

1 BEFORE THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE  
2 STANDING COMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS AND  
3 GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
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4 PUBLIC HEARING ON  
5 "TROPICAL STORM IRENE" RESPONSE  
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6 Nassau County Office Building  
7 Legislative Hearing Room  
8 1550 Franklin Ave.  
9 Mineola, NY 11530

September 22, 2011  
9:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

10 PRESIDING:

11 Senator Carl L. Marcellino  
12 Chair

13  
14 SENATE MEMBERS PRESENT:

15 Senator John J. Flanagan  
16 Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr.  
17 Senator Owen H. Johnson  
18 Senator Kenneth P. LaValle  
19 Senator Jack M. Martins

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBERS PRESENT:

21 Assemblyman David G. McDonough  
22 Assemblyman Edward P. Ra  
23  
24  
25

|    |   |      |           |
|----|---|------|-----------|
| 1  | SPEAKERS:                                 | PAGE | QUESTIONS |
| 2  | Michael D. Hervey                         | 17   | 37, 47    |
| 3  | Chief Operating Officer                   |      |           |
| 4  | Long Island Power Authority               |      |           |
| 5  | John Bruckner                             | 17   | 37, 47    |
| 6  | President                                 |      |           |
| 7  | Long Island Transmission & Distribution   |      |           |
| 8  | Craig J. Craft                            | 93   | 96        |
| 9  | OEM Acting Commissioner                   |      |           |
| 10 | Edward P. Mangano (via written statement) |      |           |
| 11 | County Manager                            |      |           |
| 12 | Nassau County, New York                   |      |           |
| 13 | Mark Weiss                                | 115  | 123       |
| 14 | Mayor                                     |      |           |
| 15 | Village of Hewlett Harbor                 |      |           |
| 16 | James Altadonna                           | 127  | 134       |
| 17 | Mayor                                     |      |           |
| 18 | Village of Massapequa Park                |      |           |
| 19 | Mark Gelish                               | 137  | 146       |
| 20 | Owner                                     |      |           |
| 21 | Mac's Steak House, Huntington, NY         |      |           |
| 22 | James Brown                               | 147  | 151       |
| 23 | Business Representative                   |      |           |
| 24 | Robert Shand (via written statement)      |      |           |
| 25 | Business Manager                          |      |           |
|    | IBEW Local 1049                           |      |           |

1           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Good morning.

2           My name is State Senator Carl Marcellino.

3           I am the chairman of the New York State  
4       Senate Committee on Investigations, Taxation --  
5       a dirty word -- and Government Operations.

6           And, we're here for a hearing on the response  
7       and reaction to the "Tropical Storm Irene."

8           Right now, I would like everyone, if you  
9       would, to stand, and join us in the Pledge of  
10      Allegiance.

11          I pledge allegiance to the flag of the  
12      United States of America. And to the Republic for  
13      which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible,  
14      with liberty and justice for all.

15          Thank you.

16          Just so everyone knows, this hearing is being  
17      simulcast on the Senate website, and we are -- it  
18      can be accessed by computer. And, it will be  
19      posted, and can be reheard at a later date if you  
20      would like to.

21          I am joined today by my colleagues:

22          To my left, Senator Ken LaValle;

23          To my right, Senator Chuck Fuschillo,  
24      Senator Jack Martins, Assemblyman David McDonough.

25          And we have, Assemblyman Ra. Good friend,

1 and son of Joe.

2 Ladies and gentlemen: The purpose of this  
3 hearing is to investigate, what I consider to be the  
4 serious lack of planning and communication by LIPA,  
5 National Grid, in the wake of "Tropical Storm  
6 Irene."

7 This hearing will examine their response to  
8 pre-storm plannings, their response time, customer  
9 communication, and what could be done to improve  
10 their system, of both communication and repair;  
11 both, communicating with the public, their  
12 customers, and, communicating with the crews, who,  
13 in my opinion -- and I think I share -- it's shared  
14 by all of my colleagues -- the crews did a heck of a  
15 job.

16 They were out there in adverse conditions,  
17 and, in many cases, were risking their lives,  
18 working with active lines and power lines, and  
19 determining -- climbing up trees, and determining,  
20 what was good and what was bad, and, what was on and  
21 what was off.

22 They did a heck of a job out there. And, we  
23 congratulate them, we commend them, for their  
24 efforts.

25 But, we do believe there was a lack of

1 communication between central office and central  
2 systems, and the crews; and central office and  
3 central systems, and the customers.

4 People were not getting adequate service.  
5 They're not getting adequate communications and an  
6 adequate response when they had questions.

7 We could -- on August 28th, as we all know,  
8 the tropical storm -- and it was a tropical storm --  
9 "Irene" hit Long Island with winds around 60 miles  
10 per hour.

11 The storm blew down trees, power lines,  
12 resulting in over 500,000 customers without power;  
13 households without power.

14 It took LIPA and National Grid over  
15 seven days to fully restore all their customers, and  
16 with a majority waiting over four days for their  
17 electrical power.

18 I would like to read to you from a portion  
19 of the mission statement that LIPA posts on its  
20 website, and it puts out in press releases.

21 "Our mission is to provide highly reliable,  
22 economical electric service through our valued work  
23 force, with a commitment to superior customer  
24 service, accountability, and transparency in all of  
25 our operations while being recognized as a leader in

1 the advancement of efficiency and renewable energy."

2 They had a hurricane drill, which included --  
3 this comes from the 2010 news release, that was  
4 released in July, on July 14th.

5 "This year's hurricane drill will include new  
6 operating procedures and an updated communications  
7 plan that LIPA has implemented as a part of feedback  
8 the utility received from the March nor'easter and  
9 last month's microburst storm that affected  
10 thousands of customers in the town of  
11 North Hempstead.

12 "Highlights of the communication plan  
13 includes: A special phone system that allows LIPA  
14 to call customers experiencing outages, to update  
15 them on their status; as well as, a dedicated phone  
16 line, where customers can leave their number for a  
17 callback from LIPA, to receive the latest  
18 information on the restoration status of their home  
19 or business.

20 "Over the next few weeks, LIPA will also  
21 complete upgrades to its Storm Center website, that  
22 will provide better information, and will allow  
23 customers to report outages on-line rather than  
24 using a telephone."

25 Down the road -- further down on their sheet:

1            "To help minimize storm damage LIPA's  
2        electric system" -- "to LIPA's electric system, LIPA  
3        has an aggressive tree-trimming program throughout  
4        the year, to identify and trim tree limbs in  
5        rights-of-way and along the easements that could  
6        potentially cause outages during and after a storm."

7            Next paragraph.

8            "Immediately after the storm outages will  
9        be" -- "storm outages will be evidenced to LIPA via  
10       its commuter" -- "a computerized control system.  
11       LIPA's computer systems automatically detect  
12       neighborhood service interruptions, and begin the  
13       restoration process by alerting systems and  
14       operators of the outage."

15           This was also in the 2009 release, and also  
16        in the 2008 releases. And, in fact, the 2008 and  
17        2009 releases are identical in -- word-for-word.

18           My first question to the gentleman who are  
19        here from LIPA and National Grid is, basically,  
20        this: What the hell happened?

21           My customers are outraged.

22           They couldn't get through.

23           And when they got through, they couldn't get  
24        answers.

25           And when they got answers, they weren't

1 accurate.

2 The website was never updated in an effective  
3 way. Most of the time, it wasn't updated.

4 So, gentlemen, that is, basically, going to  
5 be my question: What happened? And why did this  
6 system, in my mind, and many of my constituents'  
7 mind, break down?

8 Senator Fuschillo.

9 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Thank you very much,  
10 Senator Marcellino.

11 I too share the exact same sentiments and  
12 comments regarding the hurricane, having  
13 representing the south shore of, Nassau, and  
14 Suffolk County, the Jones Beach waterline.

15 Now, my district, it appears was severely hit  
16 hard. And we faced the same frustration that you  
17 and many of my colleagues up here did.

18 Assemblyman McDonough and I share the same  
19 representative areas.

20 And I think the biggest frustration was, the  
21 lack of information, the lack of coordination.

22 We have a speaker that's going to testify  
23 here today from one of my villages, Mayor Altadonna,  
24 who is the mayor of Massapequa Park.

25 90 percent of the residents in his village



1       were without power, and he received no communication  
2       at all.

3               Him and I were talking back and forth, and I  
4       finally had to go to the Governor's Office to get  
5       some answers.

6               But, we experienced no coordination with  
7       LIPA, to the town of Hempstead, to the town of  
8       Oyster Bay. And, that was echoed from the  
9       supervisors themselves.

10              The County Executive did an admirable job.  
11       Was very visible in my district, bringing response  
12       crews in there as quickly as possible.

13              But, we faced the same comments from the  
14       hundreds of e-mails and phone calls we faced during  
15       that day.

16              One East Farmingdale resident wrote to me:

17              "I called LIPA three times, and each time, I  
18       was assured I would be called back with further  
19       updates. Never happened.

20              "I finally received the computerized update  
21       call early Friday night, and they told me that my  
22       power would be restored by 9 p.m. It was on 2 p.m.  
23       that day.

24              "I went to a family who was without power for  
25       seven days, told me, every time they called LIPA,

1       they received a different answer. Sometimes they  
2       would tell them, that, "Hey, maybe the power's on  
3       already, I don't know. Turn your lights on."

4             You know, unexcuse -- inexcusable, insulting.

5             The rate payers pay the highest utility rates  
6       in the country.

7             Comments from Senator Flanagan's Office,  
8       were, that a LIPA truck, or a truck from Michigan,  
9       was driving down, and heard a generator running on a  
10      block. And they stopped, by chance, to knock on the  
11      door. And they said, "Our paperwork shows that you  
12      have power. Why is your generator on?"

13            And this was a common occurrence, comments  
14      to -- that Assemblyman McDonough and I faced from  
15      residents in North Merrick.

16            One woman had -- was on oxygen. Called LIPA.

17            And LIPA said: Well, look, we don't have any  
18      generators. Maybe your fire department does. If  
19      not, you know, maybe go to the hospital.

20            Inexcusable.

21            Inexcusable, at a time of emergency, and a  
22      time of crisis.

23            I want to thank my colleague, the Chair of  
24      the Senate Investigations Committee,  
25      Senator Carl Marcellino, for holding this hearing.

1           And we, hopefully, look for some answers.

2           You know, LIPA just wasn't created yesterday.

3           And it seems like the residents of, Nassau, and  
4           Suffolk County, were better prepared than the  
5           administration itself.

6           So, I look forward to the responses, and the  
7           questions that will be posed today.

8           Thank you, Senator.

9           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you, Senator.

10          We've been joined by our colleagues,  
11          Senator Owen Johnson, and Senator LaValle.

12          I'm sorry, and Senator John Flanagan.

13          Senator LaValle.

14          SENATOR LAVALLE: Thank you.

15          I'm just going to be very, very brief.

16          Senator Marcellino said it all.

17          Certainly, we thank the workers who were out  
18          there in very difficult circumstances.

19          I think it was publicized, that, being a  
20          former teacher, I instinctively had to give you a  
21          grade, and I gave you an F.

22          You should be thankful that Donald Trump is  
23          not the chairman of your board, because he would  
24          say, "You're fired."

25          Thank you.

1           SENATOR MARCELLINO:   Senator Martins.

2           SENATOR MARTINS:   Thank you.

3           I'll echo the sentiments, obviously, the  
4       frustration, that I heard, and that my constituents,  
5       and I'm sure Assemblyman Ra's constituents, where we  
6       overlap, was, the lack of communication. That there  
7       was no perspective.

8           There were -- in many instances, in most  
9       instances, there was an inability to get through.  
10      And, certainly, when they were able to get through  
11      they were not able to have any kind of insight as to  
12      when the power would be restored.

13          Things went wrong. And I think we can all  
14      agree that things went wrong.

15          And I would welcome this opportunity to  
16      revisit what went wrong, so that we can work  
17      together, in terms of coming up with alternatives  
18      and solutions so that we can get things right next  
19      time.

20          I found that my office oftentimes became the  
21      recipient of a lot of the frustration -- I'm sure my  
22      colleagues share that -- because, we were answering  
23      our phones; we did have people who were receiving  
24      those calls. And, we, in turn, were forwarding  
25      those calls and those sentiments and those concerns,

1 and in cases where there were emergencies, as  
2 Senator Fuschillo just mentioned, getting answers,  
3 because people simply couldn't get through to LIPA.

4 So, let's reevaluate how we do things, let's  
5 reevaluate how LIPA does things.

6 Let's look at the fact, that, we do have  
7 tree-lined streets, and we love our tree-lined  
8 streets on Long Island. And, we do have overhead  
9 lines. But, there are things that can be done.

10 And I think, you would agree, and certainly I  
11 understand, there are things that can done, to  
12 better coordinate, to avoid these kinds of pitfalls  
13 in the future.

14 So, I'm looking forward to your testimony,  
15 and looking forward to the dialogue, in hopes of  
16 coming up with certain solutions.

17 Thank you.

18 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you,  
19 Senator Martins.

20 Senator Flanagan.

21 SENATOR FLANAGAN: Thank you very much,  
22 particularly to Senator Marcellino.

23 Having heard the comments of my colleagues,  
24 I'll just join in support of the -- many of the  
25 comments that I've heard, but add a couple of other

1 things.

2 I think, we are representatives of our  
3 constituents.

4 And, I know my own frustration, human nature  
5 being what it is, I can't stand when I have to go  
6 through automated menus when I'm trying to get  
7 somebody on the phone.

8 And it's kind of ironic, because it's pretty  
9 easy to call LIPA on a day like today. You have a  
10 question about a bill, you have something, it's  
11 relatively easy to get somebody on the phone.

12 So, the fact that it became so difficult to  
13 do so during a time of, crisis, if you will, is  
14 something that is disconcerting to us as elected  
15 officials, and to the public.

16 And, I don't say this in any selfish vein,  
17 but, part of the challenge we have, is that people  
18 don't think we're doing our jobs when we can't get  
19 answers, that we can go back to them.

20 And, even if it's an answer that they don't  
21 like, getting a straight, honest answer is worth its  
22 weight in gold.

23 So, I'm going to make one comment similar to  
24 Senator LaValle, and expand on it a little bit.

25 The people who were out there, in the field,

1 on the streets, working in those bucket-trucks, and  
2 doing all the hard work, and even the people in the  
3 call center, I think they did a fantastic job under  
4 very difficult conditions.

5 And we should not lose sight of that.

6 And I'm going to close with this comment:

7 I find it disconcerting that many members of  
8 the public, despite their frustration, were taking  
9 it out on the people who were trying to make their  
10 lives better.

11 I think we need to recognize, that, the  
12 linemen and the people who were out there, they're  
13 just trying to do their job. And, at some point,  
14 getting, 16, 18 hours of overtime, it's just not  
15 worth it.

16 So, I think, as the public, and a general  
17 constituency, we need to be more thoughtful about  
18 the people who are out there actually trying to  
19 restore the power.

20 Thank you.

21 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you,  
22 Senator Flanagan.

23 Senator Johnson has passed, and will listen.

24 Assemblyman McDonough.

25 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Thank you, Senator.

1 I just would like to add to what has already  
2 been said, and not to delay it any longer.

3 I'm looking forward to hearing the testimony,  
4 and mainly the answers to the questions that have  
5 already been raised.

6 Senator Fuschillo has said what happened in  
7 our shared district. And, I concur, that it's time  
8 to find out what has been done, and what will be  
9 done in the future.

10 So, thank you, Senator, very much.

11 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Assemblyman Ra.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Thank you, Senator.

13 Just to echo what the Senators here have  
14 said, I would like to thank Senator Marcellino for  
15 including myself and Assemblyman McDonough in this  
16 hearing today.

17 Me and Senator Martins do have major overlap  
18 to our districts, and I think he expressed the  
19 sentiment that we heard from our constituents who  
20 were calling our office, you know, all day long, in  
21 those days immediately following the hurricane.

22 And we know, it's been said before: They  
23 wanted information. They wanted to have some idea  
24 as to what was going on.

25 And, the information was all over the place,



1 from, no information at all, to inaccurate  
2 information. And, it became very frustrating, and  
3 very understandably so.

4 And I would -- like as some of any Senate  
5 colleagues have said, it ended up, in a lot of  
6 cases, being taken out on workers that were out  
7 there in not the greatest conditions, and unsafe  
8 conditions, working hard to restore their power.  
9 And, you know, at times, that was very unfortunate  
10 to see. But, these constituents from around our  
11 districts had no other place to turn.

12 And that was really the most frustrating part  
13 for them, as it was for myself.

14 So, I'm looking forward to hearing your  
15 comments on how we can -- what went wrong. And,  
16 also, how we can improve on this system, to make  
17 sure that the response is better, and the  
18 information that is shared is better, next time we  
19 have to deal with something of this nature.

20 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you, Assemblyman.

21 We've asked Mr. Hervey, and Mr. Bruckner  
22 from National Grid, to testify at the same time, so  
23 questions could be asked and answered of both of  
24 them. This way, we wouldn't have to go back and  
25 forth, waiting for their testimony.

1           We'll start with Mr. Hervey.

2           MICHAEL HERVEY: Thank you, Senator.

3           SENATOR MARCELLINO: I don't think your  
4 microphone is on.

5           Is there a way to get him power?

6           [Laughter.]

7           No pun intended.

8           MICHAEL HERVEY: Is that better?

9           SENATOR MARCELLINO: I see nobody got it out  
10 there.

11          MICHAEL HERVEY: Hello?

12          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Try the other one.

13          MICHAEL HERVEY: Good morning, Senator, and  
14 thank you.

15               My name is Michael Hervey, and I'm the  
16 chief operating officer of the Long Island Power  
17 Authority.

18               And I certainly welcome the opportunity to  
19 address you here today, and to clarify some issues,  
20 and explain some of the issues around storm  
21 restoration, and LIPA storm preparation and  
22 restoration efforts revolving around  
23 "Hurricane Irene."

24               I hope that in doing so that you'll --

25          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Let me just -- I'm sorry

1 to interrupt, but let me just correct that, because  
2 it wasn't a hurricane. It was downgraded to a  
3 tropical storm before it hit Long Island.

4 And I'm not trying to pick hairs, I'm not  
5 trying to split hairs, but our -- it helps if we  
6 refer to it for what it was, for, not only this --  
7 purposes of this hearing, for the record, but for  
8 the insurance purposes.

9 It was -- it's been declared by Mr. Lasky,  
10 the head of our financial services department, that  
11 it was a tropical storm, and the insurance company  
12 should treat it as such, not a hurricane.

13 So, please.

14 Thank you.

15 MICHAEL HERVEY: So, thank you.

16 I accepted this invitation today, even though  
17 LIPA had a previously scheduled trustee meeting for  
18 the same day. We did take the opportunity to move  
19 the trustee meeting back until a 12-noon start, but  
20 I very much appreciate the Committee's willingness  
21 to help work with the tight schedule today.

22 "Irene" was the worst storm to hit  
23 Long Island in the last 26 years, since  
24 "Hurricane Gloria" in 1985, and the third-worst  
25 storm in recent history.

1           "Irene" was not just a LIPA event, but rather  
2           an event that affected the entire Eastern Seaboard,  
3           and caused approximately 7 million customer outages  
4           in the U.S., from North Carolina to England --  
5           New England.

