

21-000103-N

~~RUSH~~

FORM CD-15 (12-6-73) PRESCR. BY TRANSMIT/ROUTE DAO 214-2		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE		DATE 07/07/2021
NAME	BUILDING, ROOM OR REFERENCE NO.	TAKE ACTION BELOW	INITIALS AND DATE	
Maria Dilliard	via email	2		
Joannie Chin	via email	2		
Henry Wixon	via email	2		
Chuck Romine	via email	2		
Eric Lin	via email	2		
Jim Olthoff	via email	1		
ACTION ITEMS				
1. APPROVAL/SIGNATURE 2. CLEARANCE/INITIALS 3. RECOMMENDATION OR COMMENT 4. RETURN WITH MORE DETAILS 5. INVESTIGATE AND REPORT 6. NOTE AND SEE ME 7. NOTE AND RETURN 8. NOTE AND FILE		9. YOUR INFORMATION 10. PER OUR CONVERSATION 11. AS REQUESTED 12. NECESSARY ACTION 13. CIRCULATE AMONG STAFF 14. ANSWER DIRECTLY 15. PREPARE REPLY FOR SIGNATURE OF: _____		
COMMENTS This controlled correspondence is a letter to OMB regarding a request for emergency clearance for an interview instrument for Champlain Towers.				
		<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Continued on reverse</i>		
FROM (Name)	BUILDING, ROOM OR REF. NO.	CODE AND EXTENSION		



July 7, 2021

Dr. Dominic J. Mancini, Ph.D.
Deputy Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Dr. Mancini,

Pursuant to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) procedures established at 5 CFR Part 1320, Controlling Paperwork Burdens on the Public, I request an emergency clearance of the attached package for the Champlain Towers South Condominium Collapse Interview Instrument.

The National Construction Safety Team Act (Act), 15 U.S.C. 7301 et seq., authorizes the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to establish investigative teams (Teams) to assess building performance and emergency response and evacuation procedures in the wake of any building failure that has resulted in substantial loss of life or that posed significant potential of substantial loss of life. The purpose of investigations by Teams is to improve the safety and structural integrity of buildings in the United States. As stated in the statute, a Team will (1) establish the likely technical cause or causes of the building failure; (2) evaluate the technical aspects of evacuation and emergency response procedures; (3) recommend, as necessary, specific improvements to building standards, codes, and practices based on the findings made pursuant to (1) and (2); and (4) recommend any research and other appropriate actions needed to improve the structural safety of buildings, and improve evacuation and emergency response procedures, based on the findings of the investigation.

NIST sent a preliminary reconnaissance team to collect information on the partial collapse of the Champlain Towers South Condominium in Surfside, FL that occurred on June 24, 2021. Based on the recommendations of the reconnaissance team and evaluation of the criteria listed in the regulations implementing the Act, 15 CFR 270.102, on June 30, 2021, NIST announced that it will conduct a full technical investigation of the collapse under the authority of the Act. There are millions of high-rise condominium units in Florida alone, many of them aging structures near the ocean. While a NIST investigation is intended to identify the cause of the Champlain Towers South collapse, the findings could be used to improve the safety and structural integrity of other similar buildings nearby and throughout the nation.

As part of this investigation, the Team will conduct semi-structured interviews with eyewitnesses, first responders, engineers, contractors, maintenance workers, residents, condo owners, and government officials who can describe experiences with the building before and/or during the collapse, describe knowledge of the building prior to the collapse (e.g., construction, maintenance), and generally, provide any additional information that may help explain the

technical cause of the building failure. This information will provide an essential supplement to the engineering assessment of physical evidence.

It is imperative that this data collection effort be conducted as quickly as possible to ensure the preservation of perishable data. Interview data from any event relies on individuals' memories of the event, which can degrade as time passes. In addition, the situation is changing rapidly in and around the site, including the controlled demolition of the structure and the impending threat of hazardous weather.

With your emergency clearance, NIST is positioned to deploy the interview instrument and begin information collection immediately.

We appreciate your understanding of this urgent request and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

James K. Olthoff, Ph.D.
Performing the Non-Exclusive Functions and Duties of the
Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology