

**STATEMENT OF  
CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI**

***Re: Developing a Framework for Next Generation 911 Deployment, Notice of Inquiry; FCC-10-200, FCC Docket No. 10-255***

With today's NOI, we launch an important proceeding to modernize the 9-1-1 system. This fulfills yet another recommendation of the National Broadband Plan, which laid out a vision for Next-Generation 9-1-1 that harnesses cutting-edge technologies to help save lives.

Thanks to the outstanding job of our first responders and everyone who participates in 9-1-1 operations, the current 9-1-1 system provides an incredibly valuable service —handling more than 650,000 calls every day, over 237 million per year.

But today's 9-1-1 system doesn't support the communication tools of tomorrow. Many 9-1-1 call centers don't have broadband; some are in communities where broadband isn't even available. And today's 9-1-1 system doesn't effectively take advantage of the proliferation of mobile technology.

More than two-thirds -- almost 70% -- of 9-1-1 calls are made from mobile phones. That's why the Commission recently moved to make location-accuracy requirements more stringent for wireless service providers. As we discussed when we launched that proceeding, too many mobile 9-1-1 calls don't provide accurate location information to responders.

Even beyond that, there is much more we can do to seize the opportunities of mobile technologies for 9-1-1. As we all know, consumers are increasingly using their phones for texting. And yet, even though mobile phones are the device used by most 9-1-1 callers, right now, you can't text 9-1-1.

Let me repeat that point. If you find yourself in an emergency situation and want to send a text for help, you can pretty much text anyone *except* a 9-1-1 call center.

The Virginia Tech campus shootings in 2007 are a tragic, real-life reminder of the technological limitations that 9-1-1 is now saddled with. Some students and witnesses tried to text 9-1-1 during that emergency, but those messages never went through; they were never received by local 9-1-1 dispatchers.

It's time to bring 9-1-1 into the digital age.

Broadband-enabled, Next-Generation 9-1-1 will revolutionize emergency response. It will enable texting; it will enable photos and video; it will incorporate data. All of this will improve situational awareness and rapid response, and save lives.

I spoke about how Next Generation 9-1-1 texting could have helped at Virginia Tech. That kind of service could also help people in emergency situations, where speaking with a 9-1-1 dispatcher could jeopardize their life or safety.

It could help people with disabilities – for example, allowing a deaf person to communicate with an emergency call center by sending text messages.

And it's easy to see how sending photos or video to 9-1-1 emergency centers could have tremendous benefits. Imagine a caller transmitting a photo of a car leaving the scene of an armed robbery.

Next-Generation 9-1-1 will also allow emergency calls to be placed by devices, rather than human beings – devices like environmental sensors capable of detecting chemicals, or highway cameras, security cameras, alarms, personal medical devices, and consumer electronics in automobiles.

The benefits are clear, as is the need for action.

The reality is that modernizing 9-1-1 raises complex challenges that will take not only time, but also significant coordination. We need the help of our federal, state and local partners, public safety, lawmakers, communications and broadband service providers, and equipment manufacturers to develop a national framework for Next Generation 9-1-1 services.

Last month, as we were working on preparing this Notice, I visited the Arlington County Emergency Communications Center, and was pleased to hear the enthusiasm for embracing new technology as part of 9-1-1, and the desire and willingness to work together toward making it happen. Our first responders want access to every communications technology that can help them save lives, and I'm committed – and the FCC is committed – to meeting this challenge head on and playing a strong role in accelerating the implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1.

We can't do it alone. This initial NOI starts an important process to ensure that there is a consistent regulatory framework for states and local governments as this new technology is deployed. These efforts, coupled with the efforts of the National Highway and Transportation Administration and Congress to ensure funding for this important endeavor, will ensure Next Generation 9-1-1 becomes a reality throughout the Nation.

I want to personally acknowledge the leadership and dedicated efforts of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. They are a valued resource and partner on these issues.

I'd also like to thank the National Emergency Number Association and the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International for their consistent leadership in the 911 arena, providing a voice in Washington for 911 professionals on the

front lines throughout the country. Their continued commitment and contributions to moving this initiative forward will be instrumental.

The FCC staff recognize the importance of coordination and continue to work diligently with all interested parties to move this initiative forward. I encourage all the key constituencies to work with us, and I expect this proceeding will provide a vehicle for coordination to seize the opportunity to effectively deploy next generation 9-1-1 across America.

9-1-1 is an indispensable, life-saving tool. Broadband can make it even better.

The technology is there. The question is: will we be able to harness that technology to revolutionize America's 9-1-1 system.

I look forward to working with Congress, our federal, state and local partners, the public safety community, the communications industry and my colleagues at the Commission to get this right.

I thank the Bureau for their leadership on this issue and their hard work on this important item.