

**Remarks of Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy for
Wireless Carrier Implementation Panel
E911 Initiative Meeting, April 29, 2003**

- I would like to start by thanking the staff of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau and the Consumer and Government Affairs Bureau, especially Lauren Kravetz Patrich and Jennifer Trochim, for putting together the first meeting of the FCC's Wireless E911 Initiative. I believe that by gathering all interested stakeholders together, we can make great strides in our E911 implementation efforts. I know we all agree that successful deployment of E911 is in everyone's best interest.
- For this panel discussion on wireless carrier implementation, I would like to start by providing a brief overview of the FCC's rules governing wireless carrier implementation of E911. Following this discussion, I would like to call on our distinguished panelists to share some of their success stories on E911 implementation. Once these panelists are done, I plan on opening the floor to questions and discussion.
- Wireless carriers are required under the Commission's rules to deploy E911 technology in accordance with set implementation deadlines. Generally speaking, the E911 implementation requirement is triggered by a PSAP request. The Commission's rules do not establish a schedule for E911 deployment across the country (unlike certain other mandates – such as number pooling – where the FCC has required a specific rollout path). However, wireless carriers are subject to specific FCC deadlines. When wireless carriers implement Phase II services, they may select either a handset-based or network-based solution. Wireless carriers that use network-based solutions must deploy Phase II to 50 percent of the PSAP's coverage area within six months of a valid request and to 100 percent of the PSAP's coverage area within 18 months of a request, unless the parties agree upon a different schedule. Wireless carriers choosing a handset-based solution must complete any necessary upgrades to their systems within six months of a PSAP request. Additionally, the rules provide for specific benchmark dates by which these carriers must begin to sell and activate a certain percentage of handsets that provide location information. By December 31, 2005, these carriers must ensure that 95 percent of their customers' handsets are location-capable.
- Wireless E911 deployment is situation-specific and often varies between jurisdictions, depending on a number of factors, including the readiness of PSAP equipment and the underlying LEC infrastructure, as well as the type of location technology being used.
- Due both to these implementation variables, and to the absence of a centralized rollout schedule, the potential exists for carriers to be faced with a number of competing PSAP requests at once. A carrier's limited deployment resources may

be wasted if it moves forward with implementation in a locality only to discover that the PSAP will not be ready to receive and use E911 information.

- Commission policies provide some limited assistance in addressing this problem. In the City of Richardson order, the Commission required PSAPs to be able to document their readiness to make a valid request for E911 service. On reconsideration, the Commission established a process to allow carriers to obtain relief from implementation deadlines where there are PSAP readiness problems.
- States can play a very valuable role in addressing prioritization of rollout. To help ensure timely and effective roll-out of E911 service, a number of states have developed statewide plans for deployment. This type of statewide coordination and oversight is exactly the role envisioned by Congress in the Wireless Communications and Public Safety Act of 1999 (911 Act). The 911 Act directed the Commission to encourage and support the States in developing comprehensive emergency communications, based on statewide plans, so that all jurisdictions offer seamless and reliable networks for prompt emergency service.
- Typically, in these states, a central planning body evaluates readiness among the state's PSAPs and determines how a rapid and efficient rollout should proceed in the state. The statewide planning bodies ensure that an adequate cost recovery mechanism is in place and that necessary upgrades to the state's public safety systems have been made.
- On this panel, we will be hearing from the Honorable Tim Berry from the Indiana Wireless Enhanced 911 Advisory Board. Indiana has experienced great success in implementing E911. Currently, seven wireless carriers provide Phase I service to subscribers in 90 Indiana counties. Phase II service is up and running in at least 25 Indiana counties with between two to four wireless carriers providing service in each county. Treasurer Berry will describe how that state's planning and coordination process has resulted in its implementation success.
- We will also hear from Saralyn Doty from the Mid-America Regional Council. The Mid-America Regional Council recently coordinated the implementation of Phase II throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area. This system serves approximately 2 million people through 45 PSAPs.
- The Commission supports these state efforts and hopes that having some of these states describe their programs at the coordination initiative meeting will provide useful information for other states seeking ways to better facilitate deployment.
- We will also hear from Karl Korsmo from AT&T Wireless and Charles McKee from Sprint on how they have approached the issue of implementation prioritization. In addition, we will hear from Michael Altschul from CTIA.
- With that, I would like to ask Treasurer Berry to take the floor.

