

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927  
Minority (202) 225-3641

June 15, 2016

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro  
Comptroller General  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

The Office of Emergency Communications (OEC), within the Department of Homeland Security, was established by law in 2007.<sup>1</sup> Among other things, the law tasks OEC with “foster[ing] the development of interoperable emergency communications capabilities by State, regional, local, and tribal governments and public safety agencies.”<sup>2</sup>

As part of discharging its statutory responsibilities, OEC supports various programs and organizations aimed at improving public safety communications and interoperability. In particular, OEC provides support to the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC). NPSTC is a volunteer federation of public safety organizations with a mission to improve public safety communications and interoperability. OEC also manages SAFECOM, which was formed in 2001, and whose mission also is to improve interoperability. As part of their larger efforts, OEC, NPSTC, and SAFECOM have focused on interoperability issues within existing public safety networks, namely Land Mobile Radio (LMR) networks.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has reviewed some of the issues surrounding emergency communications and the longstanding interoperability challenges with LMR networks. Given the limited amount of funding available, and the ongoing unresolved priority of ensuring interoperability for LMR, we are interested in making sure that funding is correctly focused.

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<sup>1</sup> See 6 U.S.C. § 571.

<sup>2</sup> 6 U.S.C. § 571 (c)(5).

In particular, we would like GAO to determine:

- (1) What organizations or programs OEC funds with missions focused on promoting interoperability of emergency communications;
- (2) The current funding levels for those organizations or programs;
- (3) The extent to which, if at all, that those organizations and programs overlap in membership or duplicate efforts being undertaken by other organizations, such as private associations and FirstNet's Public Safety Advisory Committee or other organizations; and
- (4) Stakeholders' views on the effectiveness of the efforts of those organizations and programs.

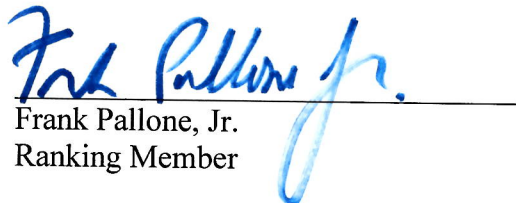
We request that you inform the Committee regarding any other issues of concern that you may uncover during your review. If you have any questions about this request, please have your staff contact Gene Fullano of the Majority staff at (202) 225-2927 or Gerald Leverich of the Minority staff at (202) 226-3400.

Sincerely,



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Fred Upton  
Chairman



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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Ranking Member