6           "Irene" first hit Long Island on August 27th  
7           at approximately 5 p.m., bringing pounding rain and  
8           sustained winds of 40 miles an hour, up to 50 miles  
9           an hour, and gusts up over -- to over 80 miles an  
10          hour, over a 20-hour period.

11          During those hours, dozens of communities  
12          were flooded, over 10,000 tree problems on the  
13          electrical system occurred, with uprooted and  
14          damaged trees causing, falling branches, toppled  
15          utility poles, downed power lines. And, ultimately,  
16          523,000 --

17          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Mike, I apologize for  
18          interrupting again, but that microphone is either  
19          low volume, and whoever controls it could raise it a  
20          little bit; or, if you could just move it forward, I  
21          would appreciate it, so that -- because we can  
22          barely hear you up here. I can imagine the audience  
23          is not getting much.

24          MICHAEL HERVEY: "Irene" didn't leave us  
25          until August 28th, at approximately 2 p.m. And it

1 left a trail of destruction that spanned the  
2 118-mile length and 23-mile width of Long Island,  
3 including outages to approximately 48 percent of  
4 LIPA's customers. This event impacted virtually  
5 every community on Long Island.

6 As of September 2nd, on that particular date,  
7 there were accounted, approximately 6,000 different  
8 locations in need of various types of degrees of  
9 electrical repair. That new number grew  
10 significantly over the post-storm period, and  
11 ultimately grew up to over 18,000 locations.

12 Notwithstanding these staggering statistics,  
13 LIPA and National Grid restored power to more than  
14 93 percent of the 523,000 customers affected by the  
15 end of the day, Friday, September 2nd, and  
16 99 percent by the end of the day, Sunday,  
17 September 4th.

18 On Monday, the 5th, all reported outages  
19 related to "Hurricane Irene" were restored.

20 The effort related to restoring power, on  
21 average, to approximately 100,000 customers per day,  
22 for the first five days after this type of  
23 devastating event, can only be described as  
24 incredible. And the tremendous amount of hard work  
25 done by the men and women of IBEW 1049, and all

1 other workers who contributed to the restoration  
2 activities on Long Island in connection with  
3 "Irene," must be respected, and their efforts  
4 valued, and certainly appreciated, by all of us.

5 We rely on their tireless efforts, on a daily  
6 basis, to restore our power, and, often, under very  
7 trying and dangerous conditions, as was acknowledge  
8 by the Senators, but never as much as after a  
9 devastating event like "Irene."

10 We must remind ourselves, that, without them,  
11 the rest is not possible.

12 I would also like to thank all of the other  
13 LIPA and National Grid employees, many of whom also  
14 went without power for several days, who worked  
15 endless extended shifts throughout the holiday  
16 weekend, and thereafter, to help to serve our  
17 customers.

18 And, in fact, many of those are still working  
19 on storm repairs today.

20 As you know, LIPA prepares for major storms  
21 and hurricanes all year round, which includes an  
22 annual drill, where LIPA and National Grid, plus  
23 county OEMs and others, participate in a hurricane  
24 exercise, broken down into three parts: preparation,  
25 restoration, and lessons learned.

1           LIPA also uses "lessons learned" to improve  
2           on its response, not only from the events that  
3           affect Long Island, but from those that occur across  
4           the nation.

5           Of note, was LIPA's reaction to the  
6           devastation caused several years ago by  
7           "Hurricane Katrina."

8           After "Katrina," LIPA spent time with the  
9           utilities affected, and reviewed best practices  
10          relating to their transmission and distribution  
11          systems, and restoration efforts.

12          Those lessons learned were incorporated into  
13          LIPA's Storm Emergency Response Policy, and the  
14          development of those policies as a common utility  
15          practice. And our guidelines have been shared, and  
16          adopted by many other investor-owned utilities.

17          LIPA and National Grid follow these emergency  
18          procedures, and tailored them to provide the level  
19          of preparedness and response necessary for a storm  
20          of "Irene's" magnitude.

21          In addition, our guidelines encompass  
22          procedures and decision matrixes for Categories 1,  
23          2, and 3, and 4 hurricanes.

24          These guidelines were also thoroughly  
25          reviewed and analyzed by the Board of Trustees'

1       Operations Committee as part of their review for the  
2       preparation LIPA undertook regarding  
3       "Hurricane Earl" last year.

4               For example: LIPA and National Grid began to  
5       monitor "Hurricane Irene" before -- more than a week  
6       before it is expected to impact Long Island, and  
7       began to prepare, according to those procedures and  
8       nationally recognized weather forecasts.

9               We closely monitored the storm's progress on  
10      an around-the-clock basis. And once it was  
11      determined that "Irene" would hit Long Island  
12      directly, LIPA and National Grid engaged in the  
13      largest storm response deployment ever in LIPA's  
14      history.

15              John Bruckner, president of Long Island  
16      Operations at National Grid, is here with me today,  
17      and he will be more able -- better able to more  
18      specifically address what steps were taken prior to  
19      the storm, as well as during and after.

20              But, suffice it to say, preparing for this  
21      type of event is a massive undertaking.

22              A few key aspects of that preparation  
23      included:

24              Using pre-established decision matrix to  
25      secure off-Island crews and housing, and housing



1       them here on Long Island;

2               Coordinating efforts with state, city, and  
3       county, and local emergency management  
4       organizations;

5               Restoration equipment, increasing  
6       inventories, and pre-stocking areas, such as, out on  
7       the East End, with wires, transformers, poles, and  
8       additional restoration equipment;

9               Also, securing electric and gas personnel for  
10       extended 16-hour shifts, canceling vacations, and  
11       calling personnel back from vacations;

12              And, adding call center personnel for  
13       support.

14              In total, 1,725 restoration line workers and  
15       tree-trimmers were available to commence restoration  
16       once weather conditions made it safe to perform the  
17       work on August 28th.

18              Prior to the onset of "Hurricane Irene," LIPA  
19       had put in a mutual-aid request for over  
20       2,500 off-Island contractors.

21              However, we didn't receive all of those  
22       personnel due to a demand in the region for over  
23       6,000 mutual-aid linemen up and down the  
24       Eastern Seaboard.

25              In addition, over 1,400 survey personnel were

1        deployed, to assess and survey damage, which is a  
2        critical component to the restoration process.

3                I note, that the staffing levels increased  
4        throughout the restoration, to approximately  
5        4,000 line workers and tree-trimmers, and more than  
6        7,500 people committed full-time to restoration  
7        efforts.

8                Prior to the storm arriving, LIPA began  
9        communicating with customers, elected officials, and  
10       special-needs facilities, its employees, and others,  
11       about being prepared for "Hurricane Irene."

12               LIPA communicated by means of e-mail blast,  
13       Web messaging, media interviews, newspaper  
14       advertisements, social-media outreach, including  
15       Facebook and Twitter, a letter to elected officials,  
16       and direct communications with the county executives  
17       and town supervisors in Nassau and Suffolk.

18               Personal calls were made to each of our  
19       registered critical-care customers, letting them  
20       know that the storm could impact their service for  
21       multiple days, and that they should be prepared to  
22       make alternate plans to ensure their safety.

23               Throughout the storm, while not as specific  
24       as anyone would want, LIPA's customer-communications  
25       and media-communications teams, in concert with

1 operations, developed and implemented a proactive  
2 customer and media communications effort, to try to  
3 set up expectations of what full restoration would  
4 be, and that it would take several days, up to a  
5 week.

6 To provide customers with as much information  
7 as possible, we also initiated more than  
8 800,000 outbound calls to customers.

9 We had ongoing communications across the  
10 spectrum that far exceeded any previous  
11 communications effort. And, we had messaging that  
12 was consistent across all communications channels.

13 During restoration, LIPA and Grid coordinated  
14 with nearly 100 villages, 13 towns, 3 cities,  
15 2 counties, and approximately 70 state and county  
16 legislatures.

17 In addition, before, during, and after  
18 "Hurricane Irene" passed, LIPA worked closely with  
19 the Nassau OEM and Suffolk FRES and various DPWs in  
20 what was the largest mobilization of forces enacted  
21 by LIPA and National Grid.

22 Nevertheless, while we believe our  
23 preparation efforts were swift, strong, and on par  
24 with our fellow utilities, we also understand our  
25 customers' frustration with not having the type of

1 access to restoration information that we always  
2 offer on a normal daily basis.

3 In these times of always-present real-time  
4 communications, our electric system and our  
5 restoration plans simply cannot provide the  
6 necessary detail during these massive events.

7 While LIPA's plan and capabilities are not  
8 unlike most other electric utilities, we certainly  
9 look forward to improving those channels of  
10 communications with our customers.

11 Over the next few weeks, LIPA's crews will  
12 continue to assess the full scope of damage left by  
13 "Irene," and make the necessary repairs to bring  
14 transmission and distribution systems back to its  
15 normal operating mode. And much of that work is  
16 ongoing to this date.

17 In the meantime, LIPA and National Grid are  
18 undergoing a thorough review of the processes used  
19 during "Irene," both internally and externally.

20 We need to analyze and understand what went  
21 right, such as the restoration of half a million  
22 customers in a one-week time frame; and what can be  
23 improved for the future, such as our communications  
24 information systems.

25 To that end, we are engaging in several

1 reviews.

2 First of all, a thorough review by the LIPA  
3 Board of Trustees' Operations Committee;

4 We'll also engage in an after-action review  
5 by LIPA staff of the entire events, and all the  
6 lessons learned;

7 We will engage in a review by LIPA's  
8 Major Storm Review Panel, which is an independent  
9 expert panel of out-of-state utility executives,  
10 emergency managers, businessmen, and  
11 consumer advocates.

12 We've already engaged in three productive  
13 workshops that were held with village mayors,  
14 city executives, town supervisors, and both county  
15 executives, who were all extended invitations, to  
16 offer recommendations to improve coordination, and  
17 ensure a uniform process of tree and debris removal  
18 across all municipalities.

19 We have committed to having roundtables with  
20 the departments of public works, and similar  
21 operational departments in the towns and villages.

22 We have also voluntarily committed to a  
23 review by the Department of Public Service,  
24 Public Service Commission, in conjunction with the  
25 review being conducted by all the other utilities in

1 the state.

2 We do have these types of appearances, such  
3 as, with the other Long Island major utilities  
4 before the Suffolk County Legislature Public Safety  
5 Committee. And that is intended to brief the  
6 Committee on LIPA's storm preparation and  
7 restoration and response procedures, and go ahead  
8 and look at the other issues that we could address,  
9 jointly, with other utilities.

10 And, of course, we'll have other forums, and  
11 take other invitations, as necessary.

12 Over the next few weeks and months, LIPA and  
13 Grid, as I'm sure all entities, will work together  
14 to better coordinate and communicate to the public,  
15 and to each other, in an effort to bring the  
16 Island's electric, gas, and other essential  
17 infrastructure services back to their normal  
18 operating state, and prepare for the next  
19 significant weather event.

20 I note, that, following FEMA reimbursement,  
21 which is expected to be at about 75 percent of the,  
22 approximately, \$175 million total cost of  
23 restoration, the net impact of "Irene" to LIPA's  
24 customers is estimated to be about 44 million.

25 "Irene" has not yet exhausted this year's

1 storm budget; and, so, the cost of "Irene" will be  
2 factored into the budget process for 2012 in the  
3 ordinary course of business.

4 Rest assured, however, that, like with all  
5 other non-discretionary costs, LIPA's goal is to  
6 mitigate any potential rate impact on its customers.

7 I really believe that once all of the reviews  
8 have been undertaken and concluded, it will be clear  
9 that LIPA's preparation and response for "Irene" was  
10 reasonable, appropriate, and achieved the desired  
11 goal of restoring power to hundreds of thousands of  
12 its customers, swiftly, safely, and consistent with  
13 sound policies and procedures.

14 And I'm equally confident, that, as with all  
15 undertakings of this magnitude, we will identify  
16 areas for improvement, and take all of those  
17 appropriate actions.

18 I really just want to stop, and thank you for  
19 giving me the opportunity to testify, and address  
20 the current concerns raised by the Committee.

21 LIPA is ready to provide additional  
22 information and support of my remarks here today,  
23 and if so desired. And, remains available to  
24 address any follow-up questions that you may have  
25 related to these, and other issues going forward.

1           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you.

2           Mr. Bruckner, I would just ask, that, as  
3           you testify, if you could, less read, and summarize,  
4           that would help, so we can expedite the questioning.

5           JOHN BRUCKNER: Can you hear me?

6           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Yes.

7           JOHN BRUCKNER: Just to make sure it's clear.

8           SENATOR MARCELLINO: You've got to speak up a  
9           little bit.

10          JOHN BRUCKNER: Is this better?

11          SENATOR MARCELLINO: That's much better.

12          JOHN BRUCKNER: Okay, thank you.

13          Chairman Marcellino, and distinguished  
14          members of the New York State Legislature, and all  
15          our elected representatives, and others in  
16          attendance: My name is John Bruckner. I am the  
17          president of Long Island Transmission and  
18          Distribution organization, and have approximately  
19          27 years of experience working for the utility on  
20          Long Island.

21          In my capacity, I serve as the local single  
22          point of contact, accountable for all services that  
23          National Grid provides to LIPA and its Long Island  
24          customer base under the current management services  
25          agreement.



1           I would like to start by thanking you all for  
2       taking the time to examine the restoration efforts  
3       of LIPA and National Grid, in response to "Irene"  
4       that recently caused severe damage to the electric  
5       system on Long Island, while impacting 7 million  
6       customers along the east coast of the U.S. and  
7       Upstate New York.

8           I would also like to acknowledge  
9       Mr. Patrick Foye, from the -- Governor Cuomo's  
10      Office, who spent many days on Long Island working  
11      very closely with our team.

12          As I reflect on the course of the events over  
13      the past few weeks, I cannot help but to feel a  
14      tremendous sense of pride.

15          "Irene" was the biggest storm to hit  
16      Long Island since "Hurricane Gloria" in '85. And in  
17      just over a week, we restored power to over  
18      523,000 customers affected.

19          This is a true testament to the talent and  
20      dedication of the men and women at National Grid,  
21      LIPA, and Local 1049 that worked tirelessly to  
22      restore power under, often, very difficult  
23      conditions.

24          At the same time, we recognize the  
25      frustration of LIPA's customers that lost power

1 during the storm, and I thank them for their  
2 patience during the restoration process, and I trust  
3 their understanding of the significance of the  
4 event, and the resulting damage it brought to the  
5 electric system on Long Island.

6 There will be always those who question and  
7 critique our storm response.

8 As a practice, and reflective of our  
9 dedication to continuous improvement, we will  
10 routinely welcome input to improve upon our  
11 performance.

12 Accordingly, we look forward to an honest and  
13 forthright assessment of our performance in the face  
14 of the difficult conditions that "Irene" brought.

15 Responding to an event, such as "Irene," it  
16 is immense undertaking. It takes much focus,  
17 coordination, and involves the execution of numerous  
18 activities.

19 Many of these activities go very unnoticed by  
20 the public.

21 To share some perspective, over the course of  
22 the week:

23 We responded to over 18,000 damaged locations  
24 associated with the 523,000 customer outages;

25 We secured and provided nightly lodging for

1 over 3,500 off-Island personnel;

2 And, we quickly established three temporary  
3 shelters with the Red Cross, at Suffolk Community  
4 College, Nassau Coliseum, Bay Shore High School, to  
5 bed over 2,500 line workers and tree-trim crews when  
6 hotel accommodations became scarce with the  
7 Labor Day weekend and the start of the U.S. Open and  
8 the Hampton Classic;

9 We dispensed over 250,000 gallons of fuel at  
10 remote locations -- hotels, shelters, staging  
11 areas -- to refuel the trucks on the overnight, to  
12 prepare them for the morning activities;

13 We established numerous material-handling  
14 sites and pre-staging areas across the Island,  
15 including using the runways at Brookhaven Airport  
16 and East Hampton Airports, as well as Bethpage State  
17 Park;

18 We made over 800,000 outbound calls to  
19 customers;

20 And, we assigned resources to towns and  
21 villages, to address wire-downs and road clearings,  
22 while trying to balance the demand for those  
23 resources with the restoration effort;

24 And, we replaced over 900 poles,  
25 1,000 transformers, 80 switches, while installing

1 over 1 million feet of wire and cable.

2 Activities such as these involve much  
3 preparation and planning, and a tremendous amount of  
4 effort is spent each year to train and drill our  
5 employees for their roles in such events.

6 National Grid employees serving LIPA, as well  
7 as National Grid employees from other business  
8 units, have a designated storm assignment in  
9 addition to their normal day job.

10 This regional presence allows us to leverage  
11 other state and regional resources rapidly to come  
12 to LIPA's aid.

13 During the course of the year, these  
14 employees participate in tabletop drills and  
15 emergency restoration field-training exercises that  
16 simulate actual events and provide the proper  
17 training to enable them to fulfill their roles  
18 during a storm.

19 In the case of "Irene", nearly  
20 5,100 Long Island and Downstate New York National  
21 Grid employees took on such roles, with  
22 approximately, 4,000, or 80 percent, of these  
23 resources coming from areas outside our electric  
24 operations organization.

25 In particular, these resources were

1       supplied --

2               SENATOR MARCELLINO:   Mr. Bruckner, let me  
3       just interrupt you.

4               JOHN BRUCKNER:   Sure.

5               SENATOR MARCELLINO:   You're saying here, that  
6       you have had 5,100 Long Island and  
7       Downstate National Grid employees, plus,  
8       approximately 4,000 from outside agencies?

9               You're talking, almost 9,000 people?

10              JOHN BRUCKNER:   No sir.

11              The 5,100 employees that are Long Island and  
12      Downstate National Grid employees, 4,000 of them, of  
13      those 5,100, is what I was referring to.

14              4,000 of the 5,100 -- 80 percent of those  
15      resources -- come from areas at National Grid  
16      outside the electric business.

17              SENATOR MARCELLINO:   So they weren't here?

18              JOHN BRUCKNER:   No, they were here.

19              They're here, specifically, in our gas  
20      business, our generation business, and our corporate  
21      services organizations, here, Long Island; and  
22      Downstate, in Brooklyn.

23              So, we utilize the resources that are outside  
24      the electric business to support the storm  
25      activities during a major event.

1           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Okay, I'm still trying  
2           to get a handle.

3           You have 5,100 employees.

4           You brought in, from out of state -- wait a  
5           second now.

6           They brought in, from out of state -- you set  
7           up lodging for 3,500?

8           How many actually got here from out of state?

9           I know there was a call on them from other  
10          areas, but, how many?

11          JOHN BRUCKNER: Yeah, I mean, the people that  
12          we brought in from out of state, are line workers  
13          and tree-trim contractors. That's different from  
14          these employees here.

15          The 5,100 employees, are the employees that  
16          support the logistics.

17          And, I'll get into that as I follow the  
18          testimony in the next few paragraphs. It will talk  
19          about, the function, and the roles, that these  
20          5,100 played, which is different from the resources  
21          we brought in from out of state.

22          The out-of-state resources were,  
23          predominantly, linemen and tree-trim contractors.  
24          And, that we had to provide bedding for those  
25          resources.

