

**STATEMENT OF  
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

Re: In the Matter of Revision of the Commission's Rules to Ensure Compatibility with Enhanced 911 Emergency Calling Systems (CC Docket No. 94-102); Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International, Inc. Request for Declaratory Ruling, Wireless E911 Location Accuracy Requirements (PS Docket No. 07-114); 911 Requirements for IP-Enabled Service Providers (WC Docket No. 05-196)

A call to 911 is among the most important calls that any of us will ever make. Customers deserve confidence that dialing these three digits will connect them to the help they need. And customers also need a realistic view of how well their current communications technologies will actually work in a crisis – because sometimes a false sense of reliance on a technology can be the most dangerous thing of all. Just consider the example of first responders focusing an exhaustive search for an injured caller on the ground next to 300 meters of highway – only to learn, too late, that the victim was actually 1000 meters down the road. Or consider the example of someone who “cuts the cord” and relies exclusively on an E911-capable cell phone – only to learn, again too late, that their phone cannot determine what floor their apartment is on and may not work inside the apartment at all.

I am pleased that today's item raises a series of pressing and important questions about the Commission's current E911 location accuracy standards. I am even more pleased that the item commits to a process for improving our wireless location accuracy that I think can lead to meaningful, and still expeditious, improvements in our emergency calling system. We need to get a handle – a better handle than we presently have – on the precise capabilities and limitations of today's emergency calling technologies. It is clear that we still have a serious challenge in making and completing some in-building emergency calls. Such calls comprise, of course, a significant percentage of all emergency calls. We need to resolve that. Another study will look at the potential and costs of hybrid technologies that could combine, in one device, the technologies appropriate for both urban and rural calling. Successfully meeting this challenge could result in huge public safety gains for all Americans.

The Commission itself will conduct these studies, working of course with industry and public safety stakeholders as appropriate, but avoiding exclusive reliance on industry-generated statistics and/or the self-assessments of technology solution providers. We don't have the time here to get bogged down in contentious technical and methodological disputes. By conducting real-world testing, the Commission can develop an independent body of knowledge upon which we all can rely, thereby freeing up industry, public safety advocates, and the Commission itself to move forward to working on constructive solutions. It is a front-and-center role for the Commission that public safety compels – there's no way around it. The process envisioned here is for the Commission to move full-speed ahead so it can expeditiously issue public reports setting forth its findings and potential solutions. I thank the Chairman for his commitment to initiate and complete these evaluations swiftly so that the issuance of a final order will not be unduly delayed.

I want also to emphasize my belief that, after developing revised location accuracy and accuracy reporting standards, aggressive and thorough enforcement will continue to be important – just as enforcement has been important in getting us this far. Our commitment to enforcement will be part of the measure of our success as much as the nature of the rules themselves.

I look forward to working with the Chairman and my colleagues to ensure that the important work we begin here today ends up making the world a safer place for America's wireless users. And my thanks to everyone here at the Commission who works so hard on these matters.