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COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

3

PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

4

AND TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

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Room 400, City Hall

7

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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Wednesday, July 14, 2004, 2:05 p.m.

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Resolution 020455 - Resolution authorizing a
Joint Hearing for both City Council's
Committee on Public Safety and City Council's
Committee on Technology and Information
Systems to hold public hearings to investigate
the malfunction of the City of Philadelphia's
digital radio system...

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PRESENT:

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COUNCILMAN FRANK RIZZO

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COUNCILWOMAN DONNA REED MILLER

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COUNCILMAN BRIAN J. O'NEILL

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1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

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4 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Good
5 afternoon. The joint committee on Public
6 Safety and Technology and Information Services
7 is now in session. Counsel members in
8 attendance, Councilman Frank Rizzo, Councilman
9 Brian O'Neill, Chair of Technology and
10 Information Services, and I am Councilwoman
11 Donna Reed Miller, Chair of Public Safety.

12 Will the clerk please read the title
13 of the resolution.

14 THE CLERK: Resolution No.
15 040655, Resolution authorizing a Joint Hearing
16 for both City Council's Committee on Public
17 Safety and City Council's Committee on
18 Technology and Information Systems to hold
19 public hearings to investigate the malfunction
20 of the City of Philadelphia's digital radio
21 system which occurred twice: Once on March
22 25, 2004 at 8:59 p.m. and then on May 18, 2004
23 at 9:04 p.m.; and, in furtherance of such
24 investigation, authorizing the issuance of
25 subpoenas to compel the attendance of

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 witnesses and the production of documents to
3 the full extent authorized under Section 2-401
4 of the Home Rule Charter.

5 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Thank
6 you.

7 We'd like to thank all those
8 agencies and personnel that have come today to
9 testify in this hearing. This is an important
10 issue, and I'd like to now call on Councilman
11 Frank Rizzo for brief remarks.

12 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you,
13 Councilwoman.

14 For the record, that resolution that
15 was read indicated two incidences and we're
16 all aware that there was another occurrence of
17 trouble with the radio system over this past
18 weekend. Not a complete interruption, but
19 some problems with the system. So we want
20 that to be part of the record, that there was
21 a third occurrence.

22 Thank you.

23 THE CLERK: Thank you.

24 COUNCILWOMAN MILLER: Steve, do
25 you want to start calling the witnesses,

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 please.

3 THE CLERK: Yes. I'd like to
4 call Philip Goldsmith, the Managing Director
5 of the City of Philadelphia, please.

6 MR. GOLDSMITH: Good afternoon,
7 Councilman O'Neill, Councilman Rizzo. I'm
8 Phil Goldsmith, Managing Director. I
9 appreciate your opportunity to discuss the 800
10 megahertz radio system with you today.

11 This afternoon you will hear from
12 the experts and City officials who work
13 directly with this system and who are more
14 knowledgeable about the technology than I am.
15 I am not here as a technology expert. I
16 appear before you as Managing Director, who is
17 responsible and concerned for the public
18 safety in the City of Philadelphia, both for
19 our citizens, as well as our employees.

20 Communications plays a key role in
21 the ability of our public safety officials to
22 protect the public, as well as themselves.
23 This has always been the case, but even more
24 critical in our post 9/11 world.

25 Our radio communication plan has

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 certainly received much deserved attention,
3 and I believe that we have been moving in a
4 positive direction, expanding communication
5 capabilities for both users and coverage area.

6 We adopted this system for a number
7 of reasons. One, the system expanded the
8 number of channels available for
9 communication; two, the reception and coverage
10 has dramatically improved over the former
11 radio system; three, the 800 megahertz system
12 has a user and distress feature for police and
13 fire; four, the system provides the ability to
14 communicate across departments, and, lastly,
15 the system has multiple back-ups, as well as
16 component level redundancies.

17 Even with these added features, we
18 have experienced problems that we are
19 aggressively addressing. Whenever an
20 institution implements a new system, there are
21 bound to be challenges. Practically every
22 implementation of new software systems,
23 adoption of new technology or implementation
24 of new business processes present challenges,
25 some unforeseen, some expected. These are

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 often technology issues, but they are
3 frequently training issues and sometimes
4 old-fashioned problems of people not liking
5 change.

6 Still, my goal and expectation,
7 which is certainly shared by the Mayor, the
8 Police Commissioner and Fire Commissioner, is
9 that our public safety personnel be able to
10 communicate with each other in a time-urgency
11 fashion.

12 We have charged Motorola, the
13 vendor, to determine the cause of the problems
14 and identify solutions quickly. It is in
15 Motorola's self interest to make sure our
16 system is foolproof. I am told by our
17 personnel that they are working with us to
18 identify and correct problems with a needed
19 sense of urgency.

20 In addition to working with the
21 vendor, our independent consultant has been
22 directed to look over Motorola's work and
23 respond to incidents and supply additional
24 recommendations to the City, if needed.

25 We have formed a crisis response

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 team, which is activated immediately on any
3 serious radio issue affecting public safety.
4 The team comprises members of the Public
5 Property department, Police and Fire
6 departments, Motorola and our independent
7 consultants.

8 Each time a disruption has occurred
9 we have brought in both the vendor and the
10 consultants to investigate the issue and
11 attempted to identify the circumstances under
12 which the system failed. This team was
13 activated over this last weekend and was able
14 to work together to stabilize the radio system
15 without serious disruption to the users.

16 Communication within and among the
17 City departments is important. It is also
18 important that the City's public safety
19 officials have the capability of communicating
20 to public safety officials across
21 jurisdictions. I am pleased to inform you
22 that we have received \$5 million of federal
23 Home Land Security Grant funds to support this
24 cross-jurisdictional communication.

25 The regional communication's

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 interoperability project will link the data
3 and voice communications of the ten
4 metropolitan areas in the Southeastern
5 Pennsylvania Counterterrorism Task Force and
6 improve our response to home land security and
7 public safety issues.

8 Hearings like this one are
9 appropriate and beneficial, for they provide
10 our technical experts with the opportunity to
11 address concerns and issues raised by City
12 Council and the public.

13 I will not sit here before you and
14 dismiss any incidents of malfunction as
15 trivial. This is too important an issue to
16 dismiss concerns, but it is also too important
17 an issue for creating undo alarm.

18 I have challenged our experts with
19 the urgency of an appropriate diagnostic
20 analysis of causes and the appropriate fixes.
21 I have made it clear I am not interested in
22 assumptions, hypotheses or speculation. Let's
23 have the facts, the facts and nothing but the
24 facts.

25 Our priority is clearly to protect

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 public safety personnel and the public. We
3 will continue and insist that we are taking
4 every step necessary to have a reliable radio
5 communication system.

6 One thing is perfectly clear, the
7 technology we are now using can and must be
8 improved, but it is also equally clear that it
9 is far better than the previous system that
10 was used.

11 We are certainly committed to
12 continually improving this system until there
13 are no issues and making sure that our men and
14 women who risk their lives every day do not
15 have a scintilla of doubt that our technology
16 is as strong as their valor merits.

17 I thank you. Be glad to take any
18 questions.

19 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:

20 Mr. Goldsmith, the testimony about you're
21 constantly improving the system, isn't the
22 reliability on the 9-1-1 system, whether it's
23 the old system or the new system, usually a
24 given, I mean, that it works? All the other
25 trappings of high tech or 800 megahertz versus

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 some other lesser technology.

3 It seems to me that if we're looking
4 at a \$5 million Home Land Security Grant to go
5 to ten jurisdictions, that if we're not
6 getting the very basic function right, just
7 9-1-1, not the police here talking to the fire
8 departments out there or the feds at that
9 level in an interoperability mode, that we're
10 never going to get there or have anything that
11 will be relied on if we can't get 9-1-1 right.
12 Because I never heard of 9-1-1 being so
13 deficient before this, and I've been around
14 quite a while. Is this something that --

15 MR. GOLDSMITH: This is our 800
16 megahertz system, which I believe is different
17 than 9-1-1, but I'm going to let the experts
18 talk about that. I think we're talking about
19 two separate issues.

20 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: This isn't
21 people calling in and us sending --

22 MR. GOLDSMITH: No. This is
23 using our radio, our 800 megahertz system,
24 which I think went into effect January of
25 2003. We're not talking about the 9-1-1

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 system.

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: How much
4 did the 800 megahertz cost?

5 MR. GOLDSMITH: I'm not sure of
6 the precise amount. I think it was a little
7 bit south of \$60 million.

8 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. 60
9 million?

10 MR. GOLDSMITH: Yes.

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.
12 Fine.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZIO: I think what
14 Councilman O'Neill was referring to, that for
15 30 years we had a 400 megahertz system that
16 worked very, very well, very few interruptions
17 of service.

18 You kind of came back on track on me
19 when you talked about whenever you, quote,
20 whenever an institution implements a new
21 system, that there are glitches that do
22 develop in software applications.

23 We had this system on test, I
24 believe, for a long time, and we'll talk more
25 to the Public Property people about that, but

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 I don't agree with your statement that we
3 should hand off or operate a system that
4 jeopardizes the safety and the welfare of our
5 employees.

6 The problem was also experienced in
7 municipal radio over this week, not as
8 significant, obviously, as police and fire,
9 but, again, I don't agree that we should --
10 and you said we're not taking this lightly,
11 but I don't believe a public safety
12 communication system of this design and this
13 excellence should have had -- these three
14 incidents, in my opinion, should not have
15 occurred.

16 MR. GOLDSMITH: Councilman, I
17 don't know where you're reading my testimony
18 that I ever said that we should hand over a
19 system that would undermine public safety.
20 That's not what I said. It's certainly not
21 what's before you.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZIO: I didn't say
23 you said that. I said that you said that
24 there are glitches in new software
25 installations.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 MR. GOLDSMITH: Right.

3 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And I don't
4 agree that when it comes to a public safety
5 communication system, that we should even
6 allow for glitches or think that glitches are
7 acceptable in this type of technology.

8 MR. GOLDSMITH: Well, I would
9 agree, and I would say that they will talk in
10 more detail about the type of testing that
11 went on, but the system went through an
12 enormous amount of testing.

13 A lot of times you can't test for
14 every conceivable glitch because you can't
15 test for every conceivable unpredictable
16 circumstance that may happen. And I don't
17 care whether it's our 800 megahertz system or
18 any other system, whether it's sending a man
19 to the moon or a woman to the moon, that you
20 can test all you want, but there are going to
21 be times when there are circumstances that no
22 one ever tested for it.

23 So I think what we've got to find
24 out and I think that the real challenge here
25 is what were the circumstances that put the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 system out of kilter for that period of time
3 it was out of kilter. And I think one of the
4 things that you'll hear is that we will
5 probably have to reenact the circumstances of
6 that day to find out what happened. But you
7 can test 99.9 percent and something comes up
8 where someone introduces a new technology that
9 interferes with yours and so forth. But I
10 think we're in basic agreement on that.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I
12 understand, but, again, I don't remember being
13 told or the field officers, fire fighters
14 being told that, Here, we're giving you a new
15 system, but glitches might develop.

16 I don't think that anyone foresaw
17 any type of glitch developing in this system
18 to the degree that it occurred here. Again, I
19 don't want to beat a dead horse. We both
20 aren't experts in this area and we will hear
21 from the experts to talk more about that.

22 Thank you, Mr. Managing Director.

23 MR. GOLDSMITH: Thank you.

24 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you.

25 Call the next witness.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 THE CLERK: The next witness,
3 Sylvester Johnson, Philadelphia City Police
4 Commissioner.

5 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Good
6 afternoon, Councilmen. Commissioner Johnson,
7 Philadelphia Police Department. And I have
8 Attorney Healy with me just to accompany me
9 today.

10 The officers in the Philadelphia
11 Police Department use the radio system 60,000
12 to 70,000 times a day, more than any other
13 City agency combined.

14 I'm aware of the issues we have been
15 experiencing and have fielded complaints from
16 individual officers, as well as the Fraternal
17 Order of Police. My first concern is always
18 for the safety of our officers.

19 In any large-scale deployment of new
20 technology, there is always a long period of
21 acceptance, and a new radio system is one of
22 those type of deployments. This new system
23 gives us some capabilities we have never had
24 before but have definitely needed. For
25 example, our undercover narcotics officers

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 have their communication for the first time.
3 Drug dealers can no longer simply purchase a
4 scanner and listen to officers' conversations.

5 In the past if an officer lost their
6 radio, the person finding it could cause
7 sufficient disruption of the radio system.
8 Now if their radio is lost or displaced, we
9 simply turn it off, insuring that no one can
10 interfere with public safety communications.

11 Despite all the new capabilities, I
12 realize that we must work through the present
13 problems to insure that reliable
14 communications are available to our officers.

15 The various agencies in this City,
16 including the Police and the Fire department,
17 have been working together for years of both
18 implementation of the radio system, as well as
19 addressing and correcting problems as they
20 arise. I am confident that the City and its
21 vendors will be able to work through these
22 issues.

23 If there are any questions to the
24 Police Department, I have my operational
25 people here to answer them. Thanks.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you,
3 Commissioner.

4 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON: Thank
5 you, sir.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That's it.
7 Out of courtesy to the Commissioner, we broke
8 the panel up, so we're going to bring the rest
9 of the -- Charles Brennan, Deputy Commissioner
10 Brennan, in.

11 THE CLERK: We're going to
12 bring up Greg Masi, Sergeant of police radio;
13 Lloyd Ayers, Deputy Fire Commissioner of
14 Operations; Michael Moore, Chief Dispatcher;
15 Joseph James and Frank Punzo, Communications
16 Superintendent of Public Property.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I guess we
18 should start off with Deputy Commissioner
19 Brennan to explain what exactly occurred
20 during three occurrences and the impact that
21 it had on the operation of the Philadelphia
22 Police Department.

23 MR. BRENNAN: My name is
24 Charles Brennan. I'm a Deputy Police
25 Commissioner.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 Councilman, we submitted testimony,
3 all of us up here, to Council and we thought
4 that we would all introduce ourselves and we
5 would prefer, if it's okay with you, to simply
6 answer questions, because our testimony sort
7 of explains from each of our viewpoints what
8 happened.

9 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We would
10 appreciate you paraphrasing your testimony.

11 MR. BRENNAN: I have no problem
12 doing that. Do you want us to introduce
13 ourselves first?

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Yes, please.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
16 Good afternoon, Councilmen. Joseph James,
17 Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public
18 property.

19 MR. MOORE: Michael Moore,
20 Chief Dispatcher, Fire Department's Fire
21 Communications Center.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS:
23 Lloyd Ayers, Deputy Commissioner of
24 Operations, Philadelphia Fire Department.

25 SERGEANT MASI: Sergeant Greg

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Masi, Philadelphia Police 9-1-1 Operations.

3 MR. PUNZO: Frank Punzo,
4 Communications Superintendent, Department of
5 Public Property.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And, again,
7 we'd like everyone with prepared testimony to
8 either read their testimony or paraphrase
9 their testimony.

10 I appreciate you starting off,
11 Commissioner Brennan.

12 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
13 Paraphrasing would be preferred.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
15 It's not long anyway.

16 The City of Philadelphia operates a
17 twin Motorola 800 megahertz radio system and
18 it's really divided into System A and B. So
19 that everyone understands this, the Police
20 Department is the sole user of System B.
21 Everyone else rides on System A.

22 On March 25th, a Police Department
23 dispatcher used a function called an
24 Announcement Group. This function allows the
25 dispatcher to broadcast a message to the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 entire City, all the officers at the same time
3 using one radio channel. In this case, the
4 incident was a triple assist officer call.

5 While broadcasting, the dispatcher
6 reported that his console, as well as the rest
7 of the consoles in the room, seemed to lock
8 up. The situation lasted several minutes.
9 During that time, dispatchers were switching
10 to one of the back-up systems when the main
11 system returned and all the consoles could
12 broadcast again.

13 Motorola was notified of the
14 incident. The Announcement Group function was
15 tested the next day, although not under the
16 same stressful conditions, but we were unable
17 to replicate the problem. As of this time,
18 Motorola has not been able to fully identify
19 the cause, although they've made a software
20 change which we believe may correct the
21 problem and we are waiting to test the
22 Announcement Group to see if it works.

23 The second incident occurred on May
24 18th during another triple assist officer
25 call.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Can I
3 interrupt? Just to keep the incidents
4 separate, if you could just explain in your
5 own words what the impact, if any, of that
6 block was or that freeze that occurred. In
7 other words, was there a five-minute delay in
8 getting an assist out, did the back-up systems
9 work? What really happened?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
11 What really happened, Councilman, is that the
12 triple assist got out okay, but what happens
13 is that all the officers try to get back in
14 and mainly they're trying to get back in
15 saying, I'm going in on that.

16 A triple assist is a rare event.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So the
18 two-way part of this was -- the two-way
19 communication was interrupted?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
21 Yes. What happens is that if an officer calls
22 an assist, we notify roughly half the City.
23 So we notify the division that the assist --
24 and just so we know what an assist officer
25 means, it's kind of obvious, but an officer is

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 in a lot of trouble. It is the highest
3 priority call we have. It takes precedence
4 over every other thing that happens in radio.

5 So an officer calls an assist. We
6 essentially broadcast that to the division
7 that the officer is in and the contiguous
8 divisions. So pretty much half the City
9 knows. And those officers will start to run
10 in to help the officer who is in trouble.

11 By the time it gets to a triple
12 assist, we've notified the whole City. And in
13 order to notify the whole City, we use a
14 mechanism called an Announcement Group. It is
15 a function that Motorola provides with their
16 system. This mechanism permits us to use one
17 radio channel. We have 15. It permits us to
18 use one, but talk to everybody in the City at
19 the same time.