1           The 5,100 employees that we have here on  
2           Long Island, and in Brooklyn, do not require a  
3           lodging. They're here as employees, but they work  
4           in our other businesses --

5           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Who do they work for?  
6           They work for, LIPA? National Grid? -- who?

7           JOHN BRUCKNER: They work for National Grid.  
8           They're National Grid employees.

9           SENATOR MARCELLINO: According to  
10          Mr. Hervey, we had 1,725 on-Island and off-Island  
11          people doing restoration.

12          JOHN BRUCKNER: I think --

13          SENATOR MARCELLINO: I'm just trying to get  
14          the numbers right --

15          JOHN BRUCKNER: Yeah, I think --

16          SENATOR MARCELLINO: -- because, I'm hearing  
17          numbers all over the place, and I'm not getting a  
18          clear picture.

19          JOHN BRUCKNER: -- the 7,500 employees that  
20          were -- or, workers that were working this  
21          restoration effort.

22          SENATOR MARCELLINO: How many of them  
23          actually work for National Grid?

24          JOHN BRUCKNER: 5,100.

25          SENATOR MARCELLINO: How many of them work

1 from LIPA?

2 JOHN BRUCKNER: I couldn't answer that  
3 question.

4 MICHAEL HERVEY: LIPA has, approximately,  
5 90 employees.

6 SENATOR MARCELLINO: So, LIPA has  
7 90 employees, totally; and National Grid has  
8 5,100 employees.

9 So, basically, the responsibility for the  
10 response, was National Grid's, not LIPA's?

11 Am I right?

12 JOHN BRUCKNER: The work effort was performed  
13 by National Grid employees.

14 SENATOR MARCELLINO: No, I didn't ask you  
15 that question.

16 Whose responsibility is it?

17 MICHAEL HERVEY: Well, I think, clearly, this  
18 is -- you know, I think you're aware -- I know  
19 you're aware of the public-private partnership that  
20 we have.

21 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Yeah, I'm aware of it.  
22 I was here. I was in the Senate when LIPA was  
23 created.

24 MICHAEL HERVEY: So, LIPA owns the  
25 transmission distribution system. LIPA approves the



1       action that National Grid takes. We -- it's  
2       underlying the LIPA procedures for doing this work.  
3       And then, ultimately, all of the work is carried out  
4       by National Grid employees.

5               SENATOR MARCELLINO: So, you were directing  
6       the traffic, and they were the traffic?

7               Am I right?

8               I just want to find out who's in charge here.

9               MICHAEL HERVEY: Well, yeah, so --

10              SENATOR MARCELLINO: Who's the general?  
11       Who's the lieutenant? Who's the private?

12              MICHAEL HERVEY: In the storm-restoration  
13       activity, for the lead on that activity, is,  
14       John Bruckner takes the lead in that  
15       storm-restoration activity, but it's under the  
16       direction of LIPA.

17              So, the day-to-day direction of the  
18       National Grid work force comes from the  
19       National Grid lead, John Bruckner.

20              And, the overall activity, of course, the  
21       public face of the restoration, is LIPA, you know,  
22       using the approvals that LIPA has given  
23       National Grid to execute.

24              SENATOR MARCELLINO: Okay. Thank you.

25              JOHN BRUCKNER: So, the work force that I was

1       referencing, the 5,100 employees from our various  
2       businesses on Long Island and Downstate New York,  
3       they work as field damage assessors, low-voltage  
4       service crews, crew guides, and logistical support.  
5       They helped to effect a successful restoration  
6       effort.

7               I'm extremely proud of the teamwork exhibited  
8       by the many organizations that contributed resources  
9       to this restoration team, and recognize that  
10      criticality to the restoration process.

11             The absence of these employees would most  
12      certainly lead to a much longer and less-effective  
13      restoration effort.

14             Preparation for the actual arrival of "Irene"  
15      began many days in advance of her making landfall on  
16      Long Island.

17             Weather reports were closely monitored, and  
18      storm-preparation meetings were initiated several  
19      days in advance of the storm.

20             During these meetings, and those which  
21      continued twice per day during the course of the  
22      event, tactical and strategic decisions were made.

23             At LIPA's direction, requests for off-Island  
24      high-voltage linemen and tree-trim crews were also  
25      made.

1 Simultaneously, efforts were launched to  
2 establish a crew processing center, and calls were  
3 made to the MTA bridges and tunnels, Department of  
4 Transportation, and local police departments, to  
5 expedite the receipt of off-Island crews as they  
6 traveled to Long Island to assist in the  
7 restoration.

8 In accordance with LIPA's storm procedures,  
9 National Grid made contact with counterparts at  
10 Long Island Railroad, Verizon, Nassau, Suffolk, and  
11 New York City Offices of Emergency Management, to  
12 reinforce, and discuss, the coordination of  
13 activities, while outreach to elected officials and  
14 local municipalities were handled by LIPA.

15 In addition, calls were made to the  
16 critical-care customers, to advise them of the  
17 impending storm, and encouraged them to take  
18 appropriate preparatory actions.

19 Outreach to all large managed accounts was  
20 initiated, with an emphasis on hospitals,  
21 nursing homes, schools, and wastewater treatment  
22 facilities.

23 Such communication was maintained throughout  
24 the course of the event.

25 As a result of the preparation, we were ready

1 to begin restoration efforts immediately after the  
2 storm had passed on Sunday afternoon, August 28th.

3 We initiated detailed damage assessments of  
4 LIPA's transmission, substation, and distribution  
5 facilities, and began repairing the backbone of the  
6 electric system.

7 Restoration efforts followed a structured  
8 restoration approach, such that the outages  
9 affecting the largest number of customers were  
10 restored.

11 Priority was also given to restoring areas  
12 affecting public health and safety.

13 As a result, neighborhood and single-customer  
14 outages were addressed later in the process, but by  
15 doing so, again, enabled the largest number of  
16 customers to be restored most quickly.

17 Based on the anticipated damage from "Irene,"  
18 LIPA had requested 2,000 high-voltage linemen,  
19 through our utility mutual-assistance groups.

20 However, given the widespread devastation of  
21 "Irene," and the resulting demand for the resources,  
22 LIPA only received 1,000 additional high-voltage  
23 linemen, and was forced to execute its restoration  
24 plan with only half of the resources for the first  
25 five days of the storm.

1           In spite of this constraint, within 24 hours  
2       of the storm passing, 178,000, or 34 percent, of the  
3       LIPA customers were restored.

4           Within two days, the majority, 283,000, or  
5       54 percent, were restored.

6           And after three days, 358,000, or 70 percent,  
7       were restored.

8           In addition, we successfully delivered on  
9       LIPA's commitments to have all hospitals restored on  
10      Tuesday, and all school outages completed well in  
11      advance of the start of the school year that was  
12      scheduled for early the following week. And,  
13      90 percent of all customer outages were restored by  
14      Friday.

15          On the evening of Thursday, September 1st,  
16      National Grid New York completed restoration  
17      activities in Upstate New York, and was able to  
18      provide over 1,100 high-voltage linemen to  
19      Long Island to assist LIPA's restoration effort.

20          The addition of these National Grid  
21      Upstate New York linemen to Long Island greatly  
22      increased our ability to restore electric service to  
23      the remaining LIPA customers. And, by Monday, all  
24      523,000 customer outages were restored.

25          In the end, the restoration effort was quite

1       impressive, and I cannot stress the significance of  
2       this accomplishment.

3               History has shown the value of thorough  
4       preparation and execution of pre-established plans.

5               In fact, our restoration response in the  
6       March nor'easter of 2010, that left over  
7       a quarter million LIPA customers without power,  
8       resulted in National Grid and LIPA receiving the  
9       prestigious Emergency Response Award from the  
10      Edison Electric Institute, for its efforts.

11              As part of our after-action review for that  
12      event, we identified and adopted many lessons  
13      learned that made our already-effort much better.

14              We continue to be committed to continuous  
15      improvement; and, thus, look to improve upon our  
16      performances as well in this event.

17              In closing: I cannot say enough about the  
18      commitment of our employees, the great working  
19      relationship we share with the IBEW Local 1049 and  
20      its leadership, and our partnership with the  
21      Long Island Power Authority.

22              Working together, and capitalizing on the  
23      co-location of our electric, gas, and generation  
24      businesses on Long Island, as well as our access to  
25      additional resources from non-contiguous service

1 territories in Upstate New York, we were able to  
2 quickly address the effects of a devastating storm,  
3 the likes of which have not been felt on Long Island  
4 for over 25 years.

5 I want to thank you again for this  
6 opportunity to testify.

7 And, I'm happy to address any questions at  
8 this time.

9 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you.

10 Just a quick point.

11 You've made -- and both of you have made  
12 reference to the communication between yourselves,  
13 LIPA and National Grid, and the various levels of  
14 government municipalities.

15 Reading -- I'm not going to read the whole  
16 statement, because it's going to be read later from  
17 the county executive of Nassau County,  
18 Mr. Mangano.

19 "The most glaring issue" -- I'm quoting from  
20 his statement, which we'll hear in its entirety  
21 later.

22 "The most glaring issue, is the lack of  
23 communication between LIPA and its customers, and  
24 between LIPA and the local municipalities."

25 Mr. Weiss, the mayor of the village of

1       Hewlett Harbor, I believe, expresses pretty much the  
2       same in his statement -- he'll make it later -- that  
3       there was a lack of communication, and, it was poor.

4               And Mayor Altadonna, from Massapequa Park,  
5       basically says -- and I'm not going to read the  
6       whole thing -- basically says the same thing: There  
7       was a lack of communication between LIPA and its  
8       customers, and LIPA and the municipalities.

9               Which basically flies in the face of what you  
10      gentlemen are saying here today; that there was this  
11      great communication system that was set up.

12              And it was what I said earlier in my opening  
13      statement: What happened?

14              Put it the time way I put it: What the hell  
15      happened?

16              There seems to be a conflict, not only in the  
17      numbers you give us, but in the statement, that  
18      there was communication between the other levels of  
19      government.

20              There's a conflict here. You don't seem to  
21      recognize it. They seem to state it.

22              Now, how do we deal with this?

23              MICHAEL HERVEY: I don't think that it's not  
24      that we're recognizing it.

25              On Tuesday, the day after the hurricane had



1       passed, we, in fact, in our media briefings,  
2       acknowledged that the customers and the governments  
3       were asking for more communication.

4               We implemented, at that point in time, a  
5       daily update newsletter to all the mayors in Suffolk  
6       and Nassau. And also participated in mayors' phone  
7       calls, conference calls, that were sponsored by the  
8       county OEMs.

9               As part of our work afterwards, when we had  
10      the forums that I spoke about, with the  
11      municipalities, this point did come out loud and  
12      clear also.

13              So, part of what we're going to need to look  
14      at, in our resolution and our improvement process  
15      here, is how to really amp that up quite a bit  
16      larger than what we had been doing.

17              And, we had several suggestions coming from  
18      the village mayors, when we spoke to them. These  
19      are certainly doable things, and we'll put  
20      several -- we intend to put some of this into play  
21      very quickly.

22              But, one of the things that also became  
23      glaring in our conversations with the mayors, is  
24      that, oftentimes, these mayors change over, every  
25      several years; every number of years.

1           And, so, what we need to do is, more outreach  
2           up-front, to give them the expectations of what a  
3           restoration like this would look like.

4           So, we're also going to commit to having  
5           training seminars or informational seminars of some  
6           sort, ahead of storms, on a regular basis, to give  
7           the mayors the information they need in advance,  
8           because, in many cases, they were seeing this as we  
9           were going. We had a plan we were executing, but  
10          they were discovering it as we executed it.

11          And we need to do a better job, one, of  
12          telling them up-front, what this looks like; and,  
13          two, then, doing daily, or maybe multiple times a  
14          day, communications directly to the mayors.

15          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: All right, thank you very  
16          much.

17          And, John, you know, while both of you pat  
18          each other on the back, I think you guys failed  
19          miserably. You know, you have 27 years of  
20          experience.

21          Mike, I think you're over 30 years of  
22          experience.

23          This is not new. This is not on-the-job  
24          training.

25          And, all I keep hearing is, assessment, and

1 review; and assessment, and review.

2 You failed. Your operation, whatever you had  
3 in place, failed.

4 And the task was enormous. And nobody here  
5 questioned, the commitment, the work, of the people  
6 in the field, because they worked like crazy, and  
7 probably put up with a significant amount of abuse.

8 But, Mike, you never came out till Tuesday  
9 afterwards.

10 You even came to my district. And, on  
11 Florence Avenue, and you guys had a great press  
12 conference, but everybody left, and nothing  
13 happened. And the people didn't get the line  
14 cleared from the trees, from whoever was there,  
15 until two days later. And the frustration grew and  
16 grew and grew.

17 So let's stop patting each other on the back,  
18 and telling me about awards that were received for  
19 prior response, because it's ridiculous, that you  
20 come here and you talk about it.

21 Judge your own performance.

22 You know, this is real-time news. People  
23 don't have to go and turn the TV on anymore to find  
24 the news. It finds them.

25 And for you not to come out to two days

1 later, and start talking about this, is wrong.

2 And for you to sit here, John, and pat  
3 yourself on the back, after 27 years of experience,  
4 is wrong, because, this was a failure as far as the  
5 residents of Long Island are concerned.

6 I think, if they had better communication.

7 If my mayor, sitting in this audience right  
8 now, was able to communicate with somebody about,  
9 when, or why, or what's going to happen in the  
10 village of Massapequa Park, when 90 percent -- "90  
11 percent" -- of the residents are out of power, and  
12 he doesn't have a clue, because nobody's telling him  
13 something.

14 Or, e-mails that I received, like my  
15 colleagues received, where, people came out and  
16 assessed the same problem on the same block, for  
17 four times, and they were told the same thing:  
18 We'll be back. We'll be back.

19 And the only people that came back were the  
20 people that assessed it.

21 And the lack of professionalism, in some  
22 cases, when the residents called your call center,  
23 was an absolute disgrace.

24 And to keep saying, "We're going to evaluate  
25 and see what we did," is wrong.

1           You know, my question is, always: Where the  
2       hell is the board of trustees in LIPA, that you  
3       haven't had a permanent CEO for one year since  
4       Kevin Law left?

5           And I know you're trying, Mike, and you've  
6       been there a long time. And you probably didn't  
7       even want this job for over a year now. But they  
8       failed their responsibilities.

9           I sit on the Energy Committee in the Senate  
10      that's going to approve that person, or not.

11          And I got to tell you, it better not be a  
12      political hack, because that's not going to fly with  
13      this panel right here. It better be somebody that  
14      has utility experience, because I don't want this to  
15      ever happen again, where all we hear is: We're  
16      going to review. We're going to assess. We're  
17      going to analyze. We're going to communicate.

18          That should have happened years ago. You  
19      guys aren't in business the first day. And,  
20      it's not/it shouldn't be on-the-job training.

21          Mike, you said something here, "In these  
22      times of always-present real-time communication, our  
23      electric system and our restoration plans simply  
24      cannot provide the necessary details during this  
25      massive event."

1           Why?

2           MICHAEL HERVEY: Well, I think --

3           SENATOR FUSCHILLO: I mean, we did, to the  
4 best of our ability.

5           MICHAEL HERVEY: Right, so, it's a good  
6 question.

7           But I think, in some respects, any utility  
8 that goes through this type of effort is going to  
9 have a lot less detailed information when you're  
10 doing this type of massive restoration.

11           So our challenge here is to really leapfrog  
12 where everybody else is, and put into place some  
13 more intelligence, computer systems, out in the  
14 field; whatever we have to do.

15           And this is what we have to really think  
16 through, and do it the right way, in order to bring  
17 that data back.

18           The electric system doesn't know that an  
19 individual home is out. And it doesn't know that  
20 even a piece of a block is out, normally.

21           We did rely on customer calls for that.

22           So -- and, certainly, once we know, then --  
23 unless we send somebody out, we don't know what the  
24 trouble is.

25           So, on a normal day, a restoration, like

1       today, when we get a case of trouble, it's assumed  
2       that there's one piece of trouble. We go out and  
3       fix it, and we can give a very good estimate on what  
4       it takes to fix that.

5               In this type of damage, there might have to  
6       be, 30, 40 pieces of trouble that are repaired  
7       before we can get to that last customer down the  
8       line.

9               So, pulling all that information together --  
10       the status of the crews; the length of time that  
11       each one of those jobs is going to take; what is in  
12       service and what's not in service, meaning,  
13       electrified, not electrified -- is something that  
14       there's just not an automated system in place right  
15       now to do.

16               SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Do you have a Reverse 911  
17       system?

18               MICHAEL HERVEY: We have an outbound-call  
19       system, yes.

20               SENATOR FUSCHILLO: And can you reach all the  
21       rate payers that serve?

22               MICHAEL HERVEY: Well, we can reach them, to  
23       the extent that they can be reached with the phone  
24       number that they've given us.

25               And this is another outreach I think we need

1 to do, and have already started, in fact; and  
2 that's, trying to get customers to give us  
3 additional phone numbers. Because, in this -- also,  
4 in this day and age of the communications we have,  
5 oftentimes, if the electric's off, the particular  
6 phone that they've given us is off also.

7 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Did you utilize the  
8 system?

9 MICHAEL HERVEY: Yes. We made over  
10 800,000 outbound calls during the week.

11 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay. Thank you, Mike.  
12 Senator Martins.

13 SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you.  
14 Mike, you have 90 employees.  
15 John, 5,100?

16 JOHN BRUCKNER: National Grid has  
17 5,100 Downstate, yes.

18 SENATOR MARTINS: So, 5,100 employees that  
19 you have direct oversight of.

20 Mike, you have 90.

21 I've heard from you; John, haven't heard you  
22 from yet -- as to how these employees are deployed.

23 And, frankly, I would like to hear more about  
24 that relationship.

25 You know, we keep talking about National --



1 LIPA. And I'm hearing responses from you, Mike,  
2 but, I need someone to explain to me, how the  
3 employees, the service crews, were deployed.

4 Who made the decisions to deploy them in that  
5 way?

6 And let's start with that: How are these  
7 crews deployed?

8 JOHN BRUCKNER: You want me to answer that?

9 So, as the storm passed, because we couldn't  
10 do any repair or the dispatching of crews during the  
11 storm event, because the equipment, you know, it  
12 would be unsafe to put them out in bucket-trucks  
13 during the event.

14 So, Sunday afternoon, Sunday evening, when  
15 the storm subsided, we immediately dispatched crews  
16 to the transmission facilities that were damaged.

17 The transmission facilities, really, is the  
18 start of power getting to the customer.

19 So, you have the transmission system on the  
20 Island that provides power to the substations, and  
21 the substations provide the power to the  
22 distribution facilities, and then, ultimately, at  
23 the end of the line, the customer service to the  
24 house.

25 So --

1           SENATOR MARTINS: So, the crews are deployed  
2           to these facilities.

3           As -- Mike, as you just testified, you don't  
4           know where these outages are until people start  
5           calling in.

6           So, at some point, you have these crews at  
7           these facilities.

8           How are they deployed there? Are they  
9           deployed centrally or are they deployed locally?

10          JOHN BRUCKNER: So, in the case of a -- on a  
11          normal day, it's always done centrally.

12          The centralized dispatch capability is  
13          limited to around, you know, maybe 100 or  
14          200 personnel that you could safely deploy, or  
15          dispatch, in a safe manner, and in an efficient  
16          manner.

