

August 13, 2004

Vanessa E. Quinn, Chief
Radiological Emergency Preparedness Section
Federal Emergency Management Agency/DHS
500 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20472

SUBJECT: REFERRAL OF CONCERNS REGARDING TRANSMISSION QUALITY, RADIO INTEROPERABILITY AND THE NUMBER OF FREQUENCIES AVAILABLE TO WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NEW YORK EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

Dear Ms. Quinn:

We are referring the concerns identified in the enclosed letter, dated July 13, 2004, from Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton for your review and response. The concerns cover transmission quality, radio interoperability, and specifically, the number of radio frequencies available to Westchester County, New York emergency responders.

Senator Clinton states that "Westchester County's emergency responders are hindered by the fact that they have an insufficient number of radio frequencies in order to communicate effectively in the event of a major emergency. Currently, interference from other emergency channels in neighboring areas has prevented Westchester's upgrades to their emergency communications infrastructure to be fully realized. ... The current frequency problems plaguing Westchester have ensured that radio interoperability among these agencies is virtually non-existent."

While the resolution of some of these concerns may be beyond both the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) respective responsibility and expertise, we realize that as part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and as the Lead Agency on the Federal Radiological Preparedness Coordinating Committee (FRPCC), you may have more information available to you on interoperability issues and coordinate regularly with other Federal agencies and departments on the offsite aspects of radiological emergency preparedness.

This matter has been discussed fully between our respective staff members. In the resolution of this concern, we offer our full support to your efforts. Should you need any assistance with, or coordination of, this matter, please contact Ms. Debra A. Schneck of my staff at 301-415-3079.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nader L. Mamish, Director
Emergency Preparedness Directorate
Division of Preparedness and Response
Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response

This matter has been discussed fully between our respective staff members. In the resolution of this concern, we offer our full support to your efforts. Should you need any assistance with, or coordination of, this matter, please contact Ms. Debra A. Schneck of my staff at 301-415-3079.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nader L. Mamish, Director
Emergency Preparedness Directorate
Division of Preparedness and Response
Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response

DISTRIBUTION

EP Reading File L Reyes P. Norry M. Virgilio W. Kane S. Collins
W. Dean K. Cyr, OGC H. Miller, RI J. Dyer R. Zimmerman
M. Weber E. Leeds N. Mamish T. McGinty D. Schneck
(Green Ticket 20040501)
(CRC No 04-0474)

**ADAMS Accession Number: ML042250431 (Package)
ML042250425 (Letter)
ML042100219 (Incoming)**

OFFICE	NSIR/EPD	NSIR/EPD	NSIR/EPD
NAME	D.Schneck	T.McGinty	N.Mamish
DATE	08/12/04	08/13/04	08/13/04

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY