



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

JULIUS GENACHOWSKI
CHAIRMAN

Mr. Glen F. Post III
Chairman, CSRIC
100 CenturyTel Drive
Monroe, LA 71203

September 23, 2011

Dear Chairman Post and Members of the CSRIC,

Thank you for your important service as part of the re-chartered Communications Security, Reliability, and Interoperability Council. I want to particularly thank Glen Post of CenturyLink for serving as the Chair of this group and Admiral Barnett and his staff for putting together today's meeting and assisting CSRIC.

Last month, we experienced two major events that put our nation's communications infrastructure to the test – a hurricane and an earthquake in the Northeast within a five day-span. These events confirmed that Americans are more and more relying on newer forms of communications like mobile phones and broadband Internet when disaster strikes.

As the FCC has reviewed these events, it's clear that our communications system in general worked effectively and played a critical role in emergency response. For example, after Hurricane Irene, wireless communications showed a remarkable restoration rate of almost 40 percent per day for cell sites. Cell sites that were down because fiber optic cables went across washed out bridges were quickly reconnected via satellite links. And, while 9-1-1 traffic to a small number of public safety answering points (PSAPs) was routed to back-up facilities, no PSAP was completely inoperable.

However, the hurricane and earthquake also shed light on areas where we must continue to work to strengthen the reliability of our communications networks, and especially our mobile networks, during and after disasters. For example, Americans increasingly rely on mobile communications, with more than half of all calls to 9-1-1 originating from mobile devices, but some wireless networks experienced serious congestion following the earthquake – congestion that prevented some 9-1-1 calls from going through. In an increasingly mobile world, that is unacceptable.

That is why today I am charging CSRIC with recommending ways to ensure that 9-1-1 is available when disasters spark a surge in mobile network use. That includes how 9-1-1 traffic might be prioritized in such situations. The Commission will benefit from your knowledge and expertise with communications networks, public safety, and consumers. We look forward to



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receiving your guidance regarding issues that would be implicated by a prioritization system for 9-1-1, including ways for PSAPs to address operational issues.

I am also directing CSRIC to develop best practices to ensure that communications providers are prepared for natural disasters and able to restore service quickly in their aftermath. CSRIC has over the years created best practices in a number of important areas, including 9-1-1 reliability, cable damage, cyber security, and disaster planning. Today, I ask you to do so again to enhance consumers' access to communications networks during and after natural disasters.

I appreciate all of the other matters CSRIC will take up, including developing recommendations regarding facilitating the deployment Next Generation 9-1-1, expanding the development and testing of E9-1-1 location accuracy, and improving our existing set of E9-1-1 best practices, as well as considering how to address cyber threats. Your work is of vital importance, and we are grateful for your service.

You have my sincere appreciation and thanks for being generous with your time and your knowledge regarding these critical public safety matters. Working together, we can ensure a stronger, more reliable, and innovative communications network to enhance our nation's security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julius Genachowski", written over a large, stylized flourish.

Julius Genachowski