



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION SEEKS COMMENT ON THE SCOPE OF ITS ENHANCED 911 RULES

Washington, D.C. -- Today, the Federal Communications Commission stated that it intends to reevaluate the scope of communications services that should provide access to emergency services and asked for comment on whether its enhanced 911 ("E911") rules, or similar rules, should be extended to cover certain additional voice services and devices.

The Commission noted that, over the last four decades, access to 911 service has dramatically improved the ability of emergency personnel to respond quickly to people in distress. Efforts by the telecommunications industry, state and local governments, and the federal government have resulted in wireline 911 service being available to approximately 98 percent of the population. State or local laws generally dictate how wireline local exchange carriers provide 911 services. Certain terrestrial wireless carriers are subject to the FCC's rules regarding both basic and enhanced 911 services.

In a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued today, the FCC examined and sought comment on the need to extend compliance with its basic and E911 rules, or similar requirements, to other mobile wireless services, such as telematics, and certain wireline services, such as Multi-Line Telephone Systems, including Private Branch Exchanges and Centrex service, that are not covered by the current rules. The Commission also sought comment on a proposal to require mobile satellite service providers providing interconnected voice service to establish national call centers to which all 911 emergency calls would be routed and sought additional information on several satellite-specific enhanced 911 implementation issues.

The FCC also asked for comment on the impact that excluding certain services and devices from the 911 rules may have on consumers, as well as the technological and cost issues involved in providing E911. The FCC stated that it is mindful of the need to balance the expectations of consumers to have access to 911 service with the need to continue to foster growth and competition in the telecommunications marketplace.

Action by the Commission December 11, 2002, by Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 02-326). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, and Martin, with Commissioner Adelstein not participating.

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