

**Remarks of FCC Chairman Michael Powell**  
**At the Launch of the Commission's E911 Coordination Initiative**  
**April 29, 2003**  
**[as prepared for delivery]**

Good morning and thank you for participating in the Commission's E911 Coordination Initiative.

We have a remarkable gathering of expertise here today – wireless and wireline carriers large and small; public safety organizations and state emergency services boards; state public utility commissions and state legislatures.

I'd also like to welcome those Public Safety Point Answering Service representatives (PSAPs) and other interested parties who are watching this meeting via the Internet.

Before I begin my more formal remarks – I also want to acknowledge the remarkable work of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau – especially the data management and policy divisions – and the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau staff that have made today's event possible. In particular I want to thank Lauren Kravetz and Jennifer Tomchin of the Wireless Bureau for their relentless efforts to make today's event a success.

Today is particularly remarkable for Lauren because it also happens to be her birthday – happy birthday Lauren – and thanks for not taking the day off!!!

I have spoken at great length about the importance of the vast digital migration that is underway across America. I have also detailed my strong commitment to the commission's public safety licensees and their homeland security responsibilities.

The E911 challenge marries these twin public policy goals – that is, we must work together to move wireless carriers, manufacturers and consumers along the migration trail for E911 capability, while also ensuring that the necessary ILEC capabilities are made available in a timely basis on financially reasonable terms. Of course all of this does not advance the public interest unless the public safety community is technologically capable of processing the information produced by the E911 Phase II technology.

Dale Hatfield in his report did an extraordinary job in detailing this challenge – and once again I would like to thank him and Leon Jackler of the Wireless Bureau for their extraordinary work. Today's event is largely an outgrowth of their efforts.

This FCC E911 Coordination Initiative is attracting attention at high levels throughout government. As you know, Congress has recently created a bipartisan Congressional E911 Caucus to focus on these issues. I want to acknowledge the leadership of Senators Conrad Burns and Hillary Rodham Clinton and

Representatives Anna Eshoo and John Shimkus on this important issue. In addition to leadership from the Hill, the Administration has also worked very aggressively to speed deployment. With us today is NTIA Administrator Nancy J. Victory. In addition, I know we also have representatives from DHS, GAO and DOT with us today. Thank you all for joining us.

**Today will launch what I hope will be a “New Era of Cooperation” in the E911 debate. Every one in this room has been a part of the debates and controversies that have led to today. But as we gather here it strikes me that we share an extraordinary number of common goals that should provide a solid foundation for a new era of cooperation.**

- We are all committed to bringing the benefits of E911 technology to as many Americans as possible as quickly as practicable;
- We all recognize that such an effort requires extensive coordination and cooperation among all of the parties – government, PSAPs, Carriers, ILECs, and the public;
- We all believe that resources should be deployed for E911 in such a way that every dollar spent helps to save lives;
- We all believe that consumers need to know and understand what is possible from E911 and when to expect it; and
- We all believe that parties should not obstruct E911 deployment based on unnecessary delay or procedural gamesmanship at the state or federal level;

The FCC E911 Coordination Initiative is just that: it is designed to initiate coordination between and among all the parties, so that this new era of cooperation may take root and grow.

This approach grew in large part from Dale Hatfield’s report. But it is informed by the fact that I believe -- and the 911 Act contemplates -- that the Commission should play a coordination and clearinghouse role in the E911 undertaking. We cannot solve all the problems of E911, but we can pull together all the players who can make the E911 process work best.

And this challenge must be met because E911 will play an extraordinarily significant role in the lives of all Americans. Increasingly, 911 calls are being made from wireless phones. Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) report that they now receive 30 to 50 percent of emergency calls from wireless phones – and that percentage will only go up. It is essential that first responders be able to locate these 911 callers.

**We have made significant progress in the past year. According to the most recent data:**

Phase II information is being provided today by at least one wireless carrier on 911 calls in approximately 125 markets across the country, to more than 300 PSAPs.

Deployment of Phase II by multiple carriers has been reported in the states of Rhode Island and Vermont. Moreover major municipal deployments have occurred in an array of other states including: Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and my home state of Virginia.

We specifically sought out presenters and roundtable participants for today's meeting from these key areas, and we appreciate your time and effort in being here with us today.

Every nationwide carrier using a handset-based approach is offering at least one location-capable handset model, in accordance with applicable benchmarks. Both Sprint and Verizon offer their customers at least 10 different GPS-enabled handset models.

Further, we have seen continued progress in bringing Phase I implementation on-line.

In particular, I'd like to recognize the efforts of the wireless carriers. Over the course of the past few years, the tone and focus of the carriers has shifted to putting the technology in place and making it a reality in a small, but growing, number of localities. The most recent quarterly reports showed increased momentum in deployment, and I have every confidence that these numbers will show significant further improvement when we receive the May 1 quarterly reports shortly.

**That brings us to today. We have an ambitious agenda to sort out what has worked, and to get people sharing information and ideas and cooperating in advancing our common goals.**

Many of the issues we'll be discussing today are those raised by Dale Hatfield in his report, namely:

- Wireless carrier implementation (focusing on how wireless carriers and PSAPs or state and local government have successfully resolved wireless carrier implementation);
- PSAP funding and operation (focusing on how certain states have been able to fund E911 deployment);
- LEC issues (focusing on how parties have resolved issues regarding the roles and responsibilities of wireless carriers, LECs, and PSAPs); and

- Rural issues (focusing on the particular challenges facing rural wireless carriers and PSAPs in rural areas).

This FCC E911 Coordination Initiative is not the only multi-faceted attempt to bring together groups of stakeholders to cooperate in building solutions. In one of the sessions later this morning, we'll hear about a cross-section of other such collaborative efforts, including:

- The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) on its Strategic Wireless Action Team (SWAT) Initiative;
- APCO on its Project Locate;
- The Emergency Services Interconnection Forum (or E-SIF), which is a partnership between NENA and the industry-supported Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions; and
- The Department of Transportation's Wireless E9-1-1 Steering Council

Our intent here today is to recognize and build upon the hard work and critical thinking that has been developed through these initiatives. Indeed we do not want to duplicate or diminish these efforts in any way – rather we want to build on them – and together make the E911 process work smarter and better.

And rest assured the FCC will do its part as well. Later today, we will hear from Dane Snowden, Chief of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, regarding consumer outreach plan on wireless E911. I think this is a very important issue that has not yet received the attention it deserves. Informing consumer expectations about how and when wireless E911 will work is an essential part of the puzzle.

You will also hear from David Solomon, Chief of the Enforcement Bureau, regarding how parties may seek assistance in mediating disputes, and how the Commission handles its enforcement responsibilities.

John Muleta, Chief of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, will wrap up and discuss the important lessons that emerge during the day. He will also unveil the new wireless E911 internal database that the Bureau has developed.

We hope that today will be a positive step towards a new era of cooperation on this critical issue. I am confident that we will all learn a great deal today, and we plan to follow up this meeting with another meeting in the fall.

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