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To Whom It May Concern

Our ref:

Your ref:

Date: 16 May 2006

Dear Sir or Madam

Improving The Resilience Of the Airwave Network

Airwave Solutions Limited provides all police forces in England, Wales and Scotland with a digital radio service under a Private Finance Initiative arrangement. It has replaced a variety of outdated and disparate force radio systems with a standard national service and has provided many benefits including improved clarity of speech, greater areas of coverage, encrypted communication and the ability for users to use their radios across geographical boundaries. There are currently some 158,000 police and associated agencies using the service operationally on a day to day basis. Airwave is an integral part of public safety arrangements within the United Kingdom and its importance has been enhanced further now that the Ambulance and Fire services in England have also contracted for the service, with Scotland and Wales expected to follow later this year.

Although the safeguards that are currently in place ensure a good degree of resilience within the Airwave network the need to safeguard public safety even further has resulted in the Home Office agreeing to spend some £180m on network resilience improvements that will also benefit both Ambulance and Fire. One of the consequences of this decision is that Airwave Solutions Limited will need to build some new radio sites or, in the majority of cases, make some changes to several hundred existing sites.

As the Non Departmental Public Department that manages the Airwave contract on behalf of the Home Office, the Police Information Technology Organisation would ask that the improvement to public safety be given appropriate weight in consideration of any planning applications from Airwave Solutions Limited made in connection with improving the resilience of the Airwave service.

Yours faithfully

Peter Main

Peter Main
Airwave Principal Programme Manager
Communications Directorate

