HEARING ON UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE RADIO UPGRADES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITOL SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE RADIO UPGRADES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITOL SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:00 p.m., in room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Michael E. Capuano (chairman of the subcommittee) Presiding.

Present: Representatives Capuano, Brady, Lofgren, and Lungren.

Staff Present: Liz Birnbaum, Staff Director; Darrell O'Connor, Professional Staff; Michael Harrison, Professional Staff; Matt Pinkus, Professional Staff/Parliamentarian; Kyle Anderson, Press Director; Kristin McCowan, Chief Legislative Clerk; Gregory Abbott, Policy Analyst; Fred Hay, Minority General Counsel; Alec Hoppes, Minority Professional Staff; and Bryan T. Dorsey, Minority Professional Staff.

Mr. CAPUANO. We are going to start on time because Mr. Lungren is here, and Mr. Brady, I believe, is on his way. He will be here shortly. And I am under the impression that we have a good chance of having votes called in the not too distant future, so I figured, let us see if we can do this while we can.

For the purposes of the record, and I hate doing this, but I will because, if I don't, my staff will yell at me, I am just going to read a little statement into the record.

This afternoon we will receive an update from the Capitol Police on the status of efforts to upgrade their radio communication system. Their mission is to ensure a safe environment for everyone visiting the Capitol and those working in Congress. An essential component of that role is the ability of the Capitol Police to communicate effectively with each other and with relevant public safety personnel.

I look forward to learning today more about their progress in implementing the new system, including the reasoning behind the choices they have made in formulating the set of criteria for a new radio communications network. Through the testimony of the individuals joining us today—we will have a second panel as well—the Subcommittee on Capitol Security will gain a better understanding of the decisions made by the Capitol Police in choosing the type of system that they feel is necessary to enhance the safety of the Capitol complex.

Much has been asked of the Capitol Police of recent years, and we all get a sense of the expanding nature of the security threats,

the necessity of having an enhanced radio communication system to improve the flow of information during a crisis. We should all work to facilitate the implementation of an improved system.

Before I close, I would also like to thank the chairman, Mr. Brady, who will be here in a moment, and the subcommittee ranking member, Mr. Lungren, as well as everyone in the audience for attending today. And I look forward to hearing from the witnesses.

And for my personal interest, because I am no radio expert, I am hoping that all people who testify try to stay away from, as much as possible, technical jargon because I may fall asleep if you insist on using it. I am interested in the generalities as to whether the system that is being considered is the kind of system that we should be moving to; is it the norm in the business, or is it some sort of an exception? And I would also be interested in hearing people's opinions on the general cost of such a system, because I think that is of interest to us.

And with that, I will ask Mr. Lungren if he has any opening statement.

[The statement of Mr. Capuano follows:]

Committee on House Administration
Subcommittee on Capitol Security
United States Capitol Police Radio Upgrades
Thursday June 19, 2008
Chairman Michael E. Capuano
Opening Statement

Good afternoon and welcome to the Subcommittee on Capitol Security's hearing on the United States Capitol Police Radio Upgrades.

This afternoon we will receive an update from the Capitol Police on the status of efforts to upgrade their radio communications system. Their mission is to ensure a safe environment for everyone visiting the Capitol and those working in Congress. An essential component of that role is the ability of the Capitol Police to communicate effectively with each other and with other relevant public safety personnel. I look forward today to learning more about their progress in implementing a new system, including the reasoning behind the choices they have made in formulating a set of criteria for a new radio communications network.

Today we will also hear from Chief Cathy Lanier of the Metropolitan Police Department, one of the Capitol Police's closest working partners, on the need for interoperability with the Capitol radio system. Dr. David G. Boyd from the Department of Homeland Security will provide the committee with information about the range of radio systems that are currently in use throughout the country, so that we may learn more about the choices available to the Capitol Police. Finally, Mr. Steve Souder, Director of Public Safety Communications for Fairfax County and a representative of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, will testify about the standards that exist for interoperable radio systems and challenges he has encountered with older systems throughout his career.

Through the testimony of the individuals joining us today, the Subcommittee on Capitol Security will gain a better understanding of the decisions made by the Capitol Police in choosing the type of system they feel is necessary to enhance the safety of the Capitol Complex.

Much has been asked of the Capitol Police in recent years, as we all get a sense of the expanding nature of security threats and the necessity of having an enhanced radio communication system to improve the flow of information during a crisis. We should all work to facilitate the implementation of an improved system.

In closing, I would like to thank House Administration Committee Chairman Brady and Subcommittee Ranking Member Lungren, as well as everyone in the audience for joining us. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses and I thank them for the time they are taking to be with us today.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

As you know, I returned to this Congress because of my desire to keep our country safe and secure from the threat of terrorist attack. And one of the prime targets of such a terrorist attack has been and will continue to be our Nation's Capitol.

I have, since 9/11, been concerned about a number of different things involving our first responders. Coming out of the experience of 9/11 and other episodes around the country, it is clear that our interoperability is not where it should be with jurisdictions around the country. And interoperability usually goes to the question of different types of responders being able to communicate with one another in different jurisdictions.

But at base, we also suffer from a lack of what I consider to be sufficient improvement in the communications networks within a department. And I am concerned that we do not have what we need to have here. And I know that people are concerned about the cost. I am concerned about the cost.

But I would just say this: It seems to me strange that I never hear Congress rejecting the notion that we need to do everything that is necessary to protect the President of the United States, the White House and other offices that surround the Executive Office of the President, and yet we don't seem to have that same urgency with respect to our Nation's Capitol. I am not suggesting that Members of Congress are Presidents of the United States, but what I am suggesting is the institution of the Congress is as important as the institution of the White House—or institution of the Presidency or the institution of the Supreme Court. And we disserve ourselves and our constituents by not putting the same attention to the security needs of this Capitol as we would for the President of the United States.

And we should always be conscious of the cost of things involved and make sure that we make appropriate decisions with regard to the taxpayers. But I hope we are not going to have any idea—and I am not suggesting you Mr. Chairman are, but I hope the Congress is not going to nickel and dime its approach to security at this Capitol.

If, in fact, as I have been led to believe, there are certain parts of the Capitol that make it difficult for communications by radio, that is the problem. That doesn't mean that ought to continue. If it requires us to make certain fixes and requires us to adopt certain hardware in order to make that problem be surmounted, then we ought to do it. And if that is somewhat costly, we ought to understand the cost is related to the specifics.

We are not going to change the Capitol. We are not going to change the construction of the Capitol. We have to realize it presents some unique problems with respect to communications. And if it does, as I believe it does, then our obligation is to overcome those obstacles rather than either to pretend that they are not there or to somehow say it would be too expensive for us to do the job.

I know the chairman shares my concern about this place, but I just would like to put that on the record. This committee, I know, is committed to making this Capitol secure. And as the chief au-

thorizing committee in this regard, it seems to me we need to not only look at this but act on this issue as soon as possible.

And so I thank the Chairman for having this hearing.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you, Mr. Lungren.

Before I forget, because if the bells ring, we need to run out of here, without objection, I assume there is none, that the hearing record will remain open for a period of 2 weeks for anybody to submit additional testimony, clarifying testimony, at a later time.

And I am pleased to introduce Mr. Brady. For those of you who don't know him, he is the Chairman of the full committee and a fine and wonderful friend of mine and the police department.

And he informs me he has no opening statement, which is usually my role, but that is to be quiet while he is talking.

With that, I am just going to go right to the Chief and it is yours Chief.

STATEMENT OF CHIEF PHILLIP D. MORSE, SR., UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE; ACCOMPANIED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF DAN NICHOLS; AND GLORIA JARMON, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Chief MORSE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the United States Capitol Police's proposal for a new radio system.

I am also pleased to be joined here today by my Assistant Chief, Dan Nichols, and to my left, my Chief Administrative Officer, Gloria Jarmon.

It has been 2 years since I was selected as the Chief of the United States Capitol Police. I have served the Department for the past 23 years. And during this time, the Department has made tremendous improvements in a number of areas, both operationally and administratively.

One area still needing improvement is our current radio communication system. Radios serve as a lifeline for every law enforcement officer. Officers depend on their radios as much as they do their weapons. It is often considered an officer safety issue when an officer is unable to effectively communicate with his or her fellow officers or dispatchers. Critical information can be delayed or missed all together when you do not have reliable and secure radio communications.

The Department is routinely challenged every day with keeping our current radio system up and running. The system is over 20 years old, and we are experiencing failures on a regular basis. These failures are the direct result of an aging equipment and infrastructure that have significantly exceeded their life expectancy. Equipment manufacturers no longer make many of the critical parts used in the Capitol Police radio system, which substantially increases the risk that we will not be able to respond appropriately in an emergency or even during normal operating conditions.

A web of very well structured buildings with numerous underground tunnels and subways adds a tremendous amount of complexity to the radio system. It is the mission of the Capitol Police

to patrol these areas on a routine basis, though the penetration of radio signals into these areas make that more challenging.

Unlike many other law enforcement agencies whose mission is to patrol primarily outdoors, the majority of the U.S. Capitol Police patrol area is within the buildings and underground areas. While my staff has done a tremendous job of providing as much radio coverage as possible throughout this web of buildings, tunnels and garages and subways, there are many gaps that exist today.

The age of the current radio system is a major concern since nearly 90 percent of the system infrastructure is 25 years old and desperately needs to be replaced. Our current system is analog with a very limiting five-channel capability. While the size of the Capitol Police force has increased our radio system has not.

Our current level of radio security does not meet appropriate Federal standards, and there are numerous issues involving our current system that I am unable to discuss publicly, but I would be happy to discuss further with the committee in a closed-door session.

