



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
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PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY BUREAU SEEKS COMMENT ON EFFECTS OF JUNE 15, 2020 T-MOBILE OUTAGE ON PUBLIC SAFETY ENTITIES, GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, AND CONSUMERS

PS Docket No. 20-183

Comment Date: July 8, 2020

On June 15, 2020, T-Mobile suffered a substantial outage that prevented customers from making calls, receiving calls, and in some cases, sending text messages over T-Mobile's Voice-over LTE (VoLTE) network.¹ According to social media reports, the outage also affected 911 calling for T-Mobile customers.² T-Mobile explained in a public statement that this outage was caused by "a leased fiber circuit failure from a third party provider in the Southeast."³ When this circuit overloaded, according to T-Mobile, it "resulted in an IP traffic storm that spread from the Southeast to create significant capacity issues across the IMS (IP Multimedia Subsystem) core network that supports [T-Mobile's] VoLTE calls."⁴

The Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (Bureau) is conducting an investigation into this outage given the large area affected and the critical importance of dependable and resilient 911 service throughout the United States. To permit a thorough and accurate analysis of this outage, the Bureau has opened a public docket and invites interested parties to provide all relevant information concerning the causes, effects, and implications of this outage.

We seek comment on the impact of these outages from the perspective of affected public safety entities, as well as state and local governments. Are there estimates of how many calls, including 911 calls, failed or otherwise affected by the outage? What was the effect of the outage on public safety activities and government services across the country? Was there a disruption of data services relied on

¹ See Neville Ray, *Update on T-Mobile Network Issues* (June 16, 2020, 6:23 pm), <https://www.t-mobile.com/news/update-for-customers-on-network-issues> ("Many of our customers experienced a voice and text issue yesterday, specifically with VoLTE (Voice-over LTE) calling.").

² See, e.g., Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network, Twitter (June 15, 2020, 6:51 pm), <https://twitter.com/GHC911/status/1272663034838896641> ("There may be an issue with the ability to make or receive any calls including 9-1-1 from @TMobile."); Redmond, Washington Police Department, Twitter (June 15, 2020, 5:04 pm) ("NORCOM dispatch has confirmed they are currently unable to receive 911 calls from T-Mobile callers.").

³ Neville Ray, *Update on T-Mobile Network Issues* (June 16, 2020, 6:23 pm), <https://www.t-mobile.com/news/update-for-customers-on-network-issues>.

⁴ *Id.*

by public safety entities and state and local governments? We are interested in learning about the experience of Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) during this outage. Are there estimates of how many 911 calls failed or were otherwise affected by the outage? If PSAPs received calls originated on T-Mobile's network during this outage, were those calls accompanied by Automatic Number Identification (ANI) and Automatic Location Identification (ALI)? For those PSAPs that are capable of receiving text messages sent to 911, did the outage disrupt the receipt of those text messages or the sending of texts in reply? Did PSAPs potentially affected by T-Mobile's outage receive timely, actionable notification about the outage from T-Mobile? If not, how did PSAPs learn of the outage? If PSAPs did not receive timely, actionable information about this outage, what effect did this have on the availability of 911 call-handling resources to the public? What measures, if any, did PSAPs take to maintain the public's continuity of access to emergency services? How effective were these measures?

The Bureau also seeks comment on this outage's impact from the perspective of affected individual and enterprise consumers. How did consumers learn about the outage? Was T-Mobile's communication about the outage appropriate, timely, and effective? Were consumers of T-Mobile's network able to successfully make or receive all calls, some calls, or no calls at all? Were consumers of other communications service providers able to successfully complete calls to consumers of T-Mobile's network? Were consumers' text messages successfully sent or received during the outage? Did consumers on T-Mobile's network experience a disruption of data services during the outage? Were consumers able to use alternative measures, such as "FaceTime, iMessage, Google Meet, Google Duo, Zoom, Skype and others to connect" during the outage,⁵ and was that method of communication successful and effective? What effect did the outage have on businesses and providers of critical services, such as hospitals? What effect did the outage have on consumers' personal activities?

Procedural Matters

Interested parties may file comments in response to this Public Notice on or before July 8, 2020.⁶ Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS).

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/>.
- Paper Filers: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing.
- Filings can be sent by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.
- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.U.S.
- Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554.

⁵ Mike Sievert, *Update on T-Mobile Network Issues* (June 15, 2020, 8:45 pm), <https://www.t-mobile.com/news/update-for-customers-on-network-issues> (stating that consumers were able to use these alternative means to connect with others during the outage).

⁶ See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121-01 (1998).

- Effective March 19, 2020, and until further notice, the Commission no longer accepts any hand or messenger delivered filings. This is a temporary measure taken to help protect the health and safety of individuals, and to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.⁷
- During the time the Commission's building is closed to the general public and until further notice, if more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of a proceeding, paper filers need not submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number; an original and one copy are sufficient.
- People with Disabilities: To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530 (voice), (202) 418-0432 (tty).

The proceeding of which this Notice is a part is a "permit-but-disclose" proceeding conducted in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.⁸ Persons making *ex parte* presentations must file a copy of any written presentation or a memorandum summarizing any oral presentation within two business days after the presentation (unless a different deadline applicable to the Sunshine period applies). Persons making oral *ex parte* presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must (1) list all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the *ex parte* presentation was made, and (2) summarize all data presented and arguments made during the presentation. If the presentation consisted in whole or in part of the presentation of data or arguments already reflected in the presenter's written comments, memoranda or other filings in the proceeding, the presenter may provide citations to such data or arguments in his or her prior comments, memoranda, or other filings (specifying the relevant page and/or paragraph numbers where such data or arguments can be found) in lieu of summarizing them in the memorandum. Documents shown or given to Commission staff during *ex parte* meetings are deemed to be written *ex parte* presentations and must be filed consistent with rule 1.1206(b). In proceedings governed by rule 1.49(f) or for which the Commission has made available a method of electronic filing, written *ex parte* presentations and memoranda summarizing oral *ex parte* presentations, and all attachments thereto, must be filed through the electronic comment filing system available for that proceeding, and must be filed in their native format (*e.g.*, .doc, .xml, .ppt, searchable .pdf). Participants in this proceeding should familiarize themselves with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.

For further information regarding this proceeding, contact James Wiley, Cybersecurity and Communications Reliability Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau at (202) 418-1678 or james.wiley@fcc.gov.

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⁷ See *FCC Announces Closure of FCC Headquarters Open Window and Change in Hand-Delivery Policy*, Public Notice, DA 20-304 (Mar. 19, 2020).

⁸ 47 C.F.R. §§ 1.1200 *et seq.*