reliability of
16 coverage in 95 percent of the City. It
17 was never designed to work in the subway,
18 into areas below grade and in certain
19 high-rise buildings where it's just not
20 able to penetrate. That will not change
21 with the upgrade. It didn't change with
22 the system when we implemented it back in
23 2000. In many cases, it didn't work on
24 the old system either.

25 We have been -- since 1992 when

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2 we first started the planning for the
3 project, we looked at a solution for the
4 upgrade -- to upgrade to a solution that
5 would have dealt with the underground,
6 and in the past, it's been primarily --
7 the cost impact has just been more than
8 what the City can afford to build out the
9 underground, which we determined in,
10 let's say, '99 it was \$23 million just to
11 do the subways.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, we
13 do have a lot of activity in our subways.
14 Does SEPTA's system work there?

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
16 Well, specific to your question, the
17 SEPTA has a 500 megahertz radio system
18 that works in the subways. We have
19 worked on a number of different things in
20 particular to the question when you talk
21 about repeaters. In the upgrade, we are
22 getting 50 repeaters, specifically
23 repeaters for the Fire Department to
24 deploy as portable repeaters, and that's
25 part of the upgrade. It's included in

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2 what we got with the upgrade. Those
3 repeaters, we actually are working with
4 the Fire Department right now to get a
5 test model to start testing up at the
6 Academy.

7 So we are going to have
8 portable and mobile repeaters and fixed
9 repeaters, and some of those fixed
10 repeaters we may implement in the
11 underground for specific coverage areas.

12 We've also been in discussions
13 with SEPTA for a number of years on a way
14 to integrate our interoperability between
15 their radio system and our system so that
16 if there is an incident in the
17 underground, somehow we can figure out a
18 way to patch the two radio systems
19 together so that the police and
20 firefighter and first responders will be
21 able to continue to communicate if they
22 have to respond to the incident in the
23 underground.

24 But there are certain -- I
25 mean, we don't try to match. There are

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2 certain areas where you're not going to
3 have coverage. What the Fire Department
4 has been doing for years whenever they've
5 done their inspections of high rise and
6 something, they identify those particular
7 issues, and in certain cases we've been
8 in discussions with certain building
9 providers to put the kind of repeating
10 cable within the building. The new
11 Comcast building has that in their new
12 tower. So that these type of repeater
13 solutions are being discussed and we are
14 looking at them, but we do not have an
15 answer that I can speak to what the
16 gentleman raised about having a coverage
17 that's going to be 100 percent everywhere
18 at all times.

19 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Well, you
20 know, I would think that you wouldn't
21 have 100 percent.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
23 Right.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: However,
25 I really didn't realize that the systems

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2 didn't work in the subways, because we
3 have a whole lot of activity going on in
4 subways and I would think that that would
5 be an important part, so if you're
6 working with SEPTA to figure out how the
7 two systems can work together.

8 I think when I had my first
9 cell phone, it didn't work certain
10 places, and I thought probably it wasn't
11 enough towers, but as more and more
12 towers were built, now my cell phone
13 works. And I got to do this in a simple
14 way. I'm not trying to be a technical
15 expert here.

16 I know that my cell phone
17 didn't work in certain places like years
18 ago that now it works because there's
19 more towers, I assume, and it's easier.
20 I mean, it works on the elevator. Years
21 ago it didn't work on the elevators.

22 So I'm trying to compare that
23 with this system that costs more than a
24 hundred million. And even with upgrades,
25 will there ever be or should there be or

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2 in any other cities does the system have
3 the capability to work underground, to
4 work on high rises, to work in elevators?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

6 Well, I think when you try to compare a
7 cell phone, I mean, there is places in
8 the elevators where my Verizon phone will
9 work, but my AT&T won't work. I mean,
10 there's areas where if I have a T-Mobile
11 phone, my phone won't work at all. I
12 mean, there's certain areas where you
13 will always have a coverage issue,
14 because you're dealing with RF signals
15 and they're trying to penetrate
16 properties and the physics of a building
17 or a space. So there are certain things
18 that's always going to be a limitation no
19 matter how many towers you put out and
20 how much power you turn up.

21 We are always looking at trying
22 to figure out a way to increase the
23 coverage of the system. And to the
24 underground, we have looked at solutions.
25 Until a couple years ago, your cell phone

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2 didn't work in the subway. Until they
3 built an antenna system that works
4 specifically in the subways, now you have
5 the ability to use your cell phone down
6 there.

7 In the radio system, there's
8 parts of the underground that your radio
9 will work. If you're walking in the
10 concourse underground, it will work.
11 Just when you get down on the track
12 level, you're so far down that the signal
13 just won't penetrate. Do we have a
14 solution? Like I said, we looked at
15 repeaters. Other than spending \$23
16 million or finding some other technical
17 solution to do that, we don't have that
18 answer at this point in time. But it's
19 just like everything in evolution in
20 technology, there's always something new
21 coming out, there's always some new
22 advancements and there's always something
23 that we're going to try to explore to
24 figure out if there is a way to deal with
25 the question that's come up about the

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2 radio coverage.

