

FCC CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI  
REMARKS TO APCO ANNUAL MEETING

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Thank you Gregg Riddle, and congratulations on becoming President of APCO. And to outgoing President Bill Carrow, thank you for your hard work and dedication.

Glad to see so many of you are still here for the conference's final session. I was afraid the Philadelphia Eagles would have signed all of you up by now.

I'm honored to be here.

As many of you know, I used to work in emergency response. In the 1980s, I was a certified EMT, worked on ambulances in Manhattan, and taught CPR. Like many others, I was in New York on 9/11, walking to work up 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue when the planes struck.

That's one of the many reasons I'm humbled that I'll be followed on the stage today by New York Fire Department Chief Richard Picciotto, the highest ranking officer to go into the Twin Towers on 9/11 and survive. Chief Picciotto, thank you for your service.

These experiences have given me the deepest respect for all of you who work in emergency response. It's a hard job, a dangerous job, and your commitment to the mission of saving lives and helping people moves us all.

These experiences also gave me particular appreciation for the powerfully important role of reliable communications for public safety, particularly in emergency situations. They've instilled in me a resolve to help harness the power of technology to enhance public safety and save lives, and it's why I've made sure the FCC has pursued a strong public safety agenda since my first day as FCC Chairman.

We meet at an important time. Technological change is transforming society and your profession, creating major opportunities and serious challenges. The world of information and communications technology is completely different from when I was an EMT, and from 9/11. It's completely different even from just a few years ago.

Take texting. Five years ago, it was a novelty, and the average America was sending just 2 texts a day. Now, we send 20 a day. Teenagers send more than 100 a day. For them, *talking* on phones is a novelty.

In 2005, 18% of phones had cameras. Now almost 100% of them do, and the majority of Americans are routinely taking and sending pictures with their phones. Video is on a similar trajectory.

So many of us see these trends up close with our friends and family. Nobody would describe my wonderful mother as a techie. She wasn't even online a couple of years ago. But today's she's searching, emailing, and zapping pictures to her grandchildren. This summer, she learned to text.

We're on the other side of the tipping point. Almost everyone in or near an emergency situation now and in the future will have access to these new communications technologies. These technologies, and the fact of their widespread use, have the potential to revolutionize emergency response and save lives. But the unfortunate truth is that the capability of our emergency response communications has not kept pace with commercial innovation – has not kept pace with what ordinary people now do every day with communications devices.

You deserve better.

Only one month away from the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11, our first responders still don't have an interoperable mobile broadband network for public safety. Our 9-1-1 call centers still can't handle texts or pictures or video being sent by the phones that everyone has.

Let me be clear, our emergency response networks are doing a phenomenal job. Across our country, you receive over 650,000 9-1-1 calls per day – over 240 million per year -- and respond to them with professionalism and commitment.

But with new technology, we can do better. And we must do better to meet our collective mission and serve the public.

At the FCC, we are working with you to help.

Today, I want to discuss the steps I believe our country should take to harness the power of technology to improve public safety and save lives.

The steps I will describe today build on a strong list of what we've already accomplished working together with so many talented experts in this room, and thanks to the strong leadership of Admiral Jamie Barnett, the Chief of the FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, and his excellent team.

A few months ago, at Ground Zero, I joined FEMA Administrator Fugate, Mayor Bloomberg, and New York's leading public safety officials to announce the launch of a new mobile emergency alert service called PLAN, the Personal Localized Alerting Network.

This new technology and service will turn mobile devices into emergency alert devices with potentially life-saving messages when public safety is threatened.

With PLAN, government officials will be able to send text-like alerts to everyone in a targeted geographic area with an enabled mobile device. Since the alerts are geographically targeted, they will reach the right people, at the right time, with the right messages. And PLAN creates a fast lane for emergency alerts, so this vital information is guaranteed to get through even if there's congestion in the network.

We worked with New York's leaders and the major mobile carriers to announce an accelerated launch of PLAN in New York City -- by this December 31<sup>st</sup>. PLAN will launch nationwide in April 2012. I urge all mobile carriers to deploy widely and quickly, and I urge all public safety and other state and local officials to take the necessary preparatory steps to be ready to make the best use of this important new service.

PLAN is of vital importance, but of course it's one piece of a broader effort.

Last month, the FCC also strengthened our existing Enhanced 9-1-1 location accuracy rules, by requiring all wireless carriers to meet more stringent metrics. As you know, more and more 9-1-1 calls are mobile today – about 50% – but the location information you receive for mobile is not nearly as good as what you receive for a landline 9-1-1 call. We'll continue working with you to address this.

