



# NEWS

**Federal Communications Commission**  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500  
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>  
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

---

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:**  
September 22, 2011

**NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:**  
Lauren Kravetz (202) 418-7944  
Email: [lauren.kravetz@fcc.gov](mailto:lauren.kravetz@fcc.gov)

## **FCC MOVES AHEAD ON EFFORTS TO PRIORITIZE 911 CALLS AND ENABLE CONSUMERS TO SEND TEXT, PHOTOS, VIDEO AND DATA TO 911 CALL CENTERS DURING EMERGENCIES**

*Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Also Presents Study on NG911 Connectivity Costs*

Washington, DC – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) sought comment today on ways to modernize the current voice-based 911 system to a Next Generation 911 (NG911) system that will enable the public to send texts, photos, videos, and other data to 911 call centers. As a result of the East Coast earthquake on August 23, 2011, the Commission also sought comment on whether and how to prioritize calls to 911 over other calls during emergencies, which are usually the moments when wireless networks experience the most congestion and calls fail to go through.

The Commission recognized the need to ensure the availability of reliable voice-based 911 service, while moving forward with a NG911 system that adds text and other information capabilities that will significantly improve emergency response, saving lives and reducing property damage. Enabling text, photos, video and data to 911 call centers allows consumers to communicate with 911 in the same way they communicate with others on a daily basis. It also enhances public safety by giving consumers the ability to text 911 when a voice call is difficult or dangerous. NG911 is also particularly beneficial to people with disabilities.

The text, photo, video, and data capabilities of NG911 will also provide 911 call centers and first responders with enhanced information and improved technological tools that can be synthesized with existing databases. This allows 911 call centers to dispatch the appropriate emergency response more quickly, a difference that can save lives during emergencies.

The *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* examines short-term and long-term options for enabling consumers to send texts to 911, including the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches. The Commission is also seeking comment on long-term development of multimedia NG911 technology that would support delivery of photos, videos, and data to 911, in addition to texting. The Commission will consider the appropriate role for the agency in facilitating – and, if necessary, accelerating – the rollout of these capabilities, and encouraging the parallel development of NG911 capabilities in 911 call centers. The Commission also noted that the transition to NG911 is not likely to occur uniformly across the country and asked for comment on how best to educate the public about the availability, capabilities, and limitations of NG911 as it is deployed.

At today's meeting, the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau also presented a cost study on NG911 network connectivity costs, entitled, "A Basis for Public Funding Essential to Bringing a Nationwide Next Generation 911 Network to America's Communications Users and First Responders."

Bureau staff analysis determined that NG911, because of its ability to leverage commercial off-the-shelf technology, has the potential to be more cost-effective to operate and upgrade than the legacy 911 system. The study offers two models for NG911 deployment: a baseline model and a cost-effective model that assumes cost savings from a reduction in the total number of 911 call centers nationwide and a greater percentage of call centers sharing NG911 infrastructure as opposed to operating their own dedicated systems.

Based on these assumptions, the baseline model concludes that the network connectivity and call routing costs to transition to NG911 will be approximately \$2.68 billion over 10 years. In the cost-effective model, the transition costs are approximately \$1.44 billion.

Action on the *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* by the Commission, September 22, 2011, by *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* (FCC 11-134). Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, and Clyburn. Separate Statements issued by Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, and Clyburn.

PS Docket Nos. 10-255, 11-153.

For further information on the *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, contact David Furth at (202) 418-0632 or [david.furth@fcc.gov](mailto:david.furth@fcc.gov) or Patrick Donovan at (202) 418-2413 or [patrick.donovan@fcc.gov](mailto:patrick.donovan@fcc.gov).

For further information on the Cost Study, contact Jennifer Manner at (202) 418-3619 or [jennifer.manner@fcc.gov](mailto:jennifer.manner@fcc.gov).

-FCC-

For more news and information about the FCC  
please visit [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)