20 Now, there's pretty much bedlam on
21 radio when this happens, because everybody is
22 trying to talk, everybody is trying to say,
23 I'm coming in to help the officer. When that
24 happens, what happened is, the consoles all
25 locked up and the dispatchers could not talk

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 to the officers on the street. The officers
3 on the street, though, could hear one another.
4 That lasted for a couple minutes. We think
5 about three minutes, maybe three and a half
6 minutes it lasted for.

7 The system cleared itself up and
8 then everything was fine after that. So
9 you're talking the first incidence was about
10 three and a half minutes of the dispatchers
11 unable to talk to the people on the street.

12 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. So,
13 in your opinion, the safety of the officers
14 that needed the triple assist was not
15 jeopardized by this?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
17 Well, only in the sense that we did get the
18 assist out and the officer -- a lot of
19 officers can't get in because somebody is
20 trying to get in, but they're all coming to
21 get the officer.

22 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So it's
23 not as effective when you can't have the
24 two-way communication?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 It's not as effective. Suppose somebody had
3 to say something. For example, the officer in
4 trouble may have had to say something.

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Now you're
6 getting to where I want to go.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
8 During that three and a half minutes, he or
9 she could not have said anything that would
10 have gotten through. But as far as getting
11 help to the officer, it did not hinder getting
12 help to the officer, because everybody knew.

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But if
14 you're the officer that needed a triple
15 assist, this is not what you want to happen.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
17 Well, it's not what any of us want to happen.

18 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
19 Particularly if you're the officer that needs
20 the assist.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
22 Exactly.

23 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.
24 Thank you. You can go to the second one.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: May I add

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 something to that quickly?

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Sure.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZO:

5 Commissioner, you indicated that the assist
6 officer is obviously the highest priority of
7 calls, and from my experience, that many
8 accidents occur, police officers are injured,
9 and one of the important things that occurs
10 during the initial minutes of an assist or
11 seconds is a resume of an assist officer. So
12 if that officer wanted to resume or say that
13 that assist was under control, that was not
14 possible at that time; is that correct?

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

16 Well, he couldn't have gotten through to the
17 dispatcher to tell him to resume, but the
18 other officers could have heard that they
19 should have resumed.

20 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But my point
21 being is that headquarters would not have been
22 aware that the situation was under control?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

24 The dispatcher would not have been aware.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And that's

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 important, that the dispatcher know that?

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

4 Yes, but in the practical matter, they don't
5 resume anyway. I mean, I'm telling you what
6 happens.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I understand
8 that they keep coming in, but --

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

10 They can say resume, resume, resume. On a
11 triple assist, most are coming in.

12 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But they
13 slow down to the point where they are not into
14 the pedal as heavily as they would?

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

16 We would like to believe that they slow down.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: How are you
18 confident that the police officers on the
19 street were able to hear those broadcasts?
20 How do you know that?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

22 Motorola tells us that they understand what
23 exactly happened and they tell us under that
24 condition that the officers, in fact, would
25 not be impeded from hearing one another. And

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 I have no evidence from anyone that we've
3 talked to that the officers could not hear one
4 another, although they would probably tell you
5 that because there was so many coming in, that
6 they probably couldn't all get in. So they
7 would probably tell you that they couldn't get
8 in.

9 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Did you
10 verify that the field heard the conversations
11 that radio could not hear?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

13 No, I didn't. No. No.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: I think that
15 would have been important to know that.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
17 would say in hindsight, we probably should
18 have, but knowing how much radio traffic goes
19 on at that time, we sort of understood the
20 situation. We look at it sort of in
21 hindsight. We pulled all the radio tapes and
22 stuff, so we pretty much know we hear.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Well, you
24 wouldn't have heard anything.

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 What you would hear is one officer. You'd
3 hear one person talking, but, in fact, a
4 hundred might be trying to come in.

5 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So I think
6 it's important to know going forward in the
7 fact if we would have a duplication of this
8 incident, it would be good for management, I
9 think, to know that even though the
10 dispatchers can't hear the conversation from
11 the field, that their officers, their
12 colleagues, supervisors are able to hear.
13 But, again, we're not sure that that's the
14 case. We're taking Motorola's -- we're
15 getting that information from Motorola, that,
16 in fact, that did occur, but we don't know
17 that that occurred.

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
19 And if I remember, I believe we pulled the
20 radio tapes on this and I believe you could
21 hear it on the tapes also. But, understand,
22 you can only hear one at a time.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Correct.
24 Okay. Thank you. Excuse me.

25 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Just one

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 point of clarity. You mentioned that an
3 assist officer is the highest priority on the
4 radio system. Could you explain the
5 difference between an assist officer and a
6 triple assist officer?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

8 The really only difference is in an assist
9 officer where we just get one call, as I told
10 you, we would probably tell about half the
11 City, the division of --

12 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I

13 understand the difference, but --

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

15 But a triple assist -- well, you have to
16 remember when the first assist goes out,
17 nothing really else is going out. That pretty
18 much takes priority over everything else. And
19 we're just waiting to see what happens. We're
20 sending officers in. We're communicating out,
21 and the officer starts hollering again, I need
22 more help, I need more help, I need more help.
23 So pretty much there's really nothing else
24 going on at that section of the City no matter
25 what it is, except our concentration on that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 assist officer call. So there's really
3 nothing else going to happen until that's
4 cleared up.

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: What
6 raises it to a triple assist?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
8 He's calling for more help.

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So half
10 the City is not enough help?

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
12 Well, if he's calling three times -- and it
13 might not be the same officer. It might be
14 another officer that gets there and sees that
15 things are so bad, that then that officer, he
16 or she, starts calling for help.

17 So it could be the same officer. It
18 could be a second officer that gets there. It
19 could be a third officer that gets there and
20 screams for help.

21 And keep in mind is that the
22 dispatcher is only listening. They're not
23 quite sure what's happening. They tend to
24 error on the side of sending more help rather
25 than less.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. I
3 think I understand.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZO:
5 Commissioner, just one follow-up. If that
6 happened in one of the divisional areas; that
7 is, the incident, what effect did it have in
8 other parts of the City? Was it a ripple
9 effect? Did it happen throughout the
10 entire -- was every console or dispatch point
11 affected by this interruption or did it just
12 occur in the division where the triple assist
13 was? Are you following my question?

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
15 Yes, I do. The reports that we have from
16 radio is that all the consoles locked up. In
17 other words, it affected the City. So our
18 understanding of what happened, and it's from
19 what we got from the dispatchers, that all the
20 consoles locked up. So that would have
21 affected the City. So it wouldn't have
22 mattered if the assist happened in South
23 Philly. The Northeast people would have been
24 locked up for about three and a half minutes.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 Excuse me for the interruption.

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Again, I'm

4 going to follow up again hearing that.

5 Wouldn't that affect the 9-1-1 call going out

6 if the --

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

8 It would affect all the 9-1-1 calls going out.

9 There's nothing going out during those three
10 minutes.

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Right.

12 When I started out with the Managing Director,

13 and I didn't know enough to argue. Now I am

14 full of information after five minutes.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

16 You've been educated in about ten minutes.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: This does

18 affect 9-1-1. Whether it's a three-minute

19 lock-up that occurred or a ten-minute lock-up

20 that might occur tomorrow, three minutes is

21 critical if you've got a part one that's

22 active and a person is in danger. So it does

23 affect 9-1-1.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I

25 was in the back when you asked the Managing

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Director that question.

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: He just
4 said it was a radio issue and not a 9-1-1
5 issue.

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
7 just want you to understand that the radio
8 component is a piece of what we view as the
9 entire 9-1-1 system.

10 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Right.
11 But it's an integral piece. I mean, you have
12 to have a console working for 9-1-1 to work.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
14 I'm not disagreeing with you. It's that when
15 we talk about 9-1-1 --

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: We're both
17 disagreeing with the Managing Director,
18 although you are not directly.

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
20 never disagree with the Managing Director.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: No. I
22 wouldn't ask you to. Thank you.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
24 When we talk about 9-1-1, we normally talk
25 about the call-handling piece rather than the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 radio piece. So we talk about the citizen,
3 that call getting to the radio center and how
4 we handle the call internally. That is more
5 of what we refer to when we refer to 9-1-1.

6 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: There's
7 two parts to 9-1-1. One is me getting in my
8 call; the other is them getting a cop out.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
10 Yes. And I would say to you, Councilman, that
11 the radio response is a part of the entire
12 9-1-1 system that the citizen sees.

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: It's
14 actually just as important as the other part.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
16 Oh, absolutely. Absolutely.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: It doesn't
18 help much to have one if --

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
20 Absolutely.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: And to help
23 clarify that, in three and a half minutes, if
24 there was another incident, a hold-up in
25 progress, a burglary or another assist officer

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 in another part of the City or the calls that
3 Councilman O'Neill is referring to, 9-1-1,
4 were stacking up that were supposed to be
5 going out in three and a half minutes, so if
6 you had a violent crime in progress during
7 that period of time, that call would have not
8 gotten out; am I right?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
10 Since this was a triple assist, there was
11 nothing going out, nor would there have been
12 if the system was working properly.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I'm talking
14 about other areas of the City. I'm not
15 talking about the console -- what area did
16 this happen, this triple assist?

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
18 14th.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So you're
20 talking --

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
22 Up in Chestnut Hill.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Northwest.
24 But I'm talking about a call in south now, a
25 hold-up in progress, a burglary in progress

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 would not have got dispatched even though the
3 incident was at the other end of the City?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
5 know what you're saying, but what I'm telling
6 you, Councilman, is that in a triple assist,
7 we're taking over the whole City. In other
8 words, we're taking over all the consoles. J
9 band is taking over the broadcast from all
10 the -- there's no other jobs going out.

11 So whether it was a burglary in
12 progress or a robbery in progress, our main
13 concern on a triple assist is that officer.
14 And my guess is you had people coming from
15 everywhere in the City to help that officer.
16 So if it was a regular assist officer, like
17 one, your point is absolutely correct. In
18 this case, in a triple, there's nothing
19 happening other than that assist in the whole
20 City.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And for
22 radio to know that the triple assist was under
23 control now to me becomes a very significant
24 piece of information back to radio, because
25 you don't need a car from Northwest

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Philadelphia coming to -- or from South
3 Philadelphia coming to Chestnut Hill to
4 involve themselves in this triple assist.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
6 agree.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay. Thank
8 you.

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Now we go
10 to the second incident. Thank you.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
12 The second incident occurred on May 18th
13 during another triple assist officer call.
14 The resources for this assist officer were
15 called using a different function, because we
16 were not using the Announcement Group
17 function. We used a different way to group
18 everybody together, and we call it a
19 Multi-Select. It is selecting each individual
20 division one at a time.

21 Since we weren't using the
22 Announcement Group, we weren't sure it was
23 working right, I put an order out not to use
24 it again. We used a different way of grouping
25 all the officers together, so that J band

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 could sort of talk to them all at the same
3 time. It's called the Multi-Select.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You haven't
5 abandoned that? You're waiting for it to get
6 fixed; is that what I'm hearing?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
8 We are not using the Announcement Group
9 function. We still use the Multi-Select,
10 although we use it a little differently.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So we have a
12 feature that we designed into the system that
13 we're not using because it created an issue
14 and now you are permanently abandoning that
15 function for this other scenario?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
17 No. Actually, the Announcement Group function
18 and the Multi-Select function are used for
19 different things. The Announcement Group
20 function is the one way that we can talk to
21 the whole City at the same time. That one we
22 are not using until we test it again.

23 The Multi-Select thing we use all
24 the time. It's being used right now as we're
25 speaking. It's used all the time.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 As in the first incident, the triple
3 assist generated a high volume of radio
4 traffic and a great number of officers trying
5 to access the radio system. As this occurred,
6 a number of consoles as well as officers on
7 the street began to experience what we term
8 system busies; i.e., was not an available
9 channel for them to broadcast.

10 News reports that the system were
11 down were incorrect. The system has never
12 been down.

13 There was limited communication
14 between officers and dispatchers because about
15 half of the channels were available, and
16 either Commissioner James or Motorola will go
17 more into what that means. But essentially it
18 was like we were running on half the horses.

19 That problem persisted for a number
20 of hours and it was eventually rectified by a
21 Motorola technician.

22 The Police Department has been
23 working with Public Property, our management
24 and technical consultants and Motorola to
25 learn what caused these problems. Motorola

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 has brought quite a team into Philadelphia,
3 and they're looking at all those aspects of
4 the system attempting to isolate the problems.

5 Although some of the problems have
6 not been solved as of this writing, the Police
7 Department, in consultation with Public
8 Property and Motorola, has taken some steps
9 which we believe will mitigate another
10 incident.

11 First, as I mentioned, we're not
12 using the Announcement Group function until
13 it's thoroughly tested.

14 Secondly, we've limited the number
15 of multi-selects. In other words, divisions
16 that we select at one time to only six talk
17 groups.

18 The third step we've taken is, and
19 this is something we wanted to do anyway,
20 we're trying to pull as much traffic as we can
21 off the radio network. We have way too much
22 radio traffic and we're pulling them to the
23 MDTs, the mobile data computers. We're doing
24 more and more over them. Actually, something
25 near and dear to your heart, Councilman, the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 auto accidents. If you have a mobile data
3 computer now, you're getting the auto accident
4 silently, and you and I understand what that
5 means.

6 It should be noted that pulling
7 radio transmissions from the network is not a
8 radio capacity issue. The radio system is
9 capable of doing it. We just think it's a
10 good operational thing to do.

11 And the only other thing is that we
12 understand and we are very concerned and
13 despite what's said here today, I actually
14 appreciate you calling these hearings, because
15 I think that there's been a lot of
16 misinformation about what occurs, and I really
17 hope the hearings go a long way to settling a
18 lot of these issues and really getting the
19 issue out so that everyone understands.

20 And so although you might think that
21 we didn't want this to happen, I'm kind of
22 glad that it happened. So I thank you for
23 that.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: No one was
25 negative about these hearings.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

3 No. I know that. I know and I have a good
4 relationship and you've never been negative,
5 and your concern is the same as everybody at
6 this table. We're concerned for the safety of
7 the people out there and we just want to see
8 this thing work the way it's supposed to.

9 That's all.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Incident
11 three?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

13 Well, the --

14 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: While
15 we're still on the second incident, I'd like
16 to ask a couple of questions. One, was there
17 any similar time period in the second incident
18 where there was any problem with calls going
19 out from dispatch to police officers within
20 the 9-1-1 system?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

22 What happened in the second incident was
23 vastly different than what happened in the
24 first incident.

25 Our system has 15 channels, 14 of

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 which are usable to talk upon. That means 14
3 different people could talk at the same time.

4 When we got this volume issue with
5 the triple assist, essentially about half
6 those channels went away. If you had to say
7 something from the street and you were lucky
8 enough to get a channel, you could get through
9 and you wouldn't have noticed that there was a
10 problem.

11 Because the assist generated a lot
12 of traffic, a lot of people couldn't get
13 through. So they would get what looked to
14 them like the system was busy. We call it a
15 bonk. The radio actually goes bonk. It says
16 you can't get through. But people did get
17 through intermittently.

18 When the whole issue actually calmed
19 down -- actually, radio thought the system got
20 better an hour later or so. They thought
21 everything was fine. Actually, it wasn't, but
22 what happened is, the volume of incidents in
23 the City got quieter and eight channels was
24 actually enough to get us through for the next
25 couple hours. Radio didn't know the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 difference. It was really a volume issue.

3 But people could get through the
4 second time. It's just that you really
5 probably waited a little bit longer than you
6 should have.

7 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So to that
8 extent, 9-1-1 was jeopardized?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
10 To the extent that if you had to get
11 through --

12 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: If I'm the
13 guy with a knife at my throat and somebody is
14 calling 9-1-1 for me, anything that causes a
15 delay --

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
17 Well, your call would get into 9-1-1.

18 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I
19 understand that part.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
21 Getting it out --

22 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: It's just
23 as important.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
25 Right. Getting it out during that time period

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 would have been problematic during the time
3 when we were most busy.

4 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. I
5 have a question. You haven't used the
6 Announcement Group function since the March
7 incident?

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
9 We've tested it once or twice with Motorola on
10 board, but I wasn't satisfied because we
11 didn't test it under stress, and that's what I
12 want to do.

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But having
14 designed this system to have that function
15 when an assist officer or a triple assist
16 officer is required, it would seem to me that
17 the Multi-Select function isn't nearly as
18 optimal where you have to go through a series
19 of divisions or sectors, or whatever you would
20 characterize them as, as opposed to one blast
21 broadcast Citywide, but that's what we're
22 using in place of the Announcement Group
23 function.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
25 Years ago we used to broadcast a lot Citywide.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 We do so less now.

3 The Announcement Group is only good
4 under really very limited circumstances,
5 believe it or not. We don't really use it
6 that much.

7 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But the
8 limited circumstances is the highest priority
9 and the highest priority within the highest
10 priority.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
12 absolutely agree with you.

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: One, I'm
14 talking about the public and somebody getting
15 a felony committed, probably pretty nasty for
16 me to be saying minutes or seconds or whatever
17 is going to be critical, but you've got your
18 highest priority situation with an officer in
19 trouble or officers, particularly when it gets
20 to this triple assist. And we've been out of
21 this now for, I guess you're talking, about
22 four months since -- in a couple of days it
23 will be four months that we haven't been able
24 to use the one function that works best for
25 that situation.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
3 agree with you.

4 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

5 Fine.

6 Third situation?

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Can I just
8 follow up?

