

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

*Re: White Paper: The Role of Deployable Aerial Communications Architecture in  
Emergency Communications and Recommended Next Steps*

I'm pleased that on the heels of the Next Generation 911 NPRM comes this White Paper and presentation on a promising technology that exemplifies the kind of creative thinking public safety needs. Deployable Aerial Communications Architecture is a mouthful, but the idea and goal seem fairly straightforward. It's clear that having this kind of system available could contribute significantly in a disaster scenario.

So it is appropriate that we take a good, hard look at this, and I would welcome a Notice of Inquiry on the subject. I am eager to learn more about the feasibility and benefits of the technology, along with the experience of the military and other countries that may be a bit further down the road in developing it. I also welcome a full discussion of what carriers are already doing to help our first responders through things like mobile cell sites. We have already heard that interference may be an issue, so I look forward to hearing more about that and about other specific concerns and what we might do to address them. And, of course, we have to understand the costs and trade-offs that always seem to present themselves when public safety opportunities are on the table.

It does strike me that this effort presents yet another opportunity not just for working together with other agencies like FEMA, the FAA, DOD and others, but also for public-private partnerships. This would be a major initiative, and such challenges are best handled—as our history proves time and time again—by the private and public sectors working in tandem. I am pleased that we will get the ball rolling with a workshop next month to discuss the potential of this technology. Images of repeaters dangling from balloons, small planes operating as cell towers, and suitcase deployments sound like something out of a spy novel. For it to become a reality, we need to begin the discussion.

Thank you again, Admiral Barnett and the fine staff of Public Safety bureau, for your hard work on behalf of the Commission and the American people.