In 2005 the Capitol Police partnered with NavAir to perform an assessment of the current system. NavAir produced a very comprehensive report that included an RF propagation study as well as many recommendations for making improvements to our radio system and infrastructure. Based upon the NavAir findings, the U.S. Capitol Police tasked NavAir with providing a high level recommendation for the future direction of the radio communications supporting our operations.

In 2006 the Capitol Police hired a consultant, Concepts to Operations, to assist the Department in moving forward the new radio system. CTO was selected based upon their extensive knowledge, vendor independence, strong reputation and experience in designing and building radio communications for systems for public safety organizations. And in 2007, the Capitol Police hired a full-time radio project manager from Global Tech.

Our project plan for the new radio system consists of a seven-phase approach which is outlined in the U.S. Capitol Police development lifecycle policy document. The first phase is the definition of the project, which includes the purpose of the project, associated benefits and so on. Our second phase involves the gathering of system requirements. This stage defines how the system is to operate and what characteristics it will have. Phase three of our lifecycle takes the information gathered in the requirement phase and constructs a design based on those requirements. We are currently at the beginning of the fourth phase of the project, which is the acquisition phase. And at this time, the completion of the request for proposal for the new radio system is required.

The new radio system will require considerable facility related work in order to host a system in primary and secondary or mirrored locations. Having a redundant radio system in a second location will substantially reduce the potential for outages resulting from environmental or terrorist related events. We at the Capitol Police look forward to working collaboratively with the Congress to continue to safeguard the legislative process, the Members, staff and visitors of the complex.

We thank you for the opportunity once again to appear before you. And my colleagues and myself are prepared to answer any questions that you may have.

[The statement of Chief Morse follows:]

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Statement of
Phillip D. Morse, Sr.
Chief of Police, United States Capitol Police
Before the
Committee on House Administration
Subcommittee on Capitol Security
United States House of Representatives

June 18, 2008

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the United States Capitol Police proposal for a new radio system. I am pleased to be joined here by my Assistant Chief of Police, Daniel Nichols, and my Chief Administrative Officer, Gloria Jarmon.

I would also like to thank the Committee for its continued support for the men and women of the United States Capitol Police. Your support, as well as the support from our other oversight committees, is crucial to the successful execution of our mission.

It has been nearly 2 years since I was selected to be the Chief of the United States Capitol Police. I have served the department for the past 23 years. During this time the Department has made tremendous improvements in a number of areas, both operationally and administratively. One area still needing improvement is our current radio communication system. Radios serve as a lifeline for every law enforcement officer. Officers depend on their radios as much as they do their weapons. It is often considered

an officer safety issue when an officer is unable to effectively communicate with his or her fellow officers and dispatchers. Critical information can be delayed or missed all together when you do not have reliable and secure radio communications.

The Department is routinely challenged everyday with keeping our current radio system up and running. The system is over 20 years old and we are experiencing failures on a regular basis. These failures are the direct result of aging equipment and infrastructure that have significantly exceeded their life expectancy. Equipment manufacturers no longer make many of the critical parts used in the U.S. Capitol Police radio system, which substantially increases the risk that we will not be able to respond appropriately in an emergency or even during normal operating conditions. A web of very well constructed buildings with numerous underground tunnels and subways adds a tremendous amount of complexity to the radio system. It is the mission of the U.S. Capitol Police to patrol these areas on a routine basis, though the penetration of radio signals into these areas make that job more challenging. Unlike many other law enforcement agencies whose mission is to patrol primarily outdoors, the majority of the U.S. Capitol Police patrol area is within buildings and in underground areas. While my staff has done a tremendous job of providing as much radio coverage as possible throughout this web of buildings, tunnels, garages and subways there are many gaps that exist today. The age of the current radio system is a major concern since nearly 90% of the system infrastructure is 25 years old and desperately needs to be replaced. Our current system is analog with a very limiting 5 channel capability. While the size of the U.S. Capitol Police workforce has increased, our radio system has not. We have very

limited interoperability with other organizations, including Metropolitan Police with whom we communicate by having their radios installed in our vehicles and talking directly to their dispatchers. U.S. Park Police and WMATA (Metro) have their frequencies plugged into our radios to permit limited interoperability capabilities. Our current level of radio security does not meet appropriate Federal standards and there are numerous other issues involving our current system that I am unable to discuss publicly, but would be happy to discuss further with the committee in a closed session.

In 2005 the U.S. Capitol Police partnered with NavAir to perform an assessment of the current radio system. NavAir produced a very comprehensive report that included an RF propagation study as well as many recommendations for making improvements to our radio system and infrastructure. Based upon the NavAir findings, the U.S. Capitol Police tasked NavAir with providing a high-level recommendation for the future direction of radio communications supporting our operations. The NavAir report outlined the need for a new digital, trunked radio system.

In 2006 the U.S. Capitol Police hired a consultant, Concepts To Operations, to assist the department in moving forward with a new radio system. Concepts To Operations was selected based upon their extensive knowledge, vendor independence, strong reputation and experience designing and building radio communications systems for public safety organizations. In 2007 the U.S. Capitol Police hired a fulltime radio project manager from Global Tech. Global Tech was selected based upon their excellent background managing large projects. Together, the U.S. Capitol Police, Concepts To

Operations and Global Tech have worked very effectively to develop a very detailed project plan for the design, acquisition and implementation of a new radio system.

Our project plan for the new radio system consists of a seven phase approach, which is outlined in the U.S. Capitol Police System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) Policy document. The first phase of our SDLC is the definition of the project, which includes the purpose of the project, associated benefits, and so on. Our second project phase involves the gathering of system requirements. This stage defines how the system is to operate and what characteristics it will have. Phase three of our life cycle takes the information gathered in the requirements phase and constructs a design based on those requirements. We are currently at the beginning of the fourth phase of the project, which is the Acquisition Phase. At this time, we are completing the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the new radio system. Once a new system is acquired, we will enter phase five, which is the actual implementation of the new system, followed by a sixth phase which is period of testing and final acceptance of the new system. Finally, our seventh phase is the operation of the new environment.

The radio project, defined by the aforementioned stages, has five important features and functional attributes that make up the core of this project. These attributes are Interoperability, Security, Coverage, Capacity and Voice Quality. We have reached out to a number of other jurisdictions to acquire lessons learned from their recent radio system implementations.

The new radio system will require considerable facility-related work in order to host the system in a primary and secondary, or mirrored, location. Having a redundant radio system, in a second location, will substantially reduce the potential for outages resulting from environmental or terrorist-related events. For this project, one main facility will be located close to our Command and Control environment while a second site will be located an appropriate distance away from Capitol Hill. Finally, many small closet locations within the area of Capitol Hill will be required to host radio transmitting and receiving equipment.

We at the Capitol Police look forward to working collaboratively with the Congress to continue to safeguard the legislative process, Members, staff and visitors to the Capitol Complex. Through this collaborative partnership, I believe we will realize our collective goal of transforming the United States Capitol Police into a premiere law enforcement organization.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and the Committee's continued support of the men and women of the United States Capitol Police.

My colleagues and I are ready to address any questions you may have.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thanks Chief.

I have a few questions just to start off. Most notably, the system that is proposed—and again, I understand that there might be details, if I get to a point where there are some details you don't want to discuss in public, just say so, and that is not a problem. The system that is proposed, in general, do you consider it a state-of-the-art system?

Chief MORSE. Yes, I do.

Mr. CAPUANO. And if you were the Chief of Police of New York City, is this the type of system you might be interested in looking at?

Chief MORSE. Yes, I would be.

Mr. CAPUANO. And you feel comfortable that we have had enough outside experts, independent experts take a look at this that would support your position?

Chief MORSE. Yes, I do.

Mr. CAPUANO. The reason I ask is because, obviously, there is a letter that has been circulated from one of the vendors that indicates that the system may be more than we need and that maybe we should just piggyback on an existing system. And I am just curious what would be your response to that suggestion?

Chief MORSE. Well, first, I think it would be appropriate for me to take you through how we came about selecting the capabilities of this particular system.

First, we had the NavAir study, which concluded that our current system was one that was in need of desperate repair or enhancement in order to give us daily operations and future operations. But it also said that we needed to look down the road to a state-of-the-art system to help us provide security to the Congress.

The first thing we had to do was take a look at our mission and what it is we are responsible for in safeguarding Congress and facilitating the legislative process. So, internally, we took a look at those mission sets and how they related to communications and, specifically, radio communications. And that was our first step to have a concept of operations for this new system.

Then what we did is reached out to a company, which is CTO, Concepts to Operations, which are senior executive telecommunications engineers, 16 years of experience in this type of business, a multitude of clients that have very similar systems to this. And they were to help us from the engineering standpoint to take that concept and get us to the operational needs, the Capitol Police needs, in order to facilitate the safety and security of Congress and facilitate the legislative process.

Once that was accomplished, we were able to reach the stage that we are now, which is the acquisition stage. And at this point in time, the design and the concept doesn't have any specific manufacturer or entity in mind. It has a concept that comes from within the agency and its stakeholders whom we serve and the mission that we serve. So once the RFP is written, it is open for you know technical scrutiny.

Mr. CAPUANO. In these studies, in the NavAir, the CTO, and in your own review, did you also look at the options? Was the option reviewed about other systems? Let us put it this way. When I go

out to buy a new automobile, my dreams all come true when I go to look at the $100,000 cars, and then I walk away from them. You know, they are fun to shop around for a little while, maybe take one for a test drive. It is not going to happen, and I end up back in reality. And I am just curious, did you take a look at some of the—again, I am going here because this letter has kind of made the rounds. This letter is kind of out there in the general public, and it raises some serious question about the potential of saving tens of millions of dollars. I am not saying, there is—were the options that they proposed reviewed and compared against the ones that you chose?