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Sure.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO:
11 Commissioner, you didn't, at least I didn't
12 hear you, talk about the fact that your system
13 switched over and started to use the channels
14 that the Fire Department, the B side, correct,
15 or the A side? Which is the --

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
17 We're B. They're A.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Right. You
19 did switch over and use channels.
20 Fortunately, the Fire Department didn't have a
21 multi-alarm fire.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
23 No. No. No. What happened is, a controller
24 switched, and what happened when the
25 controller switched -- and I was going to let

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Commissioner James get into that. When the
3 controller switched in the second incident,
4 it's supposed to take all the channels with
5 it. We're still in on our side. We never --
6 matter of fact, I don't think Fire even knew
7 what was going on with us. They are not
8 involved in that incident.

9 We're still in our side. Everything
10 is happening on the B side here. When the
11 controller switched, what happened is, all the
12 channels didn't come over with it. And if all
13 the channels had come over, actually the total
14 disruption would have been about ten seconds,
15 had it failed as it was supposed to.

16 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So during
17 Incident 2 -- like this past weekend, I
18 understand a different scenario of events
19 occurred, that other than the Police
20 Department was affected by the breakup.

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
22 Right.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You're
24 telling me that the issue in the Incident No.
25 2 only affected the Police Department, that if

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 the Fire Department would have put a demand on
3 the system at a multi-alarm fire, they would
4 not have seen any problem with the system at
5 all?

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

7 Councilman Rizzo, if I could try to answer
8 your question. On the May 18th incident, the
9 problem was isolated entirely to the police
10 side. If the Fire Department, which was
11 located on the A side, had an incident at any
12 time, they had all their resources available
13 to them for communications. They would not
14 have been impacted by the problem that was
15 occurring on the B side at the time of the
16 incident.

17 So at no time did the system switch
18 between the two, between B and A, and there
19 was no diminished effect on the A side.

20 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We'll come
21 back to you to talk more about the technical
22 reasons why this occurred and why it affected
23 Police and not Fire.

24 Incident 3, Commissioner?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 The third incident began last Friday night,
3 probably about 6:00, 6:30. We received
4 intermittent breakup of communications. We
5 would classify it as a minor nature where
6 officers had to repeat themselves sometimes.
7 We lost some words. We lost some syllables.

8 That started happening Friday, and
9 it went sort of in and out. It got better and
10 then it would start happening again. Motorola
11 and Commissioner James will tell you what
12 happened.

13 That lasted from Friday night into
14 Sunday, without any major really disruption to
15 communications. And as I said in an e-mail to
16 the Managing Director, is that we never even
17 went to a back-up system. We actually could
18 have gone to a back-up system where this would
19 have completely gone away, but the commanders
20 in charge of radio, I was in constant contact
21 with them over the weekend. They never felt
22 it was that serious to go to the first back-up
23 system, so we never did.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And we'll
25 talk more about the three scenarios

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 technically in a bit. Is there anything else,
3 Commissioner?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
5 No. I have nothing else.

6 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So that
7 was the least of the three in terms of what
8 I've just heard?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
10 would agree with you. That was probably the
11 least of the three.

12 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. Can
13 I ask one thing, Commissioner? I assume that
14 Police, Fire and Public Property, if not MOIS,
15 was involved sort of as a team in purchasing
16 this system and putting this system together
17 from a specification standpoint?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
19 Yes, although I don't think MOIS was. MOIS
20 was not.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Why would
22 we want our information systems people to mess
23 around with technology, right?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
25 Exactly.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But could
3 you tell me other cities, do other cities have
4 this same system? Is there anybody else out
5 there that uses what we have?

6 I know you always want to have what
7 you think is best for your city, but you also
8 don't want to reinvent the wheel if some
9 pretty smart people have spent a lot of money
10 already doing it.

11 Is this a system that exists in
12 other places in pretty much the same format?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
14 know the answer to this and Joe will, I'm
15 sure, just repeat what I'm going to tell you.
16 Motorola has these systems all over the place,
17 with this exception: The way it's implemented
18 here is rather unique. And so this technology
19 is well-proven technology. It exists in a lot
20 of places. Matter of fact, if you buy a radio
21 system today in your big city, this is the
22 type you buy.

23 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Is this
24 unique implementation in Philadelphia a
25 potential contributor to these glitches that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 have occurred?

3 Commissioner James?

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

5 Councilman, to answer the question, as far as
6 the incident on March 25th, no. As far as the
7 incident on the 18th, there is a possibility.
8 As far as the last incident, no. And we
9 believe that uniqueness of how the system is
10 designed in Philadelphia is, when we started
11 this process back in '95 with the RFP, we set
12 it on a solution where we had 30 800 megahertz
13 channels to work with and we went over
14 different design solutions to best optimize
15 the use of those 30 channels for all the City
16 users and primarily for public safety, and we
17 centered on a solution that basically split
18 the 30 into the two groups of 15, and that was
19 by design to provide the highest reliability
20 for failover in case there was a problem. So
21 that if we had a single system that some
22 cities have where they have all their channels
23 grouped together on the one system, you lose
24 that, you lose everything.

25 So we have the ability of having two

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 distinct systems operating at the same time,
3 insuring the safety of the fire fighters on
4 one side and police on the other side and the
5 ability to fail between the two should we lose
6 one or the other.

7 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Do any
8 other cities split it that way?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: I
10 think we're somewhat unique in how we designed
11 it. And cities like Baltimore, who have had
12 this system longer than we have, we spent a
13 great deal of time going back and forth and
14 dealing with these other cities to understand
15 the uniqueness of their experience from their
16 design, construction, implementation and
17 management of the system, and we constantly
18 talk to those cities to find out what's going
19 on in their experiences.

20 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Do other
21 cities that are in this universe, call it the
22 Motorola universe described by the
23 Commissioner, Mr. Brennan, have the
24 Announcement Group function?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: I

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 believe the other systems have the
3 Announcement Group function.

4 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Are we
5 aware of any other problems in other cities
6 with it?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: Not
8 that I'm aware of it.

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So that's
10 something we can easily learn from.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: And
12 that's something that's -- I believe the
13 Managing Director said it and Commissioner
14 Brennan said it, is that we take very
15 seriously, it's a concern for us that we have
16 a system that has a specific function that's
17 inherently important to the police operation.
18 They do not have a comfort level of using that
19 feature. That somehow inhibits their ability
20 to use the system fully, and we're working
21 very closely to make sure we can bring that
22 back on and make that available back to the
23 Police Department.

24 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So in a
25 \$60 million system with a single function that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 goes to our highest priority within our
3 highest priority, which affects an officer or
4 officers' safety, four months seems to be an
5 extraordinarily long time to be without it,
6 given that we're not a four-person police
7 department with a thousand dollar system. We
8 really got a huge investment here with the
9 leading company out in the field, right?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

11 Yes. And I believe what Commissioner Brennan
12 said is that when they had the incident on
13 March 25th, which was a three- to five-minute,
14 it created for them a grave concern that they
15 were not comfortable with using that feature.

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I

17 understand all that.

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: But
19 they altered their --

20 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I have a
21 problem with the four months that we're still
22 in where we haven't fixed it.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: But
24 I think Commissioner Brennan said they've
25 altered their operation, because there are

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 other features. Like a lot of systems have
3 duplication of features just for the purpose
4 that if you have to use a different feature,
5 like they're using the Multi-Select, they're
6 able to still do their officer assist calls.

7 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
8 Commissioner, with all due respect, the
9 description of the Multi-Select function is
10 not identical to the description of the
11 Announcement Group function, particularly in
12 that triple assist officer. I'm trying to
13 zero in on that, because that's how it
14 happened, it happened in a triple assist.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: I
16 agree.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: In a
18 triple assist situation today, we have to use
19 Multi-Select. I didn't hear anything that
20 said this works, we just turned Multi-Select
21 into something that works just like the
22 Announcement Group. It doesn't. You still
23 are going through a series of functions rather
24 than one.

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Right. You're doing an operational difference
3 to use the Multi-Select feature for what the
4 Announcement Group --

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Which is
6 not as optimal as --

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
8 It's not as optimal, but it hasn't --

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But this
10 is four months of not being as optimal. I
11 think that is really a long time.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: But
13 that has not allowed the Police Department to
14 do their triple assist.

15 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Right. It
16 just seems four months -- if we're talking
17 four weeks, four days. I don't know when it
18 becomes an overly long period of time, but
19 four months seems to me to be overly long that
20 it's still down. And I'll just leave it at
21 that.

22 Do you have anything else,
23 Councilman?

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO:
25 Commissioner, I think what you're hearing is

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 that there was a significant amount of money,
3 close to \$60 million, I don't know what the
4 amount is at this point, but for four months,
5 I'm sure we paid a substantial amount of money
6 for that feature and for four months you're
7 telling me that we are using an alternative.
8 It's like a carpenter, his nail gun breaks and
9 he uses his hammer for a week. You know, got
10 the job done, but still you need to fix it.

11 If we paid and we designed the
12 system to have a button that you push to go
13 Citywide, we need to push that button. And if
14 Motorola can't figure it out, then -- I don't
15 know why it would take four months for a
16 company that's had all the experience in
17 installing these systems all over the county
18 can't make it work and work properly. Because
19 it's unacceptable to me for a system to go
20 down for one minute, three minutes, five
21 minutes where officers on the street can't
22 communicate back to headquarters.

23 Again, even though Commissioner
24 Brennan said that the assist officers, they
25 keep coming, but I know from experience and

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 talking to a lot of officers, the minute they
3 hear that resume of that assist, they still
4 hurry, but they're not as in a hurry as they
5 once were. And, again, we don't know whether
6 the officers on the street for sure -- we're
7 told that they heard the resume patrol or
8 assist is under control, but we don't know
9 that that happened, according to the Police
10 Department.

11 So I would encourage -- and we'll
12 ask Motorola what they plan to do to get our
13 system back and working and assure that it
14 continues to work in the fashion that they
15 were handsomely paid to provide us a system.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: I
17 agree with you. We're working from the same
18 perspective as that. We have a large
19 investment in the system. There is a feature
20 that is in the system, the Police Department
21 does not have a comfort level of using it.
22 That won't impact their operation, and they
23 need to be able to use that feature.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And since
25 I'm talking about this, I would think that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 since we have had some problems and I
3 understand from speaking to one of your
4 associates that we do have spare parts on
5 site, but I understand over the weekend we had
6 to get parts flown in, meet at the airport.
7 And, again, I don't know if this was an
8 obvious part that should be in Philadelphia to
9 support this system, but I would hope that
10 Motorola, and we're going to ask them later,
11 that they do have a spare parts bin here to
12 support this system until we're confident that
13 it's working and working properly.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

15 Right. I mean, to talk about the incident
16 that just occurred on this past weekend, there
17 was a timing issue that affected the audio for
18 the police officers in the field so that there
19 was a clipping, and there is a piece of
20 equipment that we have at City Hall in the
21 City Hall system that is used to synchronize
22 that. That piece of equipment failed. There
23 was a back-up piece of equipment in place in
24 Philadelphia up in Southampton Road. They
25 brought that down here and installed it.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 We still experienced -- so we did
3 have a back-up.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: But it was
5 an operational piece that, for lack of a
6 better description, you stole it from
7 Southampton and moved it down here.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: We
9 didn't steal it since we all own it. We just
10 moved it down here to replace the piece that
11 failed and put it back in service.

12 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Wasn't it
13 serving some function at Southampton?

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: It
15 was serving a function, but when we moved it
16 down here, it didn't have an operational
17 impact on Southampton Road.

18 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: So it wasn't
19 needed at Southampton?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: No,
21 I didn't say that. It didn't have an
22 operational impact on Southampton Road. We
23 fixed the audio. That was what the intent
24 was, to move the piece to fix the audio while
25 Motorola came up with a final solution, which

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 is to bring in another replacement piece,
3 which is they flew in at their cost to resolve
4 the problem and ultimately get the system back
5 operational.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: That was
7 defective, that piece that came in --

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
9 Yes.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: -- also?

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
12 Well, no. The piece that came in was not
13 defective. The piece that we had was
14 defective. And Motorola can speak to the
15 issue of whether the piece that came in was
16 defective, but I believe from what I remember
17 from the weekend incident, it wasn't a
18 defective piece.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So the piece
20 at Southampton was defective and it was in
21 operation there?

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: And
23 they sent both the primary piece and the
24 back-up piece back to the factory for testing
25 and fixing.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So we had a
3 piece of equipment at Southampton that was
4 there in service that was defective?

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Are you
6 talking about Southampton Road?

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Southampton
8 Road.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: We
10 had a back-up piece that they moved down that
11 was up Southampton Road, and, again, I'm going
12 to have Motorola speak specifically to it, but
13 my understanding is the piece that they
14 brought down was because it was working and
15 not a defective piece up in Southampton. They
16 brought it down here to replace the defective
17 piece down here in City Hall. When they put
18 it in the system, it still did not resolve the
19 problem and that's why they didn't feel
20 comfortable and they decided to fly in, and we
21 agreed, that they ought to fly in a
22 replacement piece to replace that.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you,
24 Commissioner.

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 Sure.

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'm going
4 to ask this panel to take a seat. Unless the
5 Fire Department has something to add, it seems
6 like it's mainly a police issue we're dealing
7 with at this point. And if it comes up in the
8 course of -- I believe the two union
9 representatives, the presidents, are going to
10 be up next. If something comes up dealing
11 with fire, we can call you up. But I ask you
12 to stay here, and then I'll ask Commissioner
13 James to come back up after that with
14 Motorola.

15 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Deputy
16 Commissioner Ayers, did it affect the Fire
17 Department at all?

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS: We
19 did have some effect.

20 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You did have
21 some problems? Okay. We'll have you back.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS:
23 This past week.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay.

25 THE CLERK: I'd like to call on

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Robert Eddis, President of the Fraternal Order
3 of Police, Lodge No. 5, and David Kearny
4 representing the Local 22 Philadelphia Fire
5 Unions, Fire Fighters Union.

6 MR. EDDIS: Good afternoon,
7 Councilmen. How are you, sir?

8 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Pull that
9 mic in closer to you and identify yourself.

10 MR. EDDIS: Bob Eddis, Lodge 5.

11 MR. KEARNY: David Kearny,
12 Recording Secretary, Fire Fighters Union,
13 Local 22.

14 MR. WHEELER: Jim Wheeler,
15 Vice-President of Lodge 5.

16 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Do you want
17 to proceed, Mr. Eddis?

18 MR. EDDIS: Good afternoon,
19 gentlemen. We would like to thank you for
20 having these hearings.

21 I believe that some of the
22 discussions that have taken place, we've seen
23 that everybody is really truly interested in
24 resolving this problem. I'm not going to be
25 able to dance and give you rhetoric or some

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 kind of jargon that may be technological. I'm
3 just going to be able to give you what I hear
4 from the officers and the problem that we've
5 experienced.

6 When I hear March 25th and May 18th,
7 I find it very ironic, because these are the
8 only three issues that have been brought to
9 light. However, these problems have existed
10 for a long time. We actually started
11 implementing where we go out every single
12 week, myself, I ride in police cars just to
13 hear to see what the problem is.

14 A long time ago when I was a young
15 officer, we used to have a terminology that
16 they used to always quip: Use your radio,
17 don't use your gun. My question is, we don't
18 have that radio now. What should we use?

19 And I'm not trying to make light of
20 the issue, because on Saturday I had the
21 opportunity to be out there walking along with
22 the officers, and they are the same way.
23 Their job is not to understand the technology
24 of their equipment. It's just to have the
25 equipment there available to them.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 We've had meetings, I would probably
3 say, I would be underestimating if I would say
4 that there's been at least 15, 16 times we've
5 been down at our headquarters talking to our
6 command staff in regards to, What are we going
7 to do? We hear, Well, you know, it's new
8 technology, you don't embrace it.

9 We do embrace technology. We think
10 technology and the overall goal of this system
11 is fantastic. Any time we can bring all
12 emergency services together, we're all better
13 served. And I think we realized that
14 specifically after 9/11.

15 But the people on the street, the
16 ones that need to have the back-up -- and what
17 we did was, we put out a questionnaire,
18 because we've made every attempt and a lot of
19 times if it wasn't for the information we
20 received from our officers, we wouldn't
21 receive that information. So we don't always
22 have that give and take that everybody likes
23 to think exists, even though we've made an
24 attempt to have that.

25 And we put out a questionnaire this

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 week asking our officers in regards to the
3 problem so they can put it in their terms,
4 nothing fancy, no lawyer jargon, no exact
5 English.

6 Throughout the entire tour,
7 transmissions from officers to radio or radio
8 to officers were broken. This went on
9 constantly and required both all too often to
10 have to repeat their transmission radio, also
11 indicated officers were transmitting at the
12 same time and blame them for the problem.

13 This radio system is supposed to
14 prevent that problem. Radio only indicated
15 that transmissions were broken and officers
16 weren't being courteous by transmitting at the
17 same time. This radio system is the worst
18 change the department has made in my 23 years
19 of service, and that was signed from one of
20 the sergeants that's working out there on the
21 street.

22 We have gone out there and we have
23 tried everything we could to talk to our
24 officers to explain to them the significance.
25 And I know this may not be getting to the crux

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 of what the technical problem is, and I
3 apologize for that. I can't provide you that.
4 I can just let you know that from being out
5 there, the officers -- and you say, Well, what
6 is a small matter of time? What's a minimal
7 problem? Let's give you an example. I need
8 an assist officer at 4th and... That becomes
9 the question, 4th and where? If you're the
10 person that's calling out asking, that's not
11 insignificant.

