

911 System Hearing: Top Official Promises Investigation

Posted on Jun 24, Posted by [Daniel Stein-Sayles](#) Category [City](#)

Testifying at a hearing on the city's new emergency 911 system, a top official of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's administration promised a "full investigation" into what caused a delay in responding to a request for help for a girl who died after she was struck by a car.

Deputy Mayor Cas Holloway extended his condolence to the family of the girl and promised the full review as he testified for over three hours at a City Council hearing Friday, where he declared that the \$88 million 911 system's "technology worked."

[READ the City Council committee report about recent problems with the city's 911 system.](#)

The parents of 4-year-old Ariel Russo, the girl in question, attended the hearing. Her mother spoke to the press afterwards.

"There is only so much that we, the people of New York City, can actually do without the commitment of elected officials," said Sophia Russo, Ariel's mother. "I call on all New Yorkers to write and call our mayor and members of the City Council, imploring them to fix two major issues here. The first is, we need a law passed which prohibits high-speed police chases in school zones. Second and most importantly, we need to demand that this 911 system be fixed."

Her family has [filed a notice of claim against the city](#) and has hired attorney Sanford Rubenstein to represent them.

Ariel died after being struck by an SUV during a police chase on June 4. Fire department officials blamed the delay on human error and disputed reports that a technical glitch was at fault.

Bloomberg also tried to deflect blame from the technology to reporters last week.

“The software worked exactly the way it was supposed to be,” Bloomberg said. “There clearly was something wrong with somebody sitting in front of the screen, and maybe two people sitting in front of screens. They didn’t do what they were supposed to do and we’re looking at the procedures. It’s very tragic.”

The new 911 system was launched over three weeks ago as part of a \$2 billion modernization project by Bloomberg’s administration.

Tags: Tagged in: [911 system](#) [Cas Holloway](#) [public safety](#)