17          In an event like this, when we brought in  
18          2,000 linemen from off-Long Island, in addition to  
19          on the Island with our contractors and our in-house  
20          workforce, another, approximately 500, you couldn't  
21          dispatch that efficiently or safely from one  
22          location.

23          So what we did in this event, according to  
24          LIPA's practices or procedures, we deployed them out  
25          into substations as many operations.

1           So, we deployed many of these, this  
2       workforce, across the Island -- equally across the  
3       Island, and dispatched them directly out of  
4       substations.

5           Not all of the linemen were put into  
6       substations. Many of them were held back, and  
7       maintained that division-level capability of being  
8       dispatched.

9           And we dispatched them to the  
10      transmission-system repairs first. There was a  
11      significant amount of damage on the transmission  
12      system, so we had to get that back up and running  
13      before we could do the distributions.

14          SENATOR MARTINS: What was the single most  
15      difficult -- or, what was the single most common  
16      cause of the transmission failures?

17          JOHN BRUCKNER: I would say trees were the --  
18      was probably the leading on the transmission.  
19      Certainly on the distribution.

20          SENATOR MARTINS: I would think so.

21          What was your effort to coordinate with our  
22      local municipalities, villages, supervisors, county,  
23      specifically?

24          We have highway crews out there that are  
25      deployed on a local level, that understand the needs

1 of their local communities.

2 I've got 32 villages in my district. I've  
3 got 32 mayors and 3 towns/3 supervisors that I  
4 represent. And these highway departments in each  
5 one of these villages and in each one of those towns  
6 have the ability to deploy personnel as well.

7 How did you coordinate with them?

8 JOHN BRUCKNER: To coordinate with the towns  
9 and villages, we went through the county EOCs.

10 So, we worked through the county EOC. We had  
11 representation at the county EOCs as well. And many  
12 of those -- those towns and villages did help to  
13 clear roadway debris, as far as tree on roadways,  
14 and so forth.

15 The work that the trees had on the  
16 transmission system, we were required to use  
17 qualified -- electric-qualified tree-trimmers that  
18 we put back into those right-of-ways, and so forth.

19 SENATOR MARTINS: I had the privilege, for  
20 eight years, to serve as a local village mayor.

21 And one of my, I guess, concerns over the  
22 years, was always, whenever we had a storm, the  
23 availability of a LIPA crew to deenergize a line so  
24 that our highway crews can actually take those trees  
25 down. In the right-of-way, they were prepared to do

1 so.

2 And, there was a common complaint that I got  
3 this year, from every village, from every  
4 municipality, was that: There wasn't a LIPA truck  
5 or a National Grid crew to be found in their areas.  
6 And there was no coordinated effort. And there was  
7 no way for our mayors, who had crews on the ground  
8 to be able to remove trees, to be able to reach out  
9 to anyone to coordinate.

10 How do we fix that?

11 JOHN BRUCKNER: Yeah, I think that that's  
12 a -- that's an excellent example of an opportunity  
13 for going forward.

14 The -- in this event, we did assign resources  
15 to the county EOCs.

16 And I want to state back onto your point,  
17 because, it's not so much the transmission system.  
18 This is, road clearing, wires tangled up in the  
19 trees on the road. And, not only giving us the  
20 ability to get repair crews in there, but also for  
21 your constituents to get in and out of their  
22 communities.

23 So I think, in this example here, that we  
24 had -- and, you know, certainly in your area as  
25 well, we did assign personnel to the EOCs. And we

1 did work directly, in many cases, with towns and  
2 villages.

3 The challenge that we had here, was having  
4 half of the available work force that we needed to  
5 do this event.

6 So, while we were trying to, and we did in  
7 many cases, work directly with the towns and  
8 villages, assigning, not only people to identify the  
9 wires, and be able to clear the wires, so we could  
10 advantage of the resources that the towns and  
11 villages had to do the tree removal, we did do that.  
12 But the magnitude of the wire-down locations was in  
13 excess of about 7,000 wire-down locations.

14 We needed to balance, clearing those  
15 wire-down locations at the same time of getting the  
16 backbone of the system up that was bringing back,  
17 you know, hundreds of thousands of customers.

18 SENATOR MARTINS: I --

19 JOHN BRUCKNER: I think, going forward -- if  
20 I could; I think, going forward, one of the  
21 challenges that we had, was, we did go to many of  
22 these locations and remove the wire so that the tree  
23 could be removed.

24 But in many of those locations, I think one  
25 of the things that we can do, going forward, better,

1 is a prioritization system between those coordinated  
2 efforts; between the county OEC [sic] and LIPA, and  
3 the towns and villages, that we can, in advance,  
4 identify: What are critical intersections? What  
5 are the critical roadways?

6 Many of the ones that we did respond to, on  
7 the direction, later on, we found out that there  
8 were more critical ones that could have been  
9 addressed.

10 SENATOR MARTINS: What I would suggest to  
11 you, uhm, and I'll leave it as a suggestion, is  
12 that, rather than coordinate on the county level,  
13 try coordinating on a local level, whether it's with  
14 our local villages or towns.

15 Because, in order for you to get into those  
16 municipalities, if you want to know about outages,  
17 if you want to know where the trees are down, I  
18 could guarantee you that our local communities,  
19 villages and towns, knew where every tree was down  
20 within hours after the storm having passed.

21 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Minutes.

22 SENATOR MARTINS: Within minutes.

23 That's fair.

24 They knew where they were. And if there was  
25 someone from National Grid or LIPA who could have

1 coordinated with them, I guarantee you that those  
2 trees would have been removed in time for those  
3 repair crews to come back. We would have saved days  
4 off of your repairs, and people would have had their  
5 power days earlier as a result.

6 So if there's a suggestion, and I guess, best  
7 practice, that we could take from here, work with  
8 our local communities, because bigger isn't  
9 necessarily better, and consolidation doesn't work.

10 Thank you.

11 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Senator LaValle.

12 SENATOR LAVALLE: Thank you,  
13 Senator Marcellino.

14 I grew up in a household where I was taught,  
15 do not defend the indefensible.

16 This issue of communication was a failure.

17 Senator Marcellino mentioned individuals that  
18 talked about communication failure.

19 I have a letter here from the mayor of  
20 East Hampton, Paul Rickenbach, who says the same  
21 thing: Failure of communication.

22 So, I think that's something that you really  
23 have to zero in on, and not just gloss over,  
24 because, it was a failure.

25 Senator Martins talked about the highway



1 crews. They have not really gotten enough praise.

2 All I could speak of, in the  
3 1st Senate District, the highway crews in the  
4 villages and the towns were incredible.

5 And they said: If we only had crews behind  
6 us, it could have been done more easily.

7 Also, we, as elected officials, learned, as  
8 we go about and speak to people, we hear common  
9 themes. You hear it over and over again.

10 Again, no one saw trucks for a long period of  
11 time.

12 So, there were, literally, rumors.

13 I just tell you -- and I know it's not  
14 true -- there was a rumor, that the reason there  
15 weren't crews out on Sunday, was because you didn't  
16 want to pay overtime.

17 And I have confirmed that that was false.

18 But, that's where people were: Why didn't we  
19 see crews?

20 You know, LIPA has a responsibility to its  
21 shareholders, meaning, its customers.

22 But it also has another responsibility: You  
23 have to keep the lights on.

24 What was happening -- isn't there -- Mike,  
25 what kind of tree-trimming program did we have?

1           MICHAEL HERVEY: Well --

2           SENATOR LAVALLE: Prior to the -- I mean, the  
3 year before the storm.

4           MICHAEL HERVEY: Sure, Senator.

5           There's a very aggressive tree-trimming  
6 program. I think that National Grid spends over  
7 \$20 million a year in tree trimming. And each area  
8 is on a certain cycle, and we certainly are on those  
9 cycles. And, it's on par, if not superior to most  
10 utilities' tree-trimming program.

11           The basic issue here, the main issue was, not  
12 tree trimming, but whole trees failing.

13           We had a significant amount of rain ahead of  
14 this storm. And what we saw, time and time again,  
15 is the whole tree coming over.

16           So, that's not something that the  
17 tree-trimming program per se can address.

18           I think the fact that we didn't have many  
19 more outages with this is a testament to the  
20 tree-trimming program, and its effectiveness. And,  
21 the daily reliability of the system on a day-in,  
22 day-out basis, I think also goes to the  
23 effectiveness of the tree-trimming program.

24           SENATOR LAVALLE: Is that 20 million, more,  
25 less, or the same, as it was in the previous year?

1           MICHAEL HERVEY:  It's -- I'll let John answer  
2           that.

3           The budget ramped up a few years ago, and  
4           I'll let John go into the specifics.

5           JOHN BRUCKNER:  The tree-trim budget has been  
6           consistent, I think, from a tree-trim perspective.

7           What has ramped up, is, we have installed a  
8           hazardous-tree program, in accordance with LIPA's  
9           direction.

10          So, in addition to trimming trees, which is  
11          really protecting the system for the majority of the  
12          season, the hazard-tree program is where we go  
13          around and identify hazardous trees, that are not  
14          healthy, that pose a threat to the wire, as, more  
15          during a storm.

16          Those numbers have increased over the years.  
17          As a matter of fact, the inception of that program  
18          is only a few years old, so, we have started picking  
19          up on that program.

20          And while we did the hazardous-tree program,  
21          or brought that into existence, we didn't take  
22          anything away from the existing tree-trim program at  
23          all.  As a matter of fact, over the last five years,  
24          we probably added miles to the tree-trim program, on  
25          an annual basis.

1           SENATOR LAVALLE: 20 million; more or less  
2           than the previous year?

3           JOHN BRUCKNER: The \$20 million is about on  
4           par with the previous year. I wouldn't say it was  
5           any more or less.

6           We didn't take away from it, and we didn't  
7           add to it.

8           SENATOR LAVALLE: Okay.

9           My last comment, and, Mike, you were at the  
10          hearing when Senator Maziarz came down, the  
11          Energy Committee.

12          And I think we've reached a point, and --  
13          where we need to make a decision, as a legislature,  
14          and an executive, on whether we continue with LIPA  
15          in the form that it's in. And, whether LIPA  
16          contracts out to a private company to deliver  
17          certain services.

18          Because, Senator Martins and  
19          Senator Fuschillo were right on target, and even  
20          Senator Marcellino: Who's providing what?

21          And people are confused, what is LIPA's  
22          function.

23          I know that you've had between 90 and  
24          100 employees. That has been your number of  
25          employees at LIPA. So, you contract out to

1 National Grid, to provide certain services.

2 We have to decide whether that works; that  
3 model works or not.

4 So, that -- both of you have enormous  
5 experience, but if you're operating in a failed  
6 model, then no matter what you do, is, you're going  
7 to end up with failure.

8 So, we, as a legislature, in the next  
9 12 months, have to make that decision.

10 And I know this is on the Governor's list, to  
11 do, to figure out, to make recommendations. But,  
12 we, as a legislature, also have to take a look at  
13 it.

14 I know it's a difficult job, but, if you're  
15 working in a failed system, then no matter how much  
16 you spin your wheels, you are just going to fail.

17 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you, Senator.

18 Senator Flanagan.

19 The statement that came to me as a -- as  
20 customers and consumers were calling over the  
21 weekend, my office was staffed, as were most of our  
22 offices, over the weekends.

23 We had a section in Hicksville, right across  
24 the street from the old LILCO main headquarters on  
25 Old Country Road. Directly across the street was a

1 community, predominantly of older people, because it  
2 was -- it's been there a long time. They were  
3 without power. And, they trying to get power to  
4 these senior citizens, and trying to help them out.

5 My office was aggressively involved.

6 When one of my people reached one of your  
7 call operators, she asked, "Where is this community  
8 that you're talking about?"

9 And she was told, "Right across the street  
10 from your headquarters."

11 My person was told, "Our headquarters is in  
12 London."

13 It's totally unacceptable.

14 It wasn't a joke, it was just stated.

15 Now, that's a toss-back.

16 Those people didn't get power for another  
17 two days.

18 So, what Senator Martins was saying: Local  
19 communities, local towns.

20 The town halls of many of the villages were  
21 out of power for days.

22 Town of Oyster Bay was out of power, main  
23 headquarters, for two to three days.

24 And we had this conversation, Mike, about  
25 this. And you told me that they have to take care

1 of themselves. That they should be able to take  
2 care of themselves.

3 My question is: They're priorities.

4 What are the priorities?

5 If government headquarters, governments that  
6 will disperse crews, from road crews, to tree-trim,  
7 to move trees, to get things out of the way, so your  
8 people can come in and repair the lines, don't have  
9 power, or have to operate on generators, which is  
10 not efficient, and very -- and, in many cases, not  
11 effective, I think you -- you're cutting your own  
12 throat here. You're weakening your force.

13 Your crews could have been expanded by  
14 hundreds of other workers from local municipalities,  
15 that might have been able to help you and assist you  
16 in clearing roads, clearing trees, and clearing  
17 routine -- clearing areas.

18 Let me ask this question: What are the  
19 priorities? Who goes first?

20 Who gets put back first, who gets put back  
21 second, and so forth?

22 Where are your priorities?

23 MICHAEL HERVEY: A great question.

24 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you.

25 MICHAEL HERVEY: The priorities really have

1 two parallel paths.

2 One is the public infrastructure.

3 And, I think we were very forward in talking  
4 about that. And that was, the hospitals and nursing  
5 homes were on that infrastructure parallel path.

6 We also, as county OEMs identified for us  
7 specific intersections, or other specific issues, we  
8 needed to deal with.

9 At one point, we were dealing with a plant  
10 that processes a lot of the gasoline coming onto  
11 Long Island.

12 So, that public-infrastructure path primarily  
13 starts with those critical-care facilities. And,  
14 then, other priorities that are identified to us, as  
15 we go along, by the county OEMs.

16 So, that's the control point there for  
17 prioritization across the whole effort.

18 SENATOR MARCELLINO: There are two nursing  
19 homes, critical-care nursing homes, in  
20 Suffolk County that didn't have power for four days.

21 MICHAEL HERVEY: Right.

22 And --

23 SENATOR MARCELLINO: How did that happen?

24 MICHAEL HERVEY: And because they're high  
25 priority does not mean that we can accomplish



1 getting them on quickly.

2 As was indicated, the first day was taking  
3 up, putting our transmission system back together,  
4 along with some restoration. And then, basically,  
5 we have to build the system out from the substation.

6 So, it always comes down to man-hours of  
7 work. And you simply have to get all the work done,  
8 from the substation out to the customer, in order to  
9 get the customers on.

10 So, being a priority doesn't mean that the  
11 customer comes on quickly. It means that they're  
12 working -- we're working on the issue, up-front, and  
13 as a first priority.

14 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Your statement of  
15 substations, and the use of the term "substations,"  
16 that you, and Mr. Bruckner also, stated, we found  
17 that somewhat frustrating, because, in contacting  
18 and communicating, we were told many times by the  
19 callers: Well, that's being handled by a  
20 substation.

21 Okay, which one?

22 "We don't know."

23 Can we communicate with them?

24 "No. We don't have a number we can give you  
25 to communicate with them."

1           How do we pass a message on to them?

2           "Well, we're going to have to do that."

3           I said: How are you going to do that if you  
4       can't -- you don't know where they are, and you  
5       can't communicate with them?

6           It was -- I'll say it again; you can hear the  
7       frustration, I hope: It didn't work. The plan  
8       didn't work.

9           There's no other way to put it.

10          I know you train. I know that.

11          I know you have plans. I know that.

12          You have press releases that say that.

13          You have press releases that say you had an  
14       automated phone system.

15          You have a press release that says you have a  
16       website that worked.

17          Your website was a disgrace. It didn't work.  
18       It wasn't updated effectively. It was a mess.

19          It was talking, for three days, about  
20       assessing.

21          And then when it was, after the assessing  
22       dropped, it was telling areas: We're back on-line.  
23       That 50 percent was done.

24          We knew that wasn't true. It simply wasn't  
25       accurate.

1           So, there needs the be a complete overhaul of  
2       this system.

3           The phone systems; how intimately were you  
4       tied into Verizon and Cablevision's lines?

5           Because, a lot of them had to come down too.  
6       When the trees hit the lines, and the lines came  
7       down and poles came down, I'm sure phone lines came  
8       down as well.

9           How did that impact you?

10          JOHN BRUCKNER: So, in preparation for this  
11       storm, we had reached out to Verizon. And we had  
12       Verizon crews and supervision assigned to each of  
13       our divisional areas, so, we were -- in our dispatch  
14       rooms.

15          And, across the Island, in our four dispatch  
16       rooms, we had Verizon supervision, we had access to  
17       Verizon crews.

18          So, when their facilities were impacted, you  
19       know, they certainly went out and corrected them.

20          When it was a pole down that had their  
21       infrastructure on it, we were able to assign them to  
22       that pole. We knew that pole was being taken care  
23       of by Verizon.

24          So --

25          SENATOR MARCELLINO: When you talk about

1 Verizon, you're also talking about Cablevision as  
2 well?

3 JOHN BRUCKNER: No, sir. I was just talking  
4 specifically about Verizon.

5 SENATOR MARCELLINO: What about Cable? Why  
6 don't you work with them?

7 JOHN BRUCKNER: Well, Cablevision crews do  
8 not set poles on Long Island.

9 So, if there's a pole that comes down, it's  
10 either a Verizon pole or it's a LIPA pole. It  
11 wouldn't be a Cablevision pole.

12 SENATOR MARCELLINO: They wouldn't have a  
13 Cablevision line on it?

14 JOHN BRUCKNER: There may have a Cablevision  
15 line on it. And, in many cases, Cablevision would  
16 go out, and, you know, they would identify their  
17 outages and respond to them.

18 If this was their wire down, they would go to  
19 that location and identify it, and repair it  
20 themselves.

21 SENATOR MARCELLINO: What you're telling me  
22 is, that you don't communicate with them?

23 JOHN BRUCKNER: We have communication with --  
24 we have communication with Cablevision.

25 If there's a wire down, what happens is,

1 the -- as I said before, there's about  
2 7,000 wire-downs that occurred during this event.  
3 More than half of those wire-downs were not LIPA's  
4 wires.

5 We would always be the first to go out, or  
6 attempt to be the first to go out. Based on the  
7 volume, it was more of a difficult challenge, but,  
8 we would always go out first, because there's always  
9 a public-safety liability; that, if it were an  
10 electric wire, when customers report those  
11 wire-downs, it's very difficult for them to  
12 differentiate which they are.

13 So, we go to the site of caution, and respond  
14 to each one of those wire-down locations.

15 If it's not our wire down, we do try to make  
16 communication to the company whose it is, if it's  
17 not ours.

18 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Just one more question,  
19 and I'll turn it over to Jack Martins.

20 On South Oyster Bay Road, a large tree fell  
21 over Oyster Bay Road, taking the power lines with  
22 it. The only thing that was holding the tree off  
23 the ground, because it never really reached the  
24 road, but it was, like that (indicating), was the  
25 lines that were supporting it.

1           That tree took out my entire community, so  
2           I'm very familiar with this one.

3           It took three days to get that tree removed.

4           The response was, "It's not our tree. This  
5           is a county road."

6           We had to get, the county crew has to come  
7           out and take it down.

8           Again, the communication between you, your  
9           people, and a level of government, to know that  
10          there were several hundred homes that were out of  
11          power, as well as a hanging tree, where cars  
12          literally were driving under the tree.

