



STATE OF OKLAHOMA
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Mr. Richard J. Orsulak
Emergency Planning and Public Safety Division
Office of Spectrum Management
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1212 New York Avenue, NW Suite 600 B
Washington, DC 20005

June 16, 2010

Dear Mr. Orsulak:

This letter is in response to your invitation for public comment regarding efforts to prevent contraband cell phone usage within the prison system. The mission of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections is to protect the public, the employee and the offender. Due to the increased availability of contraband cell phones over the past several years this mission is becoming more difficult to meet.

The use of contraband cell phones to orchestrate criminal activities became evident in 2007 following a gang related homicide in the streets of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. During the investigation, it was determined that a telephone call placed from a contraband cell phone in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary led to the homicide.

In June, 2008, following a violent assault at the State Penitentiary, contraband cell phones were utilized by offenders to orchestrate a statewide retaliation which affected four separate state facilities. Investigation revealed offenders at other facilities were to participate in the assaults; however, poor cell phone reception prevented them from receiving the orders.

On November 21, 2009, a second round of statewide assaults causing injuries to numerous offenders was coordinated by offenders utilizing contraband cell phones.

From April 2009 to April 2010, 846 contraband cell phones were confiscated in our State facilities.

Although this Department would not support any action that would jeopardize or interfere with emergency services, including 911 operations, the Oklahoma Department of Corrections strongly supports the Safe Prisons Communication Act of 2009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Johnny Blevins".

Johnny Blevins, Administrator of Internal Affairs
Oklahoma Department of Corrections