12 The problem that occurred I believe
13 on the date of May 18th, one of our
14 families -- because we're also part of the
15 community, even though sometimes people like
16 to think we're separate. We are the
17 community.

18 On May 18th, if somebody picks up
19 that phone and calls for an emergency, what
20 response do they get back in return? There
21 was nothing available. The next day we had a
22 call downtown to find out. That night we were
23 notified and we called all of our districts in
24 regards to how the situation was going to be
25 able to be handled.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 I think a lot of times over the last
3 year and a half when I bring it to people's
4 attention, they become extremely annoyed, and
5 I think the reason why they become extremely
6 annoyed is because they've been involved in
7 the process from the very beginning. And I
8 understand the significance of believing in
9 something and doing everything I can to make
10 sure that that works out, but sometimes you
11 have to remove yourself from that and say,
12 What is the benefit to the officers on the
13 street? What's the benefit to the community?
14 And let's not mislead ourself by thinking that
15 these are the only three times that there was
16 problems out there.

17 On the one incident we heard there
18 was nobody hurt. Well, I made the mistake of
19 believing that. So I went out at that press
20 conference that we had on the day of May 19th
21 and I said, We were informed that no one was
22 hurt. On that afternoon, a young officer came
23 into me from the 39th District who had been
24 injured as a result of the assist officer.

25 And a triple assist, if anybody

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 knows anything about police officers, we do
3 everything we can not to call an assist. It's
4 almost like you can handle the situation. It
5 may be a little -- I don't know what the term
6 would be, but you'd like to feel as if you're
7 trained and you can handle most situations.

8 If it elevates to a triple assist,
9 there's a problem. If you can't get in,
10 there's a problem. If officers are coming in
11 to a scene when it's not being resumed -- how
12 many people have been hurt either going into
13 or going away from a scene? And that's where
14 our concern is right now.

15 We're not here to point fingers to
16 blame. We believe it was \$52 million that was
17 spent on this program. We talked to people
18 around the country and heard other places
19 where they said the system worked.

20 We know in the very beginning we had
21 the opportunity to work with Sergeant Masi and
22 Inspector Scott Small. They worked with us
23 fantastically. Not to put them in harm's way
24 within the department, but we were very upset
25 about that, because some of the stories that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 were coming in weren't being verified.

3 So that then itself became
4 third-party issues. Well, this one heard
5 this. And that's why we wanted to go out
6 ourselves and see.

7 The comfort level right now of the
8 Philadelphia police officer on the street is
9 one that was realized this weekend, because we
10 all said what would happen if this happened
11 during an emergency situation.

12 I think we're very fortunate the way
13 the Greek Picnic played out this year, but
14 what if it didn't? What if this would have
15 been one of the Greek Picnics from previous
16 years? And we can all say, Well, you're
17 making it the worst case scenario. Police
18 work is worst case scenario.

19 Any questions?

20 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Mr. Eddis,
21 one of the criticisms -- and I don't know if I
22 even want to use the word "criticisms." There
23 is an operational change from the way the
24 radio system used to work. For 20 years we
25 had, or even more, 30 years, the 400 megahertz

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 system where if an officer -- if there was
3 routine traffic going back and forth and there
4 was an emergency, the officer could overtalk
5 that transmission and a dispatcher or other
6 cars because of the way the receivers were
7 able to hear that.

8 One of the complaints I hear, and if
9 you could verify, that if there is an
10 emergency, that they can't get through because
11 the system is so designed not to permit them
12 to get through.

13 MR. EDDIS: Well, there is a
14 button that they can push. It's what's known
15 as an -- initially it was referred to as an
16 assist button. Because when the program first
17 came out, we were actually out doing roll
18 calls when they were starting the training
19 process of this, and a lot of the officers
20 themselves didn't always use the equipment
21 that was provided there to them, in all
22 fairness.

23 There was a comfort level of
24 reaching for it, and there was different
25 things, as the Commissioner stated, with the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 narcotics unit. That was resolved. But it
3 was changing the whole way that they were used
4 to doing it. And at that time, we made a
5 request and they also included into the
6 training in regards to officers having more
7 hands-on with an item prior to them going out
8 there.

9 But the actual hitting of the
10 equipment itself was handled differently than
11 it was in the past.

12 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But hitting
13 the emergency button tells radio that a
14 particular radio is in trouble, but it doesn't
15 tell them where that officer is, correct?

16 MR. EDDIS: I believe it gives
17 them a good indication of where that officer
18 is. That's my understanding.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: We'll talk
20 more to Motorola about that, but when, I
21 think, Commissioner Brennan and even maybe the
22 Managing Director indicated that there is -- I
23 haven't seen any resistance from the officers
24 to use the new system, but I have heard some
25 legitimate concerns, that the system is

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 sometimes cumbersome or difficult to use
3 during an emergency situation.

4 So I really need to understand what
5 that means, because I've been told that in an
6 emergency, I guess what I'm hearing is that
7 the emergency button is the only way to get
8 through, that if there is activity on that
9 radio or that system, that the officer can't
10 get through and say that, I'm in trouble and I
11 have an emergency.

12 MR. EDDIS: I agree with you.
13 And the other problem was, there was a lot of
14 dead spots also in the beginning. That was a
15 problem that a lot of the officers had out
16 there. Certain areas up in the 14th District,
17 there's a place called the Box, which is just
18 one of those things that lends itself to hard
19 communications.

20 If you don't mind, before you go to
21 the fire fighters, I would like to defer to
22 Jim Wheeler, only because from the beginning
23 when the meetings first started in regards to
24 what this system was going to be, Jim was both
25 the point person for Rich Costello and for

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 myself. So if you don't mind him making a few
3 comments and then I'll...

4 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:

5 Mr. Wheeler?

6 MR. WHEELER: Yes, sir. With
7 due respect to everyone that has spoken, we're
8 talking about a system that the officers on
9 the street have no faith in, and that's the
10 biggest problem. This weekend certainly
11 didn't help. We could suppose or create
12 scenarios that if it happened during Freedom
13 Week or Greek Picnic or some other events that
14 were maybe tenuous at best, it would have been
15 tragic. It didn't. We're grateful. Thank
16 God.

17 The problem is that I have an e-mail
18 here I'm just looking at, it's in my folder.
19 It's from June of '03 from an officer.

20 We've been working with the City
21 diligently, supporting them in every step of
22 the way, working with them. We've implemented
23 new training for our officers for the radios
24 to help, because some of the reasons given,
25 that it wasn't being implemented the way it

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 should be is because they weren't trained well
3 enough in how to use that. And we publicized
4 it, we worked on it, we preached on it. We've
5 done everything that we think necessary to be
6 a partner with the City in promoting this
7 system, because we believe in a good system.

8 It's gotten to the point now where
9 we can't wholeheartedly tell our members that
10 you've got a good radio system here. That's
11 where we're at. And it isn't three times.
12 The June of '03 e-mail is just another of many
13 of daily, weekly, monthly calls and e-mails to
14 us about garbled, can't hear, can't get
15 through, knocked off the air, bonked, boinked
16 or whatever the heck it is. And it's ongoing.

17 And I know they're working on it. I
18 know that there's good people here behind me
19 that are pulling their hair out probably
20 trying to get this thing straightened, but as
21 the good Councilman said earlier, how long is
22 too long and do we have to have a tragedy
23 before we really take this thing seriously?

24 It isn't something we can just say,
25 Well, this was a minimal incident. I've got a

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 folder here with all sorts of people calling
3 all the time. Bob has got people that he
4 rides with every week. And the first thing
5 out of their mouths, other than what's in the
6 new contract, is the radios. And it is, as
7 you, I think, were trying to allude to
8 earlier, cultural in the beginning. We tried
9 to work on that.

10 We miss our radios in the car
11 dearly. People of my age and experience, we
12 miss that, that safety blanket. But it's
13 something that we're evolving out of, and this
14 is probably a better concept for the future.
15 And we're working on it, educating our
16 officers, but it's got to work, and they have
17 to have faith in it, and they're not -- it's
18 just not happening.

19 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Can you
20 explain the difference between the old system
21 with the radio in the car and how this works
22 and how it's different?

23 MR. WHEELER: This is a totally
24 portable system. It's attached to you. It's
25 with you all the time.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Is it on
3 your shoulder?

4 MR. WHEELER: Yeah, it's on
5 your shoulder. And if you didn't have a
6 hand-held radio in a car or wagon years ago,
7 when you got out of the vehicle, you're on
8 your own.

9 So in that respect, I thought it was
10 a great move, but you always knew that your
11 radio in the car or the wagon worked and it
12 was alive, you could hear the --

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: That's a
14 big distinction.

15 MR. WHEELER: It is a
16 distinction and you did have that override
17 that you could hear somebody else in another
18 car calling even though two other people and
19 the dispatcher were talking. You could say,
20 No, no, no, he's at 4th and Girard. And that
21 availability isn't with this system and, you
22 know, okay. But if that was the only problem,
23 I think we'd all learn to live with it.

24 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I understood
25 that there was an issue with portable radio

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 batteries where an officer couldn't even get
3 through a tour of duty with one battery and
4 they didn't have spare batteries?

5 MR. WHEELER: We had officers
6 come to us. We'd be out on the street at
7 details and they'd show us that they had
8 batteries in their pockets. I mean, it got to
9 a point where everybody -- the batteries were
10 running out and everybody was afraid to go in
11 and get a new one. They'd get a new one, it
12 would be dead before they got back out to
13 where they were supposed to be. And I know
14 the City has addressed that with getting a new
15 version of the battery, but it makes you
16 wonder when they were sold that particular
17 product -- I was at the meetings. That
18 battery is supposed to last for over ten hours
19 on a full charge, and this is not what was
20 guaranteed, so to speak.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: And that's
22 part of the issue and faith in the system.

23 MR. WHEELER: Well, that's it.
24 If it isn't that, Bob mentioned that they had
25 the dead spots. Boy, the Police Department

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 and the technicians worked their tails off to
3 get those dead spots cleared up. They
4 adjusted the towers. They adjusted the dishes
5 and everything they did to correct that, and
6 they really were showing a lot of effort that
7 they wanted to get it right. That's why we
8 supported them so strongly, but right now it's
9 really hard.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The last
11 thing we need on police radio is to hear a
12 police officer saying, Can you hear me now.

13 MR. WHEELER: You said it.

14 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: The most
15 bothersome thing that I've heard from you two
16 gentlemen is that with a system like this that
17 clearly has some problems, and it isn't just
18 the three incidents that have been publicized,
19 that you are taking up the function of
20 management in getting input back from the
21 officers on the street who are actually using
22 this system as to how well it works, not just
23 when something is publicized and we read about
24 it in the Inquirer, Daily News or hear it on
25 the radio.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 It would seem to me that right from
3 the Commissioner's office on through every
4 other part of this responsibility from the
5 City administration side, we should be
6 spot-checking constantly with the men and
7 women that are front line and relaying these
8 problems to Motorola on a constant basis. And
9 I didn't hear any of that.

10 And I know the people are still in
11 the room and I'm going to ask some more, but
12 it seems to me that the union has a different
13 job in representing -- it shouldn't be
14 something that is a communication with
15 management issue. That's management's
16 responsibility. I'm glad you're doing it,
17 because it's bringing information forward and
18 everybody wants more information, but I'm just
19 wondering why the people that are e-mailing
20 you and probably worried about whether
21 somebody is going pick their name up are not
22 being solicited by the people that are
23 responsible for this system, this \$52 or \$60
24 million system.

25 I would think that Motorola would

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 want to know how this is affecting officers on
3 a day-to-day basis, because if I'm the city
4 out there looking at the next system and
5 Motorola is competing with somebody, it sounds
6 like Philadelphia is a place I'd want to check
7 to see what the progress is on some of the
8 issues that are in the 800 megahertz system.

9 MR. EDDIS: Councilman, may I
10 please respond to that?

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Sure.

12 MR. EDDIS: I think we're all
13 here for the same reason; that is, for truth,
14 and I would not feel comfortable sitting here
15 without responding to that, because in all
16 fairness, Motorola, along with the department,
17 have held probably so many meetings and the
18 department has reached out so many times to
19 legitimately say, Where are the problems,
20 whether it was at the University City, whether
21 it was the 35th District.

22 It's like we're finding a problem --
23 I point out poor Sergeant Masi. I mean, there
24 was times I'm talking to him 3 o'clock in the
25 morning.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 I don't think that's always the
3 case. I think --

4 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So they do
5 know?

6 MR. EDDIS: And I truly believe
7 in my heart that there is no one within the
8 Philadelphia Police Department that meant any
9 harm to anyone. I just think it was a matter
10 of wherein the problems were brought up so
11 many times, we brought the issue in regards to
12 the batteries very early on and we were told,
13 Well, maybe the officers aren't having them
14 charged right. We said, Well, that should be
15 then a bulletin explaining how the battery
16 should be rotated, rotated.

17 And then I had the advantage of
18 being a supervisor down in the subway and we
19 had major problems in the area of
20 communications in regards of what to do if a
21 radio went down. And these are things that we
22 tried to sit down and work side by side with
23 the administration in.

24 I think because of the newness of
25 the program trying to put a finger on it, I

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 think that everybody in this room is just as
3 frustrated as we are. I think as a result of
4 us being out there on the street, taking the
5 approach that we took to actually ride in the
6 cars, which we felt was our responsibility as
7 the representative agency of these officers,
8 it gave us the chance to see firsthand
9 something that Jimmy pointed out. As a result
10 of this, the confidence level -- and I think
11 when the system was put in, everybody thought
12 that it was what it was being sold to be, the
13 next best thing, because it was going to link
14 all technology. I think as the surprises came
15 up, I think that's where the frustration level
16 may have developed.

17 We said about the batteries. Until
18 May 18th, we never heard back that, Yeah,
19 you're not out of your mind, the battery has
20 been a problem.

21 So while we're out there, at times
22 we were saying to ourselves we're actually
23 becoming almost like the gatekeeper for the
24 department, exactly as you said. We seem to
25 be fulfilling a different role on which we

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 thought was our responsibility and not to
3 overvalue ourselves, and that was something
4 that we took serious in sitting down and
5 saying, How can we work this out, how can we
6 get this to a point where it can be
7 identified, we can look and we can know that
8 these people who are saying these complaints
9 exists. We're going out. They exist. There
10 was dead spots and it can be identified.

11 So, I mean, we knew -- and then I
12 think a lot of times the perception was, Well,
13 you want it the way it always was. See, I'm
14 different. I like change. I think change is
15 good. I think we have to move forward in this
16 day and age, and I hate to keep on throwing it
17 back to 9/11, but my thing is, as an elected
18 official representing my members, what level
19 of responsibility do I have if I don't put the
20 City on notice and say, We've come to you,
21 we've tried to work, we've tried to point out
22 these problems.

23 On May 18th we were never given an
24 answer of what actually caused the problem.
25 Over the weekend, minor. When I hear the term

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 "minor," it's almost like saying minor
3 disturbance, which is an officer's worst
4 nightmare. You don't know what you're walking
5 into.

6 And we're not trying to be out there
7 making things more than they are. We're just
8 saying that we feel that our officers need to
9 be able to have an environment that's
10 conducive for working. What level of threat
11 can be eliminated as a result of them knowing.
12 The greatest security in the world is knowing
13 when you call for a back-up, that the officers
14 are going to come in. It helps you keep the
15 system under control to make sure nothing gets
16 out of control.

17 If you're calling and you think
18 people are coming and you're standing there
19 and no one is coming and then officers -- I
20 went into the 19th District and a sergeant
21 grabbed me out of roll call and he said, I
22 want you to talk to this officer and explain
23 to him what you as president were doing last
24 night when he almost got killed out there.
25 And it was a radio situation. And the reality

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 was, when we were done, I was arguing with the
3 sergeant saying, What responsibility do you
4 have to make sure that the training is going
5 to your officers, too.

6 So we're not trying to pin one
7 against the other, and I don't think that was
8 the intent of anybody's hearings here today.
9 I think it's just a matter of saying, Do we
10 have a guarantee that this is not going to
11 happen again?

12 When the officers call me and we
13 asked the questionnaire, we never get
14 responses like this from our members. This
15 was only within like a four-hour period we
16 received these kind of things back from people
17 who normally are not complainers. I mean, you
18 have some people, no matter what, change
19 they're going to oppose all the way down the
20 line, and then we're out there and they always
21 tell me I'm shilling for the Commissioner.
22 That's what I get everywhere I go. Well,
23 you're just defending the Commissioner. I'm
24 like, No, no, you have to embrace this, you
25 have to see.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 But when they're pointing out and
3 then when you a situation like this weekend --
4 like I said earlier, without overdramatizing
5 it, you call for back-up, you're not coming or
6 they don't hear you, that's very frustrating.

7 So that, compounded with everything
8 else. So I apologize for not being able to
9 give you the technical reasons of all this. I
10 can just tell you from an officer's point of
11 view that they're frustrated out there and
12 they're asking us, as they did last night at
13 our meeting that was full, What are we doing,
14 where do we go, are we safe when we are out
15 there, what's the system?

16 After May 18th, we had a discussion.
17 The Deputy sat down and worked with us a
18 policy so officers now know what to do when
19 this type of thing breaks down, and we're very
20 appreciative of that. But we're just in fear,
21 when is the next major disaster. And we're
22 not looking to wait until afterwards. And I
23 hate to make the analogy, but I sure hope this
24 isn't like Tucker where you're going to wait
25 until afterwards and it was cheaper to pay for

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 the damage than it was to fix the problem.

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. I
4 want to get Engine 22 up here.

5 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I've talked
6 to officers. You talk about confidence in the
7 system. I've talked to officers that tell me
8 that they now carry a personal cell phone on
9 duty with them because they are concerned
10 about their safety.