Chief MORSE. From a technical engineering standpoint, the answer is yes. All those considerations were made internally and externally. Internal and external is unique with our police department, because many of the municipal police departments have 80 percent of their mission outside; whereas we have 80 percent of our mission inside. So there are technical engineering solutions to that that answer those questions that you are asking: Does a certain system work? So there are technical engineering solutions to each one of these capabilities when you talk about options.

The one thing that I had to understand as we went through this process is that a P25 trunk digital radio system is that in and of itself. With that comes options, various options of encryption, options of coverage; is that coverage internal, external? Clarity, voice clarity, and then finally is, how do you from an engineer standpoint find the solutions to that type of coverage and infrastructure? All that was looked at in this project. That is the reason we had CTO, the experts in this in the engineering of such a concept and the experience in this type of radio system, involved in helping us get to where we are.

We also had a project manager, someone from Global Tech, who was able to keep us on track with a large project and initiative like this, someone who had experience in that and the various types of systems and projects that are out there that are offered.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thanks, Chief.

Mr. Lungren.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chief, you have your experience in the area of law enforcement. You are not a technical expert in the area of communications, radios, et cetera.

Who did you use as your expert?

Chief MORSE. We have, what we use as our experts are two people. One is CTO and how they reached out to partner and also to experts in the field, and they are certainly engineering, senior engineering experts themselves. In addition to that, the hiring of the project manager from Global Tech, he is an expert in this field with a vast amount of experience as well. So we had really two paths of expertise taking us through this process.

Mr. LUNGREN. Who is NavAir?

Chief MORSE. NavAir is a government entity.

Mr. LUNGREN. Right. But I mean, what are they?

Officer NICHOLS. NavAir works under DOD obviously. They do a lot of engineering for communications for other agencies. They are a pay-for-fee, or a pay-for-service type organization. But they do

bring a lot of technical expertise to bear on telecommunications issues.

Mr. LUNGREN. Did you consult with other law enforcement agencies that have gone through this same issue?

Chief MORSE. Yes.

Mr. LUNGREN. Who?

Chief MORSE. Specifically, I would have to turn to our CTO folks who are here with us.

Mr. LUNGREN. Well, maybe they can tell us who.

Chief MORSE. But some of the partners or some of the systems that were looked at in the Metropolitan area, for instance, are Maryland authorities; Prince George's County the Metropolitan Police Department here in the District of Columbia.

Mr. LUNGREN. Did you folks consult with the Secret Service?

Chief MORSE. I am—the answer is, yes we did.

Mr. LUNGREN. Did any of these agencies talked about make recent purchases for the upgraded communication systems that they currently have?

Chief MORSE. Yes. The Prince George's County and Metropolitan Police Department would be the most recent.

Mr. LUNGREN. But they would be one that generally spends its time in open areas as opposed to what you described as the unique characteristics of the police department right?

Chief MORSE. That is correct.

Mr. LUNGREN. I mean, my question is Secret Service, and I am not trying to say they are the only one out there, but I have seen them operate with their communication systems. They go into just about any environment you can possibly have, closed environments, open environments, et cetera, have to bring their communication systems. It would seem that they might have some particular expertise. How much did you rely on their expertise?

Chief MORSE. Well, I can say that our representative from Global Tech is very familiar with how their systems function and have worked on many projects in that respect with those systems.

Mr. LUNGREN. You said in your testimony that a current level of radio security does not meet appropriate Federal standards, and then there are some other issues that we cannot discuss publicly. I assume that means you could discuss publicly the failure to meet appropriate Federal standards. What do you mean by that?

Chief MORSE. Specifically to encryption capability.

Mr. LUNGREN. Are you currently in a situation where the performance of the Department is less than what you would hope it to be because of failures in communication?

Chief MORSE. Whenever you operate, knowing that your system could fail at any time because it has in the past as a whole and on certain occasions from a hardware or software standpoint, it does not give you a confident feeling that you can carry out operations on a daily basis or in an emergency situation if in fact your system is unreliable.

Mr. LUNGREN. In the review of what happened on 9/11, there was the pinpointing of the lack of interoperability and the lack of officers unable to talk to one another, the fire department being able to talk to the police department. Do we have a situation here

at the Capitol that there are episodes or times where officers cannot talk with one another?

Chief MORSE. That is correct, nor could we talk to them.

Mr. LUNGREN. How long have we had that?

Chief MORSE. Well, at various levels. Obviously, as I said in my testimony, our staff has worked very hard to eliminate as much as those gaps as we possibly could. This particular system takes it even further than that and helps us fill those gaps to ensure that communication with our officers—two-way communication with our officers is paramount—and that can occur throughout the complex.

Mr. LUNGREN. See, here is the concern that I have. And that is not just with your department, but departments across the country. We have gotten a warning which was in the form of a terrible attack on our land, on our own soil. And that has been a number of years ago. And one of the things everybody agreed on was the failure of our communication systems on the ground, within departments, within the sub-set of departments, interoperability. And yet we still are asking some of the same questions we asked then.

And that is why I am somewhat confused that, if this is such a priority, the 2009 budget request from your shop doesn't request money for this radio system replacement. And if it is of that urgency, as I believe it is, why didn't we ask for that, or why didn't we receive a request from you asking for that?

Chief MORSE. Primarily because we wouldn't be able to ask for the amount of money that is required to do an initiative like this until we were able to complete the design and concept of the operation and have a cost analysis associated with that. And that is where we were as discussions began on this, and that is where we are today.

We now know the conceptual design of this. There is a cost analysis associated with that, as well as facilities costs. And we are prepared to make that request in whatever fashion that the Congress would support us.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Brady.

The CHAIRMAN. First of all, Chief, thank you for being here today and thank you for the job you do protecting us and all the citizens. I know it is pretty tough that job in itself, but it is also tough to have to report to so many bosses that have so many different ideas.

But in a perfect world or even just in reality, how long would it take, if everything moved in the right proper direction, would it take for you to have a proper system that you would like and would be the proper system that we would be able to rely on, God forbid, any other emergency or be able to talk to all the entities that we need to talk to? How long would it take for you to get that up and running?

Chief MORSE. Two years. And we have the—as I said, as I stated in my testimony, this is designed in phases, and with those phases come timelines, and we are in the acquisition phase now. And that would require an RFP for bidding for the scope of work that needs to be done. And from that point to completion would be 2 years.

There is a testing phase that goes with that, but that is not an operational issue. So we would expect to go operational with this in 2 years.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure that this is a system that could be upgraded; as times allow or need be, they can upgrade them as you have to?

Chief MORSE. Yes, this system provides us not only state-of-the-art technology that is current with this type of radio system, but it also sets us up for the future and expansion.

The CHAIRMAN. Then you will need one budget request, or will you need a phased 2-year budget request?

Chief MORSE. The preference of the people who are advising me is that this be a one-time request, which——

The CHAIRMAN. I am not holding you to that. You need to be safe. I understand that.

Chief MORSE. Right.

The CHAIRMAN. For the most part, to the best of your knowledge, it will be a one-time budget request, and you will have what you need to get it done, phases that will be up and running within 2 years but completed within 2 years?

Chief MORSE. Right.

Ms. Jarmon is going to answer the question here regarding——

Ms. JARMON. I just wanted to add that, while the option of receiving the money up front is probably the better option because we wouldn't have as many of the possible cost increases that could occur if we receive the money over several years, but since, like the Chief mentioned, that this would be 2 years from the time that the contract is awarded based on our estimate, our preference would be that there be no-year money because it will be spent over a couple of years.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. CAPUANO. I would like to note that we have been joined by Ms. Lofgren, and without objection, if she would like to ask any questions.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am sorry to be late. I am very interested in this subject. As Mr. Lungren knows from our other assignment on the Homeland Security Committee, there is a lot of work that has been going on on interoperability. And we are fortunate that the District of Columbia metropolitan region is in the lead along with Silicon Valley on how you do interoperability in the smartest way. And so I am looking forward to making sure that we get the upgrades that we need but that we do it in a way that is going to last and not have to be replaced, because there are software solutions to a lot of what we think are hardware questions.

And I thank the chairman for allowing me to participate and look forward to being a productive partner with the subcommittee on this.

I yield back.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you.

Chief, I want to talk, because there have been several publicized reports about the potential cost of this system that have ranged all over the ballpark, anywhere from $10 million to $70 million and above. And I know that you haven't put the RFP out there. I know that, and I respect that.

At the same time, you know, every vendor in the world already is thinking about this. You are already thinking about it. You have

some ballpark ideas of what you think it might cost and a range. Could you give us an estimate of a range? And I am particularly interested in, if that is the case, as I understand it, some of those estimates have changed depending on who has looked at the issue, and I am just wondering why they would have changed.

Chief MORSE. Well, I would like to address the issue of what has changed and why that has changed. With respect to NavAir, which is where the original costing quotes were placed, with respect to NavAir and replacing a new system, what they did versus replacing a new system are really two different things. What NavAir did for our organization was take a look at the existing radio system and recommend to us a manner in which we could enhance that system to its highest capability. Even with that being said, that would be with the existing 25-year-old hardware and software and infrastructure. So we would be enhancing a system that eventually would be obsolete. But that was an option, and certainly remains an option, that you could enhance to the highest capability possible the current radio system, which is an analog system. And you would try to do that in coverage areas, as well as a secure and interoperability. But we would be doing that with a system that is obsolete.

What changed is the fact that, at the conclusion of that report, it notes that the long-term resolution is for state-of-the-art technology, a P25 digital trunk system, which requires a whole different level of engineering expertise infrastructure along with the mission sets that are required to accomplish our mission as the United States Capitol Police in safeguarding the campus. That is the big difference. It is really an existing system versus making a new system what it needs to be to support us. And that is really the difference in cost.

So had the NavAir report been the CTO report of a new system, we would be at the same place today. But they were really two different reports.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you Chief.

