FCC Chairman Genachowski Announces Five Step Action Plan to Improve the Deployment of Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911)

At the 2011 APCO Conference in Philadelphia August 10 , FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski announced his five step action plan to chart the transition to Next Generation 9-1-1 services. Working with the public safety community, carriers, manufacturers, and other service providers, the goal is to ensure that effective emergency response is a critical element of the broadband environment.

- *NG911 supports IP-based communication of emergency-related voice, text, data, photos, and video.*
- *We need a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach to NG911 implementation: If we do nothing to address NG911 requirements, timelines, costs, and governance, we will see uncoordinated patchwork deployment of NG911 over the next five to ten years, leaving much of the US without any NG911 capability.*

What Is NG911 and Why Do We Need It?

- **NG911 supports seamless, end-to-end IP-based communication of emergency-related voice, text, data, photos, and video** between the public and public safety answering points (PSAPs). NG911 systems will continue to support the legacy 911 system on a transitional basis for as long as is necessary.
- The benefits of NG911 include:
  - ***Increased public access***: NG911 multi-media capabilities expand accessibility (e.g., to persons with disabilities) and give all consumers more calling options in emergencies.
  - ***Enhanced information for first responders***: PSAPs receiving text, data, photos, and videos can assess emergencies more quickly and respond more effectively.
  - ***Increased reliability of NG911 networks:*** IP-based architecture provides more flexibility and resiliency than the legacy circuit-switched 911 system.

FCC Five-Step Action Plan to Deploy Next Generation 9-1-1

1. ***Develop location accuracy mechanisms for NG-911***: The FCC's Location Accuracy proceeding (July 2011 agenda item) has launched development of a framework for providing automatic location information in the NG911 environment.
2. ***Enable consumers to send text, photos, and videos to PSAPs (NPRM)***: Next month, the FCC will consider an NPRM to accelerate NG911 adoption. The NPRM will help answer practical, technical questions about how to enable text, photo, and video transmission to 911, including how to ensure adequate broadband infrastructure to deliver the bandwidth PSAPs will need to provide NG911. As part of the NPRM, the FCC will examine interim solutions for ensuring that carriers/service providers support transmission of text-to-911.
3. ***Facilitate the completion and implementation of NG911 technical standards***: For NG911 to be effective, we need technical standards for the hardware and software that carriers and public safety answering points (PSAPs) use to communicate NG911 information. The FCC will work with NG911 stakeholders to resolve NG911 standards issues and facilitate consistent and coordinated implementation of a standards-based architecture.
4. ***Develop a NG911 governance framework***: Because no single governing entity has jurisdiction over NG911, the FCC will work with state 911 authorities, other Federal agencies, and other governing entities to provide technical expertise and develop a coordinated approach to NG911 governance.
5. ***Develop an NG911 Funding Model***: To assist 911 authorities and Congress in considering NG911 funding options, the FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau will prepare a cost model focused on the cost-effectiveness of the NG911 network infrastructure linking PSAPs and carriers.

Recent FCC Actions to Improve Public Safety

- ***Launched Personal Localized Alerting Network (PLAN):*** Recently launched, PLAN is a new public safety system that allows customers who own an enabled mobile device to receive geographically-targeted, text-like messages alerting them of imminent threats to safety in their area.
- ***Strengthened our Existing Enhanced E-911 Location Accuracy Rules*****:** In July, the FCC committed to requiring all wireless carriers to meet the more stringent metrics of the handset-based location accuracy standard.
- ***Laid the Groundwork for a Nationwide, Interoperable Public Safety Broadband Network*****:** Working with the public safety community, the FCC has begun laying the groundwork for a nationwide, interoperable public safety broadband network, including adopting a standard air interference for such a network.
- ***Granted Waivers to Build Out the Public Safety Network:*** The FCC has granted 22 waivers for jurisdictions to begin building out the public safety interoperable broadband network, 7 of which have received BTOP grants. We're also working with these jurisdictions so they can start construction.

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