

Bechtel/Parsons Brinckerhoff Statement on Boston Tunnel Accident August 4, 2006

The tragic death of Milena Del Valle on July 10 and the loss of public confidence in the Boston Central Artery/Tunnel are of great concern to Bechtel/Parsons Brinckerhoff. We are deeply committed to supporting efforts to investigate the accident, re-open the highway, and address public concerns over safety.

B/PB immediately offered its support to the accident recovery efforts and related inspections. Once the accident came under criminal investigation, state authorities limited access to the accident site, project records, and information relating to the ongoing inspections and investigations. At its own initiative, B/PB has provided information and specific technical recommendations to the Attorney General concerning investigative steps and testing procedures that could advance the forensic analysis. B/PB has no direct role in ongoing investigations, however, or direct access to project records, which belong to and are controlled by MTA.

We are confident, however, that a thorough forensic analysis can determine the causes of the accident. When the results are known, we will be on hand to stand by our work, as we have for 108 years.

We also endorse and will fully support a prompt, non-partisan, expert and objective review of the entire Central Artery/Tunnel project with a focus on potential public safety issues. Such a comprehensive review – including design, construction, operations, and maintenance – is essential to restoring public confidence in the safety of this historic project. We urge that this review cover the entire range of potential safety-related issues, including structural integrity, structural elements over roadways and public areas, suspended ceilings, ventilation and support systems, fire and life safety, structural fire protection, utilities and lighting, communication systems, and the adequacy of operational inspection/maintenance.

Bechtel/Parsons Brinckerhoff performed many functions in our role as Management Consultant to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority and its predecessors (see http://www.bechtel.com/PDF/BigDig_Roles&Responsibilities_Jul_25_06.pdf). Our work was part of a program subject to layers of checks and balances. We and our customer have at all times shared a common goal: to provide Boston with a state-of-the-art highway network that will keep the city moving efficiently through the 21st century.

We firmly believe the project's processes for engineering, construction, and quality assurance were appropriate and robust. We are proud to have been a part of one of the largest, most complex, and technically challenging projects ever undertaken in an urban setting – and which already has transformed Boston into a more livable, attractive, and economically vibrant city.