11 MR. EDDIS: The night that I
12 was in the 24th District there was a stolen
13 auto and the officers couldn't get through
14 from each other, and they actually were able
15 to relay and make the apprehension as a result
16 of talking to each other through their own
17 cell phones. And I believe now the policy is
18 that the officers are not allowed to have
19 their cell phones out there, which is making
20 it even worse.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: That's
22 pretty sad. Oklahoma City was -- cell phone
23 was the only way anybody could talk to each
24 other, and that is what got all the
25 interoperability started nationwide.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 I said Engine 22. That's mine. But
3 Local 22. Sorry.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner
5 Ayers indicated that there were some problems
6 with the fire system. Could you tell us,
7 after you make your remarks, of what effect
8 this has had on the Fire Department?

9 MR. KEARNY: I'll start out by
10 saying we haven't had nearly the same amount
11 of complaints --

12 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Give your
13 name.

14 MR. KEARNY: I'm sorry. David
15 Kearny from Local 22.

16 We haven't had nearly the same
17 amount of complaints it seems as the police
18 officers have. I'm guessing it's because
19 operationally we function differently in the
20 way we use the radios.

21 I will say this: I'm a front-line
22 paramedic. I've been through the radio
23 training through the Fire Department, and the
24 first questions that were asked when we went
25 for our training is, Is this the same -- one

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 of the first questions that was asked when I
3 went for my training for the radio was, Is
4 this the same system New York has? And I'm
5 sure you're aware that they had many problems
6 with their radio system failing prior and post
7 9/11.

8 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: What was the
9 answer to your question?

10 MR. KEARNY: It is the same
11 type of radio system. It is an 800 megahertz
12 trunked radio system.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: But not of
14 this brand?

15 MR. KEARNY: The same Motorola.

16 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Motorola
17 system?

18 MR. KEARNY: It is a similar
19 system. So there's a lot of -- in the world
20 of the fire side, there's a lot more
21 communication between departments. Guys know
22 different departments. So we knew that they
23 had had problems up there.

24 We've had no similar communications
25 with the Fire Department such as the FOP has.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 There's been no formal communications that I
3 know of as far as problems with the radio.

4 The department has a form that we
5 can send in to list problems. What action
6 they've taken on that, I don't know. It's
7 not -- we've had some slightly larger concerns
8 in the last few months, as you well know. So
9 this has kind of taken a back seat to those
10 things.

11 I can tell you from many anecdotal
12 accounts and my own personal accounts that we
13 have the same problem with the bonking, the
14 radio traffic gets too much, you can't get
15 through and you might have to push the button,
16 and then if you push the button, sometimes
17 you're left having to explain, Well, why did
18 you push the button, it wasn't that big of an
19 emergency.

20 When you have multiple units
21 responding at one time, the way it happens in
22 our operation on calls, a lot of the time
23 you're constantly trying to get through on the
24 radio, trying to key the radio up, waiting
25 your turn in line to get through.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 I know that we have problems with
3 penetration into high-rise buildings. I've
4 been on many fire grounds where we had to
5 switch to what they call the analog band,
6 which doesn't use the repeater system, so that
7 the chiefs could talk to each other on
8 different floors of the building. The biggest
9 problem with that is, it totally defeats the
10 emergency call button.

11 Every fire fighter on every ladder
12 and engine has their own personal radio that
13 identifies them as the fire fighter with the
14 tip, the officer, the pump operator, the pack
15 man, and if one of those men goes down and are
16 operating on this analog band, we don't know.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Headquarters
18 is not in the loop?

19 MR. KEARNY: Headquarters
20 doesn't know. That's who would tell us. It
21 would come up on their console.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But because
23 you're using the analog, you're not being
24 monitored by fire headquarters, correct?

25 MR. KEARNY: Correct. But

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 that's not an everyday occurrence. It's
3 occasional and it's specific to certain
4 incidents. It's not on the same scale as the
5 police are having. However, there are
6 problems in the system.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner
8 Ayers again on his way to the last panel
9 indicated that there were problems this
10 weekend. Could you describe your knowledge of
11 what occurred and what effect it had on the
12 Fire Department?

13 MR. KEARNY: We received at the
14 union hall no complaints about the problem.
15 We did not receive any complaints this weekend
16 regarding that problem.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Maybe the
18 Commissioner knows something that we're not
19 aware of. We'll ask him that question. Thank
20 you.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you,
22 gentlemen.

23 Why don't we call Commissioner Ayers
24 up before we bring Commissioner Brennan back
25 with Motorola, just to follow up on that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 recent situation.

3 Commissioner, you just don't have to
4 limit yourself just to this past weekend, but
5 any comments you want to make about this
6 system is appropriate.

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS:
8 Well, basically the comments that I was going
9 to make was related to this weekend.

10 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS: It
12 was basically some intermittent transmissions,
13 which was spoken about earlier by Commissioner
14 Brennan.

15 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Who makes
16 the decision not to go to the back-up, to the
17 back-up system? I know it was made. Is it a
18 joint decision between Police and Fire when
19 you stick with the primary system and not the
20 back-up system?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS:
22 Mike, you can answer that.

23 MR. MOORE: Yes. As has been
24 stated, the City system is comprised of two
25 independent identical but interconnected type

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 of systems. We reside on System A, the Fire
3 Department.

4 If there was a total systemwide
5 failure on A, then we would make notification
6 where the system management, being Public
7 Property, would know about it and we would
8 then migrate to the B system. But that's a
9 natural path of migration that would take
10 place.

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So that is
12 your back-up system, is to migrate over to B?

13 MR. MOORE: That is the final
14 solution, yes.

15 In regards to this past weekend, the
16 unit that malfunctioned actually affected both
17 systems. The effect it had on Fire was very
18 minimal. On Saturday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00
19 p.m., we had maybe ten instances, and at
20 midnight Saturday going into Sunday from 12:00
21 to 1:00 a.m., we had about 11 or 12 instances.
22 And the effect itself was an audio fluctuation
23 in a transmission where the audio would drop
24 until a word or two would be clipped from a
25 transmission. To adjust, the dispatchers

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 would have to simply ask the unit to repeat
3 the transmission. That is the effect that
4 Commissioner Ayers was referring to as the
5 Fire Department being affected.

6 If I could in response to Dave from
7 Local 22's comments, the Fire Department since
8 going operational in October of '02 has
9 encouraged our members, our users, to report
10 any instances of reception problems or
11 diminished reception, coverage problems, and
12 that is in the form of a memorandum, which
13 Dave spoke to. That memorandum is forwarded
14 to the Fire Communication Center's Fire Survey
15 Unit where it's investigated, and if validated
16 or substantiated, then it's turned over to the
17 800 megahertz team, the management, the
18 Department of Public Property.

19 Since going online in October of
20 2002, I've received about approximately 30
21 reports of reception issues. In most cases
22 when investigated, these turn out to be
23 user-related issues or training issues. For
24 instance, the bonk. The bonk indicates a talk
25 group busy, which means someone else is

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 talking. The new system is intelligent enough
3 where it is telling the user that someone else
4 is talking.

5 In the old system that we used,
6 there were such things as busies. The fact of
7 the matter is, you didn't know you were being
8 busied out. You just talked and the system
9 didn't notify you of that.

10 When you are out of range with the
11 new system, the system will give you a steady
12 tone. In the old system, you could be out of
13 range very easily and not know it.

14 So some of these effects that are
15 being described as nuisances or dangers are
16 things that did, in fact, exist and probably
17 existed to a much larger degree in the old
18 system, but the user simply wasn't aware of
19 it.

20 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you
21 comment on the issue of coverage where the
22 fire operations are switching over to an
23 analog system? Are you aware that they're
24 required to do that or is it an issue -- fire
25 fighting is a bit different than the rest of

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 the world where you get to a location, you
3 can't monitor or know wherever you're going to
4 have coverage issues. So I guess the
5 alternative when there is no digital coverage
6 is to switch to the -- I guess it's a duplex
7 system or simplex system?

8 MR. MOORE: Exactly. It's a
9 conventional duplex, radio to radio,
10 walkie-talkie, yes, sir.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So that's
12 good supervision in the field, because if
13 you're not able to communicate on your primary
14 system, that's your only alternative, to go to
15 the duplex system, but I would think that when
16 they encounter that kind of an issue, that it
17 is reported so you can address that specific
18 geographic area of why you're not getting
19 penetration in that particular location.

20 MR. MOORE: You're exactly
21 correct, Councilman. And we designed Fire's
22 system due to the nature of the business we
23 do. We do a lot more operational-type things
24 inside buildings, and if due to the physical
25 characteristics of the building, it's densely

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 constructed, the systemwide channel may not be
3 effective. So we equipped our system with
4 three analog radio-to-radio simplex channels.

5 Now, we use a systemwide channel to
6 do fire ground communications because of the
7 emergency activation feature. We feel that's
8 important. But if upon arrival on a fire
9 ground it is determined that there is signal
10 degradation to the point of negative --
11 there's a negative effect on communications,
12 then the Incident Commander has the latitude
13 to switch the internal communications on the
14 fire ground over to an analog channel.

15 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I understand
16 there's technology that can actually be
17 brought to a scene that has poor coverage that
18 could enhance the signal, like a suit case.
19 Is there technology like that that you could
20 have in the event you ran into -- let's say
21 you had a major incident and you had no
22 Citywide coverage. Is there a portable device
23 that could be brought to the scene to help
24 correct the coverage issue?

25 MR. MOORE: That has been

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 explored. We have asked that question, okay,
3 and it's one that we have not gotten an answer
4 back as of yet.

5 We've had some diminished receptions
6 at at least two high-rise fires that I could
7 think of and we brought the question of the
8 high-rise fire to the City's team and the
9 City's consultant, radio engineering
10 consultant, RCC.

11 I don't know if there's a digital
12 repeater portable radio that is on the market
13 yet, but we have raised the question of
14 diminished reception in high-rises and asked
15 for a response or a solution.

16 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Great.
17 Thank you very much.

18 Councilman O'Neill?

19 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: That's
20 all.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you.

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS: I
23 wanted to add one other thing to the simplex
24 channel. When we actually switch on the fire
25 ground to that channel, one of the things that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 happens as far as the emergency button is that
3 it is not completely disabled. One of the
4 instructions that go along with that order
5 from the Incident Commander is that we will
6 have the aide monitoring the simplex channel,
7 because if that button is pressed, we still
8 get the readout, we still know exactly which
9 radio was affected, just to let you know.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO:

11 Commissioner, I appreciate that, but for the
12 investment that this City made, I want to make
13 sure that our fire fighters have the ultimate
14 maximum protection. I understand that there
15 are issues of coverage, but, again, we want
16 this system to work the way it was designed.
17 And, again, if we have coverage issues, we
18 really need to address them, but it's not
19 acceptable that we can't communicate on a
20 Citywide digital frequency in a high-rise
21 building, especially when we're in the upper
22 floors.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER AYERS:

24 Okay. I appreciate that.

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Thank you,

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 sir.

3 MR. MOORE: Thank you.

4 THE CLERK: The next panel --

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Bring Mr.
6 Brennan back with --

7 THE CLERK: Do you want them
8 all back together?

9 John McFadden from Motorola, will
10 you please approach the table as well.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: If there's
12 anyone else on your team that you need to
13 bring, bring them, please.

14 MR. MCFADDEN: Good afternoon,
15 Councilmen. I welcome the opportunity to
16 present Motorola's participation with the City
17 system today.

18 With me I have my Engineering
19 Manager, Mary Beth Krantz. She's the head of
20 engineering for the Motorola Northern
21 Division. Also with me I have the Project
22 Manager for the Philadelphia project, Melissa
23 Hanlon. Melissa has been involved in this
24 project for almost six years.

25 At this current time, there are four

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 people that are dedicated, that are assigned
3 full time to the City of Philadelphia to
4 monitor the system. They're technicians that
5 are basically on call for this system as a
6 system manager.

7 One of the things I think I'd like
8 to say at this time is that there is in
9 Chicago a monitoring center. It's like a war
10 room. And in that monitoring center, they're
11 watching the Philadelphia system
12 electronically. They can literally -- all
13 your sites are being monitored for alarms, any
14 critical path, like a microwave path. So
15 people are sitting there and when an alarm
16 goes off, that means there's something
17 happening in your system and they can
18 literally see that.

19 A lot of times what happens is, they
20 see something, an alarm goes off, we dispatch
21 technicians and the modification is made and
22 nobody even sees that that happened. It's
23 almost what we would consider to be normal
24 maintenance.

25 In this particular incident, the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 incidents that we're discussing today, we put
3 most of the power of the Northern Division
4 engineering resources into this and all our
5 resources out of our headquarters in Chicago.
6 We have the architects that originally
7 designed this system involved in
8 troubleshooting this. We have our software
9 engineers. We brought people out here from
10 our factory to look at the system as it
11 stands.

12 We have also put together in our lab
13 a system that looks just like your system, and
14 the reason we did that is, we want to test it
15 under stress in a lab.

16 One of the issues I thought earlier
17 I heard was that why is this taking four
18 months. One of the things we want to do in a
19 live system is, it's a live system. You
20 cannot put a live system -- we do not want to
21 put a live system under stress. So in our
22 laboratories, we have your system set up. We
23 are loading the computer up and stressing it
24 constantly for the last month. We got another
25 at least month worth of doing that to see if

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 we can duplicate some of the issues that we
3 saw here.

4 That's the resources that we have
5 brought to this account. We're extremely
6 concerned as a company about the situation in
7 Philadelphia and we want to make sure that
8 this customer is served extremely well. And I
9 believe we have put in the resources to do
10 that.

11 I brought my Engineering Manager and
12 my Project Manager here today so we can answer
13 your questions, and I'll be happy to take any
14 questions.

15 MR. RIZZO: Mr. McFadden -- go
16 ahead.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Real
18 quick, Councilman.

19 In your written testimony you make
20 several references to the May 18th situation.
21 Maybe I'm reading too quickly, but I don't see
22 any references to the March 25th and --

23 MR. MCFADDEN: There were a
24 couple instances I did not address in the
25 testimony. Specifically, we addressed the May

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 18th, but we intend to answer any questions
3 about any incidents that you'd like to talk
4 about.

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: The March
6 issue is over a month older than the -- or two
7 months older almost than the May issue, and in
8 terms of time, I mean, at some point it's
9 extremely long. I don't know where the line
10 is that you draw on how long is it taking to
11 fix this. But the March incident is four
12 months old and yet there's no sign-off by
13 Motorola that we're ready to go back to the
14 Announcement Group function, and it seems to
15 me to be a key part of the whole system.

16 MR. MCFADDEN: We do have a
17 modification that we believe corrects that
18 problem. We've tested the modification in our
19 lab in Chicago. The issue really is when do
20 we want to put this live on the system so that
21 the Police Department and everybody involved
22 in the City is comfortable that we do that.
23 We're suggesting that we do that on a quiet
24 day at 4:00 in the morning, that we bring this
25 in and we turn it on and we stress it.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 We do not want to do this at any
3 time that there is even the remotest potential
4 that something will happen. So there's a
5 caution both from the City side and our side
6 on when exactly do we bring this back up. And
7 we are not interested in having any other
8 events of this type. So that's really -- it's
9 not a delay that we don't know what the issue
10 is. It's more of a case do we want to stress
11 the system and are we very, very, very
12 comfortable that when we do this, that we
13 don't have another incident.

14 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So your
15 solution has been in place, your prepared
16 solution?

17 MR. McFADDEN: Yes.

18 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: It's just
19 a matter of -- I don't want to say pull the
20 trigger, not with this crowd here, but
21 actually making it real and --

22 MR. McFADDEN: Going live.

23 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: And having
24 it tested in the real world.

25 MR. McFADDEN: Yeah, in the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 real world. I tried to explain to you, the
3 difficulty -- this is, as you're very well
4 aware, a public safety system. This is not
5 something you can -- it's not like Verizon can
6 shut you down for an hour and do something and
7 change some software. This thing is live.
8 It's running every day.

9 It's an area of expertise that we
10 have. We know how to manage and maintain
11 these police systems, and you cannot do
12 anything that puts the system at risk
13 inadvertently. So that is the caution. It's
14 not a case that we don't know what we need to
15 do.

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: How long
17 have you had this ready to go given the right
18 circumstances, the 4:00 in the morning call
19 since March 25th?

20 MR. MCFADDEN: I'll ask Melissa
21 that.

22 MS. HANLON: Actually, the
23 modification that we identified was put in
24 place approximately the first week of April,
25 and we did demonstrate to the City, to the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Police Department that the Announcement Group
3 worked, but as Mr. McFadden said, it has not
4 been stress-tested and until it has been
5 stress-tested with the City and the Police
6 Department, they do not feel comfortable using
7 it in a triple assist situation.

8 Our goal is to test this out with
9 the City at the appropriate time, and that
10 time has not been selected yet.

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So this
12 isn't a problem for Motorola at this point.
13 Motorola is trying to fix it, thinks they've
14 got the solution. At some point the Police
15 Department has to stress-test this. And if
16 the solution that Motorola recommends that's
17 going to work has been in place since the
18 first week in April, our problem isn't with
19 Motorola, our questions aren't for Motorola.

20 MR. MCFADDEN: Well, there's
21 another --

22 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Our
23 questions are for the City side. What is
24 taking so long if this is critical to our most
25 critical police radio function, the triple

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 assist or the assist officer in the first
3 place?

4 Mr. James, could you take a shot at
5 that?

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
7 I'll try to answer your question, Councilman.