And the reason I ask is, obviously, I mean, we all want the best system we can get that works and meets the security requirements and all the other requirements that you already know about. At the same time I hope that you are sensitive, and I am actually more—I am less talking to you than I am to what I presume to be vendors in the audience. I hope that they are very sensitive to the fact that what we went through with the CVC, we will not go through with the radio system. When we get a number, it is the number. And it won't be doubled. It won't be tripled. It won't be quadrupled. That will be the number. Whatever the number is, and as long as it is fair and reasonable, that is going to be the number. And that is—I think a lot of concern around this place lately is the fact that we are not sure we are being led down a rosy path with numbers that double and triple as soon as we say yes. That is number one.

Number two is—my hope is that, as you go out to bid, that there is some sort of performance bond, particularly if you are going to pay the money up front or chunks of money up front, which I understand. I have no problem with that concept. But I will tell you that representing Boston I have an unfortunate fair amount of experience in people that didn't get sufficient performance bonds for

large capital projects. And that was significantly a seriously bad judgment. And as a former mayor, I have bought radio systems. I have bought fire trucks. I have bought police equipment. We always had performance bonds and, again, not because we don't trust the vendors, but because we had to give up a lot of money up front. They were expensive systems, because you don't want to get into the thing and, all of a sudden, you get halfway down the road and somebody says, well, by the way, you didn't ask for this third tower over here, and now that you need it, it is another $5 million. Performance bonds prevent that. So my hope and expectation is that whatever the number is that it is the number; it gets you exactly what you ask for and, especially if we are going to be having upfront payments, that we have some sort of a performance bond or its equivalent.

Mr. Lungren.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The thought strikes me that someone who succeeded in getting this bid and did a good job, it might be a pretty good selling point for other business around the country that you provided the best radio system for our Nation's Capitol. Maybe people ought to think about that when they are bidding.

You know, we passed a billion dollar grant program for interoperability for all the agencies around the United States except the U.S. Capitol, $1 billion. And it was supposed to be on a risk-based assessment. And what is risk? One of the ways you analyze risk, one of the elements of risk is threat.

Is there any belief on your part, Chief Morse or Assistant Chief Nichols, that the U.S. Capitol is no longer a potential target among terrorists?

Chief MORSE. There is no belief of that at all.

Mr. LUNGREN. Well, here is my point. We spent $1 billion. We are going spread out all around the country. We are going to send to every other jurisdiction for their communications, and part of it is, we are going to try and figure out which may be targets as part of our assessment as to who ought to get the grants, but we make sure the only person who doesn't get it, the only group that doesn't get it is the U.S. Capitol Police. I don't know, that strikes me as somewhat odd.

Let me ask you this, Chief, who is the chief contracting officer in your operation for this?

Chief MORSE. It would be a procurement officer within the Office of Financial Management which falls under the Chief Administrative Officer.

Mr. LUNGREN. Who is?

Chief MORSE. Gloria Jarmon.

Mr. LUNGREN. All right.

What role if any is played by the police board and the oversight committees.

Chief MORSE. With respect to the Capitol Police Board, we briefed out and kept apprised the Capitol Police Board of every step along the way of this project. And they were inclusive in the decision-making of its concept and endorsed that.

Mr. LUNGREN. If there is a protest involved in the bid process, how is that adjudicated?

Chief MORSE. That is not a question I can answer.

Maybe Gloria could do that for us.

Ms. JARMON. I think the protest would still go through the GAO bid protest process.

Mr. LUNGREN. Is there any—Chief, you mentioned that, if everything goes along as it should, you would have this system up in 2 years. If you have a protest in the midst of that, do you know how that would interfere with, if it would interfere with, the project if you have already started the process of building this out?

Chief MORSE. Well, I think if there was a protest, it would probably come before the start of the process, so it would depend on how long it took to adjudicate that before we started. So the way we look at this is, every day or every week or every month that you wait is that much further out for the completion of the system. But when you start to finish it is 2 years.

Mr. LUNGREN. Now, Chief, I mean, when you make this decision, we are talking about you and your men and women in uniform as well as the people you serve relying on a system that you made a decision upon. We know from 9/11, that can mean the difference between life and death; success or failure; a disaster becoming worse or a disaster being prevented. How confident are you in the process that you have begun that you are going to get to the right decision here, and how confident are you that, in any request for proposal that is put out there, that you believe you have covered all the bases so that the responders will not only respond within what we consider to be appropriate parameters financially but performance-wise?

Chief MORSE. I am 100 percent confident that we are doing this the right way. We have the right methodology to do this. We have contracted the right expertise to take us through this process. We are going to continue to have peer review of this process and due diligence to ensure that it is the best system that we can possibly offer to this community. And I pledge that due diligence will be done in this case.

Mr. LUNGREN. Let me ask one last question here. I have been trying to figure out how you would find departments that are similar to your department. And maybe this might sound a little offbeat, but I am trying to think of places that have large numbers of people that are funneled through small spaces, oftentimes broken up, a landscape that changes; you have got some open spaces, but you have a lot of buildings of different sizes; you are worried about, you are concerned about the convenience of the individuals as well as your ability to perform. And in some ways, and I don't mean to make this facetious or anything, but we are more like a major amusement park than we are like other things; like a Disneyland or an Epcot or something like that that has to force people through. What I am trying to think of is how imaginative were you in reaching out to other organizations that may be similar to you in terms of their performance and in terms of the challenge that they have in terms of what kind of communication systems they might have when you have told us that people like the Metropolitan Police or others in this area are dissimilar very much in terms of the mission and the communication needs they have?

Chief MORSE. It is very difficult to find other agencies who are as unique as us. And that is why I am so proud of the hard work of our civilians and sworn personnel each day.

With respect to reaching out with a radio system and finding similar situations, for instance, the Metro Transit system, Metro Transit Police and the subterrainean underground work that they do and the challenges that they face. So it may not be one agency with respect to a challenge that they face, but we sort of have all the different challenges of all the different agencies. So Metro Transit would be an example of an agency that has subterrainean, below-ground work in areas that typical police departments don't work.

We also obviously worked—we kept in mind that a lot of, 20 percent of our work is outdoors, so we obviously looked at agencies who have outdoor coverage, protective responsibilities like we do, building security like we do, street patrol like we do, and sort of tried to find a mix of agencies that captured all the different challenges that we face here on the Hill.

Mr. LUNGREN. I thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Brady.

The CHAIRMAN. Chief, you said you are 2 years out once we get the bid process and the bid awarded. How many years are we until we get to that 2 years? And maybe you shouldn't answer that because you might be getting us more scared. I mean, are we getting close? And I want to say, for the record, that you do have a system that is in place that does work, so we are not trying to send anybody any messages out there, but we just want to make this work better and more efficient. But are we like getting close to that signature?

Chief MORSE. Yes, we are.

As you recall in testimony, we have seven phases of this project. We are currently in phase four, which is the acquisition phase of the project. Three to six months after the RFP is issued for design and construction, we would move into the implementation stage, which is phase five, which is 15 to 18 months. So we are in the acquisition phase. What needs to be done now is to write and complete the RFP to put out for bidding. And once that is accomplished, then we can move into the implementation phase.

The CHAIRMAN. And whoever gets that award will have a timeframe when they have got to do their due diligence to get moving too quickly?

Chief MORSE. That is correct. And like I said, this is all based on engineers and subject matter experts in this, so it shouldn't deviate in timeframe.

Then you move into phase six, which is the test and acceptance phase, which is 2 to 3 months and then, finally, the operation and maintenance and lifecycle of the system.

The CHAIRMAN. Because I find it astounding that we are moving faster than they are. "We" meaning us in Congress are pushing to move it quicker than they are, so let us try to get this done.

Chief MORSE. We agree, and we always appreciate all your support in helping us accomplish these tasks to safeguard the campus.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. CAPUANO. Chief, one last question. When this is all built out, how many people will be using this system, about?

Chief MORSE. Well, within our agency, we have about 2,000 employees plus and, from a sworn standpoint, around 1,700 that would be using this. But this also has the capability of adding additional users, which is why it is such a great system. You know, the interoperability part where we can bring in other law enforcement agencies; other entities within the congressional community who use radio systems, can use this system. So one of the reasons that we use the leg branch radio system with this is that its capability is to bring on as many users as you want.

Specifically with us, they have given me a number of 2,400 units/subscribers, and could go up to 5,000 users/subscribers.

Mr. CAPUANO. So, at the moment, the estimation is to begin with, give or take, 2,000 members of the Capitol Police and immediately allow the use, give or take, of 400 non-Capitol Police but yet employees of the Capitol.

Chief MORSE. That is correct. And it also allows other leg branch entities to use the system as well.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thanks.

I think we are all set, Chief, now. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

If I could ask the second panel to take positions.

Thank you.

The second panel, we were going to have Chief Cathy Lanier of the Metropolitan Police Department, but my understanding is she has more pressing demands for her immediate attention at the moment. And we are honored to have Commander James Crane join us, and I believe Mr. Travis Hudnall is with you as well.

We also have Mr. David Boyd from the Department of Homeland Security and Mr. Steve Souder, who is the director of Public Safety For Communications for Fairfax County and a representative of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials.

STATEMENTS OF JAMES CRANE, COMMANDER, SPECIAL OPERATIONS DIVISION, METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT, ACCOMPANIED BY TRAVIS HUDNALL, CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER; DAVID G. BOYD, Ph.D., DIRECTOR, COMMAND, CONTROL AND INTEROPERABILITY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY; AND STEVE SOUDER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS, FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA, AND MEMBER, ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL

Mr. CAPUANO. And with that, I believe we will start with you, Commander Crane.

STATEMENT OF JAMES CRANE

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, staff and guests, on behalf of Chief Cathy L. Lanier, thank you for the opportunity to present the statement on the need for upgrades to radios used by the United States Capitol Police.

