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SUPERINTENDENT

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RE: Matrix

March 9, 2004

Commissioner Guy Tunnell  
Florida Department of Law Enforcement  
Chairman of the MATRIX  
Executive Committee  
Post Office Box 1489  
Tallahassee, Florida 32302

Dear Commissioner Tunnell:

The impetus for proposing the MATRIX pilot project stemmed from the need to improve information sharing among law enforcement on a multi-state level. A primary goal of the project was to pilot a multi-state variation of the factual data analysis application that had been in use by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement after the events of 09/11/01. Initially, agencies from thirteen states, including New York, expressed an interest in the project. The project was designed in a manner to allow additional states to be included as the pilot proceeded. Identified as essential by all project participants was the requirement to address the security of information accessed, privacy concerns and use and dissemination policies.

The need to improve information sharing and the need to provide law enforcement investigators with improved access to information and data sources that are legally available to them remains more critical today than ever before. Although the New York State Police continues to be involved in several efforts to meet this need, we have determined that we will no longer participate in the MATRIX project as it is currently designed. I am, therefore, writing to you in your capacity as Chairperson of the MATRIX project to provide 30-day notice of our intent to withdraw from the project. A copy of this letter will also be sent to MATRIX board members from the remaining participating states.

Unfortunately, instead of increasing the number of participating states over time to improve the potential benefits of the pilot, to date nearly two-thirds of the initial states have opted out of the project. The uncertainty of continued funding and the valid concerns about the feasibility of expanding the project in its current physical data warehouse design have been the most crucial reasons provided for withdrawing.