13          I was able to reach Deputy County  
14          Executive Walker, who sent a crew out, and said: We  
15          have to know that the lines are dead before our  
16          crews are going to touch the tree, because it's a  
17          safety factor.

18          Understood.

19          So somebody had to tell the county the lines  
20          were dead, so that the county would go in there with  
21          a crew and remove the tree, so that the LIPA,  
22          National Grid, whoever, could come in and readjust  
23          and reconnect the lines.

24          The communication wasn't there. Trust me, I  
25          know this, I lived. And so did my neighbors.

1           And that was repeated over and over again,  
2           Island-wide.

3           I could cite you dozen of cases, similar to  
4           that, where there was a communication problem  
5           between your people and a local municipality, be it  
6           a county, be a town, be it a village.

7           That has to change. There has to be, a --  
8           and perhaps what Jack said, perhaps communication  
9           better, instead of these bigger, through county  
10          OEMs, to, maybe go down to towns, maybe work it  
11          through villages.

12          Somehow there has to be a better system of  
13          communication between the localities.

14          Senator Martins.

15          SENATOR MARTINS: Just a few more questions.

16          How did you approach traffic signals?

17          I know, in my community, there are a number  
18          of traffic signals that were down on significant  
19          intersections, that remained out for days.

20          What was the approach, there?

21          JOHN BRUCKNER: Want me to take that?

22          So, for traffic signals, once again, we did  
23          work with the county EOCs. So, the county EOCs,  
24          we had representation in there, and they would  
25          forward over the -- I was going say, "the critical,"

1 but, really, the volume of signals that were out.

2 So, those locations would be forwarded.

3 On Sunday, we did assign personnel to work  
4 with the counties directly, not only the people that  
5 were there, but back in the divisions, as far as  
6 personnel crews, field personnel, to work with them,  
7 and account for those traffic signals being out.

8 But, again, here, I would go back to the  
9 comment that I made earlier, about tree-trimming,  
10 debris in the road, and clearing it.

11 We did find ourselves moving, from the county  
12 EOCs, into some of the towns specifically, and  
13 working directly with the towns.

14 We did make good progress with that approach.  
15 To your suggestion earlier, we did try to more  
16 localize that approach.

17 Once again, I think the challenge there was,  
18 even the ones we got to, very early Sunday, and  
19 then, as the week progressed, were not always the  
20 most critical.

21 I spent a number of hours across Long Island  
22 as well. And, while I saw that there were some that  
23 were restored, there were also main intersections  
24 that remained out.

25 So I think, not only the coordination, but we



1 do need to, in advance, identify, what are -- in the  
2 prioritization, what are the most critical  
3 intersections, so we do make sure, on a town and  
4 county basis, those are in, so that, if they're not,  
5 those are the high priorities that we do address.

6 And I would agree with you, that we do need a  
7 comprehensive plan, beyond just LIPA going out and  
8 putting a streetlight back in; but, coordinated with  
9 the towns, with the municipalities, with the  
10 counties, to get a team together, to identify what  
11 the prioritization is, and how do we go about doing  
12 that in the most efficient manner, while still  
13 balancing, getting the restoration process underway  
14 as well.

15 So, we want to balance all of these  
16 high-priority issues with bringing back as many  
17 customers as possible.

18 I just want to clarify something about the  
19 streetlight crossings.

20 Following LIPA's priority of the most  
21 customers brought back for each repair that's made,  
22 when we do that, we also bring back many  
23 intersections as well. It's not just the customers.

24 So, there is a focus that, inherently, is  
25 built into bringing some of them back, but I don't

1 think it identifies the prioritization as much as  
2 something that we need to do, collectively, going  
3 forward.

4 SENATOR MARTINS: How many crews were out  
5 immediately after the storm?

6 JOHN BRUCKNER: We had -- you know, we keep  
7 using this word "crews," versus "linemen."

8 So, people out in the field, we have on the  
9 Island, it was -- 5,100 -- about 6,000 people  
10 working the storm.

11 In the field, we -- going into it the first  
12 day, I think we had just under 600 off-Island  
13 linemen here, in addition to what we have on Island,  
14 which is our own work force and our own local  
15 contractors, which is about 450.

16 So, the first day, it was, you know,  
17 somewhere in the area of the 800-and-change, and the  
18 450-and-change, as far as linemen.

19 As tree-trimmers on the Island, it's a couple  
20 hundred that we have on the island. But during the  
21 course of the event, we continued to bring on  
22 tree-trimmers as well.

23 SENATOR MARTINS: How many crews did you have  
24 available that were capable of deenergizing lines?

25 JOHN BRUCKNER: That's the same number, sir.

1           SENATOR MARTINS: Okay, so, if we have --  
2           again, I'm going back to a point I made earlier.

3           If we have, 64 villages, 3 towns, in  
4           Nassau County, and we have the ability to take a  
5           fraction of the crews that you have at your disposal  
6           but, frankly, much more efficiently, deploy them in  
7           a way that is going to coordinate with local  
8           resources, doesn't that make sense?

9           JOHN BRUCKNER: Yeah, I do agree that it's  
10          something that we need to take a look at; is,  
11          looking at how we can work, again, more locally, and  
12          putting some of those resources, at the local level,  
13          to address many of those situations.

14          SENATOR MARTINS: I hope you understand the  
15          frustration, that, this isn't the first time, out.

16          And the question naturally is: Why haven't  
17          we done it before?

18          I mean, it just seems like a no-brainer.

19          How did we get to this point, where we have  
20          not, and were not, prepared to deal with a tropical  
21          storm of this nature?

22          And, I guess, these are the lessons that  
23          we're trying to get through, through this hearing.

24          Were -- your -- both, yourselves, and your  
25          top-staff personnel, here, present, during the

1 storm, and immediately after the storm?

2 JOHN BRUCKNER: So, yes, myself, and my  
3 staff, were here during the -- certainly, during the  
4 pre-storm, as we were watching the track of the  
5 storm, as well as throughout the event. And,  
6 continue to be, with respect to the follow-up,  
7 because the system, still, repairs are being made  
8 today, and over the course of next several weeks.

9 So, they were on site. We all worked.

10 You know, we used the term "16-hour days."

11 I don't really believe that to be the case.  
12 Most, as we know, it's -- that's just a term, but  
13 it's probably more in the way of 20-hour days.

14 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Right.

15 JOHN BRUCKNER: And my staff was, not only  
16 located in Hicksville, but also shared  
17 responsibilities out in many of these locations  
18 where we had substations that were activated.

19 The experience of the staff that I have, in  
20 excess of 20 years per person, or so, their  
21 expertise was used out in the field as well; so,  
22 they wore many hats.

23 But, nobody was absent, sir.

24 SENATOR MARTINS: Were a number of weeks,  
25 post the storm?

1 JOHN BRUCKNER: Yes.

2 SENATOR MARTINS: Can both of you share with  
3 us, what lessons we learned.

4 And, can you give assurances to, our  
5 residents, rate payers, that there are changes in  
6 place, or in the process of being implemented, to  
7 prevent things like this from happening?

8 And, if so, what are they?

9 MICHAEL HERVEY: Senator, I certainly do want  
10 to give you an assurance.

11 I think that's what we have been indicating,  
12 is that, we are going to do a thorough review at the  
13 local level, at our trustee level, and even on a  
14 statewide level, in conjunction with PSC, on lessons  
15 learned here.

16 And we'll put -- just as we do after every  
17 major event, we'll put the improvements in place.

18 I do want to caution, that a hurricane or a  
19 tropical storm is still a major event. And there  
20 will still always be issues, at the end of the day,  
21 that are unforeseen, or that aren't part of what  
22 we're geared to handle.

23 But, we freely acknowledge that we need to do  
24 a much better job, at the communications, and at the  
25 coordinations, level.

1           Communications with governments and our  
2 customers. And, also, coordination with the towns  
3 and villages.

4           And, we've already started that process.

5           As I indicated, we sat down last week,  
6 with -- ultimately, I think we met with about  
7 a third of the villages on the Island. Got a lot of  
8 good feedback. But, it's also not something that's  
9 instantaneous.

10          So, we are in the process right now, both the  
11 LIPA and the National Grid teams, of putting  
12 together short-term actions, if, God forbid,  
13 something were to happen again in the next few  
14 weeks, or even over the winter. And then we'll have  
15 some longer-term actions, that take more building-up  
16 of computer systems, and that type of thing.

17          So, we are actively working on all of those  
18 paths to improve the response.

19          SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you.

20          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Mike, quick question:  
21 When does the National Grid contract expire with  
22 LIPA?

23          MICHAEL HERVEY: The contract expires  
24 December 31st of 2013.

25          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay. Then, why, if --

1       why is -- why was LIPA going to take that up, this  
2       month, I believe it was, the LIPA board of trustees,  
3       when it doesn't expire for another --

4               MICHAEL HERVEY:   Sure.

5               Regardless of --

6               SENATOR FUSCHILLO:  Two and a half years;  
7       right?

8               MICHAEL HERVEY:  Regardless of who is --

9               Well, it's two years and a few months.

10              SENATOR FUSCHILLO:  Right.

11              MICHAEL HERVEY:  -- LIPA feels that it needs  
12       a two-year transition period, regardless of who is  
13       selected, even if it's National Grid.

14              And the reason being, is that the contract  
15       structure and the organizational structure that  
16       we're specifying is dramatically different than the  
17       structure that we have today.

18              So, just the simplist of things you think  
19       about:

20              We've talked about computer systems, and such  
21       things here.  The computer systems are not simple to  
22       transition over.

23              And, the employee plans, those types of  
24       things, organizational structures, it is a huge  
25       effort to make that transition, even with

1 National Grid.

2 So, we really think, to do it successfully --  
3 and "successful" means, the day we make that  
4 transition, that our customers, either, don't  
5 notice, or they notice an improvement -- we think  
6 that we need a full two years to transition that  
7 organization.

8 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Has -- have you or the  
9 board of trustees considered any other provider?

10 MICHAEL HERVEY: Oh, absolutely.

11 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: You have.

12 MICHAEL HERVEY: And we've been very open  
13 about that; that we have been engaging in competitor  
14 negotiations with three providers.

15 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Right now?

16 MICHAEL HERVEY: That's, National Grid,  
17 Con Ed, and PSEG --

18 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Right now?

19 MICHAEL HERVEY: -- all are finalists. And,  
20 we've essentially completed those contract  
21 negotiations --

22 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay.

23 MICHAEL HERVEY: -- and are in the process of  
24 working towards a recommendation -- on evaluation of  
25 those contracts, working on a recommendation to the



1 board of trustees.

2 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Has the board of trustees  
3 indicated to you -- this is my final question --  
4 their time frame to recommend a permanent CEO to the  
5 Governor, to be recommended to the Senate Energy  
6 Committee and to the full Senate?

7 MICHAEL HERVEY: They have not given me that  
8 information.

9 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay. Thank you.  
10 Thank you, Senator.

11 MICHAEL HERVEY: Senator Marcellino, I would  
12 just like to beg your indulgence.

13 I know you're well aware of my time  
14 constraint.

15 SENATOR MARCELLINO: I'm going to close it  
16 down, and let you both go in just one second. I  
17 understand that you do have a time constraint, and  
18 that's one of the reasons why we started -- we  
19 wanted to start a little earlier today than  
20 necessary.

21 We do appreciate the fact that you did come.

22 They have a meeting, and as an -- an auditing  
23 review.

24 I would just -- getting to what my colleague  
25 was talking about: I would suggest, and make a

1 strong recommendation, because I will be following  
2 that up with a letter to the Governor, that, I don't  
3 believe there should be any recommendation made by  
4 the board of trustees as to the contract with  
5 National Grid, until the -- until all of the reviews  
6 of this process have been completed.

7 And included in those reviews, I believe,  
8 should be a complete review -- by an outside, not  
9 internal, group -- by an independent outside  
10 organization of supplier experts, which I believe we  
11 can put together as quickly as possible, as to:

12 The relationship between LIPA and Grid;

13 The formation of LIPA: Does it work? Is the  
14 system something we want to, maintain? keep going?  
15 whatever?

16 I think all of that has to be looked at,  
17 completely, and it has to be reviewed before any  
18 recommendation, can, or should, be made as to who's  
19 going to run the system.

20 And I'm going urge that that be postponed  
21 until this review process is completed, because, as  
22 I think we've all pointed out, that there's nobody  
23 up here that's been happy as to what's going on, and  
24 the way it's been handled.

25 "No one" is happy.

1           I haven't talked to a single individual, that  
2       will state that this is a -- this thing worked, and  
3       it was flawless.

4           And every one of us believes that the review  
5       process has to be done, and it cannot be done  
6       in-house.

7           I don't believe -- and this is not a personal  
8       attack on anybody -- but, I just don't believe that  
9       you can evaluate yourself effectively.

10          I think it has to come from an outside  
11       entity, to come in and look at what went on,  
12       dispassionately, and without any agenda; to come in  
13       there, and give recommendations to the Governor, and  
14       to the Legislature, as to, how this thing worked,  
15       how it should work, how it can work, and any  
16       recommendation as to be handled in the future.

17          We've heard talk about cost, of \$176 million  
18       to the rate payers.

19          How are you going to pay that?

20          Are we going to see a rate increase?

21          The question I'm getting on a daily basis:  
22       "Are we going to see a rate increase to pay for  
23       'Irene'?"

24          We're not out of the hurricane system yet.  
25       We could have another one hit.

1           It's not over.

2           You could have a storm in the winter. It  
3 happens every year, we have a major storm. We had a  
4 couple last year. You could have more.

5           That cost is going to go up and up.

6           How do we pay for it?

7           And it can't be on the rate-payers' back  
8 totally. They cannot keep going.

9           I say the same thing to the MTA, I say the  
10 same thing to the Port Authority; we're saying the  
11 same thing you to: You cannot keep going back to  
12 the same well over and over again. The pockets of  
13 the people of, Nassau, and Suffolk County, the  
14 people of Long Island, they're empty. And you can't  
15 keep taking money out of their pockets anymore.

16           So, we have to look at the system. And,  
17 again, it has to be done by outside people, to  
18 really get a clear and effective evaluation of the  
19 system, and how it's operated.

20           I thank you for coming in. I thank you both  
21 for your time.

22           And, I appreciate the work you're doing.

23           I appreciate the work that your employees do.

24           What we're trying to do, is formulate a  
25 system that makes your employees more effective, the

1 system more effective, with one goal: "To provide  
2 our customers" -- as your Mission Statement says --  
3 "with the best, most cost-effective, and least  
4 expensive electrical services and gas services, on  
5 Long Island, and in the country."

6 Thank you. I appreciate your time.

7 We'll take a five-minute break.

8 (Whereupon, the hearing stood in  
9 recess.)

10 (The hearing resumed, as follows:)

11 SENATOR MARCELLINO: We have a representative  
12 of County Executive Ed Mangano, Craig Craft, who  
13 will be giving another county executive's statement.

14 Is that microphone the one that --

15 A/V TECHNICIAN: This one is better.

16 SENATOR MARCELLINO: That's the better one?  
17 Okay.

18 Mr. Craft.

19 CRAIG CRAFT: Senators, good morning.

20 My name is Craig Craft. I serve as the  
21 acting commissioner of the Nassau County Office of  
22 Emergency Management.

23 County Executive Mangano hoped to join you  
24 this morning, but is unable to attend due to a  
25 scheduling conflict.

1           Accordingly, he has asked that I read the  
2           following testimony into the record on his behalf.

3           "Members of the Senate Investigations and  
4           Government Operations Committee, thank you for the  
5           opportunity to address this hearing.

6           "We can all agree that the Long Island Power  
7           Authority's response to the widespread power outages  
8           that occurred as a result of 'Hurricane Irene' was  
9           unacceptable.

10          "The most glaring issue was the lack of  
11          communication between LIPA and its customers, and  
12          between LIPA and the local municipalities.

13          "LIPA remained vague, at best, regarding when  
14          residents could expect their power to be restored,  
15          and many times, these estimates were days off.

16          "In fact, full power was not restored to all  
17          customers until 12 days following the hurricane.

18          "LIPA knew well in advance of  
19          'Hurricane Irene' making landfall that Long Island  
20          was looking at the worst hurricane it has seen since  
21          'Hurricane Gloria' in 1985.

22          "In response, LIPA called in more than  
23          3,500 out-of-town workers. Even with the added  
24          workers, it still took them over a week to restore  
25          full power.

1           "The most deplorable aspect of this situation  
2           was the amount of time that it took LIPA to restore  
3           power to some critical-care customers, and  
4           facilities that house critical-care patients.

5           "In neighboring Suffolk County, there were  
6           two nursing homes that were without power for  
7           four days. Nassau [sic] homes house critical-care  
8           patients, and for them to rely on backup generators  
9           is unacceptable.

10          "Throughout the initial cleanup, there was a  
11          clear failure by LIPA to communicate with local  
12          crews in order to clear the roadways.

13          "Nassau County cleaned all downed trees on  
14          county roads immediately after the storm, except for  
15          those where live wires were attached.

16          "Unfortunately, many crews that were ready to  
17          finish the clean-up process were unable to do so,  
18          because LIPA had not communicated with them, the  
19          live-versus-dead wires.

20          "Even by LIPA's own admission, it took them a  
21          day or two before they were working effectively with  
22          local governments, on deenergizing lines and  
23          removing trees.

24          "In wake of 'Hurricane Irene,' Long Island  
25          found itself with over 500,000 of its residents

1 without power.

2 "With the amount of notice that LIPA received  
3 of the impending storm, and amount of aid they  
4 received from out-of-town workers, they should have  
5 been equipped to restore power to its customers.

6 "During the clean-up process, communication  
7 efforts between LIPA and local municipalities, and  
8 LIPA and its customers, were subpar.

9 "In fact, my office was inundated with  
10 'power' phone calls because residents were only able  
11 to reach an automated system when calling LIPA.

12 "In the future, LIPA must implement a better  
13 plan for restoring power to Long Island residents,  
14 and they must communicate with localities in a more  
15 efficient manner so we can partner with them to  
16 better serve our residents."

17 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Senator Fuschillo.

18 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Mr. Craft, thank you very  
19 much for being here on behalf of the  
20 County Executive.

21 And I must say, that, coordination from him  
22 himself, his office, your office, and other  
23 departments in Nassau County, was excellent.

24 And we -- that's why we're so frustrated,  
25 because we expected the same of LIPA.



1           But, I spent many days with the  
2       County Executive and yourself, in the Southern Tier  
3       of my district, on the waterlines, from Freeport to  
4       Massapequa.

5           And, he was readily available and accessible;  
6       also, arranging for the New York State Insurance  
7       Department to have their office hours -- emergency  
8       office hours at Cedar Creek Park, as well as the  
9       mobile van down there.

10          And there were many days, including yourself,  
11       when you participated, and you were physically able  
12       to be there. And, it's a large county.

13          Where we were down, in South Merrick and  
14       other areas, and Bellmore, Wantaugh, and Seaford,  
15       Massapequa, with FEMA, directly, to show them the  
16       damage, for them to make a -- an assessment of the  
17       damage. And they were pretty quick to respond as  
18       well.