My name is James Crane. I am Commander of the Metropolitan Police Department, Special Operations Division. From 2002 to

2007, I was director of D.C. Police Communications. To my right is Mr. Travis Hudnall, our Chief Information Officer.

The Metropolitan Police Department believes this upgrade is vital to the safety of those who work in and visit the U.S. Capitol and therefore is of interest to both the District of Columbia and the entire Nation. The specific operational relationship between the Metropolitan Police Department and the U.S. Capitol Police regarding voice communication has a long history of partnership.

In 1992, our Department and the U.S. Capitol Police entered into a memorandum of understanding allowing for reciprocity in radio programming. At the time, both agencies used an analog-based system. Selected units with adjacent patrol areas were cross-programmed, allowing members to monitor and communicate on each agency's channels. However, the system shared a common trait of analog systems with poor signal strength, especially in many large buildings, inherent noise and heavy static and the inability to communicate in the subway system.

In 2003, the District of Columbia built a digital trunk radio network for all city agencies. This replaced MPD's analog system and now provides redundant service within a 35-mile radius. Interoperability is one of the most important joint issues between local and Federal partners.

In September of 2006, a mandatory Federal interoperability exercise was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security with National Capital Region agencies. The NCR partners, including MPD and U.S. Capitol Police, received one of the highest marks in the Nation. Our city system can also be viewed as a regional system.

Because of the digital platform, there is the ability to program access with additional users from partner agencies, both local and Federal. However, agencies using an analog platform are at a disadvantage. They cannot be programmed to have direct connections to a digital system.

Any upgrade to the U.S. Capitol Police radio system will have a direct positive impact on MPD operation and city events. Our agencies are daily partners and maintain a security event such as protest and large scale events such as national special security events. With the Presidential inauguration several months away to be followed by the State of the Union Address, the need for improvement is paramount. It is also very common for events to involve not only our two agencies but many other partners, such as the U.S. Park Police or the United States Secret Service.

Both of our agencies are parties to the National Capitol Region's Police Mutual Aid Operational Plan. An integral part of this agreement involves response and unified command when faced with multi-jurisdictional responsibility, a common factor for law enforcement in the District. Voice interoperability is a key to achieving efficient operations in the spirit of this agreement.

As we move toward a unified force in crime prevention and law enforcement within the National Capital Region, it has become more prudent now than ever before to effectively communicate with our law enforcement partners.

There is hardware that exists, and we do use it to create temporary patches, that can communicate with the U.S. Capitol Police.

However, this involves notification to the respective communication centers, and it is best served for planned or prolonged events.

Taken into account the need to continue rapid voice communications for unfolding situations and direct notifications, MPD did allow a select number of radios that were purchased by the U.S. Capitol Police to be programmed with MPD channels that allowed two-way communication with MPD's patrol districts and city-wide units.

However, an upgrade by U.S. Capitol Police would allow for our agencies to implement direct channel integration. MPD has similar connections with D.C. Fire and emergency medical services and the Metro Transit Police. It would also allow for selected U.S. Capitol Police users to have MPD channels programmed into their radios without having to purchase additional radios. And depending on the type of system, U.S. Capitol Police may be able to facilitate voice communication in Metro subways when needed.

All of our efforts are for one common goal, which is to protect the citizens, residents and visitors to the National Capital Region. Voice interoperability is an integral part of reaching these goals. And the Metropolitan Police Department supports any efforts to improve the communication systems for the United States Capitol Police.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions that you have.

[The statement of Chief Cathy L. Lanier follows:]

Government of the District of Columbia

Metropolitan Police Department

Testimony of
Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

Hearing on
"United States Capitol Police Radio Upgrades"

United States House of Representatives
Committee on House Administration
Subcommittee on Capitol Security
Honorable Michael Capuano, Chair

June 18, 2008

U.S. House of Representatives
1310 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Capuano, members of the Committee, staff and guests – thank you for the opportunity to present this statement on the need for upgrades to radios used by the United States Capitol Police. I believe that this upgrade is vital to the safety of those who work in and visit the US Capitol, and therefore is of interest to both the District of Columbia, and the entire nation.

The specific operational relationship between the Metropolitan Police Department and the US Capitol Police regarding voice communication has a long history of partnership. In 1992, our Department and the United States Capitol Police entered into a Memorandum of Understanding allowing for reciprocity in radio programming.

At the time, both agencies used an analog based system. Selected units with adjacent patrol areas were cross programmed allowing members to monitor and communicate on each agency's channels. However, the systems shared a common trait of analog systems with poor signal strength (especially in many large buildings), inherent noise and heavy static and the inability to communicate in the subway system.

In 2003, the District of Columbia built a Digital Trunked Radio Network for all city agencies. This replaced MPD's analog system and now provides redundant service within a 35 mile radius. A backup transmitter system uses microwave technology and can provide service within the general boundaries of the Beltway if needed.

Interoperability is one of the most important joint issues between local and federal partners. In September of 2006 a mandatory federal Tactical Interoperability Exercise was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security with National Capitol Region agencies. The NCR partners, including MPD and US Capitol Police, received one of the highest marks in the nation.

Our city's system can also be viewed as a regional system. Because of the digital platform, there is the ability to program access for additional users from partner agencies, both local and federal. However, agencies using an analog platform are at a disadvantage. They cannot be programmed to have direct connections to a digital system.

Any upgrade to the US Capitol Police radio system will have a direct, positive impact on MPD operations and city events. Our agencies are daily partners in maintaining general security, and handling events such as protests and large-scale events as National Special Security Events. With the Presidential Inauguration seven months away, to be followed by the State of the Union address, the need for improvement is paramount. It is very common for events to involve not only our two agencies but many other partners such as the US Park Police or the United States Secret Service.

Both our agencies are parties to the National Capital Region's Police Mutual Aid Operational Plan. An integral part of this agreement involves response and Unified Command when faced with Multi-Jurisdictional Responsibility, a common factor for law enforcement in the District. Voice interoperability is a key to achieving efficient operations and the spirit of this agreement. As we move toward a unified force in crime prevention and law enforcement within the National Capital Region, it has become more prudent now than ever before to effectively communicate with our law enforcement partners.

Although the incompatibility of our systems does not allow direct programming, interoperability is available through different methods: The Police Mutual Aid Radio System (PMARS) connects call centers, including the US Capitol Police. It is one of the oldest interoperability tools in the region. This program is administered through the Council of Governments. It allows 911 centers to be connected to each other's radio systems and can be activated very quickly. It is most frequently used during unfolding incidents such as vehicle pursuits

Another tool is to create a patch using hardware that allows different agencies to communicate on a separate channel. A common device capable of creating patches and used on MPD's Command Bus and at the city's Unified Communication Center is an ACU 1000. However, an issue that arose between the US Capitol Police and MPD involving patches with the new system was the loss of encryption. Selected channels on the MPD network are encrypted. Because of the analog base, if MPD interfaces with US Capitol on an encrypted channel, the encrypted ability is lost and that channel can be monitored by a scanner.

Enabling a patch involves notification to the respective communication centers and is best served for planned and/or prolonged events. Taking into account the need to continue rapid voice communications for unfolding situations and direct notifications, MPD allowed a select number of radios purchased at US Capitol Police expense to be programmed with MPD channels that allow two way communications with MPD's Patrol Districts and Citywide Units.

However, an upgrade by US Capitol Police would allow for our agencies to implement direct channels that would not involve patching. MPD has similar connections with DC Fire and Emergency Medical Services and Metro Transit Police. It would also allow for selected US Capitol Police users to have MPD channels programmed into their radios without having to purchase additional radios. And depending on the type of system, US Capitol Police may be able to facilitate voice communication in Metro subways when needed.

All of our efforts are for one common goal, which is to protect the citizens, residents, and visitors to the national capital region. Voice interoperability is an integral part of reaching these goals and the Metropolitan Police Department supports any efforts to improve the communications systems for the United States Capitol Police.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions that you have.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you,Commander.

And we will have Dr. Boyd from the Department of Homeland Security.

STATEMENT OF DAVID BOYD

Dr. BOYD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee.

As the members of this subcommittee are well aware, the ability to communicate is essential to the success of any emergency response operation. For that reason, a key mission of the Department of Homeland Security is to strengthen interoperability by developing tools such as technologies, reports and guidelines, best practices, methodologies, and voice and data messaging standards, and by testing communications equipment to those standards.

But any successful interoperable communication solution requires a focus on user needs and requirements, so we rely on both practitioners and policymakers across disciplines, jurisdictions and levels of government to ensure that our work is aligned with actual responder needs. We believe this focus on the practitioner level has done much to improve interoperability since the attacks of 2001, but more remains to be done.

We developed the Interoperability Continuum to outline what it takes to achieve interoperability, which the House Homeland Security Committee tells us they have seen in virtually every communication center in the country and which has also been adopted by Canadian public safety.

We completed a National Interoperability Baseline Survey and published the first national Statement of Requirements for Public Safety Wireless Communications and Interoperability to serve as a guide for agencies developing their own requirements. Each major urban Metropolitan area now has a Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan scored by DHS, and all 56 States and territories have Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans.

The DHS Office of Emergency Communications will shortly release the first National Emergency Communications Plan which is informed by national principles developed by practitioners at every level of government, and we are initiating pilot evaluations of a multi-band radio capable of bridging all the public safety spectrum and modes.

Our core strategy aims at building a system of systems so that separate agencies can join together using interface standards and compatible procedures and training without having to discard huge investments in existing infrastructure.

Our experience working with practitioners has led us to believe there are a number of issues agencies must understand in building any communication systems, among which are these:

Agencies must be able to articulate exactly what they need in requests for proposals and contracts. This will be especially important for any new system in the Capitol, because the nature of the Capitol campus and its construction makes communications within and between buildings and in tunnels and subways particularly challenging and because the National Capital Region has one of the most difficult radio frequency interference environments in the world.