3 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay.

4 Thank you.

5 Councilman Greenlee.

6 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank

7 you, Madam Chair.

8 Councilwoman Miller just

9 mentioned about other cities. I too

10 didn't realize that the radios don't work

11 in some of the areas Mr. Gault talked

12 about. Have you looked at other cities?

13 And maybe the union members know this.

14 Do the radio systems work, say --

15 Councilman Kenney talked about other

16 cities -- New York, Chicago? Have you

17 looked at those?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

19 Yes, we have. We've looked at other

20 cities that have underground subways,

21 like New York City, which has a mixed bag

22 of just about every type of radio

23 communication under the sun, every type

24 of system, but even New York had a long

25 legacy of a history in the New York Times

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2 about their 800 megahertz digital radio
3 system did not work in the underground or
4 they had problems with their underground
5 solution, to the point they stopped using
6 it.

7 There's Baltimore, there's DC,
8 there's other areas, and you look at
9 their solutions and most of it is, you
10 have to build out a repeater, you have to
11 build out an antenna system in the
12 underground if you truly want to do it.
13 You have to do above ground, what you've
14 done, in the underground, and we have
15 just not gotten to that point where we
16 have come up with a cost-effective
17 solution that deals with that that we can
18 be able to make that expenditure, other
19 than patching in other systems that are
20 currently -- and one of the things --
21 it's an IP-based system, so we're hoping
22 that there's some technology
23 advancements, because the newer systems
24 are IP based. Maybe there's a way that
25 we can get the signal there that's in a

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2 non-traditional method, but it's just a
3 matter of trying to look at -- when you
4 look at some of these other cities, it's
5 kind of either they built it from ground
6 up with an antenna system in it or
7 they've augmented it over time.

8 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: And I
9 understand everything costs money, but, I
10 mean, we are talking -- not to make a
11 speech here, but obviously public safety
12 when firefighters and police can't
13 communicate. And as Councilwoman said,
14 the subways jumped out, I think, at both
15 of us, because stuff does happen down
16 there obviously, and that's concerning.
17 And I know -- look, we certainly
18 understand here about not having enough
19 money for stuff, but it just does seem --
20 and, again, I might be one of the least
21 technological people here, but it just
22 does seem like there should be -- we got
23 to keep looking into that, I guess is the
24 simplest way to say it.

25 Thank you.

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2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: To
3 answer your question, Councilman, we have
4 not stopped looking at it, and one of the
5 things about getting these digital
6 repeaters is maybe that's a solution that
7 we can implement in the subway that
8 allows us to repeat the signal down there
9 just like the cell phone carriers do and
10 give the firefighters and the officers
11 the coverage they need and it doesn't
12 cost us \$23 million to do that.

13 COUNCILMAN GREENLEE: Thank
14 you.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
16 you.

17 Councilman Rizzo.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Not to beat
19 a dead horse, but I made a
20 recommendation, and the cell phone
21 providers were open arms, that when they
22 were building out the subway to provide
23 their coverage, that the biggest expense
24 building out the subway is trying to find
25 the time when you can work down there

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2 because of the trains, et cetera. So I
3 believe there's only one at this moment,
4 AT&T Wireless, and fortunately they're
5 our vendor, and the Fire Department and
6 the Police Department are fortunate, even
7 though the radios don't work there, their
8 ace in the hole is their cell phone, in
9 many cases their company cell phone, City
10 cell phone or their own personal cell
11 phone.

12 But also I think that we could
13 help you if you think there's something
14 legislatively we can do to require new
15 construction or asking some of the high
16 rises that are below grade, above grade
17 to go back and retrofit and put repeaters
18 in there, because, A, it benefits them.
19 If they have a group of firefighters that
20 go in to fight a fire or a police
21 officer, it benefits them for that police
22 or firefighter to be able to do what they
23 have to do, communicate, flash
24 information, whatever. And I know there
25 are some cities that require repeaters in

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2 buildings below grade, above grade so the
3 phones work.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
5 Yes.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So that's
7 what I'd like to do. And I'd like you to
8 possibly communicate to the next phase of
9 a fit-out for the subway to join hands,
10 Mr. Frank, to be able to save the
11 taxpayers of this city some money by
12 doing it jointly. Why should T-Mobile do
13 it once and AT&T and Verizon and Nextel?
14 Let's get down there and do it all at one
15 shot and maybe save a few bucks.

16 MR. FRANK: This is Allan
17 Frank, Chief Technology Officer.

18 If I could just make a comment
19 about the subway. I mean, I'm equally
20 concerned about it, and I think it's
21 really a matter of creating a real
22 focused strategy so that we all know what
23 the heck we really need to do. I mean,
24 we are a homeland security region one
25 location, as has been pointed out. The

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2 subways and, frankly, I'm sure there's
3 other areas of the City, including high
4 rises, that are absolutely critical, and
5 I, for one, if a high rise was burning, I
6 want to make sure firefighters get up
7 there, and certainly we don't want any
8 lives lost.