With input from the public safety community, we have also taken important steps toward the vital goal of a nationwide interoperable mobile broadband public safety network.

We established a framework for an interoperable public safety broadband network, including adopting LTE as the standard air interface for such a network.

We established the Emergency Response Interoperability Center at the FCC, the Public Safety Advisory Committee, and we're working diligently with our federal partners – all to hasten the deployment of the nationwide public safety broadband network.

We've granted 22 waivers for jurisdictions to begin building out the public safety broadband network, 7 of which have received BTOP grants, and we're working with these jurisdictions so they can start construction.

That's the good news. Unfortunately, I can't give you the news we all want to hear: that Congress has funded a nationwide, interoperable broadband network for public safety.

As we said in the FCC's National Broadband Plan more than a year ago, the network won't get built if Congress doesn't fund it.

Of course we're living in a time of serious fiscal constraint. But there is a mechanism to fund the public safety network without adding a penny to our deficit. The FCC and others have worked very hard to develop a mechanism that would generate \$25 billion in revenue, according to the Congressional Budget Office – more than enough to cover the costs of a national public safety network.

This mechanism is voluntary incentive auctions, and if authorized with the proper flexibility, it would not only provide funds for the public safety network and for deficit reduction. It would significantly help consumers and businesses that otherwise would face worse mobile service and needlessly higher prices because of the looming spectrum crunch, and it would spur innovation, the creation of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of private investment to grow our economy. That's why the concept has received bipartisan support and rare collective endorsement from 112 leading economists from across the political spectrum.

It just needs to get done.

I'm deeply concerned that legislation hasn't yet been adopted. The clock is ticking. Every day of delay risks increasing the costs of the network. Every day of delay risks compromising the vital goal of interoperability, the core of the 9/11 Commission's recommendation.

I'm deeply concerned that 9/11 of this year will come and go, and we'll still be waiting.

I'm renewing my pledge to work hard with you on this. There's no greater priority than moving forward on a smart spectrum plan to save lives and create jobs.

Of course, there are still other steps necessary to improve our public safety response systems. Let me speak about our plan to speed the deployment of Next Generation 9-1-1.

I want to thank APCO up front for your leadership on this issue. Working with you, as well as NENA, NASNA, the Transportation Department, the 9-1-1 Institute, and the 9-1-1 Industry Alliance, we're making real progress on this issue, and we're poised to do even more.

NG9-1-1 is also fortunate to have the energetic support and focus of a number of Congressional leaders who have demonstrated a longstanding commitment to this issue, including Representatives Shimkus and Eshoo and Senators Klobuchar and Burr, the co-chairs of the Congressional NG9-1-1 Caucus.

As you know, NG9-1-1 is an emergency response system that will run on the broadband networks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, instead of the circuit-switched copper networks of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

What's the big deal? Why is NG9-1-1 going to add so much value as compared to the 9-1-1 system that's been in place, and that's been an indisputable success?

For starters, NG9-1-1 allows consumers to use whatever communications devices they have with them. In an emergency, people are going to reach out for help with whatever means of communications they are accustomed to using. For a growing number, its texting, which, unbelievable as it is, the current system doesn't support. It's hard to imagine that airlines can send text messages if your flight is delayed, but you can't send a text message to 9-1-1 in an emergency. With NG9-1-1, no matter how you try to contact 9-1-1, your call for help will be delivered.

And NG911 holds tremendous promise for persons with disabilities. Texting can make 9-1-1 accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Opening up 9-1-1 to new means of communications not only makes the service more accessible, but enabling the public to transmit photos, video, and data will dramatically enhance the ability of first responders to help those in need.

It enables the creation of 21st century command centers that can give first responders broad and timely situational awareness – dramatically improving the ability to stop crime and save lives.

Imagine if an incident commander had instant access to multiple video streams and sources of information during an armed robbery.

Imagine someone was in a car accident. With NG9-1-1, somebody in the car could send pictures of injuries and the scene to 9-1-1, which EMTs could review in advance. Once on scene, EMTs could send critical information back to the hospital, including on-site scans and diagnostic information, increasing odds of recovery.

With NG9-1-1, dispatchers could access hospital capacity data, real-time road and traffic conditions, and video of the crash scene from traffic cameras to decide who to dispatch and where crash victims should be transported.

Getting victims the right type of assistance even a few minutes earlier can make the difference between life and death.

