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DOI ISSUES REPORT ON ALLEGATIONS OF POSSIBLE CITY WORKER SLOWDOWN DURING 2010 BLIZZARD

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), released a report today detailing a five-borough investigation into allegations of a possible slowdown by workers of the City Department of Sanitation ("DSNY") during the December 2010 blizzard. The investigation consisted of interviews of more than 150 witnesses, including Sanitation supervisors and workers from the five boroughs, City Department of Transportation ("DOT") workers, union representatives, and members of the public; a review of video footage provided by the public and City surveillance cameras, and Global Positioning System ("GPS") data that monitored trucks' locations and speeds in real time; and an examination of DSNY internal agency information. A copy of the report can be found at the following link: http://www.nyc.gov/html/doi/downloads/pdf/june11/snowreport_60311.pdf

Highlights of DOI's report include:

- DOI obtained and viewed 24 hours of footage from City surveillance cameras in various parts of the City, which collectively showed approximately 265 City trucks in the streets on December 26th to 27th, most of which were visibly plowing the snow. There appears to be an explanation from the video as to why some trucks had plows lifted, while others with raised plows are not readily explainable from the video footage. The tapes were turned over to DSNY for further analysis.
- At one location in Brooklyn, DSNY trucks got stuck and Sanitation workers with those trucks bought beer, as reported to DOI by the *New York Post*. The store where the beer was purchased indicated it deleted the relevant video surveillance. DOI issued a subpoena and DOI's computer forensics investigators recovered a portion of the tape clearly featuring uniformed DSNY workers buying beer. Workers were identified; one made an admission. The video footage and information has been turned over to DSNY for disciplinary action.
- Other DSNY trucks that appeared to the public to be doing nothing were stuck with DSNY employees instructed to stay with trucks – creating a negative impression with the public. While stuck with their trucks, DSNY employees were observed napping, or buying coffee or food, again leaving an impression with members of the public that employees were not doing their job.
- Roads around the hospitals surveyed by DOI, were cleared in a timely manner to varying degrees. Hospitals with more sizeable campuses experienced greater problems. While several hospitals reported satisfactory snow removal in the streets around their perimeter, several reported that vital roads and access points were not expeditiously cleared. Better advanced planning by the City for snow cleanup of key access points to hospitals is needed. All of the hospitals had their own snow removal workforce for sidewalks around and internal roads within their respective properties.

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- DSNY employees complained about a variety of issues during cleanup, including that the snow chains were inadequate and broke easily. DOI found 44% of the snow chains deployed on snow removal vehicles throughout the five boroughs broke during the snowstorm cleanup.
- One DSNY garage in Queens using GPS in its vehicles achieved a higher percentage of streets salted and plowed compared to other districts that received a similar snowfall amount.
- City Councilman Daniel J. Halloran did not provide information that contributed any actual evidence about a possible slowdown. With respect to the DOT and DSNY witnesses Mr. Halloran stated he spoke with about a possible slowdown, the DOT witnesses did not corroborate Mr. Halloran's public statements and the Councilman refused to name three DSNY workers he said he spoke with, asserting attorney-client privilege.
- DOI interviewed representatives from four unions who each denied under oath any knowledge of a concerted slowdown or that union members engaged in a slowdown.
- DOI has referred the findings in its 47-page report to DSNY, the offices of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes and Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown, and the office of Loretta E. Lynch, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DSNY Commissioner John J. Doherty and Public Advocate Bill de Blasio and their staffs for their cooperation and assistance in this investigation.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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