8 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Because
9 you got to do it, unless you're just going to
10 say \$60 million, forget the most important
11 function of our most important function, we're
12 not going to ever use it.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: No,
14 I'm not saying that.

15 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: At some
16 point you got to try it.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES:
18 Yes, we do. And I think we were planning to
19 try it. We're taking the lead from the Police
20 Department, because it's basically going to
21 impact their operations, and to the point
22 where they were comfortable that this
23 Announcement Group was changed, that
24 Motorola's planning was going to work, we were
25 waiting for the Police Department to really be

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 in a position, along with us, to be able to
3 tell Motorola go ahead and do that, and before
4 we had -- it did take some time -- the May
5 incident occurred.

6 Since the May incident occurred, not
7 clear exactly if we resolved that problem, it
8 didn't make sense for us to now add another
9 component back into the system, because we
10 need to find out what happened on the May 18th
11 more than we do about the March 25th incident.

12 So we have not asked them to change
13 anything because we want to try to test what
14 we understand to be the current environment
15 and which caused the incident on the 18th.

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Do you
17 know why -- the police are here, so I can ask
18 them, but do you know why from the first week
19 in April we hadn't tested this until the third
20 week in May when Situation 2 happened when
21 Motorola wasn't going to change the
22 recommendation? This was what they felt was
23 going to work. Why wouldn't it have been
24 tested within a very short period of time or
25 put under stress, or whatever the proper

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 terminology is? Why four, five weeks when it
3 affects such an important part of our public
4 safety system?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: I
6 can't answer that question for you.

7 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Can I ask
8 Commissioner Brennan on that one? That to me
9 is a key issue, unless I'm not understanding
10 some of the factual parts of this.

11 Commissioner --

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
13 No. I understand the question.

14 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I want to
15 make sure that I'm clear on the record.

16 You have a problem with the
17 Announcement Group function that affects your
18 triple assist situation. It's been put into
19 the system for that. It has a separate
20 channel. All that has been planned. It
21 breaks down in March on the 25th. A week
22 later or so Motorola says, You're going to
23 have to stress-test this, but we think this is
24 going to work. These are the same people that
25 we are relying on the whole system for for

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 upwards of many millions of dollars. And at
3 some point, we have to do this 4 o'clock in
4 the morning thing.

5 What would take us even to the end
6 of April, let alone May 18th, not to have done
7 it? What would have prevented us from doing
8 it when it's so important to have it -- and we
9 got to do it sometime or we're just going to
10 forget about it, and I hope we're not going to
11 forget about it based on how important it's
12 been explained, how important this function
13 is.

14 Could you explain why just the
15 window between the first week in April and May
16 18th? I can understand Mr. James saying, Now
17 we got this other problem and, God, you
18 already got one, you don't want to put too
19 much in this pot. But we only had one in the
20 pot up to May 18th. Could you explain that
21 over-a-month situation where we didn't
22 stress-test it?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
24 Councilman, after the March 25th incident we
25 were extremely wary, even though Motorola told

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 us that they had fixed it. And really it was
3 my decision, mine alone, not to use that
4 function again, despite Motorola's assurances
5 that it would work, until it was
6 stress-tested. That was mine and mine alone.

7 That test was actually scheduled for
8 May 20th. May 20th in the early morning
9 hours, just as you said, that's when we do
10 this, like 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 in the morning.
11 We had that test scheduled and then May 18th
12 happened.

13 So when May 18th happened, that sort
14 of made us step back, because we weren't sure
15 now at this point are these problems somehow
16 related.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I
18 understand after May 18th. I understand.
19 Commissioner James explained that very well.

20 You were just hesitant to even rely
21 on Motorola's recommendation that this is
22 going to work?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
24 Motorola said it would work, but --

25 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: This is

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 the first week in April situation.

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
4 Right. Except we were just really concerned
5 what would happen if it didn't work.

6 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But what
7 was it that changed from the first week in
8 April when you weren't comfortable testing it
9 and the scheduling it for May 20th decision?
10 So there was an initial decision not to do it
11 or not to do it yet. Motorola is not changing
12 anything. They've already made their
13 recommendation.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
15 Right.

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: What was
17 it that gave you the confidence to stress-test
18 it on the 20th, even though you never got to
19 do that?

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
21 It sounds like a long time, but when we test
22 this, as Mr. McFadden said, we test it live.
23 In every other computer system that I have,
24 there's always a test side. If you blow
25 something up, it really doesn't matter.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 In this case, there's no test
3 system. It's live.

4 In order to test a system of this
5 magnitude, there's a lot of resources that
6 have to be brought in and coordinated. It
7 doesn't happen overnight and it doesn't happen
8 if we're not comfortable.

9 For example, we want to do something
10 right now. We've postponed it three times
11 because we're not comfortable that we have the
12 resources in place to do it. And we are at
13 the point now that if we're not comfortable,
14 we always put it off.

15 So I'll tell you, I know it seems
16 like a long time.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Could you
18 describe the resources that are needed?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
20 think probably Motorola can describe better,
21 because I see what happens on my end in radio.
22 In other words, I have the radio people there,
23 but I know they have people, not only on site,
24 but they have people off site at different
25 places in case something should happen.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So what
3 would be the lead time, Commissioner? If your
4 schedule is for May 20th, which was cancelled,
5 I understand that, but what would have been
6 the lead time when you would have said, Okay,
7 Motorola, ready to test this? What would that
8 time frame have been; in other words, the lead
9 time before May 20th that you would have
10 needed?

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
12 would say, and I think Motorola can probably
13 tell you, we did have other things going on at
14 this time besides that. For example, I think
15 there was the training. We had a lot of
16 training that was going on in the middle of
17 this that we didn't want to interrupt, because
18 we had significant resources with dispatcher
19 training. There's a lot that the dispatchers
20 had to know about the back-up systems. That
21 was all going on between March 25th and May
22 20th, and we didn't want to interrupt that
23 either.

24 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But you
25 said initially you weren't comfortable with

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 even a live test.

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
4 Right.

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So at what
6 point did you get comfortable enough to
7 schedule it and how much lead time did you
8 need once you got comfortable?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
10 I'd like to tell you, it was probably -- I
11 probably told Motorola that we wanted to test
12 it and it probably took us a couple weeks to
13 bring that all in, and that's probably what
14 led up to the May 20th date. I actually can't
15 remember back to then.

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But it
17 took you a while to get comfortable with even
18 the idea of putting it under stress?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
20 Yeah, it did. And to be honest with you, I
21 know that you understand that this is an
22 important thing, but we kind of felt and we
23 were comfortable that we had a work-around
24 that was effective and that worked fine, so we
25 did not feel that this is like a number one

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 priority. We did not tell Motorola drop
3 everything and do this, because they do what
4 we tell them. If we had told them drop
5 everything and we want this fixed right now,
6 they would have done it. We didn't tell them
7 to do that, because we felt we had a
8 comfortable work-around with the Multi-Select.
9 The Multi-Select is working fine. So we were
10 kind of comfortable that that gets us around
11 the problem until we are comfortable enough to
12 get this in and working.

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: You say
14 it's working fine. It doesn't mean it's
15 working as well as the -- what's that, the
16 Announcement Group function.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
18 The Announcement Group is the only thing that
19 we can have that we could talk to the whole
20 City at one time.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So a lot
22 of this is terminology, what is fine and what
23 is optimal. Fine is more like okay.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
25 There's no doubt the Announcement Group is

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 optimal.

3 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Optimal is
4 more like the best.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
6 There's no doubt that the Announcement Group
7 for when we have to talk to the City is the
8 best way for us to do it.

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. I'm
10 finished.

11 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You talk
12 about loading the system. You're talking
13 about 15 officers on the street at the same
14 time able to talk back to police radio, 15
15 channels, correct, Commissioner?

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
17 There's really 14. One channel is a control
18 channel and 14 are opened up.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: It's not
20 really a fancy test. You're talking about
21 having 15 people try to communicate at one
22 time to police radio and you test the system,
23 right?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
25 No. Actually, if it was only 15 people, we

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 could do that ourselves. And, actually,
3 Motorola did that.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: But if you
5 told every police officer in the street on a
6 tour of duty to key your radio, you'd be,
7 what, 400 plus units trying to come in to
8 police radio, and that's the test, right?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
10 That's exactly what I want. We actually
11 tested the system, Motorola and our people.
12 We actually got, I think, 10 or 15 radios and
13 we come in and we couldn't do the stress, and
14 I told them I didn't think that was a fair
15 test. I want to do it with the cops on the
16 street live. And we actually did one. We
17 told all the cops on the street start keying
18 your radio like it's a triple assist.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: And I would
20 assume that Motorola could develop a way to
21 abort any significant crash of the system
22 during that stress of the system?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
24 That's why it's important that everybody be in
25 place, in case the system does have a fault,

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 is that they have everybody in place to make
3 sure that we can recover very quickly.

4 Actually, I have been pushing very
5 strongly to try to fail the system. They are
6 less -- they are more reluctant to do that.
7 It has been my experience with other computer
8 systems you try to make them fail. And I
9 think that we may push them to the point where
10 we want to try to make it fail, and in order
11 to do that, I need all those 400 officers to
12 help me.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Okay.
14 Commissioner, I appreciate that. I want to go
15 back to Mr. McFadden.

16 Mr. McFadden, how many 800 megahertz
17 radio systems do you have in public safety? I
18 know that there are utility companies that use
19 them. Let's just talk about public safety
20 now. How many systems do you have in service?

21 MR. McFADDEN: Around the
22 country, hundreds.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: How many?

24 MR. McFADDEN: I don't know
25 exactly. Just from this location,

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Philadelphia, Montgomery County, State of
3 Delaware, all the counties surrounding
4 Washington, DC, Washington itself and then
5 down to the south, most of Florida. I don't
6 have the exact, but it's hundreds, because
7 we've been selling these probably now for at
8 least ten years.

9 The system the City has is similar
10 to ones we've been selling for ten years.
11 There's been changes in software, but
12 basically they're out there.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: One thing I
14 know about technology is, you can relate it to
15 a problem with a motor vehicle, that you call
16 the technician and you tell him that it's
17 doing this and they'll say, Oh, yeah, you need
18 to get a new widget and it will fix it.

19 Have you ever experienced this
20 condition in any of your public safety
21 systems?

22 MR. McFADDEN: This
23 particular -- which condition? Are we talking
24 about the one on the 18th?

25 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Let's talk

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 about all three of them.

3 MR. McFADDEN: I would say the
4 one on the 18th, the fact that the channels
5 didn't switch over where you have 15 channels
6 and when the computer switched over, the
7 channels didn't follow, only eight followed,
8 we haven't seen that anywhere else. That was
9 the reason for setting up the lab in Chicago,
10 to try and duplicate that particular incident.
11 So that one was unique.

12 I can't address every single issue
13 around the country, but I'm sure there's been
14 situations where -- that's why you have a
15 maintenance contract, that's why you monitor
16 the systems, to see that -- electronic parts
17 do wear out, they do get old and they do have
18 issues occasionally.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: The analogy
20 that I just used when somebody said to one of
21 your lead technicians, This is what happened,
22 did somebody say, Yeah, this particular part
23 failed, because we saw the same thing happen
24 in Detroit?

25 MR. McFADDEN: I'm sure that

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 happens every day at our monitoring center
3 where something happens and say, All right,
4 we've seen that before, I know exactly what it
5 is. It's this, this and this. And that's
6 when we have spare parts. We have a
7 recommended list of spare parts. These are
8 things that could possibly weaken.

9 We have a rather extensive way of
10 monitoring the systems and what parts are
11 used, because if something starts showing up
12 with some regularity, then we have to go
13 address the vendor we get the part from, that
14 if this part seems to be having problems, then
15 there's something wrong with our quality
16 control and maybe their quality. So we either
17 change vendors or we get them to fix whatever
18 it is we see.

19 So there is a rather complex system
20 of monitoring parts, because parts are a cost
21 to a system. So if we've got something that
22 looks like it's having a problem all the time,
23 we want it out of our systems for a lot of
24 reasons, but because it's public safety, we
25 cannot have that happening with any

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 regularity. So if there's something we see,
3 we change it right away.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: I'm sure you
5 want to comment on some of the testimony that
6 you heard here today.

7 MR. McFADDEN: Yes, I can.

8 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Just to --

9 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Sure.

10 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
11 Specifically, you mentioned the 18th, that
12 that was unique where the channels were
13 dropped. How about the March 25th incident?

14 MR. McFADDEN: The March 25th,
15 it looks like a software issue. I don't think
16 it's that unusual to have software issues in
17 systems that now have moved away from the
18 conventional technology of old into the
19 computer world. So software issues are --
20 over the years, yeah, they appear.

21 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: But have
22 you had that particular problem where it's a
23 Citywide announcement jamming?

24 MR. McFADDEN: I'm not sure.
25 I'd have to find out for you. That particular

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 problem? Because when I said we have hundreds
3 of these systems, many cities configure them
4 based on how they want to operate. The City
5 of Baltimore, as an example, is configured,
6 I'm sure, differently than the City of
7 Philadelphia. The City of Philadelphia is
8 bigger. It probably has more incidents,
9 probably has more fires.

10 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: You're not
11 aware of a specific incident in another city
12 that's like this?

13 MR. McFADDEN: No, but I
14 wouldn't want to say that there's never a
15 software issue someplace. There's always
16 software issues.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'm not
18 speaking about software.

19 MR. McFADDEN: Specifically,
20 no, that I'm aware of today, but I can
21 certainly double-check that for you.

22 COUNCILMAN RIZZIO: What was the
23 problem with the design of the system that
24 we're discussing right now, the Citywide alert
25 system? What is the problem with that and

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 what are you doing -- in other words, what was
3 designed improperly out of the gate?

4 MR. McFADDEN: I don't think it
5 was designed improperly. What happens in
6 computer systems is -- and maybe I should have
7 one of our engineers answer this question
8 rather than me.

9 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Please. In
10 other words, what I want to know is what went
11 wrong with the initial --

12 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: What
13 needed to be modified.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Right.

15 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: There's a
16 modification out there, I know that.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: What
18 happened with the initial design?

19 MR. McFADDEN: This is Mary
20 Beth. She's our Engineering Manager.

21 MS. KRANTZ: Yes.
22 Specifically, with regard to some of our
23 features, that feature is set up in more than
24 one piece of equipment. The radio actually
25 has the Announcement Group feature in it. The

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 dispatcher has it in it. It also resides
3 within our main controller.

4 There are different parameters that
5 you can set in each of those devices, and you
6 have to reach the optimal choices of all those
7 parameters. We changed one of those
8 parameters for the Philadelphia system, which
9 we think is going to alleviate the issue going
10 forward.

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: So the
12 parameters may not have been set as well as
13 they could have been?

14 MS. KRANTZ: They may not have
15 been optimal for this City's usage, yes.

16 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: So --

17 MR. MCFADDEN: I don't know if
18 that was -- I guess all the devices have that
19 piece of software in it, and I think when all
20 the devices start sending information into the
21 main computer, that it has a tendency to
22 almost start overloading it away. I mean,
23 that's maybe a simpler way of explaining that.

24 The computer then sees an awful lot
25 of signals coming in from multiple places and

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 it starts loading the cue, basically starts
3 getting loaded, loaded, loaded.

4 The reason you have back-up and
5 back-up computers is just for that, for the
6 incident that something like that happens and
7 now the thing automatically switches because
8 now I've got too much stuff stacked up in this
9 first computer. It goes to the second one and
10 I start fresh with fresh information.

11 So maybe that's probably a layman's
12 description of what was happening.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: That's good.
14 I watch this whole process very carefully,
15 because I have a real interest in our public
16 safety communications.

17 I heard you say something earlier
18 that got my attention, or someone said it. I
19 believe it was you. I'm not sure. This is
20 not your typical Motorola 800 trunking radio
21 system installation here in the City of
22 Philadelphia. We have a tendency to do that
23 in this City. We can't even buy a trash truck
24 that resembles the rest of the world. We have
25 to have a Philadelphia design on almost

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 everything we do here.

3 Is the design that you were handed
4 to build and install so complicated or so
5 unique that it's creating some of these
6 problems?

7 MR. MCFADDEN: No, I don't
8 believe that. I think the designs for these
9 systems in Philadelphia is typical of a police
10 environment, that there is procedures,
11 operational procedures, in place. They're how
12 you manage your police force, and every city
13 manages them the same, but a little bit
14 differently. That really drives how you
15 configure your police radio system, how you
16 manage your officers, how you respond to an
17 assist officer in a city, how you do all those
18 things.

19 Every city wants a certain amount of
20 redundancy. In the City of Philadelphia, you
21 actually have five levels of redundancy. We
22 do not have very many systems that have five
23 levels of redundancy. That's very good.
24 There are cities that we don't think possibly
25 have enough redundancy, but Philadelphia has

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 five levels.

3 So that's the difference. I don't
4 think the system was overengineered. I think
5 it's driven by how you originally set up, how
6 the city is set up and how the patterns of
7 operation. So I wouldn't say that somebody
8 was trying to do something crazy.

9 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But someone
10 did mention earlier that some of the things
11 that this package has is kind of different
12 than the norm.

13 MR. McFADDEN: Well, I wouldn't
14 call it the norm. The basic system is the
15 same. Everybody puts their own kind of
16 configuration in.

17 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Could you
18 explain the redundancy levels, levels of
19 redundancy, why it's better to have more?

20 MR. McFADDEN: Well, when
21 something terrible happens, that's when you
22 really need all this redundancy that you've
23 got built into this system. The fact that the
24 computer dumped over -- overloaded and dumped
25 over into a back-up, it's great the back-up

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2 was there. You have a system if something
3 really terrible happened, you could go to that
4 police back-up, then you could go to the fire,
5 to the fire back-up, and the last stop is
6 something that's built into all our systems,
7 it's called Fail Soft, which means if all the
8 computers fail, your officers can still talk
9 the way they used to talk 20 years ago.