Agencies must not assume digital systems are always superior to analog systems, that digital systems are somehow immune to interference, or that systems must necessarily be all digital or all analog. In some situations, digital systems can be more susceptible to interference than analog systems, and interference can often have more severe consequences for digital signals. And sometimes hybrid systems may offer more reliable capabilities. Digital systems are the future of communications, but they are not a panacea. Effective requirements gathering and sound systems engineering principles remain the most fundamental elements of any successful system development.

A thorough testing, evaluation, and acceptance process should be carefully spelled out in both RFPs and contracts, and demanding testing must be conducted before acceptance, not in a laboratory or factory but in actual operational use. When new systems fail in the field, it is generally because they were accepted from the vendor without adequate testing.

Whenever possible, agencies should purchase proven technologies that have been fully tested and piloted by the vendor in environments that are as much as possible like that of the purchasing agency, and that are early enough in the technology lifecycle to both meet current interoperable communications standards and to continue to be supported for at least 10 to 15 years after acceptance.

Agencies should consider broader requirements, and design the system so it can support other critical functions such as encryption and the transmission of critical text imagery and other information.

Agencies should develop a lifecycle strategy that allows for graceful updates as enhanced technologies and capabilities become available. Such a strategy will allow the agency to extend the life of the system by making more gradual infrastructure investments over time instead of being forced to make a wholesale replacement once the system is so old it verges on collapse.

Finally, all of the critical factors for a successful interoperability solution identified in the continuum—governance, standard operating procedures, training and exercises, and integration of the system into daily operations—as well as technology—must be addressed in agency planning.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

[The statement of Dr. Boyd follows:]

Statement for the Record

Dr. David Boyd
Director; Command, Control and Interoperability Division
Science and Technology Directorate
Department of Homeland Security

Before the U.S. House
Committee on Administration
Subcommittee on Capitol Security

June 18, 2008

Introduction

Good afternoon Chairman Capuano, Ranking Member Lungren, and Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to speak to you today.

The Science and Technology Directorate's Command, Control and Interoperability Division (CID), within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), uses a practitioner-driven approach to create and deploy information resources that enable seamless and secure interactions among homeland security stakeholders. Our goal is to ensure that stakeholders have comprehensive, real-time, and relevant information to protect the Nation.

As the members of this Subcommittee are well aware, the ability to communicate is essential to the success of any emergency response operation. Emergency responders need to share vital data and voice information across disciplines and jurisdictions to successfully respond to day-to-day incidents and large-scale emergencies. A key mission of DHS is to strengthen interoperability by developing tools, such as reports and guidelines; best practices; and methodologies that emergency response agencies can use immediately. We are also developing both voice and data messaging standards, and testing communications equipment to those standards. But the key to a successful solution to improve interoperable communications requires a focus on user needs and requirements, so we rely on both practitioners and policy makers across disciplines, jurisdictions, and levels of government to ensure that our work is aligned with responders' needs.

We believe our focus on the practitioner level has done much to improve interoperability since the attacks of 2001.

- In 2004, the Office for Interoperability and Compatibility (OIC) developed the Interoperability Continuum to help policy makers understand what it takes to achieve interoperability: effective and collaborative governance, well designed standard operating procedures, well implemented technology, meaningful training and exercises, and the integration of all of these into day-to-day operations.
- In 2006, we conducted the National Interoperability Baseline Survey which revealed that approximately two-thirds of emergency response agencies use interoperability to some degree in their operations.
- In 2007, each of the major urban/metropolitan areas developed a Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan.
- Earlier this year, all 56 states and territories developed Statewide Communications Interoperability Plans.
- Later this year, the DHS Office of Emergency Communications will release the first *National Emergency Communications Plan*, which is informed by national principles developed by practitioners at every level of government.
- Later this year, we will pilot a multi-band radio which is capable of operating across different radio frequencies, across different modes—including both digital and analog—and with radios developed by different manufacturers.

System of Systems Approach

With emergency response practitioner input, we developed a core strategy for improving interoperability for the Nation's emergency response community which is focused on promoting a "system of systems" approach using standards-based communications equipment. This approach gives emergency response agencies the flexibility to select equipment that best meets their unique technical requirements and budget constraints; it also allows systems owned and operated by different emergency response agencies that may be developed by different manufacturers to communicate. The long-term strategy aims at building a system of systems so that separate agencies can join together using interface standards and a set of compatible procedures and training without having to discard huge investments in existing infrastructure. Ultimately, emergency responders operating on a system of systems will be able to respond to an incident anywhere in the Nation, using their own equipment, on any communications system, and on dedicated public safety spectrum as needed and authorized. We are working on identifying solutions that advance the emergency response community toward a reliable system of systems—one that is not dependent on any single technology but instead allows for maximum flexibility within and among numerous technologies.

Procuring a New System

The vast majority of vendors want to manufacture and sell effective products that allow emergency responders to better communicate. But often times, emergency response agencies lack the technical personnel required. As a consequence, we have focused on building tools to help agencies effectively communicate their requirements to the manufacturers and we have worked directly with many agencies to help them make wise communications systems purchases. This experience has highlighted for us several issues that need to be considered by any emergency response agency considering the procurement of a new system:

Requirements

First, the agency has to comprehensively identify and describe its system and operational requirements. Agencies must be able to articulate exactly what they need, both in the request for proposals and in the contract so responding vendors know what they must be able to do, and so the agency knows what it must demand from its new system. This will be especially important for any new system in the Capitol, because yours is an unusual environment. The nature of the Capitol campus and its construction makes communications within and between buildings challenging; communications in tunnels and subways require especially robust designs; and because the National Capitol Region is one of the most RF intensive places on Earth—that is, it has different transmitters in operation all the time—interference, both direct and indirect, are unusually severe. To help local agencies identify requirements, practitioners worked with us to develop a national Statement of Requirements (SoR) for Public Safety Wireless Communications and Interoperability which provides a comprehensive set of emergency response communications requirements that can be used as a model for the development of specific agency requirements.

Digital vs. Analog

Some vendors have suggested that digital systems are always superior to analog systems and that digital systems are essentially immune to interference. While we are moving into a digital world because it offers a number of significant advantages, digital radios do not necessarily solve all the problems faced by emergency responders. For example, in some situations, digital systems can be more susceptible to interference than analog systems, and interference can have more severe consequences for digital signals. While interference in an analog radio system may result in dropping words or parts of words, interference in a digital system can block communications entirely. For example, firefighters report that background noise, such as sirens, helicopters, breathing apparatus, or alarms, can cause unintelligible audio in portable, two-way digital radios. We are working with the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, manufacturers, and fire service leaders to identify the causes of and potential solutions to this critical problem. Digital systems are the future of communications, but they are not a panacea. Effective requirements gathering and sound systems engineering principles remain the most fundamental elements of any successful system development.

Testing and Acceptance

In addition to firm and detailed requirements, a thorough testing, evaluation, and acceptance process must be established before a contract is awarded and should be carefully spelled out in the contract. It is essential that agencies and vendors clearly understand the expectations for the new system as well as potential obstacles and that robust, demanding testing be conducted—not in a laboratory or factory, but in actual operational use—to ensure the new equipment really satisfies requirements and is fully operational. Testing of this kind should include individual component testing and end-to-end system testing to ensure all portions of the system work together and meet the specified requirements. When new systems fail in the field, it is almost always because they were accepted from the vendor without adequate, demanding testing.

Proven Technology

When possible, agencies should purchase a proven technology that has been fully tested and piloted by the vendor in other emergency response environments that are as much like the environment in which the purchasing agency will be using the equipment as possible. They should also purchase technology early enough in the technology lifecycle so that it meets current interoperable communications standards; the vendor can also include in the contract an agreement that the system will continue to be supported for at least 10-15 years after acceptance.

Beyond Voice

Although we usually think of voice communications when discussing radio interoperability, agencies should also consider broader requirements and design the system so it can support other critical functions, such as the transmission of critical text, imagery, and other information.

Lifecycle Strategy

Finally, agencies should develop a strategy that will allow for updates to the system. A lifecycle approach to the design of the system can help ensure the system can be gracefully updated as enhanced technologies and capabilities become available. Such a strategy will allow the agency to extend the life of the system by making more gradual infrastructure investments over time instead of being forced to make a wholesale replacement once the system is so old it verges on collapse.

Conclusion

Interoperability is not solely a technology problem that can be solved with just the "right" equipment or the "right" communications system. All of the critical factors for a successful interoperability solution—governance, standard operating procedures, training and exercises, and integration of the system into daily operations—*as well as* technology—must be addressed.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you, Mr. Boyd.

Mr. Souder, the Director of Public Safety and Communications for Fairfax County.

STATEMENT OF STEVE SOUDER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS, FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA, MEMBER, ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICIALS INTERNATIONAL

Mr. SOUDER. Good afternoon and thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee on Capitol Security, for the opportunity this afternoon to speak with you about my knowledge regarding the efforts of the United States Capitol Police to upgrade their current and legacy radio system.

On June 10th of this year, I had the opportunity to meet with several representatives of the United States Capitol Police. At that time, based on the detailed information they provided me to upgrade their current radio communications system, I am prepared today to testify before the subcommittee in the following seven areas:

One, the need for adequate and reliable and secure command and control radio communications for law enforcement and security applications presently and in the future for what is by anyone's standard one of the most important and most unique law enforcement agencies in the United States of America, the other one being 16 blocks away.

Number two, current and rapidly expanding data communications applications in fixed, mobile, and portable devices.

Third, interior and exterior radio signal propagation coverage and quality within the Capitol building, the associated buildings on this Hill, including below ground areas, garages and tunnels, and an acceptable above ground wider area coverage within the National Capital Region.

Interagency radio communications, interoperability, including local and Federal partner public safety, law enforcement, fire-rescue, emergency management, and emergency medical service agencies. Compliant with the standards and the recommendations contained in APCO Project 25 relating to interoperability and disparate radio systems and technologies.