If a patient wearing a 24-hour cardiac monitoring device experiences a cardiac event at home, the device could automatically send a wireless signal to the NG9-1-1 system to request aid, and also transmit the patient's location, identifying data and relevant medical information.

Getting NG9-1-1 up and running is going to take a lot of work on the part of a lot of people. It will require 9-1-1 authorities and service providers to work in parallel and take coordinated actions. Without a comprehensive and coordinated strategy, we'll see a patchwork deployment of NG9-1-1 over the next 5 to 10 years, with much of the United States still without any NG9-1-1 capability at the end of that period.

That's not the right outcome. It's imperative that NG9-1-1 be deployed to all Americans as quickly as possible, and in the most effective and cost-efficient way.

That's why the FCC has developed a comprehensive five-step plan to make sure that these potential life-saving services are available to every person in this country.

First, we need to develop location accuracy mechanisms for NG9-1-1. To provide assistance, first responders need to be able to find the person in need of assistance quickly and accurately. That's as true of NG9-1-1 as it is of 9-1-1. As I mentioned, last month, the FCC took steps to improve the accuracy of mobile 9-1-1. At the same time, we started a process to tackle location accuracy for NG9-1-1. I encourage your active input on that.

Second, we need to complete the implementation of NG9-1-1 technical standards that define the system architecture – the hardware and software that carriers and PSAPs will use to communicate NG9-1-1 information seamlessly. Through years of hard work by the 9-1-1 community, much of the necessary standards work has already been completed, but some issues remain about how the architecture will be implemented. We will work with all stakeholders to help resolve these issues, which will help ensure that NG9-1-1 is deployed consistently across the country. It's necessary for innovation, and it's necessary to accelerate adoption of NG9-1-1 technologies.

Third, we need to develop a NG9-1-1 governance framework. One of the biggest challenges facing NG9-1-1 deployment is that no single entity has jurisdiction. The FCC is working with other federal agencies and 9-1-1 authorities to create a governing framework that can get and keep everybody on the same page.

The fourth piece of our game plan is identifying how to fund NG9-1-1 in a cost-efficient way. The FCC's Public Safety Bureau is preparing a cost model to identify the expenses associated with deploying the network infrastructure required to link PSAPs and carriers.

We also want to find ways to ensure that states don't divert the 9-1-1 fees they collect to other purposes. As directed by Congress, each year the FCC reports on which states are diverting the 9-1-1 fees they collect to other, non-9-1-1-related purposes.

The good news is that the number of such states is going down. The bad news is that there are often no consequences for states that divert.

The FCC will work with Congress to ensure that its laws have real teeth, so that states face consequences if they engage in redirection of 9-1-1 funds. And meanwhile, the FCC's annual report will be released in the coming weeks, and we'll all be able to see which states are using 9-1-1 fees for 9-1-1, and which are not.

Fifth and finally, I'd like to announce an action the FCC is taking as part of our NG9-1-1 game plan. Next month, the Commission will consider a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to accelerate NG9-1-1 adoption. This will help us answer the practical, technical questions about how exactly to enable transmitting text, photos, and video to 9-1-1 so that PSAPs are able to receive them. The rulemaking will also consider how to ensure adequate broadband infrastructure to deliver the bandwidth PSAPs will need to provide NG9-1-1.

I urge everyone in the emergency response community to participate in this proceeding. To make sure these technologies work for you, we need to hear from you.

I also strongly support experimenting with different models to develop both near-term and long-term text-to-9-1-1 solutions. I know there is creative thinking and real energy going into solving this problem, and I'm pleased that, in parallel with FCC consideration of this matter, a number of companies are doing just that.

Just last week, the City of Durham, North Carolina, Verizon and Intrado launched a six-month text-to-9-1-1 trial. And Neustar has been demonstrating Text Everywhere – a text-to-wireline solution – that could have real promise for NG9-1-1.

Steps like these are important toward building a 21<sup>st</sup> century 9-1-1 system that enables the public to send text, data, photos, and video to 9-1-1 in emergencies.

I encourage innovation in this area. It's vital that we identify cost-effective ways to bring these new communications technologies to 9-1-1.

The shift to NG9-1-1 can't be about if, but about when and how. I recognize that it's going to usher in a lot of changes – changes that will present many challenges. The FCC will work with you to make sure this new system will allow you to keep doing your jobs well, and to make sure that this new system works for the American people.

The stakes couldn't be higher.

Whether or not we get this right could make the difference between life and death in certain situations.

We have to get this right. Working together, we will get this right.

Thank you.