10 So it's just a matter of how much
11 redundancy a city can afford, and with the
12 change -- with the world that's changed the
13 way it has, a lot of cities are looking now at
14 what they have and how they're backed up and
15 how they interoperate.

16 You had asked me earlier about do I
17 have -- the only comment I had about the
18 testimony was that I was very involved in New
19 York City. I understand their systems in
20 depth, that the people that were working with
21 New York for the last ten years were people on
22 my team.

23 They do not have an 800 megahertz
24 system in the police and fire in New York
25 City. In fact, what they have is what you

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 used to have. The Fire Department in New York
3 City had a high-band radio system like you
4 used to have with two or three channels and
5 that's it.

6 So that's the only piece of
7 testimony that I'd like to comment on, that we
8 were kind of -- I think there's a lot of
9 misinformation, because New York City does
10 have a police UHF system -- a VHS system for
11 fire, they do have a 800 megahertz system.
12 It's for public, but what you would call
13 public property.

14 So I just really wanted to correct
15 that. See, they had what you had and they're
16 trying to buy what you have, I guess is
17 probably -- so I think you're a little ahead
18 of the game in that regard as far as
19 redundancy and as far as coverage and as far
20 as being able to communicate and identify
21 officers that have the ID that you have in
22 this system.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Could you
24 please -- and, again, we've been at this for a
25 while now. Could you just possibly discuss

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 some of the operational aspects of your system
3 that you heard here today, about some of the
4 complaints from the officers about coverage,
5 about the fact that -- how simply to describe
6 it is if there's an officer in trouble and
7 they don't want to push the panic button and
8 you hear that there's some criticism heading
9 their way if they use that feature. Is it --
10 and, again, you're right, we had a 400
11 megahertz radio system that worked very well
12 and I think, matter of fact, there are
13 probably some cities that wish, maybe New
14 York, that they had our old 400 meg system
15 that was very, very effective where our
16 officers could hear each other. I think they
17 called them voting receivers, where they would
18 be able to hear each other's conversations
19 back and forth, and I believe they can still
20 hear that today.

21 And I agree that there is an
22 adjustment in coming to this new technology,
23 and I think that one of the points that I
24 thought was good that the Fire Department
25 made, that maybe we didn't know when we were

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 using the old system that we were having some
3 of the coverage issues or we were out of range
4 or whatever. And this system is better, that
5 it makes us aware of every little issue, like
6 the fact that you can't get through. You
7 didn't know it on the old system.

8 But could you talk about, just for a
9 minute, some of the complaints that we're
10 getting? Again, this is one of the hottest
11 issues that we have had. Is this typical when
12 there's a transition -- I'm asking this of
13 Motorola -- to one of your systems, the
14 complaints that we're getting from the field?
15 Is that also occurring in other cities that
16 you have your systems?

17 MR. MCFADDEN: I would say when
18 we move from the old technology, the
19 conventional technology, to the trunk
20 technology -- and, by the way, the FCC is
21 going to pretty much mandate in the next
22 couple of years anyway that you move to
23 digital, because they're not going to allow
24 the building of any other gear that's not
25 digital I think in 2008. So everybody is

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 going to these digital platforms.

3 What has happened -- this is not
4 unique. Any system that's had an old
5 conventional system, there was always a
6 feeling of comfort by the -- and I won't speak
7 of Philadelphia officers, but just around the
8 country, of the fact that, Yeah, I know
9 somebody is already talking, but I'm going to
10 start talking over him and I'm going to keep
11 pressing this thing and hope that I blast them
12 off the air. And that gives people the sense
13 that at least I'm doing something, even though
14 in fact what they were many times doing is
15 actually interfering with maybe another
16 critical conversation going on over here.

17 So there's always been the feeling
18 of officers when you switch to the new
19 technology, that at least in the old one I
20 could keep backing that thing. The results
21 are the same. Nobody is going to hear you
22 because you're interfering with each other.

23 So that is not unusual, that when
24 you come in with a new system, that a lot of
25 training has to be done. It can't be done

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 quickly. It really is a cultural change.

3 And I can't address specifically
4 what these officers are hearing in the street.
5 I don't know what they're hearing, but that is
6 typical around the country.

7 When you move from an older system
8 that has limited functions -- because what
9 happens, everybody forgets that the old system
10 had a ton of problems. And I don't mean just
11 here, I mean everywhere. When you have a
12 system that's 25 years old, you have all kinds
13 of problems that you've learned to live with.
14 You literally know that I can't talk at
15 Kensington and Allegheny, so I don't even try.
16 I drive another block.

17 Well, with the new system, you get
18 there, you get to a spot, you can probably
19 talk there, but maybe three feet later you get
20 a bonk, at least you know you can't talk. So
21 there's a lot of things people -- I mean, it's
22 almost a memory -- you forget how bad the old
23 system was and now we address what we have
24 now. And that's how things keep getting
25 better and keep getting better.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 So it's usually somewhat of a
3 cultural change, a training issue, but it is a
4 real issue. It is not something I'm saying
5 nobody has had this. Everybody has had the
6 same kind of issues when you make those kinds
7 of changes, because the comfort level changes
8 even though -- I heard earlier that you had
9 the radios in the cars, which is great, but if
10 in the old system you didn't have a portable
11 radio, you were running down the street and
12 something happens --

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: They had
14 both. They had the hand-held and the fixed
15 radio.

16 MR. McFADDEN: But a lot of
17 cities, everybody didn't have both. There are
18 a few --

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: In
20 Philadelphia pretty much we did.

21 MR. McFADDEN: So that's
22 basically it. When you go through those kind
23 of changes, it's a cultural change. And then
24 if there are some incidents like we had here,
25 then it tightens up a little bit and it's

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 just -- you need to go back out, reaffirm what
3 we have, understand the levels of back-up that
4 you have.

5 We have people, like I said earlier,
6 sitting in Chicago watching your system,
7 literally watching it.

8 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I
9 understand, but, Mr. McFadden, you heard the
10 FOP say that they --

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
12 Councilman, I think Mr. Brennan switched seats
13 so he could address the --

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I'll get to
15 him.

16 But, Mr. McFadden, the comfort
17 level -- and I can tell you of listening to
18 police radio for a lot of years, that in the
19 old 400 megahertz radio system if an officer
20 did depress their microphone, they could talk
21 over, in many cases, if they were closer to
22 the receiver or whatever the technology
23 allowed, and at least the cars in the field
24 could hear them hollering for help. And
25 that's the issue that the officers on the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 street are dealing with. Saying that they
3 couldn't get through is not accurate. They
4 could be heard in an emergency. If they
5 decided to take the air, the dispatcher in the
6 radio room might not have heard it, but a
7 colleague on the street may have heard it.
8 Today they can't do that. And that is one of
9 the issues.

10 And, again, I'm not saying that's
11 bad, the system the way it's designed and how
12 it works, but you have to understand, you've
13 got a lot of officers for 20 years or so have
14 been out there working with a system that did
15 a lot of things that's important to them, and
16 today what's important to them isn't
17 necessarily there.

18 MR. McFADDEN: Right.

19 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Commissioner
20 Brennan?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
22 Thank you, Councilman O'Neill, for seeing I
23 wanted to say something. I've been hitting
24 John in the leg. Either his leg is absolutely
25 numb and he feels nothing or he thinks I love

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 him, either one. I'm not sure.

3 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Was that a
4 stress test?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
6 Just a couple things with some of the
7 complaints the FOP brought in. Actually, the
8 issues that we're addressing today, the issues
9 in March and May, actually as Bob Eddis will
10 tell you, we've had complaints since the day
11 this went up, but I will tell you this:
12 Before the first radio was in the first
13 officer's hands, we knew we were going to get
14 complaints. Their complaints largely, if you
15 look at all their complaints they -- let's
16 take the batteries aside, because I'll address
17 that separately so you understand what
18 happened with the batteries.

19 The officers don't like two things
20 about this system. They don't like them now
21 and they'll never like them. And those two
22 things are -- the first thing they don't like
23 is, in the old system when you pushed the
24 button, you could talk right away. Right now
25 you have to get permission to talk. It's

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 called a grant tone. It takes about a little
3 less than a half a second. They don't like
4 that. They don't like to have to wait to
5 talk.

6 So we knew that that was going to be
7 a problem, and that was a big, big resistance
8 factor. But that's not the number one thing
9 they don't like. The number one thing they
10 don't like is not being able to talk over one
11 other. They really, really hate that.

12 If you really look at all the
13 complaints that we get, that is really at the
14 heart of almost all of them. What the
15 officers really don't understand is that --

16 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: We
17 couldn't have a City Council meeting if we
18 weren't allowed to talk over each other. I
19 can understand the frustration.

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
21 What the officers really never understood --
22 and really I worked under the old system for
23 many years, so I know how it worked -- is that
24 the system rigorously enforces that one person
25 can talk at a time. Actually, the dispatchers

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 love it. They can fully hear every officer
3 very clearly now, unlike before.

4 In an emergency situation is when
5 this comes up all the time, is that in the old
6 system, the dispatcher would hear a lot of
7 garbling, screaming and garbling. They really
8 couldn't figure out what was going on. What
9 they would say is, One at a time, one at a
10 time. You know, let's find out who is -- and
11 then they'd all try to talk again, and there
12 would be all this garbling again.

13 What happens now is, and Bob Eddis
14 referred to it, when we first put the radios
15 out, we referred to that little button that he
16 told you about -- I don't know if anybody has
17 got a radio here. It's a little orange button
18 up top. We referred to it as an assist
19 button. We realized right away that was a
20 mistake, because it sort of indicated that the
21 only time you push that is when there's an
22 assist. So we've changed that now. We try to
23 educate them.

24 It's more like when you got to have
25 the air. In an emergency, you have a priority

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 or an emergency, you push the button and you
3 get priority over everybody else. That is
4 actually a safety feature which we never had
5 before. It takes a while for the officers to
6 understand that and to use that. They
7 actually are learning, believe it or not.

8 The only other thing I'll disagree
9 with President Eddis, and believe me, I got
10 the highest respect for him and I know we've
11 had a lot of conversations about this, is he
12 said the officers embrace new technology. I
13 find them to be a very tough sell. I find
14 them to be a really tough audience.

15 I think the learning curve for this
16 system is going to be real steep. I
17 anticipated that from the beginning, and we in
18 radio sort of knew that.

19 So those two issues are really at
20 the heart of why they don't like this thing.

21 Let me just talk about the coverage
22 issues. The reason that Bob gets a lot of
23 complaints, and I know this, is that although
24 we've opened up to them, is a lot of times
25 they're afraid to come to us. I don't know,

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 maybe they're afraid they'll get in trouble.
3 And I've brought this up to Bob and I told him
4 nobody ever gets in trouble for making a
5 complaint. I mean, we've had people go
6 publicly, they go on the air, they go in front
7 of the news cameras. Nobody has ever gotten
8 in trouble, and I think he would come up here
9 and tell you that no one has ever been
10 disciplined for criticizing the radio system.
11 They can have their own opinion. That's fine.

12 We did have some initial coverage
13 issues actually, and every single coverage
14 issue that we got we turned over to Motorola
15 and we addressed every single one, but all of
16 them were not necessarily Motorola's fault,
17 and I'll give you examples and you'll probably
18 like some of these.

19 We ran into coverage issues early on
20 that we couldn't understand, because they were
21 coming sporadically. We would get an officer
22 say, I can't transmit from this area, but we
23 would go back and we could transmit fine. It
24 was happening at different spots all over the
25 City.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 We found out that -- and this was a
3 good trick. I used to use it. In the
4 portable radios what the officers would do to
5 make sure that they wouldn't forget the radio
6 in the operations room, they'd put their keys
7 over the antenna. And in the old system, the
8 old system was very forgiving of that, you
9 could still transmit. Well, the new system
10 doesn't like that. If you put the keys over
11 the radio and you try to transmit with the
12 keys there, the system is garbled, it won't
13 get through.

14 We quickly identified that as
15 being -- that was sort of an epidemic in the
16 department. A lot of cops did that.

17 The cops complained early on about
18 not being able to broadcast underground. For
19 example, a lot of the locker rooms are below
20 ground. They would go down there, they
21 couldn't transmit. They would say, I can't
22 transmit underground. Well, the system is not
23 rated to transmit underground. We explained
24 that to them. Although it does transmit in a
25 lot of places underground, much more than the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 old one, it is not rated to, nor does Motorola
3 guarantee, that it will go underground. We
4 understand that.

5 As far as coverage issues even
6 today -- and we do get a lot of them up from
7 the street. If we get them up from the
8 street, I send someone out immediately to test
9 the coverage in that area. We often cannot
10 duplicate what the officer is telling us.
11 When we can duplicate it, we turn it over to
12 Motorola, Motorola addresses it.

13 So these coverage issues, I don't
14 think that neither the FOP nor the officers
15 understand how little coverage you had with
16 the old system. Although, Councilman, as you
17 said, we had in-car radios and we had
18 portables. Once you walked in the house, the
19 portables didn't work. And the portables, the
20 old system, was really geared to in-car
21 radios, the mobile radios. This system is
22 made for portable radios. That's why we got
23 portable radios. And I think Jim Wheeler
24 referred to it as the fact that the officer
25 now has got his communications device with him

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 all the time. We actually even bought better
3 coverage for in Center City so that we could
4 go into the thicker buildings, like these
5 skyscrapers. We've paid more money and
6 Motorola put up more equipment in Center City
7 so that an officer could go into a skyscraper
8 and still get coverage. A lot of people don't
9 understand that, but we did that.

10 We tested 1,600 grids in the City.
11 We went into multiple locations in 1,600 grids
12 in the City and tested. We banged on people's
13 doors and asked them, Can we go into your
14 house and test the radio? Some people threw
15 us out and said no; other people let us come
16 in. So we extensively tested this system
17 before we did it, before we put this out.

18 And just on the battery issue, the
19 real battery issue is our fault, partly our
20 fault. When we initially got complaints about
21 the batteries, we weren't -- since we put all
22 the batteries out at the same time, we thought
23 that why aren't we getting complaints across
24 the whole City at the same time. They were
25 coming from very specific areas of the City.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 So we actually did a test in the
3 area that we got the most complaints from.
4 What we actually did is, we went out and we
5 gave them all the same batteries we've been
6 using, but we rigorously rotated them. In
7 other words, we made them charge the batteries
8 like they were supposed to, and the complaints
9 actually went away.

10 The biggest problem in the districts
11 was the failure to rotate the batteries. The
12 ones that worked well, they had day work
13 batteries, 4:00 to 12:00 batteries, and
14 midnight to 8:00 batteries. And as we all
15 will tell you here, every cop in the world,
16 they took whatever battery they wanted to. A
17 lot of times they took a battery that was not
18 properly charged.

19 Even saying all of that, we realized
20 that the batteries were coming to the end of
21 their life cycle. And little known by anyone
22 here and Motorola, it's one of the -- as much
23 as we can have beaten on them, and we beat on
24 them pretty good, is Motorola stepped up to
25 the plate with the batteries. And I don't

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 think anybody knows this, they gave us a half
3 a million dollars in new batteries. Those
4 batteries out there today are brand new
5 batteries given to us by Motorola for free.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I hope we
7 have a warranty. There's nothing like free.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
9 No. The batteries are not -- the batteries
10 are disposable, are consumable. The batteries
11 are consumable. I mean, that's something that
12 we know that we have to replace.

13 COUNCILMAN RIZZO:
14 Commissioner, nothing is free.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
16 sort of believe that, too, but I expected
17 Motorola to go out with a news conference, and
18 they really kept kind of quiet about it. And
19 Motorola really said to us, You tell us what
20 you want to do, we're going to give you all
21 new batteries. They gave us all new
22 batteries. And I think Bob will tell you,
23 since those new batteries went out, I haven't
24 heard of one complaint. Neither have my radio
25 people, not one complaint.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 So the battery problem we look at as
3 that's something that we just have to refresh
4 sooner. I know you want to say something. We
5 had never had a totally portable radio system.
6 So the batteries in our old radios, the old
7 portables, they lasted for years, because we
8 didn't use them all the time.

9 So it was our inexperience in how
10 fast these batteries had to be replenished
11 that really led to the problem. Now we fully
12 well understand. The batteries that are out
13 there today, I will get money for those in the
14 fall and by next summer we will replace those
15 well before the 18 months that we realize that
16 they start to fail.

17 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Do these
18 batteries, Commissioner, that we presently
19 have, are they of the technology where they
20 don't have to be totally discharged before
21 they're recharged?

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
23 We decided -- we brought this before the
24 Managing Director. Actually, he was very
25 interested in the whole battery issue.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 The batteries we have now are two
3 types. They look identical, but actually
4 they're two very significantly different
5 batteries. One is of the type you just
6 mentioned, Councilman, where it actually knows
7 when it's got to be reconditioned. It has a
8 little chip in it.

9 There's a second battery that is a
10 higher milliamperage battery. In other words,
11 it's a more powerful battery, but for want of
12 a better term, I call it like a dumb battery.
13 It doesn't know. We have to recondition those
14 ourselves.