Six, scalable and expandable radio system design, equipment, and capability.

And lastly, to address the chairman's comments earlier, incorporate proven and effective project management, contract compliance, vendor performance expectations, and change order and cost containment safeguards.

I hope that the information that I can provide today will be helpful both to the subcommittee and the United States Capitol Police in our collective effort to secure the best possible radio communications system in furtherance of protecting the public and legislative branch of our great country, the United States.

[The statement of Mr. Souder follows:]

Statement of

Director Steve Souder, Department of Public Safety Communications and Member of the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials – International

Before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITOL SECURITY
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
on

JUNE 18, 2008

Hearing on the "United States Capitol Police Radio Upgrades"

Thank you, Chairman Capuano, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee on Capitol Security for the opportunity to speak to you today about my knowledge regarding the efforts of the United States Capitol Police to upgrade their radio system.

On June 10, 2008, I had an opportunity to meet with several representatives of the United States Capitol Police. At that time, based on the detailed information they provided to me to upgrade their current radio communication system, I am prepared to testify before the Subcommittee on the following areas:

1.) The need for adequate, reliable and secure command and control radio communications for law enforcement and security applications presently and in the future.

2.) Current and rapidly expanding data communications applications in fixed, mobile and portable devises.

3.) Interior and exterior radio signal propagation coverage and quality within the Capitol, building, associated buildings, including below ground areas, garages and tunnels and an acceptable above ground wider area of the National Capitol Region (NCR).

4.) Inter-agency radio communications interoperability including local and federal partner public safety, Law Enforcement, Fire-Rescue, Emergency Medical Service and Emergency Management agencies.

5.) Compliant with the standards and recommendations contained in APCO Project 25 relating to interoperability and disparate radio systems and technologies.

6.) Scalable and expandable radio system design, equipment and capability.

7.) Incorporate proven and effective project management, contract compliance, vendor performance expectations and change order and cost containment safeguards.

I hope that the information that I provide today will be helpful to both the Subcommittee and the USCP in our collective effort to secure the best possible radio communication system in furtherance of protecting the public and the Legislative Branch of our great county the United States of America.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you, Mr. Souder. I just have what I consider to be basic questions. And I guess the first question I am going to ask of each of you, first of all, whether you know enough about the specific proposal the Capitol Police are discussing or considering to comment? And if you don't, you don't. That is fine. But if you do, I would like to know what you think of the system. And if you were to become the Chief of the Capitol Police tomorrow would you pursue a similar or comparable effort to purchase the system that is under consideration?

And we will start with you, Commander Crane.

Mr. CRANE. No, I have not seen the specs or proposal for the current system, but if I was in a leadership position here I would try and look and see if anything could be reviewed.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Boyd.

Dr. BOYD. I also don't have all of the detailed specs, although we have been briefed by the Capitol Police. I can tell you two things. One is that it looks to me like the methodology and the process they are following is exactly the sort of thing that I taught in those days when I taught at the university about how to go about building a system. So I think they are going through the right steps, and I think they are doing the right thing.

As for cost, without looking at and doing a detailed survey that is hard to do. But what I did ask my staff to do was to not look just at the places the Capitol Police have gone to, but to look at a couple of other places that I thought might give you some notion of what reasonable cost ranges are. One, I can give you is an example of a traditional, typical department that is not going to be analogous to the Capitol because it doesn't have a number of the problems the Capitol does. The Portland, Oregon area, where one subset of that system, the Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency, which they are in the process of moving to an 800 megahertz system with about the same number of subscribers is an example. But it is a terrestrial system, it is not in tunnels, and it doesn't have the building campus kinds of issues. Their estimate is that they will need about $36 million.

One that is probably a little closer but still doesn't have all the same issues that the Capitol Police have, is WMATA, the Metro system here in D.C. If you think of that one with its tunnel systems and the parking garages that it has to worry about, their estimate right now is about $86 million. And I would suggest that they do not have some of the cost issues there that you will have here. Nobody cares a whole lot whether you drive a nail in the wall in the subway or in a parking garage and hang a cable on it. But you are not going to do that in these buildings. So when you think about what it is going to take in historic buildings like this to install a system and its infrastructure, and when you consider that fiber links between buildings require excavation in a notoriously complicated area, with traffic that can't be blocked very much and all of the other things that will go with that, I suspect there are some cost issues here that no matter how diligently they design the project may surprise you as you go forward.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Souder.

Mr. SOUDER. And I also only know what I have been briefed on. But what I have been briefed on gives me a high level of comfort

that the approach that has been taken to date, that of doing a strong analysis about what the current problems are and what the needs are in the future, combined with obtaining the outside expertise of the consulting firm that has a lot of experience in this field, as well as looking at some of the pitfalls that have befallen some systems that have been installed throughout the Nation where this same very deliberate approach was not taken, and the end result was not as expected, it would seem to me from what I have been briefed on and what I have read that those lessons have been well learned by this group both within the Capitol as well as within the consultant they have acquired the services of, and that the plan that has been put forward as a solution to these legacy problems that the Capitol Police are dealing with is a strong plan. But I think it is only as strong as the vendor's ability to meet that expectation and to ensure that what the consulting vendor has recommended the installation vendor, whatever company that may be that is actually put under contract to install this system, can fulfill that expectation so that there aren't the surprises that unfortunately have occurred elsewhere in the country when it comes to did the system really provide what the end user needed and did it provide what the RFP, if you will, said it should provide.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you very much. Mr. Lungren.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you. I would ask all three of you this question. And that is, is there any dispute that they ought to be moving from analog to digital?

Dr. BOYD. No. I personally think you have to go to a digital environment. That is the future. It provides features you can't get in an analog world. The only comment I make about the analog piece is that there are sometimes issues where you may want to think about a hybrid linkup. For example, fire services are discovering some real difficulties with the existing line of vocoders. I think we will be able to fix that. We are working with the community now to try to come up with better standards, but current vocoder distortion makes communications very, very difficult for fire personnel. What I am suggesting is that as you go through the engineering and the requirements design, it is imperative you do testing and surveys to make sure you have the right solution. Ultimately, it must be a digital system.

Mr. LUNGREN. Any disagreement with that, Mr. Souder?

Mr. SOUDER. Not at all. In fact, everybody in the metropolitan area that is either at an interoperable radio system, usually in the 800 megahertz frequency, and they may have done that early on before digital became a solid option, or making a conversion from their analog to digital, and those newer sometimes that are being installed; namely, in Prince Georges County and elsewhere, including Arlington, are going digital.

So clearly, as the doctor said, it is the wave of the future, no pun intended. And clearly, to invest in any system other than a digital system would not be a step forward.

Mr. LUNGREN. You concur, Commander?

Mr. CRANE. Yeah, I concur with the approach that Dr. Boyd mentioned about a hybrid. When we converted to digital we had many partners, Federal and local, on analog systems. We had to keep an analog transmitter up for several years so that we could patch

them back into our digital system. So I agree that moving forward with digital and other methods is the best, but you have to always remember that some of your partners might not be able to come up to speed yet.

Mr. LUNGREN. If you have a situation in which, as I understand what the Chief said, that some costs were estimated out of there by NavAir that was sort of, as I understand it, upgrading the current system as opposed to bringing a new system in, is there any argument that could be made that we ought to upgrade the current system as opposed to moving into a newer system because upgrading the current system will get you at least incrementally—make some incremental progress in a shorter time span than putting in an entirely new digital-based system?

Mr. CRANE. I don't think upgrading an analog system, which you said was 25 years old, would show much improvement because of the age of the system. I am thinking of the transmitters involved.

Dr. BOYD. I think you would be throwing largely good money after bad. I would limit the Band-Aids to what you absolutely must do to cover what you need for that transition period, because you are not going to turn the existing system off until you are absolutely certain the new system can meet those requirements. But I would try to limit the investments in those Band-Aids only to what I absolutely had to have.

Mr. SOUDER. And I would concur with that also. There was an analogy made earlier in this testimony relative to buying a car. Clearly, we would not go to a dealership and expect to buy a 1985 model of car with a new digital dashboard. We would look to upgrade the entire vehicle. And that is exactly I think the approach that should be taken here.

Mr. LUNGREN. Dr. Boyd, I think you said something to the effect that you ought not to get unproven technology, you ought to get proven technology. Is there any lack of proven technology to put into a system such as would be required to meet the needs here of the Capitol?

Dr. BOYD. No, I don't think so. I think there is more than enough sufficient proven technology out there. Back in my Army days, before I retired, we used to refer to different levels of technology. You don't want bleeding edge technology. That is the stuff that you are going to put in place then and figure out if it really works well. You want something that has already worked somewhere. But you also want to make sure that it is early enough in its lifecycle that it has been well established, and that you know for sure will really work in environments that are as similar to yours as possible.

Mr. LUNGREN. Thank you very much, Mr. Capuano.

Mr. CAPUANO. Ms. Lofgren.

Ms. LOFGREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just appreciate that we are sitting in one of two places in the country that has had really a very effective intergovernmental effort to address interoperability. And the National Capital Region, I mean I have been very critical in some aspects of the Department of Homeland Security, as Mr. Lungren knows. But I think the National Capital Area's interoperability project deserves a lot of credit. I credit it. I mean it has really been very good. And the other project that has had

similar success is the Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Project that is identified as a pilot program by DHS.