19          So, I want to thank you, and the  
20       County Executive himself personally, for his actions  
21       during the storm.

22          CRAIG CRAFT: Thank you, on behalf of the  
23       County Executive, and myself.

24          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Craig, you were in the  
25       audience, I think, for a good part of the testimony

1 of the gentlemen from LIPA and National Grid; their  
2 claim of communication between other municipalities,  
3 that they've been -- that it was ongoing, and an  
4 important factor in how they worked.

5 How did you find their communication with  
6 you, as the County's chief emergency management  
7 officer?

8 CRAIG CRAFT: Senator, we -- I did take note  
9 of testimony by LIPA.

10 We did, in fact, have each of the townships  
11 in our EOC, three days prior to the storm,  
12 throughout the storm, and for the week to follow.

13 A great amount of information went up to  
14 LIPA, but nothing came back down.

15 The representative that LIPA put in our EOC  
16 was excellent, to say the least. Sent all of our  
17 information up, but nothing came back down,  
18 including restoring power to critical  
19 infrastructure.

20 SENATOR MARCELLINO: So you did have a  
21 representative working with you, and they were  
22 helpful, in a sense, that they helped you to get the  
23 message upwards; but, you never heard back as to,  
24 what was done, and what was being done?

25 CRAIG CRAFT: That's correct.

1           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Dave, do you have any --

2           ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: I do, thank you.

3           Thank you, Senator.

4           Craig, thank you for your remarks, but let me  
5 ask you a question.

6           During this crisis, "OEM," the Office of  
7 Emergency Management, you were also charged with the  
8 function of preparing shelters as well --

9           CRAIG CRAFT: Yes, sir.

10          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: -- for the eventually  
11 of the storm requiring that?

12          CRAIG CRAFT: Yes, sir.

13          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Right.

14          And, was that -- was there any cooperation  
15 with LIPA -- other than what you just said, the lack  
16 of it, was there any cooperation with LIPA,  
17 regarding those people who had been evacuated, and  
18 their power situations?

19          CRAIG CRAFT: Actually, at one point in the  
20 storm, when power failed to one of the evacuation  
21 sites, we had to relocate residents to a site with  
22 power.

23          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: How many people were  
24 in that location, roughly?

25          CRAIG CRAFT: Approximately 1,000.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: How many?

2 CRAIG CRAFT: Approximately 1,000.

3 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: So, you lost power in  
4 that shelter for 1,000 people in the shelter?

5 CRAIG CRAFT: Yes, sir.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: And, was LIPA  
7 responsive to that?

8 I mean, I'm sure that's the first one you  
9 contacted; right?

10 CRAIG CRAFT: Again, information went up,  
11 Assemblyman.

12 It certainly went up.

13 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: It never came down?

14 CRAIG CRAFT: If it was a great response, we  
15 wouldn't have relocated the people that were in the  
16 shelter.

17 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Okay, so you heard  
18 nothing back from them when you reported that;  
19 right?

20 CRAIG CRAFT: No, sir.

21 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: So, then, I guess we  
22 all agree that the communication is what failed  
23 tremendously here; right?

24 CRAIG CRAFT: Absolutely.

25 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Okay.

1 Well, thank you very much for your efforts  
2 during this, Mr. Craft.

3 Thank you.

4 Thank you, Senator.

5 SENATOR MARCELLINO: You're welcome.

6 Senator?

7 It's --

8 Jack has a question.

9 Senator Martins.

10 SENATOR MARTINS: Uhm --

11 SENATOR MARCELLINO: I call him Jack.

12 SENATOR MARTINS: That's fine.

13 Thank you.

14 Thank you very much for being here.

15 Just in terms of coordination, your efforts  
16 were specific to the towns; right?

17 CRAIG CRAFT: Our efforts were, the county,  
18 towns, and villages, starting with conference calls,  
19 starting a week out, to coordinate efforts with the  
20 town.

21 SENATOR MARTINS: I remember those, sure.

22 But, as -- you know, in the immediate  
23 aftermath of the storm, as each municipality was  
24 responding to its own jurisdiction, can you tell us,  
25 what, and how -- what efforts, and how the county's

1 OEM coordinated those efforts?

2 CRAIG CRAFT: Absolutely.

3 In the EOC, we have locations for each of the  
4 towns to be represented.

5 Each township gathers information coming  
6 into, calls to the town highway departments, or  
7 "DPWs." And, the information is shared back and  
8 forth.

9 When we receive information into the EOC, we  
10 share it with the three townships.

11 The three townships, when they receive  
12 information, send it to the county EOC, where  
13 there's a LIPA representative, fire marshals,  
14 police department, and we take the action needed,  
15 dependent on the call.

16 But, there are representatives, as I stated  
17 earlier. There were representatives from the three  
18 townships in the EOC, three days prior to the storm,  
19 and a week following the storm, ready to answer  
20 questions, and, make contact with town government to  
21 assure that the needs of the residents were  
22 facilitated.

23 SENATOR MARTINS: Yeah, yeah, I understand  
24 that. And, again, I'm just trying to figure out if  
25 there are lessons to be learned here as well.

1           You know, when you're dealing with the town  
2           of Oyster Bay, you're not necessarily dealing with  
3           the village of Massapequa Park.

4           And, certainly, there are resources available  
5           to the village of Massapequa Park. And, I guess  
6           you're assuming that there's contact between the  
7           town and each individual village, to be able to  
8           coordinate those efforts.

9           And the same can be said for the town of  
10          Hempstead and the town of North Hempstead.

11          How are we getting to the street; how are we  
12          getting to the individual residences?

13          How are we making sure that we're actually  
14          coordinating best efforts, especially in those areas  
15          where you do have larger villages that may not  
16          necessarily be coordinating with the towns as  
17          effectively as you may think?

18          CRAIG CRAFT: Senator, early into these  
19          conference calls with the village mayors, they were  
20          all provided with direct contact numbers to key  
21          members of the EOC staff, to communicate any  
22          problems that they had in their village.

23          On more than one occasion, they took  
24          advantage of those key phone numbers, and their  
25          requests were addressed.

1           SENATOR MARTINS: And the information was  
2 sent up?

3           CRAIG CRAFT: Sent up, sir.

4           SENATOR MARTINS: It never came back?

5           CRAIG CRAFT: Rarely.

6           SENATOR MARTINS: Understood.

7           Thank you, sir.

8           CRAIG CRAFT: Sure.

9           ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Senator? If I could,  
10 just one other comment, Senator Marcellino?

11          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Sure.

12          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Craig, you have a --  
13 in the Office of Emergency Management, you have  
14 something called the "CERT teams."

15                I believe that's the community -- would  
16 you -- "Community Emergency Response Team"?

17          CRAIG CRAFT: Yes, sir.

18          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: And that's all  
19 staffed, mainly by volunteers from Nassau County  
20 offices who arrive at OEM?

21                I know, during that big snow storm last year,  
22 that was activated.

23                And, this was activated just prior to the  
24 full impact of the storm; right?

25          CRAIG CRAFT: Absolutely.



1           We had CERT volunteers in the Office of  
2           Emergency Management throughout the storm.

3           ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH:   And I've been in  
4           those offices.   That, you have phone banks there.

5           And were -- most of those are incoming calls  
6           from people who are calling that number?

7           Is that where the number that the  
8           County Executive would -- had put out publicly?

9           Is that where those phones were, basically?

10          CRAIG CRAFT:   The number that the  
11          County Executive had put out was a non-emergency  
12          number --

13          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH:   Right.

14          CRAIG CRAFT:   -- that was staffed by  
15          police department personnel.

16          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH:   Okay.

17          CRAIG CRAFT:   The "Office of Emergency  
18          Management" number, remained, remains, intact  
19          throughout all of events.

20          The CERT volunteers were manning all incoming  
21          phone calls; as well as, staff from county agencies,  
22          that were not directly out addressing the issues of  
23          the storm, were deployed to OEM, to man the phone  
24          banks there.

25          ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH:   Now, those numbers

1       were -- the calls coming in were from citizens? Or  
2       was that from agencies trying to coordinate stuff  
3       within the county? Or, what?

4               CRAIG CRAFT: Agencies have direct contact  
5       numbers.

6               ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Right.

7               CRAIG CRAFT: Most of the calls coming in  
8       were from residents.

9               ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: And, then, you would  
10      pass them on to -- or, CERT members would pass them  
11      on to, I guess, LIPA, where you said, it was going  
12      up, and not coming back? Or, what?

13              CRAIG CRAFT: Yes.

14              ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Okay, so -- but, how  
15      many, uhm -- could you give me an estimate of how  
16      many calls you got?

17              What would you say out there? What would you  
18      guess?

19              CRAIG CRAFT: The OEM line received  
20      thousands -- multiple, multiple thousands -- of  
21      calls throughout the week; primarily, frustrated  
22      residents of Nassau County that could not get  
23      through to LIPA.

24              Again, municipalities have a direct line to  
25      call in.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: Yeah?

2 CRAIG CRAFT: Police agencies have a direct  
3 line to call in.

4 Our phone lines were manned -- approximately,  
5 75 stations, just manned, just to take incoming  
6 phone calls from residents that, primarily, could  
7 not get through to LIPA.

8 ASSEMBLYMAN MCDONOUGH: And that was manned  
9 24/7 throughout the duration, and a little after?

10 CRAIG CRAFT: 24/7 throughout the duration,  
11 up until Wednesday following the storm.

12 SENATOR FLANAGAN: Okay.

13 Thank you, Craig.

14 Thank you very much.

15 Thank you, Senator.

16 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Senator Fuschillo.

17 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Craig, was your primary  
18 communication and interaction with LIPA, or did that  
19 include National Grid, Verizon, Cablevision, or any  
20 other interested parties that may be affected?

21 CRAIG CRAFT: Our representative in the EOC  
22 is from National Grid.

23 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay.

24 CRAIG CRAFT: We do communicate directly with  
25 Cablevision and Verizon FiOS.

1           When we learn of outages in areas, again,  
2           that might have to do with critical infrastructure,  
3           a means of getting vital information out to the  
4           residents, we keep an open line of communication to  
5           Cablevision and Verizon FiOS.

6           SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Right. And your  
7           communication was with National Grid and LIPA, or  
8           National Grid directly?

9           CRAIG CRAFT: National Grid had a  
10          representative in the office that reports up the  
11          chain to both.

12          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: And what about LIPA; did  
13          they have a representative in your office?

14          CRAIG CRAFT: A few days after the storm,  
15          they did.

16          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Now, when you -- you  
17          mentioned a few times, everything went up.

18          Your information was provided to, whom, when  
19          you said "up": LIPA or National Grid?

20          CRAIG CRAFT: The call-center rep, again,  
21          sent to the EOC, is a full-time employee of  
22          National Grid.

23          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay.

24          CRAIG CRAFT: He sends the information up to  
25          National Grid, and LIPA.

1           He sends it to the LIPA call center.

2           Again, his position, I believe, is a  
3       National Grid employee --

4           SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   Okay.

5           CRAIG CRAFT:   -- full-time.

6           But, the information going up, was going to  
7       the LIPA call center, just to clarify that.

8           SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   Right.

9           And, what came back to you?

10          CRAIG CRAFT:   Rare.

11          Rare information, in very rare instances.

12          I could think of very few, over a few days'  
13       time, that we received accurate communication back  
14       down the line.

15          Very rare.   Maybe a handful.

16          SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   During the aftermath of  
17       the event, the storm, the hurricane, however we want  
18       to categorize it -- "tropical storm," Senator --  
19       what was your communication with LIPA in the  
20       aftermath?

21          CRAIG CRAFT:   With the exception of --

22          SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   As far as -- and let me  
23       just rephrase that.

24          With communication from the top, to you, as a  
25       representative of Nassau County OEM, were you

1 getting briefings, daily? three times, four times a  
2 day?

3 What type of communication did you have?

4 CRAIG CRAFT: Senator, with the exception of  
5 one conference call that I was holding, with the  
6 cities, towns, and villages --

7 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Uh-huh?

8 CRAIG CRAFT: -- where LIPA asked to join in  
9 on that call, there was no correspondence from the  
10 top to myself personally.

11 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: During the entire week?

12 CRAIG CRAFT: Through the entire week, to  
13 myself personally.

14 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Now, since the  
15 aftermath -- aftermath now, what has been the  
16 communication with LIPA with OEM?

17 CRAIG CRAFT: Again, their employee in the  
18 EOC remained there.

19 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Right.

20 No, I'm speaking about --

21 CRAIG CRAFT: To OEM?

22 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: -- from the  
23 administration of LIPA.

24 CRAIG CRAFT: None.

25 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Nothing since then?

1           CRAIG CRAFT: Nothing at all.

2           SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay.

3           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Senator Martins.

4           SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you.

5           Your understanding, as far as a response to  
6           this tropical storm, who was responsible, or who had  
7           direct oversight, of deployment of personnel, as  
8           between National Grid and LIPA?

9           CRAIG CRAFT: National Grid.

10          SENATOR MARTINS: Decisions made as to, how  
11          to deploy, and where to deploy, who was making those  
12          decisions?

13          CRAIG CRAFT: I would have to say,  
14          National Grid.

15          Again, that is my understanding.

16          SENATOR MARTINS: I understand.

17          CRAIG CRAFT: I'm certainly not in a position  
18          where I'm setting policy for them, but it's my  
19          understanding that it was National Grid's management  
20          deploying the employees to the field.

21          SENATOR MARTINS: And as much information as  
22          you were providing, and, as you were available with  
23          resources on the local level, to be able to  
24          coordinate with them, was it your experience that  
25          they were unresponsive?

1           CRAIG CRAFT: It was certainly unresponsive.

2           I reflect to a microburst that affected  
3 Great Neck --

4           SENATOR MARTINS: Sure.

5           CRAIG CRAFT: -- about a year and a half ago,  
6 where, LIPA and National Grid responded to the EOC  
7 that was set up in Great Neck.

8           There was a coordinated effort at that time,  
9 between LIPA and National Grid, and the local DPW  
10 and highway forces, to go out, as you had mentioned  
11 earlier, in unison.

12           You know, kill the power, clear a road. Not  
13 to have agencies going to different locations at  
14 different times, and finding their hands tied, that  
15 they couldn't gain access to a road because a tree  
16 was down; or, vice versa, they couldn't remove the  
17 tree because the power was on.

18           SENATOR MARTINS: What would you -- to what  
19 would you attribute the lack of coordination on  
20 their part, with respect to their response to this  
21 storm?

22           CRAIG CRAFT: Poor communication.

23           Just, poor communication is the key component  
24 to this failure of the response to this storm.

25           SENATOR MARTINS: Thank you.



1           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Craig, thank you very  
2 much for your testimony.

3           I think the issue here that we're trying to  
4 get at, and I have just one quick question for you:  
5 Were there ever any police, fire, or other  
6 first-responder emergency personnel who were without  
7 power, to your knowledge, within the county?

8           CRAIG CRAFT: Yes, there was.

9           SENATOR MARCELLINO: How long did it take to  
10 get them back on-line?

11          CRAIG CRAFT: Off the top of my head -- I  
12 don't want to give you incorrect information -- but  
13 I believe it was, Tuesday, after a conference call  
14 with the village mayors, where there was an issue on  
15 the North Shore, restoring power.

16          I know that Merrick Fire Department was  
17 without power for quite some time.

18          I know that Wantaugh Fire Department,  
19 Station 5, on Merrick Road in Bellmore, was without  
20 power, approximately six days.

21          I know that Wantaugh Fire Department,  
22 Station Number 4, was without power, approximately a  
23 week.

24          SENATOR MARCELLINO: See, this is what I was  
25 talking about earlier, when I asked about

1 priorities.

2 What were the priorities? And, how were they  
3 addressed? And, who addressed them?

4 And when you have town halls out, for  
5 three days, with the inability to communicate to  
6 their crews, to go out and help clear streets and  
7 access roads, and so forth; when you have a county  
8 not being told that that tree overlying a -- or  
9 overhanging a major thoroughfare can't be cleared,  
10 because they weren't officially told that the wires  
11 were dead, so that it would be safe for the crews to  
12 come and chop the tree down, and break it up and  
13 move it out of the way, so that the crews could then  
14 come in and fix the wires; this kind of  
15 communication, one cannot have police, fire  
16 departments, first responders, emergency  
17 circumstances, and emergency situations, you know,  
18 out in an area, and claim, "We have a successful  
19 system, and a twenty-first-century communication  
20 system, that is -- that just doesn't fly.

21 So, I thank you for your testimony, Craig.  
22 And I appreciate it.

23 Thank the County Executive for his  
24 assistance, and his service, during the storm.

25 I'm sure everybody appreciates it.

1           CRAIG CRAFT: Thank you, Senator.

2           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Our next speaker will be  
3 Mayor Mark Weiss of the village of Hewlett Harbor.

4           MAYOR MARK WEISS: Senator Marcellino,  
5 distinguished members: My name is Mark Weiss, and  
6 I am the mayor of the incorporated village of  
7 Hewlett Harbor.

8           On behalf of the residents of our village, a  
9 mostly residential community, located in the  
10 southwestern corner of Nassau County, and with a  
11 heartfelt sense of concern for all who lived and  
12 work on Long Island during the storm, I want to  
13 thank you for holding this most important hearing.

14           I feel privileged to be here today.

15           While mine is but one voice, and mine is  
16 one -- but one small village, I believe my  
17 frustrations and bewilderment regarding LIPA's  
18 response to "Tropical Storm Irene" reflects what has  
19 been, and still is being, expressed by hundreds of  
20 thousands of Long Islanders, people who live --  
21 people who I believe, and I dare say, have the right  
22 to believe, that they have been victimized, and let  
23 down by LIPA.

24           By painting a word picture, describing what  
25 went on in my village, I hope to give voice to all

1       those who are eager to gain a commitment from LIPA;  
2       a commitment that our utility will fix their  
3       emergency-preparedness plans, what I see as a  
4       systemically flawed model, that, from head to toe,  
5       needs to be revisited, and revamped.

6               In the aftermath of "Tropical Storm Irene,"  
7       it is clear that LIPA and National Grid failed.

8               And so that I am not misunderstood, I'm not  
9       speaking about a failure on the part of the  
10       thousands of men and women who work for LIPA. We  
11       are in their debt.

12              In my view, this was, specifically, and most  
13       definitely, a failure of leadership. As such, LIPA,  
14       as a utility, violated a sacred trust with its  
15       customers, and with our counties, our towns, and our  
16       villages.

17              In less than two weeks, LIPA undermined the  
18       feeling of safety all Long Islanders have a right to  
19       expect from the providers of their electrical power;  
20       the power that lights our homes and our offices, the  
21       power that helps to heat and cool our homes, the  
22       power that drives the machines that wash and dry our  
23       clothes, the power that runs our televisions and  
24       radios, that heats our ovens and electrifies our  
25       microwaves, and the power that runs our computers,

1 and oftentimes, the computers that run our phones,  
2 and, to so many, most importantly, the power that  
3 keeps our food fresh.

4 Based on the experience of this Island  
5 resident, the poor planning, the poor coordination,  
6 the poor internal and external communications  
7 surrounding this storm, categorizes "Irene" as  
8 nothing short of LIPA's "Katrina."

9 Just as "Katrina" exposed FEMA's  
10 inadequacies, "Irene" hung a lantern on what now  
11 appears to be LIPA's soft underbelly.