15 We actually wanted to try them, and
16 half the City split up. Half have the dumb
17 batteries and half have the smart batteries.
18 And we did that sort of deliberately just to
19 sort of test the technology. But they're both
20 new. We know they'll last, and Motorola is
21 going to strictly the smart batteries. Our
22 next buy will be totally smart batteries.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Well, I
24 would hope going forward, and I know this is
25 maybe a first generation or second generation,

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 but that radio is heavy and big and bulky, and
3 I would hope that some day going forward that
4 we would have a radio that kind of is smaller
5 and lighter, because I've heard a lot of
6 officers complain that this new radio is
7 heavier than the old one.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
9 If you look, Councilman, it's really the
10 battery that's heavy. The radio is actually
11 not that bad. And we sort of knew. I mean,
12 we watched the battery situation.

13 Actually, part of the battery
14 problem again that never came to light was
15 that when we went out and started to look at
16 the battery issue, we found at least 60
17 batteries that weren't even ours. We knew
18 they had come over from other departments.

19 They looked absolutely identical.
20 And that's the problem, they all look the
21 same, but actually they were only half the
22 power of the batteries we gave out.

23 COUNCILMAN RIZZIO: When they're
24 out on the street, they borrow a battery from
25 Lower Merion.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

3 Well, we think it actually -- my Fire
4 Department friends, we're going to blame them.
5 We actually think that what happened is, in
6 the past, what happened is, we had a different
7 radio, so there wasn't really a problem,
8 because the batteries were all different. We
9 never swapped batteries.

10 In the new system, all the batteries
11 look different. There are a lot of fire
12 engine companies that are right next to our
13 police stations. We think probably what
14 happened is, they came in and said, Look, you
15 know what, can you give me a battery, I need a
16 new battery. The operations guy swapped it,
17 not realizing he's getting a battery half the
18 power of the one he had. And we found at
19 least 60 of those when we went out. So we
20 know that that's part of the problem.

21 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Color the
22 police blue and I think they'll figure it out.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:

24 Well, you're laughing. All the new batteries,
25 we actually colored them. We actually got a

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 big white stripe on half of them and a big red
3 stripe on them. We said, If you don't see the
4 white or the red stripe, don't take that
5 battery because it's not ours.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: You're a
7 genius.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
9 Thank you.

10 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL:
11 Commissioner, now that you got raised to that
12 level, I'm more comfortable --

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN: I
14 can only go downhill from there, I think.

15 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Earlier we
16 heard from Bob Eddis and Jim Wheeler that
17 they're doing something that normally isn't a
18 union function, trying to help the whole
19 family get this thing working. I guess your
20 sergeants are probably the supervisors that
21 have the most interaction with your patrol
22 officers on a regular basis. I don't care if
23 it's a sergeant, a lieutenant or captain, but
24 I would assume it would probably be the
25 sergeant. Is there any system that has them

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 on a regular basis asking the officers, Are
3 you having any problem with your unit, with
4 the radio, and could you tell me so I can get
5 it downtown? You have a constant stream
6 almost sort of a comsat of this 800 megahertz.
7 You're seeing more, less, different, same
8 problems, so you can kind of get an idea of
9 whether you're getting a better handle on
10 this.

11 Is there anything like that going
12 on? First of all, it would make what they're
13 doing not necessary, but also it would
14 institutionalize it within your -- forget the
15 voluntary part where I have to put my name
16 down, but where the sergeant is saying three
17 people this week said, I have no faith in
18 this, this system is -- and I've gone over are
19 they well trained. These people know how to
20 use the system. Do they know how to use the
21 batteries, do they have smart batteries, dumb
22 batteries, whatever. Could you just address
23 that?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
25 One of our biggest issues -- and we were

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 talking in the back of the room. Actually, my
3 sergeant, Greg Masi, he gets some of the
4 complaints. The complaints come in and
5 they're very non-specific, and they go along
6 this line: This system stinks. And we say,
7 Well, can you be a little more specific? And
8 it's -- well, it really stinks.

9 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: It really
10 stinks.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
12 And we try to sort of nail them down.

13 I will tell you that I would bet you
14 that 90 percent of the complaints the FOP gets
15 relates to the two issues that I brought up,
16 and probably almost the one, that they can't
17 get through when they feel they have to get
18 through. They get this bonk sound.

19 I can't tell you that -- and it
20 almost always happens in every big incident
21 that we have, every assist. Every assist
22 that's an issue. Every double or triple
23 assist, I almost always hear complaints at my
24 level that they're complaining that they can't
25 get in. And it's true, they can't get in.

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655

2 And for the longest time, and I think Bob sort
3 of referred to it, is how the officers
4 sometimes are very reluctant to call an
5 assist, because maybe they feel that, I don't
6 want to call it an assist because if it's
7 really not that level, then they'll think like
8 I'm a sissy or something. So they really
9 don't like to call an assist unless they have
10 to. Sometimes to their detriment they don't.

11 So when they understand that if they
12 push the button, that they get the priority,
13 those who understand that are -- when they
14 learn that -- and, actually, a lot of them
15 didn't understand. We got a lot of these
16 questions: What happens if I push the button
17 and you push the button and all together we
18 all push the button? And it actually works
19 fine. Actually, the three of us get priority.
20 Everybody else sort of gets second shrift
21 here, short shrift and the whole thing.

22 But they're learning that, that that
23 button is there for their safety, and I think
24 again as I go back, is that this longer curve
25 of learning, I believe that it will eventually

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 take hold in the department.

3 The new officers get a lot of
4 training on the radio system and the new
5 officers, I bet they don't get any complaints
6 from them, because they didn't know anything
7 different.

8 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I got a
9 question on the technology. The 800 megahertz
10 obviously is light years ahead of some other
11 technologies you were referring to, older
12 technologies. Is there anything on the
13 horizon or here today that is a level of
14 technology above 800 megahertz?

15 MR. McFADDEN: There's always
16 new technology. The FCC is about to release
17 another bank of channels. They have to wait
18 until some of the broadcasters get off them.
19 It's very close to the 800 spectrum, and that
20 will generate another new generation of things
21 we want to do.

22 But public safety is probably a
23 little slower in adopting new things.
24 Traditionally public safety wants to see a
25 system they're going buy. They want to see it

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 up and running someplace. They don't want to
3 be the first person to experiment with that.

4 So there are new things coming, but
5 there's a reluctance until it's established in
6 public safety that it doesn't get widely
7 distributed in public safety.

8 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Does that
9 next generation have a name yet that if I
10 heard it, I would recognize it?

11 MR. McFADDEN: Well, it's
12 really not a name. It's a way of taking the
13 channels and breaking them up, and it would be
14 TDMA, which the phone companies and the cell
15 phone companies have been using. In fact,
16 they are past TDMA. They are onto the next --
17 they went through TDMA, which is time
18 division. They're in cell division now, and
19 they're looking for the next thing, because in
20 their environments, they want to load these
21 systems up with as many users as possible
22 because it generates income. The public
23 safety environment is different. They do not
24 want to load these systems up.

25 So I think the next step is probably

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 TDMA, which would give you different features.
3 It's only for use in urban areas, but that's
4 probably the next thing that's coming.

5 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: For
6 instance, the TDMA, do we have to throw out
7 what we have to put that in or can we layer
8 that on?

9 MR. McFADDEN: No, you don't
10 have to throw it out.

11 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: We can
12 layer that on the system that we have?

13 MR. McFADDEN: Yeah. And the
14 reason is this: That I said earlier, a lot of
15 these systems now are computer based. There's
16 technology out there now that will take
17 your -- just call it a very sophisticated
18 switch and put that switch into your network
19 and then allow you to add things on top of
20 that. So that's the way the transition
21 over -- that's one of the ways to do it.

22 The limiting factor, however, is
23 channels. You're still going to need
24 somewhere to go, and public safety right now
25 is struggling with channels. There's a whole

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 issue right now with trying to get some
3 channels from Nextel. Public safety never has
4 enough spectrum, quite frankly, and we're
5 hoping that the 700 megahertz spectrum
6 relieves that.

7 The City of Philadelphia right now,
8 I believe, has enough spectrum, but as your
9 requirements change as -- some of the things
10 you might want to do in the future
11 operationally, because that really drives what
12 you buy, may change. I guess you're looking
13 in -- I'm sure you've got mobile data
14 terminals now. What's the next generation
15 mobile data terminals.

16 So I think in public safety the next
17 thing that is probably going to be bigger than
18 anything else is more along the data lines, is
19 more along sending IDs, fingerprints,
20 photographs to the officer's car. That's
21 probably where we're going next versus more
22 voice things.

23 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Okay. Do
24 any cities have or counties have more than 30
25 channels on their 800 megahertz? Are we

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 pretty much the highest?

3 MR. MCFADDEN: No. I would say
4 that's -- I'm trying to remember what certain
5 people have. It's typically anywhere from 10
6 to 28, in that range. It's hard to get
7 channels, but that's typical. You have to
8 justify it to the FCC, is the other issue.
9 You have, I guess, 30 channels, only because
10 you were able to justify to the FCC to load,
11 but if I were Chester County, I could not get
12 28 channels from the FCC.

13 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: Thank you.

14 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Before we
15 recess this joint hearing of Public Safety and
16 Technology to the call of the Chair, I have
17 three last questions for you.

18 We want to get a commitment for the
19 record of what Motorola really plans to do to
20 support this system. When we first started
21 talking about -- I came to Council right when
22 this system started to be discussed and it was
23 presented to me that we were going to have so
24 much capacity, that we might even be able to
25 sell some of the excess capacity or share the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 excess capacity with possibly other interests,
3 public, SEPTA or the PGW or Delaware River
4 Port Authority.

5 From the testimony, it sounds like
6 the system may not have a sufficient channel
7 capacity to support the demand. Your response
8 to that?

9 MR. McFADDEN: My response to
10 that would be, public safety always uses as
11 much as you give them. If you give public
12 safety 28 channels, we can break those
13 channels down into talk groups, which is the
14 change, which gives you the capacity.
15 Suddenly you're putting people -- you're
16 making talk groups for groups in the city, any
17 city, that did not have their own system in
18 the past. Like typically would be suddenly
19 we're going to add fire marshals, we're going
20 to add some kind of teams in the Police
21 Department that normally weren't off by
22 themselves. So we start segmenting these
23 changes into specialized functions, and that
24 has a tendency to fill the thing up.

25 I don't know exactly what new

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 functions or what groups that this City was
3 broken off into, but that's typically what
4 happens. That's why I said there's never
5 enough spectrum for public safety because
6 there's always a program that may change your
7 operations and now we want to add more people,
8 we want to add more functions, we want to add
9 more groups.

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: This is to
11 Commissioner Brennan, talk about training.
12 When this system was designed and discussed
13 here in Council, we were told that there would
14 be private groups where a supervisor could
15 talk to another supervisor. I was at a recent
16 scene of an incident where the sergeant was
17 talking to the lieutenant over the air and
18 they really wanted to have a private
19 conversation. Those supervisors, that
20 lieutenant or the sergeant, did not have a
21 clue how to program that radio or use that
22 radio where he could talk to his supervisor
23 privately. Now, that amazed me that they had
24 no clue, Commissioner, that that radio had the
25 capability of giving them a private

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 conversation between supervisors. That really
3 surprised me.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BRENNAN:
5 The supervisors don't have a way to privately
6 talk. The commanders do. There's 15
7 channels, but there's 80 talk paths. In other
8 words, there's 80 -- for want of a better
9 term, the way to explain it is, it looks to
10 them like they have 80 different places to go.
11 And a lot of those talk paths are -- the ones
12 that you're most familiar with are the ones
13 that you hear on the air, like Southwest
14 Division, you hear the cops down there, and up
15 in Northwest and North Central, you hear
16 those.

17 That's only -- you listen mainly to
18 the 15, but above the 15, there's 65 which you
19 probably don't hear in places like narcotics,
20 homicide, SWAT. They all have what appears to
21 them to be their own radio stations for them.
22 They talk privately.

23 There is a way for the commanders to
24 talk privately. That's used really by the
25 Chief of Patrol on -- probably over the July

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 4th, he would tell all his commanders, Look, I
3 want to talk to you, switch to the commanders
4 channel. That channel -- that talk group is
5 only available on commanders' radios. It is
6 not available in the supervisors' radios. So
7 the sergeant can't talk to his lieutenant
8 privately.

9 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Okay.
10 Second question: Does the vendor, Motorola,
11 maintain degradation records leading up to the
12 March and May incidents?

13 MR. McFADDEN: We have on --
14 the system has something called a System
15 Watch, which is a computer that basically
16 tracks all the activity on the system. So we
17 have records of what is happening on that
18 system, how many transmissions. I can
19 probably have the technical people tell you.

20 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Has that
21 data been reviewed?

22 MR. McFADDEN: Yes, I believe
23 it has. I'm sure it has, because we had to go
24 back and -- yeah, we did a thorough
25 investigation. But I would rather have

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 Melissa answer that since she did it versus me
3 answering questions.

4 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: And I hope
5 it was shared with Mr. James, Deputy
6 Commissioner James?

7 MR. McFADDEN: What did we do
8 as far as going back on the history, I guess,
9 of this --

10 COUNCILMAN RIZZ0: Did you hear
11 my question about the degradation record?

12 MS. HANLON: Yes. And we share
13 the results. We don't always share all of the
14 data. What the System Watch does is, it
15 records all of the outbound traffic on the
16 system, when a call starts, when it ends, the
17 ID of the radio that was transmitting, the
18 channel that it was assigned to and the
19 system, the talk group, that it's on. And
20 because the Police Department, for example,
21 has 60,000 transmissions a day, all of this
22 information is recorded, and ten seconds of
23 air time equals about one megabyte of data,
24 20,000 lines of data, as every radio switches
25 talk groups or pushes to talk or a dispatcher

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 talks.

3 So what we do is, we analyze this
4 data and consolidate it and deliver it to the
5 City.

6 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: Last
7 question: If the system has so much
8 redundancy, why is it failing? Why are we
9 having these problems if you've got five
10 back-ups? Why are we in this situation?

11 MR. McFADDEN: Well, I guess
12 it's when do you want to move to the back-ups.
13 The switchover happens automatically on the, I
14 guess, the 18th, but you could manually move
15 these systems over to back-up, if required.

16 The reason you have all the back-ups
17 is, in something you can't imagine that would
18 happen right now, that it's a massive incident
19 that something has happened, it gives you
20 these -- manually you can move to these
21 back-up systems. But you don't want to be
22 doing that. It shouldn't be something that
23 you're doing unless there's something like a
24 9/11 incident. It should not be switching to
25 the back-up. And if it does, you shouldn't

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 even notice it.

3 The redundancy there is that worst,
4 worst, worst case scenario. So the system is
5 not designed to be constantly going back and
6 forth to the back-up.

7 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: I would hope
8 not.

9 MR. McFADDEN: And that's not
10 what we think is the optimal way this thing
11 should be working.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER JAMES: If
13 I could weigh in on that, too, Councilman. On
14 the March 25th incident, there was no reason
15 to go to a back-up, and in the period of time
16 of transition, there was no back-up to go to
17 really at that point in time for that
18 Announcement Group for that three to five
19 minutes. By the time you got everybody in the
20 back-up, the problem was back -- they had
21 unlocked. So by the time they got everybody
22 there, they still were locked up, so you
23 wouldn't have had a back-up to go to.

24 And we're talking about the larger
25 back-ups where we actually move traffic from

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 controllers -- or we move traffic from one
3 side to the other, which you wouldn't have
4 done on the 25th.

5 On the 18th, the back-up was -- the
6 system switched from the primary controller to
7 the back-up controller like it's supposed to,
8 so it did go to one level of back-up. And on
9 the past weekend with the system, when you
10 mention municipal radio had a problem, we did
11 go to our back-up dispatch contegra units.

12 So there's elements of the back-up
13 that are different than just moving from one
14 side to the other.

15 COUNCILMAN RIZZO: But I think
16 we have to develop -- whether it's three
17 minutes, ten minutes, I think going forward,
18 Commissioner Brennan, at some point there's
19 got to be a call made when you do go to your
20 back-up. Whether it's three and a half
21 minutes, four minutes, eight minutes, somebody
22 has got to make the call, because if you have
23 officers not able to communicate with
24 headquarters for any length of time, it's
25 unacceptable, especially if you have the

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 ability to go to a back-up system that would
3 provide reinstating that service.

4 I think we're at the point now,
5 Mr. McFadden, where we really need to hear
6 for, again, the record what Motorola plans to
7 do to give us the support that we so
8 desperately need here.

9 MR. McFADDEN: We plan to
10 continue with all the resources, and by
11 "resources," I mean people, who are working on
12 the system we have in the lab to see if we
13 could duplicate the incident of the channels
14 not switching over. We intend to keep all
15 these resources. The monitoring center is 24
16 hours a day, seven days a week, until this
17 customer, the City of Philadelphia, is
18 satisfied with this system and that the
19 officers in the street have a comfort level
20 that I didn't hear today. But that's what we
21 want to do, and we intend to keep the
22 resources on it.

23 This is not a case where you bought
24 something from us and now you can't find us.
25 So that's our commitment, to keep pumping

1 Public Safety/Technology - 7/14/04 - Res. 040655
2 people and engineers and architects until you
3 are satisfied. And the people that are
4 managing this system are on us constantly.
5 This isn't a case where we show up once in a
6 while. No. This is an everyday job for us
7 until you're happy, quite frankly.

8 COUNCILMAN O'NEILL: I'd like
9 to thank everyone, not just the witnesses but
10 those in attendance. This is very rare that
11 we have a public hearing in the summer, July
12 or August, in City Council. I can't even
13 remember the last one. And so you know how
14 important this is to the City Council, and I'm
15 glad that everyone gave it that level of
16 importance today, and hopefully we can move
17 forward and keep improving this system.

18 So the hearing is recessed until the
19 calling of the Chair. Thank you.

20 (Hearing adjourned at 4:50
21 p.m.)

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