So here is the question. There are really two questions, I guess, for this upgrade. One, do we want to have a communications system for the Capitol Police that works for them communicating with each other, that can be heard in the tunnels, that works? And I think the answer has to be yes. And that has to be a modern digital system. And the testimony we had both from you and the chief himself, you know, gives us the answer. But then there is a second question, which is the interoperability with other types of emergency personnel, other police agencies. We don't have a U.S. Capitol fire department. We don't need to be interoperable with them. We don't have a U.S. Capitol hospital system. I mean we need to be interoperable, and that is the thing, Mr. Souder, that you have worked on and others. So here is the question. I don't know that we have had the same working relationship with the Capitol Police that we have had with other police entities in the region. Would you envision a closer cooperation and support for the Capitol Police in the future on the interoperability issues? Could they become part of this regional team? Would that be a possible thing to do?

Mr. SOUDER. During the briefing that I was provided a week and a half ago, the issue of interoperability was raised by me because of the very question that you posed. And I was informed that interoperability was given a lot of consideration by both the Capitol Police in its initial internal analysis as well as in conjunction with the consulting firm that they ultimately hired. And there is interoperability provided for within the proposed system with those key stakeholder and partner agencies that this unique police department operates with on a daily basis and would most often have to operate with in an exceptional basis. That does not include the entire metropolitan region, if you will. But it does include entities, as you suggest, the District of Columbia Fire and EMS Department, the U.S. Park Police, and those other key agencies that are so much a part of the Federal family and presence here on the Hill and immediately adjacent to that.

Ms. LOFGREN. I would suggest that you always when you have an emergency is not the time to say I wish that we had had this discussion before, because if there were a major disaster you might also have a need to communicate with Fairfax County and Arlington County, for example, depending upon what happened. I am not suggesting that there is anything deficient in what has happened to date, but moving forward I think that it would be a helpful thing to have ongoing support and communication on the interoperability issue, it seems to me.

Dr. BOYD. I agree. And I think that needs to be designed in as they develop the system. What we tell agencies across the country, and all of our materials point at, is trying to work out how it is you are going to do this as you upgrade your systems. Probably the toughest nut to crack in this whole thing is governance. The Capital Region has done a pretty good job with this, and the Silicon Valley project, which runs out of my office, also has done a pretty good job in this arena. The hardest of all the pieces to crack has nothing to do with technology. It has everything to do with governance. It has to do with whether you really want to work together,

and the degree to which you are willing to do so, so that you can build a viable system of systems.

You are right that the Capital Region, just to give you an idea, has done a pretty good job with interoperability. I have been involved in it since about 1992. But I would suggest that if you think about when the initiative started, with the Air Florida crash in 1982, it has taken a longtime. When that crash happened they couldn't communicate because they didn't even share the same language, much less the same radios. They couldn't, for example, call for a HAZMAT unit and be certain they weren't going to get a pickup truck with two guys with push brooms and kitty litter. So they had to come up with a common language, as well as all of the technical solutions that go together. That means they have had 24 years to make all of this work. We don't want the rest of it to take that long, but it is important to understand that it is pretty complicated bringing so many different players together, as nobody knows as well as you do when you try to work on legislation. That human piece is going to be the toughest piece. My impression in the briefings I got from the Capitol Police is that they understand that, and that they are intensely interested in making that work. I would suggest, just as an outside observer, that the hardest part of this piece may very well be developing your internal Capitol governance over the different players that need to make use of this system.

Ms. LOFGREN. My time has expired, Mr. Chairman. I would think that as we move forward on this, the communication not only between the local agencies, but also the other Federal agencies; for example, the Secret Service and some other key elements, could also be a subject of improvement as we proceed. And I thank you and I yield back.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you, Ms. Lofgren. Gentlemen, I would like to ask a further question. And I am not sure, I don't know whether you are familiar with the letter that has been kind of making the rounds relative to the suggestion we should be saving a lot of money by piggybacking on the DOD system. And if you aren't familiar with it, if you are familiar with the concept. And I am particularly interested in your opinions, Commander. My understanding is the Metro just kind of upgraded a few years ago. And I am just curious, when that happened did you look at piggybacking on somebody else's system?

Mr. CRANE. No, Mr. Chairman. It is an entirely brand new system for the entire city agencies, not only the law enforcement agencies and fire department, but other agencies such as Emergency Management Department and Health, all the city agencies that use two-way communication. This is their radio system, and have all built new transmitters in the District of Columbia. So it was an entirely new system at a cost of $40 million. And about $28 million of that was through Homeland Security funds.

In terms of the letter circulating, I haven't seen it. I would feel uncomfortable if someone approached me about piggybacking on someone else's system, because then I am dependent on their engineers, their technical abilities. I would have to really see what that system is and what it can do. I think it is better to have what we have, is a unified system for the city, where we have a separate

agency, not the police department and not the fire department, but there is a separate city agency that was tasked with maintaining that system.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Boyd.

Dr. BOYD. I am not familiar with the specific letter, but I am a retired soldier who served on the Joint Staff and spent a full career in the military, and I would discourage that. I would discourage it for many of the same reasons the Chief has just talked about. But another one is that both the defense approach and defense priorities are necessarily different. The system would fall under a command that may have a set of missions that may require it to redirect the system just where the Capitol Police need it. The Defense agencies do not operate in the same way that police do. In fact, Capitol Police operations and the way they will use their communications systems are much more like the way the D.C. Metropolitan Police or the Fairfax Police will use it than they are like any other Federal agency, including the Department of Defense. That means you really need to think about building a system that meets your specific requirements and that is tailored to your very specific situation. The military approach is ideally suited for military applications, and military units. It is rarely properly suited for the kind of things public safety does.

Mr. SOUDER. And I would like to make the opinion of the panel unanimous. Thank you.

Mr. CAPUANO. Thank you very much, gentlemen. I appreciate it. And I again thank everybody who came. And I appreciate all the candor and the insight, because though I wasn't a radio expert when I started, I am now. And again thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 3:20 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[The information follows:]

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF

Chief Harlin R. McEwen

Chairman, Communications & Technology Committee
International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)

Before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITOL SECURITY
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 18, 2008

Hearing on the "United States Capitol Police Radio Upgrades"

Thank you, Chairman Capuano, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to submit written testimony for the Hearing to be conducted today.

My name is Harlin McEwen. I have dedicated nearly 50 years of my life to public safety, most of that in law enforcement. I am the retired Police Chief for the City of Ithaca, New York, and am also retired as a Deputy Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington, DC.

I serve as Chairman of the Communications and Technology Committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), a position I have held for almost 30 years.

Most recently, I was honored to have been elected to be Chairman of the Public Safety Spectrum Trust Corporation (PSST), a non-profit corporation formed under the laws of the District of Columbia. The PSST has a Board of Directors made up of representatives of fifteen of the major public safety organizations in the United States. The principal purpose of the PSST is to serve as licensee for the 700 MHz nationwide Public Safety Broadband License (PSBL), which was granted to the PSST by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on November 19, 2007. The license is for the 10 MHz of radio spectrum in the 700 MHz band that has been allocated by the FCC for

public safety broadband purposes and is intended to be one half of the spectrum that will be used to develop a shared commercial/public safety network.

On June 11, 2008, I was privileged to have participated by telephone conference call in a briefing conducted by the U.S. Capitol Police for the staff of the House Subcommittee on Capitol Security and to be updated on the recent efforts by the Capitol Police to upgrade the Capitol Police radio system.

From that briefing I am convinced that the U.S. Capitol Police have done the necessary preparation for making an informed decision to replace their outdated and failing radio communications system with a next generation state of the art system. Now they need the support of this Subcommittee and the Congress to appropriate the necessary funding.

I have known and worked with the Police Chiefs and other top executives of the U.S. Capitol Police for many years and often have been asked to provide them my advice on behalf of the International Association of Chiefs of Police on issues related to radio communications and other technology matters. For many years I also have known and worked with the Senate Sergeant at Arms, Terrance Gainer, and the House Sergeant at Arms, Wilson Livingood. I am aware of their untiring efforts to make sure that the U.S. Capitol Police are properly equipped and trained to perform their demanding duties.

I am very much aware that the U.S. Capitol Police are faced with an increasingly critical problem of using an outdated and technically deficient radio system.

In many ways, the U.S. Capitol Police are unique because they are providing police services in an environment different from most other agencies throughout the nation. In most police agencies, services are provided much of the time outside of buildings in a mobile environment. In the case of the U.S. Capitol Police, they are providing their services primarily inside of buildings and

underground which makes their radio communications needs much more challenging and expensive. It is my understanding that in-depth studies have been conducted that support the need for extensive building amplifiers and cabling in order for the Capitol Police to adequately communicate in the U.S. Capitol and associated buildings and grounds. This will result in a much higher cost for building a replacement system that will meet the needs of the Capitol Police in protecting their assigned area of responsibility.

We in the nation's public safety community have come a long way in the past few years – with the help of many of you here in Congress – to be in a position to play a constructive role in crafting a viable solution to our long-standing nationwide public safety and law enforcement mobile communications deficiencies.

In this regard I must mention an important initiative that is currently underway at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to craft the rules to build and implement a new nationwide public safety broadband wireless data network. This would be based on a Public/Private partnership and is not intended to be dependent on government funding but primarily on funding by the private partner who would build a new Shared Wireless Broadband Network (SWBN). This initiative is intended to provide for public safety a new nationwide wireless broadband service that will provide agencies like the U. S. Capitol Police access to next generation high speed data services. It will also have Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) push to talk capability to provide greater interoperability with other public safety agencies in the Capital Region and throughout the nation. Although this proposed system is not intended to take the place of traditional land mobile mission critical voice radio communications systems, it is intended to provide the necessary secure and reliable wireless data services required by today's public safety and law enforcement agencies.

In today's challenges as we face increasing threats of terrorism, the U.S. Capitol Police stand squarely on the line to protect the Congress and its employees and visitors and they need the best tools possible to accomplish this task.

I urge the Subcommittee to support the U.S. Capitol Police in their efforts to upgrade their current outdated and failing analog radio system with a modern digital voice communications system.

Please contact me if I can be of assistance to the Subcommittee as you further examine this urgent matter.