12 The time for anger, emotion, and name-calling  
13 is over. This is the time to reflect on the past,  
14 only to plan for the future. A better future.

15 Let's begin with what's commonly known and  
16 accepted as fact by all Long Island residents:  
17 Long Island has trees.

18 These are trees that block roads, and trees  
19 that knock down power lines. Trees that were, and  
20 in the future will be, an impediment to getting the  
21 right people and equipment to where they need to be.

22 Future planning must recognize the challenges  
23 these trees present, and your planning -- LIPA's  
24 planning, must prepare for the probability that they  
25 will fall.

1           Second: Understanding the probable, or even  
2           the possible, magnitude of the devastation after a  
3           storm, understanding where critical problems might  
4           be, understanding how best, and where, to deploy  
5           assets, cannot be left to the last minute, or until  
6           after the event has occurred.

7           Yes, Long Island Power Authority's customers,  
8           I'm sure, will be willing to accept that LIPA will  
9           not have assets in place for a spontaneous disaster.  
10          But it is difficult to fathom why, as it appears,  
11          LIPA's assets were not where they were needed when  
12          "Irene" was being touted for weeks as the  
13          "storm of the century."

14          Setting aside that experts were wrong  
15          regarding the severity of the storm, the Nassau, and  
16          Suffolk County, executives, town executives,  
17          village mayors, citizens' groups, and business  
18          residents across Long Island were preparing for  
19          almost two weeks.

20          What on earth was LIPA doing during that  
21          time?

22          Senators, let me suggest, that hope is not a  
23          strategy.

24          In the future, obtaining and distributing  
25          LIPA assets to all corners of Long Island must be

1 one of LIPA's highest pre-storm planning  
2 considerations.

3 And, then, there is the matter of  
4 communications.

5 From time to time, power will be disrupted.  
6 This is inevitable. But what Long Islanders should  
7 be able to expect, is that they will be able to  
8 reach their power utility, and that we will get  
9 accurate information about the status of repairs,  
10 either, immediately, or within a reasonable period  
11 of time.

12 With 20 percent of our village without power,  
13 98 percent of the complaints we received were about  
14 LIPA.

15 Let me restate: 98 percent of the complaints  
16 we received in the aftermath of "Irene" were from  
17 residents who were not able to get through to LIPA,  
18 about the problems LIPA's intake operators were  
19 having managing outage reports.

20 This is evidenced by the fact that reports  
21 seem to go missing, and were not being coordinated  
22 with field crews.

23 Even when our Village tried to aggregate our  
24 resident complaints, it became apparent, that,  
25 within hours, and then within days, that LIPA

1 left -- LIPA's left hand did not know what LIPA's  
2 right hand was doing.

3 Complaints were recorded, but they appear to  
4 have fallen into a black hole.

5 The people we spoke to were courteous, but it  
6 appears that LIPA's infrastructure and systems did  
7 not support their efforts.

8 When we were told the trucks were in our  
9 area, no trucks could be found.

10 When we were told that our village hall was  
11 on a priority list, our village hall was, in fact,  
12 the last place in the village to get power restored.

13 When we were told that a line crew would come  
14 immediately to secure lines tangled in fallen trees,  
15 several tree crews came, and left, because no line  
16 crews ever showed up.

17 In this day and age where computerized  
18 reporting and status analysis is price of entry for  
19 any business entity of substance, I cannot think of  
20 an excuse worthy of expression.

21 Certainly, none would satisfy my residents.

22 LIPA must commit to adopting a better  
23 communication system, and a system protocols, to  
24 deal with emergency management.

25 In my village, as I'm sure was the case in so



1 many villages and towns, our trustees, our emergency  
2 managers, our commissioners, our office staff, our  
3 security staff, our road crew, started preparing for  
4 "Irene" a week in advance of the storm reaching  
5 Long Island.

6 In addition to readying vehicles, and making  
7 arrangements to move them to accessible higher  
8 ground, we purchased additional gas-powered saws,  
9 chains, ropes, lights, batteries, and radios.

10 We also made plans to move our computers out  
11 of village hall.

12 We activated our standing agreement with our  
13 local country club, putting their forces on call,  
14 and allowing us to engage the club's ground and  
15 maintenance staff immediately after the storm  
16 passed.

17 We also put private tree services on alert,  
18 to ready them and their equipment if our personnel  
19 were in need of additional resources and support.

20 And beyond this, walkie-talkies were  
21 purchased, and with street maps, they were  
22 distributed to our trustees and volunteers, to allow  
23 us to note and centrally process information about  
24 trees that were down, flooded conditions, power  
25 outages, and the like.

1           In Hewlett Harbor, our roads were clear in  
2       hours, and our residents, many of whom evacuated the  
3       village, returned, for the most part, to an  
4       accessible functioning village, save one problem:  
5       As it turns out, LIPA was our weakest link. Not  
6       because the power went off, but because, with all of  
7       our systems that were put in place, to support and  
8       communicate with our residents, LIPA seemed to have  
9       fallen off the grid.

10           Were we perfect? No.

11           Could we do better? Most definitely.

12           Will we incorporate the key learnings from  
13       this storm into plans for the future? Yes.

14           Senators, this is what we are asking of LIPA:

15           Senators, let's me recommend if I may, that  
16       you require LIPA to set up an ongoing citizens  
17       committee to help in the planning process.

18           No one knows a community better than area  
19       residents and local business leaders and local  
20       government officials. These people will be  
21       invaluable.

22           I am sure each village and town will support  
23       this effort.

24           And, I would also like to suggest that LIPA  
25       assign field representatives, people who will be on

1 the streets, before and after a storm, to interface  
2 with villages throughout the Island.

3 It is nice to have someone to talk to on the  
4 phone, but if one's complaints are not delivered to,  
5 and coordinated with, and by, a responsible field  
6 representative, who has a bird's-eye view of the  
7 situation on the ground, the functionality of the  
8 system is sure to be compromised.

9 In my professional experience, customers are  
10 favorable to companies that acknowledge the  
11 existence of a problem, and work to satisfy their  
12 complaints.

13 Over the next few months, LIPA will have an  
14 opportunity to fix the flaws in their  
15 emergency-preparedness program, and to get it right.

16 As a result, I expect LIPA's customers, and  
17 their representatives, will be most appreciative and  
18 supported.

19 I offer our village's support.

20 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you very much,  
21 Mayor.

22 I just -- if I could ask you a quick  
23 question.

24 One of the things, you talked about future  
25 planning.

1           And one of the reasons why we didn't hold  
2       this hearing immediately, on top -- or, during the  
3       storm, or immediately after, is, we wanted to give  
4       some time to, basically, let the dust clear a little  
5       bit so we would have, you know, some clear thoughts,  
6       and we just get over some of the initial anger that  
7       was out there.

8           Could the villages, like some do with police  
9       services, contract to a police entity?

10          We have the old Brookville Police, for  
11       example, that service different villages, by  
12       contract.

13          Could they service, could they form  
14       connections with private tree-trimming operations,  
15       so that they didn't have to bring them in one at a  
16       time? Could they have them on contract, to -- on  
17       call, to come in?

18          Would that be feasible to some of the  
19       villages, to get together?

20          MAYOR MARK WEISS: It's definitely feasible.

21          I think it's up to each village to determine  
22       the assets that are available to them; those that  
23       are on staff, and those that are within the  
24       community.

25          Three years ago, the village of

1 Hewlett Harbor formed a written agreement with the  
2 Seawane Country Club, which is smack in the middle  
3 of our village.

4 We noticed that they have very large  
5 vehicles, they have pay-loaders, they have people  
6 who know how to use equipment to cut down trees, and  
7 to help us to clean roads.

8 We formed this agreement, and we've taken  
9 advantage of it, in three years, three times.

10 The storm in March, which devastated  
11 Hewlett Harbor, was a great example of how well it  
12 worked. And, we've employed it once again during  
13 "Irene."

14 We -- I -- we also have relationships with  
15 several tree-pruning companies. We contacted them  
16 prior to the storm. We made them aware of the  
17 situation, and our potential need for them.

18 They know the area very well. They have  
19 equipment that can deal with the challenge. And, we  
20 were on the phone with them on a regular basis.

21 And they were, in fact, working to support  
22 our own crews, the country club's crews. And, we  
23 brought them in as well.

24 SENATOR MARCELLINO: I appreciate that  
25 comment, especially with these -- some of the larger

1 clubs that exist on the north shore, and various  
2 south-shore communities, that they could be  
3 utilized, because, I do know some of the villages  
4 are not all that big, and do not have a  
5 department of public works per se; or, maybe, have  
6 only an individual in the clerk's office to go out  
7 and assist in this kind of operation.

8 So, that, perhaps getting together and  
9 forming some kind of joint relationship might help  
10 them in the future, coming in.

11 I appreciate your testimony, and we thank you  
12 for your time.

13 Any other questions?

14 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Just a quick question.

15 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Sure.

16 SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Mayor, thank you for your  
17 testimony.

18 It seems you prepared to the best ability as  
19 you could.

20 What has been your communication with LIPA in  
21 the aftermath?

22 MAYOR MARK WEISS: We had a contact, a  
23 personal contact, at LIPA, that was set up prior to  
24 the storm. And, in fact, as you've heard from  
25 others, that worked well.

1           The Village was able to get through to that  
2       person.

3           It was everything else that failed.

4           SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Has the administration  
5       reached out to you since the storm and the  
6       aftermath, for coordination meetings,  
7       emergency-management meetings?

8           MAYOR MARK WEISS: Only the village and  
9       towns' meetings that they've set up.

10          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Okay. Thank you very  
11       much, Mayor.

12          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you once again.

13          MAYOR MARK WEISS: Thank you very much.

14          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Our next speaker,  
15       Mayor James Altadonna, of the village of  
16       Massapequa Park.

17          MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA: Good evening.

18                I should say: Good afternoon,  
19       Senator Carl Marcellino, and Senators.

20                Thank you for having me, and thank you for  
21       having this hearing.

22                We were equally as frustrated, as you've  
23       heard from other representatives speaking here  
24       today.

25                And my goal today was to provide you with a

1 microcosm of the days' events, and leading up to the  
2 storm, and after the storm.

3 As you know, we were 90 percent affected. We  
4 had no electrical power to 90 percent of our  
5 villages.

6 So, if you indulge me, I would like to  
7 provide you with a microcosm of the events.

8 We held a staff meeting on the morning of  
9 August 25th to advise employees of the coming storm.  
10 Employees were advised of the severity of the storm,  
11 and all the employees needed to prepare personally  
12 for the hurricane that was to be coming.

13 Equipment was staged throughout locations in  
14 the village, to prevent the loss of equipment at any  
15 one location.

16 On August 26th, at approximately 7 p.m., an  
17 Emergency Notification Announcement to all village  
18 residents was dispatched, advising residents to  
19 prepare for the storm, and provide them with contact  
20 information for fire, police, LIPA, and to let them  
21 know that Village Hall would be open and  
22 functioning, and to assure our residents that we  
23 were prepared.

24 All employees were brought in at 12 midnight  
25 on Saturday, August 27th. Last-minute preparations



1       were made.

2               Early in the morning, Sunday, August 28th,  
3       employees were dispatched, to survey and assess the  
4       damage from the storm.

5               The central command center at the village was  
6       activated, and residents immediately began calling.

7               Village crews went to work on clearing trees  
8       on emergency streets that were not entangled with  
9       wires.

10              The village was divided into three sections.

11              Crews were dispatched to clear roadways. In  
12       addition, small truck were dispatched to clear  
13       smaller items from the streets.

14              This action was taken to remove any  
15       impediments that may arise for fire, police, and,  
16       especially LIPA.

17              Trees that were entangled with wires were  
18       called in to our LIPA emergency government lines.

19              My initial contact was with  
20       Tracy Burgess Levy. We relayed all pertinent  
21       information, including trees entangled with wires  
22       that were blocking our roadways.

23              This was our first hint of trouble.

24              I repeatedly asked, when we were going to see  
25       crews, and what information I could relay to our

1 residents.

2 She seemed overwhelmed at the amount of phone  
3 calls she was receiving from various municipalities,  
4 and unable to provide a response.

5 On Monday morning, August 28th, after no  
6 response from LIPA, I began calling LIPA's municipal  
7 representatives for action.

8 At this point, 90 percent of our village was  
9 without power.

10 Again, in contacting LIPA, their response  
11 was, that they were directing crews to the  
12 hardest-hit areas.

13 And I politely told them again, that  
14 90 percent of our village was out. We had major  
15 access roads that were impassable, as well as  
16 multiple downed wires with electrical fires. If  
17 this does not constitute a hard-hit area, I do not  
18 know what does.

19 By mid-morning, my frustration level had  
20 peaked. I began reaching out to other forms of  
21 government for support.

22 I called Governor Cuomo's Office, as well as  
23 Senator Chuck Fuschillo.

24 And I would like the record to reflect, that  
25 Senator Fuschillo stepped in and made calls. And,

1       it was after those phone calls that we started to  
2       receive some limited response from LIPA.

3               At this point, we received that call from  
4       Lillian Manjarrez of LIPA. We again relayed to her  
5       all the previous information that was relayed to  
6       LIPA government contacts.

7               Again, all day Monday, August 29th, no LIPA  
8       crews were available in Massapequa Park.

9               On Tuesday morning, August 30, 2011, I was  
10      advised that a LIPA crew was on O'Connell Street.

11              The Village Administrator was dispatched to  
12      find that crew.

13              An employee by the name of Ron Noone -- and I  
14      would like to be on record, the employees of LIPA  
15      and National Grid did an incredible job under the  
16      circumstances -- a name, Ron Noone, from LIPA,  
17      provided assistance and information. He was present  
18      to ascertain the situation on O'Connell Street, but,  
19      initially, had no plans to clear it.

20              Once it was determined that the electric was  
21      off, he did, in fact, have his tree crew clear the  
22      tree -- clear the wires from the tree.

23              Village staff immediately went to work.

24              The administrators -- at the Administrator's  
25      insistence, he was asked to go to Willow Street and

1 Lake Shore, which is a major thoroughfare in our  
2 village.

3 Again, he ascertained that the wires were not  
4 live, and we went to work, and we cleared that main  
5 northwest -- I'm sorry, north-south thoroughfare.

6 Although extremely helpful, he advised us  
7 that he had to move to other areas.

8 Again, after some convincing, he determined  
9 that other areas, two other blocks were safe, and  
10 that the Village was able to clear those streets.

11 After numerous calls and demands for action,  
12 a dedicated crew arrived at Village Hall on  
13 Wednesday morning. That crew, headed again by  
14 Ron Noone, worked in conjunction with the  
15 Superintendent of Public Works, and began clearing  
16 trees from roads and wires.

17 And I would say, Wednesday, was the first day  
18 we had manpower to, actually, effectively create --  
19 effectively improve the situation in  
20 Massapequa Park.

21 The Village continued with its three crews,  
22 and brought in an outside contractor, as the --  
23 Senator Carl Marcellino had suggested -- outside  
24 contractor to provide crews to continue to clear  
25 trees and clean up roads.

1           I was giving -- at that point, Wednesday, I  
2           was given a contact, Joseph Cicalo, director of  
3           construction delivery, who was able to provide  
4           updates, and attempts to advise us when electrical  
5           power was restored to our village.

6           It was not until late Friday that the village  
7           residents had been restored with power.

8           In conclusion to "Tropical Storm Irene",  
9           which was not as strong as predicted, thank God, we  
10          determined that there were three facets that needed  
11          to be addressed by LIPA.

12          First, and foremost: Their preparedness.

13          We felt that they were not prepared. Assets  
14          were not deployed throughout the county. And, it  
15          took too long to mobilize and to respond.

16          Second: LIPA's assessment.

17          If they would embed with the villages and  
18          towns, their assessment would have been much easier.

19          Third: Reconstruction, which should have  
20          two separate, distinct components.

21          One should be, clearing roads of trees, and  
22          determining wires that are live or dead;

23          And, then, the second component should be,  
24          the opening or the electrical restoration.

25          But, to do two in the same, as we see, takes

1 too long.

2 I would like to thank you for the opportunity  
3 to address the Standing Committee on Investigation  
4 and Government Operations.

5 And, I welcome any of your questions.

6 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Well, Mayor, thank you  
7 very much for coming. And, I appreciate your  
8 testimony. It will be, obviously, part of the  
9 record when we prepare our report on this issue,  
10 going forward.

11 Just a quick question: Did you -- it's the  
12 same question I asked Mayor Weiss.

13 Did you find any first responder -- police  
14 department, police substations, fire departments --  
15 without power?

16 MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA: We were on generator  
17 power.

18 The Massapequa Park firehouse was on  
19 generator power.

20 The most significant event in our village,  
21 was, we had, literally, downed wires that were live,  
22 with fires.

23 And, in calling in those calls to LIPA, as  
24 long as it was not going to cause fire to a home,  
25 they felt it wasn't a priority.

1           We were actually staffing code enforcers, on  
2       blocks, to prevent children and individuals from  
3       walking down those blocks while these transformers  
4       and wires were live.

5           SENATOR MARCELLINO:   Senator Fuschillo.

6           SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   Mayor, just a quick  
7       comment.

8           Thanks very much for taking the time to be  
9       here.

10          MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA:   No problem.

11          SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   I shared your frustration  
12       all week long, when you and I were communicating  
13       quite often --

14          MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA:   Right.

15          SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   -- due to the lack of  
16       response, or I should say, a lack of communication,  
17       as to whether or not somebody would be in your  
18       village.

19          MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA:   Yes.

20          SENATOR FUSCHILLO:   And to hear from you,  
21       repeatedly, every day, that 90 percent of the  
22       homeowners that you represent, you and I both  
23       represent, was inexcusable.

24                I thank you for your efforts.

25          MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA:   Thank you.

1           SENATOR FUSCHILLO: One question, and I've  
2       asked the previous speakers: In the aftermath, have  
3       you had any communication from LIPA with respect to  
4       coordination of any type of meeting?

5           MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA: I have had one  
6       communication with them, that they were going to  
7       hold a town-hall meeting for mayors.

8           Unfortunately, they scheduled it the same  
9       night of the NCVOA of Nassau County, so, I did send  
10      a representative in my place.

11          SENATOR FUSCHILLO: Thank you, Mayor.  
12          I appreciate you being here.

13          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Assemblyman Ra.

14          ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Mayor, one quick question.

15          MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA: Sure.

16          ASSEMBLYMAN RA: And I thank, you, and  
17      Mayor Weiss, for being here, because, as  
18      Senator Martins had highlighted earlier, the  
19      coordination with our real local governments was  
20      certainly very lacking here.

21                 My question was: You talked about that  
22      Tuesday morning when you were advised about the LIPA  
23      crew that had -- that was on O'Connell Street.

24                 Had you received any prior communication from  
25      LIPA, or anything directly from them, letting you



1 know there would be a crew in the area so that you  
2 could coordinate with your village crews that needed  
3 to be there as well?

4 MAYOR JAMES ALTADONNA: No, our residents are  
5 pretty resourceful. So, it was a resident that  
6 called it in.

7 And, as soon as we found out that there was a  
8 truck, we immediately went to meet them.

9 We -- you know, we were -- that's the way we  
10 communicated with LIPA.

11 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Thank you.

12 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thank you very much for  
13 your testimony. Appreciate it.

