



THE COUNTY OF CHESTER



COMMISSIONERS

Carol Aichele
Terence Farrell
Kathi Cozzone

Department of Emergency Services
601 Westtown Road Suite 012
West Chester, PA 19380-0990
(610) 344-5000 Fax (610) 344-5050
Website: www.chesco.org/des

1 November 2010

Chester County Municipal Managers
Chester County Emergency Management Coordinators
Chester County Police Chiefs
Chester County Fire Chiefs
Chester County Ambulance Captains
Chester County ARES/RACES

Subject: Emergency Responder Credentialing System

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a previous communication we indicated issuance of the emergency responder credentials would begin sometime in September or October, 2010. We have been working closely with our vendor, Advanced Response Concepts, the United States General Services Administration (GSA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reach a point where we are ready to issue. Unfortunately we have been unable to reach this state of readiness in the time frame we were expecting.

The reason for the delay is a change to federal standards. GSA is responsible for the policy administration of a specific technical component of this system called a digital certificate. In May, 2009 the Federal Chief Information Officer (CIO) Council issued guidance on how to be interoperable with the Federal government from a policy perspective. As a corollary to this guidance, GSA began developing new technical specifications for state and local governments in order to be interoperable with the Federal government from a technical perspective. GSA has been unable to finalize these specifications which is what has our, and many other communities', programs on hold. Interoperability with the Federal government is an important part of our program. Not only does interoperability with the Federal government allow our Federal partners to be verified when arriving at our local emergency scenes, but it also creates the layer of interoperability between State and Local governments throughout the nation.

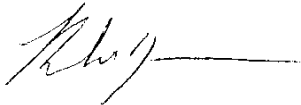
At this point we are uncomfortable giving a timeframe for GSA to reach completion of these standards, although they believe they will be done sometime in the 1st quarter of 2011. Instead of issuing cards that will not have the level of interoperability to ensure successful operational

use, we believe it is in everyone's best interest to wait until all requirements are in place and we are able to fully meet the requirements of the Federal government.

We share in your frustrations and appreciate your patience as we work through this layer of Federal bureaucracy.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact either of us.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Kagel
Deputy Director for Emergency Management
Chester County Dept. of Emergency Services
(610) 344-5000
rkagel@chesco.org



J. Patrick Davis
Law Enforcement Liaison
Chester County District Attorney's Office
(610) 344-4619
jpdavis@chesco.org

CC: DES Executive Staff
President, Advanced Response Concepts
President, Operational Research Consultants
Chair, Federal PKI Policy Authority
F/ERO Coordinator, FEMA Office of National Capital Region Coordination