9 So let me just speak
10 personally. I want to make a commitment
11 that we are going to focus on what the
12 heck the strategy is, and we owe it to
13 ourselves and we certainly owe it to the
14 citizens and to the fine professionals in
15 both the Police Department and the Fire
16 Department. So I just want to make a
17 direct comment. And I think the key here
18 is, I think as we pointed out, there is
19 no perfect technology, but I don't think
20 neither can we sit here and just talk
21 about it. I think we have to say to
22 ourselves, over a period of time how do
23 we get there, and if repeaters or
24 whatever it is are the way we do it
25 today, that's great, but what are we

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2 doing tomorrow and how are we going to
3 get there.

4 So I'm equally concerned, and I
5 don't want to sit here a year from now
6 without really being able to articulate
7 and say, Hey, look, here's how we want to
8 chip away at this, including working with
9 SEPTA and others, just how the heck do we
10 deal with this.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: And
13 that's really great. That's what we
14 really want to hear. I mean, we stated
15 the problem. We need to figure out a way
16 to start moving towards the solution.

17 How long will that take you to
18 get back with us, about six, seven
19 months, a year, giving us an update,
20 keeping us informed?

21 MR. FRANK: Well, I would
22 commit to an update in six months, but,
23 again, we obviously have a lot of work to
24 do.

25 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We

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2 understand that.

3 MR. FRANK: But I think we
4 should be tasking ourselves.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: We
6 understand, but it's good that we're in a
7 hearing, we're talking about it, we set a
8 date with a "to do," and we'd like to
9 hear back of what's being done. So this
10 is April and -- no; this is June.

11 MR. FRANK: And I want to make
12 it clear I want to satisfy myself as to
13 what other cities are also doing.
14 There's no excuse.

15 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. So
16 around December then we want to hear
17 something. You can just send it to me as
18 the Chair.

19 MR. FRANK: You got it.

20 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER:
21 Councilman Rizzo.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: It's
23 interesting what Councilwoman Miller just
24 said, our Chair, that we're here in the
25 hearing and things that you're doing

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2 today, we discussed in the hearing, like
3 joining hands with the School District to
4 acquire their channels, save them money
5 on not having to maintain their own
6 system, using ours, Delaware River Port
7 Authority, all things that were brought
8 up in hearings. There's another agency
9 besides what I just mentioned, the School
10 District, that -- well, there's a couple
11 others -- that are going to be utilizing
12 this system and increasing those push to
13 talks, but, again, saving money for them,
14 all the new school buses.

15 So, again, it started in a
16 public forum and things are starting to
17 happen.

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: We
19 learned our lesson, and I think what
20 we've taken away is some of those lessons
21 learned that we're going to put back is
22 those things that we are doing right now
23 to deal with this issue and some of the
24 things that we will find through
25 investigating and looking at what other

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2 cities are doing and other joint
3 opportunities to try to leverage other
4 people's infrastructure.

5 MR. FRANK: If I could make one
6 more point I think going back to the
7 original discussion around the hearings
8 with some of the failures and so forth.
9 I think it's going to be particularly
10 critical. One of the questions was what
11 did the City learn. So one of the things
12 certainly that I learned through this
13 experience is, again, looking at all the
14 weak links, all the possible things, even
15 just asking the question of, Okay, we
16 replaced the radio, what's the life? Ten
17 years. Well, what's the life of the
18 batteries? What's the life of this and
19 what's the life of that?

20 So I really think one of the --
21 certainly the things that I've learned
22 that we need to do is, as we move forward
23 here and start the clock and effectively
24 what Deputy Mayor Gillison and I have
25 ordered is, we're going to refresh all

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2 those little weak links as we speak, and
3 then I want to make sure we write down
4 somewhere what the life is so that five
5 years from now or ten years from now,
6 we're not sitting here and saying, Oops,
7 we forgot the life of the next antenna is
8 ten years. So it's remedial maintenance
9 and ongoing making sure we understand
10 that we have to continue to maintain this
11 equipment or replace it after its life.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Right. I
13 think that's one reason why I would like
14 to get and the Committee members would
15 like to have a statement or a list of
16 lessons learned, prevention, moving
17 forward. It seems like we keep going
18 back. I've been in most of these
19 hearings, and it just seems like we're
20 just going around and around and around,
21 and at some point, we need to figure out
22 a way to address some of the issues.
23 Like I really think it's good that you're
24 going to be pursuing who can you partner
25 with as it relates to the subway or the

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2 underground issue, high rise issue,
3 whatever. But we need to feel like we're
4 making some kind of progress rather than
5 spending a lot of money and police
6 officers and firefighters still don't
7 feel safe. So we got to figure that one
8 out. All right. So that's on our "to
9 do" list.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

11 Yes.

12 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Okay. Do
13 we have any more questions for the
14 unions, the FOP, the firefighters?

15 (No response.)

16 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: All
17 right. I want to thank everyone for
18 coming in, and this Committee is recessed
19 until the call of the Chair.

20 Thank you.

21 (Committee on Public Safety
22 recessed at 3:20 p.m.)

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