14 Just so that we put on the record: I did  
15 make, and my staff did make, outreach to the  
16 Suffolk County Executive's Office, to come and  
17 testify, and present a statement.

18 We were declined, that testimony.

19 Our next speaker, just to give you a  
20 perspective of a business person on the Island, and  
21 how that particular individual was able to operate  
22 under the circumstances of the outage, is a  
23 gentleman by the name of Mark Gelish.

24 Mark is the owner of Mac's Steak House in  
25 Huntington.

1           Mr. Gelish.

2           MARK GELISH: Good morning.

3           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Good afternoon.

4           MARK GELISH: Good afternoon.

5           My name is Mark Gelish. I'm the owner of  
6 Mac's Steak House, in -- 12 Gerard Street,  
7 Huntington, New York.

8           I would like to describe my experience with  
9 "Tropical Storm Irene," and my experience with the  
10 response of LIPA.

11           Upon Sunday morning, I arrived at  
12 Mac's Steak House. The eye of the storm was upon  
13 us.

14           Mac's, at that point, had no power, but the  
15 cross-street did have electric, of New York Avenue  
16 and Gerard.

17           At about 10 a.m., the immediate area around  
18 Mac's Steak House --

19           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Just to point out,  
20 Route 1 -- that's Route 110 --

21           MARK GELISH: Route 110.

22           Yes, sir.

23           SENATOR MARCELLINO: -- is New York Avenue.  
24 So, it's a major north-south thoroughfare.

25           MARK GELISH: Around 10 a.m., the electric

1 was out in the whole immediate area of  
2 Mac's Steak House.

3 The first 24 hours were uneventful.

4 Monday, I woke up in the restaurant, and was  
5 pleased to see that the electric had been put on  
6 everywhere that I could visibly see, except for,  
7 Mac's Steak House.

8 Monday day, we at Mac's went into a rescue  
9 mode. We set up electric with generators.

10 We figured that the electric would be on any  
11 time, and all we tried to do is maintain the  
12 temperatures of the fresh food and the wine  
13 inventory.

14 We also tried to monitor response of LIPA,  
15 with radio, Internet, and phone calls.

16 At around 3 p.m., I was lucky enough to reach  
17 a LIPA operator.

18 This was an extremely frustrating event.

19 In summary: I was trying to explain to her  
20 that the outage at our area was a technical event  
21 and not a physical issue.

22 The operator seemed to want to taunt me, with  
23 comments like:

24 "I don't care. My house doesn't have  
25 electric either."

1 "I will not write down this issue, because we  
2 don't know where the trucks are."

3 "We don't know. Could be weeks, could be  
4 hours, before we get there."

5 "You have insurance, don't you?"

6 And, "We are working 24 hours a day."

7 Resigned to the fact that I wasn't going to  
8 get anywhere, I slept at Mac's from 6 p.m. to  
9 10 p.m. I went home to shower, and look up my  
10 status on the LIPA Web page.

11 The status -- and I paraphrase -- was  
12 "assessing and responding."

13 With that, I was excited.

14 I went back to Huntington, to see how close  
15 the truck were to Mac's.

16 I drove around for two hours. Could not find  
17 a working crew anywhere.

18 I proceeded to go in a five-mile circle of  
19 Mac's Steak House, and I gave up my search at about  
20 1:15 a.m. Tuesday morning.

21 5 a.m., I called emergency number again, and  
22 there was nothing new on the recordings.

23 At 8 a.m. I called again, and there was -- it  
24 stated that there was a service ticket that went out  
25 at 7 a.m.

1           With that, I stayed outside the restaurant  
2           for the next 24 hours, monitoring the cross-street  
3           of New York, which is Route 110, and Gerard.

4           At about 9 p.m., I saw a LIPA truck, and with  
5           my excitement, I went into the street to greet them  
6           like a liberator.

7           He informed me that he wasn't there for me,  
8           but that he was only on his way home.

9           The next -- the following events happened  
10          over the next hour and a half:

11          He informed me, that the crews were working  
12          until dusk, but they got paid until 10 p.m.

13          That, the trucks were all up on the north  
14          shore roads because they were devastated.

15          He said, and I quote, "It look like a war  
16          zone."

17          He was generally upset with my situation, and  
18          he decided to take time out of his day, to go up and  
19          down the street and look at the wires, to see if he  
20          could find the issue.

21          Upon his inspection, he said that the problem  
22          was a transformer that was open. It just needed to  
23          be closed.

24          He then proceeded to tell me he would do his  
25          best to dispatch -- to get to dispatch, and to send

1 a crew first thing Wednesday morning.

2 He would not touch anything, however, that  
3 night, because -- even though I begged him. He  
4 cited safety of other LIPA workers as the reason he  
5 wouldn't touch it.

6 Wednesday morning that subcontractor called  
7 me. He explained his conversation with the  
8 Green Lawn dispatcher. And, he gave -- and he said  
9 I would be in the thoughts and prayers.

10 He said he did the best he could.

11 Around 9 a.m., I tracked down another  
12 subcontractor on Wall Street, which is approximately  
13 one block from Mac's. They were in a small pickup,  
14 and they seemed to be doing site evaluations.

15 I thought they were there to inspect my  
16 plight. And, as cordial as they were, they also  
17 portrayed the incompetency of the LIPA response.

18 And, here's a few of those excerpts:

19 They told me that they needed to get the  
20 water station up for the sewage, and, so, they were  
21 holding back some electric.

22 With that I asked: Well, why was the  
23 electric around the sewer, restaurants, and retail  
24 working, and not where I was?

25 They again told me that LIPA had no clue

1       where their trucks were. And, that they would also  
2       not come 100 yards from where they were to see why I  
3       didn't have electric.

4               At 2 p.m. that day, Wednesday, I spoke to a  
5       LIPA representative. This time it was a supervisor  
6       who would only identify herself as "Linda."

7               Linda was very courteous, and equally  
8       incompetent.

9               She stated, at this point, she would write  
10      down my issue, but still could not send an e-mail or  
11      call a dispatcher, but, that -- so, maybe next time,  
12      they could avoid some of this type of issue to  
13      happen.

14              Linda kept me on the phone for 15 minutes.  
15      And I think, at that point, it was because I was  
16      truly defeated, and I was very amenable and not  
17      hostile to her.

18              At 5 p.m. that day, with great amount of  
19      resentment, I spoke to my insurance adjustor. And  
20      we decided, at this point, the products had been  
21      compromised, and we needed to go, from rescue, to  
22      recovery mode.

23              We then proceeded to throw out all of fresh  
24      food, and document what we threw out.

25              Again, I stayed at Mac's until about 6 a.m.

1       No electric.

2               At this point, we got ready for a re-opening  
3       mode. We called all of our vendors, to get opening  
4       orders, just to get ready.

5               Electric was restored around 10:20 a.m. And  
6       with a great amount of effort, we opened up Thursday  
7       night with about 80 percent of our menu.

8               Here are a few of my concerns for this panel.

9               Number one: How could the powers to be have  
10      so much to say about the public being prepared,  
11      which the public did, and then not prepare  
12      themselves?

13              Number two: How could the recovery response  
14      be so incompetent and so uncoordinated?

15              Dominoes can tell you the status of your  
16      pizza delivery, with a part-timer 19-year-old  
17      executing the baking, and a 19-year-old executing  
18      the delivery.

19              And, LIPA, a well-class utility, having no  
20      control, and repeatedly saying, they have no idea  
21      where the trucks.

22              The lack of some sort of analytical  
23      decision-making process at LIPA, to the fact that  
24      100 trucks were put on streets where the devastation  
25      was, and I can appreciate that, but, that they



1        didn't decide to put one bucket in the business  
2        districts, just to fix the little bit of problems  
3        that mine was, and some of the other restaurants in  
4        Huntington were.

5                And then, of course, the decision-making  
6        process, that they leave businesses hostage to them,  
7        and let other businesses thrive, during their  
8        self-inflicted crisis.

9                And, lastly: The audacity of them, to use  
10       insurance as part of the consoling process of the  
11       business plight.

12               Insurance is for emergencies, not for utility  
13       incompetency.

14               In conclusion: I would like to thank you,  
15       Senator Marcellino.

16               Your staff did show genuine concern, and  
17       follow-up, during the whole time of this crisis.  
18       They also seemed to try to fix the issue.

19               I hope, that instead of pointing finkers --  
20       fingers, excuse me, LIPA re-evaluates the system,  
21       and starts, works, to recreate an effective mature  
22       and -- response to the next emergency.

23               Thank you for your time.

24               Thank you all.

25

1           SENATOR MARCELLINO: All right, thank you  
2           very much, and I appreciate your time coming in.

3           I wanted you to come in, and let the -- for  
4           the record, just to be here; that, the plight of a  
5           business person out there, trying to do business.

6           A lot of restaurants, as you well know, were  
7           feeding people; because, they had no power, they  
8           couldn't cook, they couldn't take care of  
9           themselves. They were using the restaurants as a  
10          place to just get warm food for their families.

11          MARK GELISH: Uh-huh.

12          SENATOR MARCELLINO: So, it is important  
13          to --

14          What was the total number of -- what was the  
15          total amount of your loss?

16          MARK GELISH: So far, we have four claims.

17          The food inventory was 18,000;

18          Business loss is still being negotiated;

19          A stereo system, which is nobody's fault, is  
20          somewhere between two and five thousand;

21          And, last, I have antique wines that we have  
22          to go through, that might have been compromised. If  
23          it was all of it, which I don't think it will be, it  
24          will be about \$14,000.

25          SENATOR MARCELLINO: Wow.

1           Thank you very much, Mark.

2           Appreciate your time.

3           MARK GELISH: Thank you, guys.

4           SENATOR MARCELLINO: Our next speaker will be  
5 the business representative of the  
6 International Brotherhood of Electric Workers  
7 Local 1049, James Brown.

8           Mr. Brown.

9           MARK BROWN: Mr. Chairman,  
10 Senator Marcellino; Senator Fuschillo, all our  
11 elected representatives, and all those in  
12 attendance: My name is Jim Brown. I'm a business  
13 representative with IBEW Local Union 1049.

14           I'm here representing business manager,  
15 Bob Shand. Unavoidably, he's away on IBEW business,  
16 and is unable to attend.

17           He has asked that I read his statement, and  
18 make it available for the record, and answer any  
19 questions to the best of my ability.

20           "Chairman Marcellino, Senator Fuschillo,  
21 members of the Committee, and all elected  
22 Representatives present: As the proud manager of  
23 3,500 IBEW men and women who diligently and expertly  
24 provide electric and gas service for our friends and  
25 neighbors on Long Island, I want to thank you for

1 taking the time to examine the efforts made while  
2 restoring service to the 523,000 customers who lost  
3 their power as a result of 'Hurricane Irene.'

4 "First, and foremost, Local 1049 is committed  
5 to working with your Committee, our government  
6 agencies, LIPA, and National Grid, to provide the  
7 best service and storm response possible.

8 "The record will indicate that electric  
9 customers on Long Island enjoy the highest electric  
10 reliability and the shortest outage time of any  
11 overhead utility in New York State. This is for,  
12 both, storm- and non-storm-related events.

13 "This is not to indicate we are satisfied.

14 "We strive every day to be better, and hope  
15 that the storm-review process will provide  
16 additional safe and expedient solutions to restore  
17 power after these types of events.

18 "I would like to point out, that our members'  
19 average age is a little over 48 years, and it is not  
20 unusual for members to have 30 or 40 years of  
21 service to our community.

22 "Our experience can be a valuable resource to  
23 your Committee, should you desire.

24 "While I know that some of you may take  
25 exception to the response to 'Hurricane Irene,'

1 I would like to discuss some of the extraordinary  
2 efforts made during restoration.

3 "All vacation and scheduled days off were  
4 canceled prior to the event.

5 "All personnel were staged and prepared in  
6 advance of the storm.

7 "There were mandatory 16-hour shifts around  
8 the clock, seven days a week, in advance, during,  
9 and subsequent to the storm. And, in some  
10 departments, these shifts lasted for six or  
11 seven days after all customers were restored.

12 "16-hour shifts, commuting to and from work,  
13 allow little time for much-needed sleep after  
14 performing this hard and dangerous work.

15 "Just examining the numbers, 50 percent of us  
16 were going home, to dark homes and cold showers,  
17 too.

18 "Yes, we live here. Long Island is our home,  
19 also.

20 "We are not complaining. We are proud and  
21 privileged to serve our community.

22 "I personally began my career with then-LILCO  
23 in 1973, initially, as an apprentice lineman;  
24 subsequently, as a substation technician.

25 "For the last 20 years, I have been a

1 business representative with IBEW Local Union 1049,  
2 representing members who work for the utility.

3 "I believe this combination of experience, of  
4 over 39 years, provides a unique perspective for  
5 evaluating the storm restoration.

6 "I have worked, and been an integral part of,  
7 ice storms, heat and lightening storms, tropical  
8 storms, and hurricanes, and I remain unaware of any  
9 authority that delineates as to what is an adequate  
10 or excellent number of customers to restore each and  
11 every day.

12 "The restoration is a function of the damage  
13 to the system, and the right number of workers with  
14 the appropriate skills.

15 "Is, two days, five days, or seven days, too  
16 long?

17 "I'm sure we all feel two hours is too long,  
18 but, I am unaware of no process that restores  
19 523,000 customers that effectively and safely.

20 "As you would guess, I am very proud of the  
21 work done by the men and women of IBEW Local 1049.

22 "I also wanted to give thanks and praise to  
23 all 7,500 men and women, who sacrificed, and gave  
24 their best efforts, during this time.

25 "I had the opportunity to observe many facets

1 of the restoration effort. Those by my members, the  
2 contractors who traveled here, and the National Grid  
3 management team. Their dedication to restoring  
4 Long Island was extraordinary.

5 "A special recognition should go to  
6 National Grid president, John Bruckner, who led the  
7 effort of what became several battalions of men and  
8 women. His leadership during this difficult time  
9 was as professional as I have witnessed in my  
10 39 years of storm restoration.

11 "Lastly, I would also request, that, through  
12 our efforts, we can come up with a message, asking  
13 customers to remain calm, provide support to the  
14 restoration effort, and come together as a  
15 community, during these difficult times."

16 Thank you.

17 SENATOR MARCELLINO: Thanks for your  
18 testimony, Mr. Gelish.

19 And, I do appreciate your remarks.

20 And, I do appreciate, as it, I said earlier,  
21 and I think you heard it from just about every  
22 member of the panel, we appreciate the work of the  
23 crews in the field. We appreciate the fact that  
24 they were out there on under very difficult  
25 circumstances.

1           I agree with you; there's no way to say,  
2       that, four, five, six, seven days, is an appropriate  
3       response for half a million people out of power, or  
4       half a million households out of power.

5           It depends on the nature of the outage, it  
6       depends upon the nature of the units that are out,  
7       and the complexity of the hook-up system.

8           We understand all of that.

9           We also -- it depends upon the timing when  
10      streets could be cleared appropriately.

11          But, I think that you heard here today, a  
12      complaint on the communication between LIPA, Grid,  
13      and its customers.

14          That's a problem.

15          I also heard, from testimony, and I think you  
16      heard it, too, because you were here, that there was  
17      a complaint about the communication between the  
18      central headquarters and the workers in the field,  
19      and vice versa.

20          I was told by a LIPA representative, on the  
21      phone, that the backyard of the household that I was  
22      standing in, had been given power earlier that day.

23          In fact, they had not.

24          In fact, there hadn't been a crew on that  
25      road to address their household.



1           And there had been many calls from, both, the  
2           customer and my own office, to LIPA's phone system.

3           How would you address the communication  
4           between your people, who are on the ground, doing  
5           the best they could, under difficult circumstances?

6           But, still, how is the communication between  
7           your field people and the main office?

8           MARK BROWN: I personally didn't have any  
9           interaction at that time.

10          Even though the members that I represent, the  
11          gas group, we go out and do two-man restoration, to  
12          assist the regular electric crews at the time, I'm  
13          sure that they functioned as they normally would,  
14          through our dispatch system.

15          Just, once again, overwhelmed by the quantity  
16          of outages, and the damage, that occurred, as was  
17          represented by Mr. Bruckner, you have to start at  
18          one end, and get -- to get to the other end.

19          How the communication went? I'm sure that  
20          local 1049 will do everything in its power to assist  
21          LIPA, National Grid, and your Committee, or any  
22          other governmental agency, to make it function in a  
23          better manner.

24          SENATOR MARCELLINO: I appreciate that.

25          And I appreciate your time, and the

1 testimony.

2 And, again, I appreciate the efforts of your  
3 workers, that you represent. Of the workers that  
4 you represent, they did yeoman's work.

5 Once sent to the places of -- most people  
6 were saying: Well, once they got here, we had --  
7 they did their job, and they did it quickly, and  
8 they did it well.

9 I didn't get any complaint on that level.

10 We did get complaints, as I said, on the  
11 communication system, and whatever.

12 Again, I thank you for your time, and I thank  
13 you for your testimony.

14 I will be forwarding -- that's the last  
15 testifier in this series.

16 I thank my colleague for coming and being  
17 here, and listening and, asking questions.

18 We will be forwarding on to the Governor, a  
19 letter.

20 We'll copy LIPA and Grid, as to what it says.  
21 But, we're going to ask them to, basically, hold in  
22 abeyance, any reference, or any recommendation, on  
23 contract between LIPA and Grid, until, and when, a  
24 full independent review of the operation and the  
25 response to "Irene" is completed.

1           We don't have that done.

2           And I don't trust -- this is my own personal  
3 thing -- I just don't trust the fox to look at the  
4 security system in the hen house.

5           We're not going to deal with that.

6           I want somebody, outside; I want a  
7 professional group, come in. And I want a full  
8 review of the system, and a full review of this  
9 so-called "twenty-first century communication  
10 system," which, as you've heard, over and over  
11 again, from testifier after testifier, failed.

12          Absolutely failed.

13          That is the only way you could describe it.

14          It didn't work.

15          I don't know why. I'm not an expert, but I'm  
16 going to find out.

17          And I don't want decisions being made, one,  
18 as to who's going to head LIPA; or, who's going to  
19 be contracted to perform the service, and manage  
20 your personnel, the workers, until we get that  
21 review.

22          They're just going to have to wait until we  
23 get that review.

24          And I'm going to urge the Governor to set one  
25 up as expeditiously as possible, so that we can make

1       this review done -- get it done, until we get some  
2       answers to the questions.

3               Because, as you heard here, the testimony  
4       between -- and the written testimony, if you read  
5       both Grid's and LIPA's written testimony -- we  
6       didn't get LIPA's until this morning. We had Grid's  
7       yesterday, in advance, and we were able to read that  
8       ahead of time -- in fact, they contradict each  
9       other. They don't -- they don't match.

10              And, that's not the way it should be. They  
11       should be in sync.

12              They're not.

13              So, we're going to need answers.

14              Again, I thank all the people who testified,  
15       for their efforts, and their time. And we  
16       appreciated their testimony.

17              And, my colleagues, again, thank you once  
18       again.

19              The meeting of this committee is adjourned.

20                      (Whereupon, at 12:48 p.m., the public  
21       hearing, held before the New York State Senate  
22       Standing Committee on Investigations and  
23       Government Operations, concluded.)  
24  
25