

February 18, 2014

The Honorable Gerald L. Vap
Hearing Officer
Nebraska Public Service Commission
1200 N Street # 300
Lincoln, NE 68508

In re: NE PSC Order Seeking Comment on Initial NG911 Report Entered Feb. 3, 2014 as Required by LB 595 (2013), Application No. 911-058/PI-188

Dear Commissioner Vap,

CTIA-The Wireless Association® (“CTIA”) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the State of Nebraska Next Generation Telephone Communications Study (“Initial Report”). CTIA and its member companies are committed to supporting wireless consumers’ continued ability to utilize wireless emergency communications services, such as 9-1-1 and Wireless Emergency Alerts. CTIA supports the Nebraska Public Service Commission’s (“Commission”) efforts to thoroughly review and consider the technical, operational, funding and regulatory implications of Nebraska’s transition to Next Generation 9-1-1 (“NG9-1-1”). CTIA believes that NG911 will offer wireless consumers the ability to use emergency 9-1-1 communications in the ways that they increasingly communicate using wireless services and devices, including voice, text and video.

In furtherance of these goals, CTIA offers the following suggestions for modification and incorporation into the Final Report:

- *Location Accuracy.* On Pg. 14, the Initial Report states that “...some areas in the northern portion of the state appear to not have enough radio towers for triangulation of calls needed to obtain precise locations. This means that location may be within 1,700 meters or greater. This means that location of a wireless 9-1-1 call could be incorrect by over a mile, creating a high risk of loss of life.”

The Commission should consider that the Federal Communications Commission’s (“FCC”) rules for wireless 9-1-1 location accuracy encourage wireless carriers to adopt handset based location technologies that utilize Global Positioning Service (“GPS”) based solutions, rather than network based solutions that utilize cell tower trilateration.¹ Specifically, the Commission should note that some wireless carriers which have used network oriented location technologies are rapidly converting to handset oriented (i.e. GPS) technologies.

¹ See 47 C.F.R. 20.18.

For this reason, the Initial Report should more clearly acknowledge that wireless carriers may rely on network and handset based 9-1-1 location accuracy technologies. CTIA suggests that the Initial Report be modified to state: “In addition, some service providers with coverage in some areas in the northern portion of the state that rely solely on trilateration appear to not have enough radio towers for trilateration of calls needed to obtain higher accuracy location estimates. Some location estimates may have an uncertainty of up to 1,700 meters or greater. This means that location of a wireless 9-1-1 caller could be incorrect by over a mile, leading to a delayed emergency response in some situations.”

- *Text-to-911*. On Pg. 22, the Initial Report states “Public service announcements may be necessary to educate the public, not just those with speech and hearing impediments, of the current inability of 9-1-1 resources to accept text messages from the public. Many people today do not realize that a text cannot yet be sent 9-1-1. The assumption often is that it can be done.”

While CTIA agrees that public education about the current availability of Text-to-911 services is necessary, the Initial Report does not acknowledge the recent commitments of some wireless carriers who will begin offering Text-to-911 services by May 15, 2014 to requesting Public Service Answering Points (“PSAPs”).² In addition, the Initial Report does not acknowledge that the FCC recently adopted rules requiring wireless service and interconnected text message providers to offer a “bounce back” message that will instruct a consumer who attempts to send a text message to 9-1-1 to, instead, dial 9-1-1 when Text-to-911 service is unavailable.³

For these reasons, CTIA believes the Final Report should address the increasing availability of Text-to-911 services and recommend a public education campaign to ensure that consumers, including the deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired communities, are appropriately informed. Specifically, CTIA believes the Final Report should include a recommendation to coordinate any Nebraska Text-to-911 public education

² In December 2012, AT&T, Sprint Nextel, T-Mobile, and Verizon entered into a voluntary agreement with the National Emergency Number Association (“NENA”) and APCO International (“APCO”) in which each of the four carriers agreed to provide text-to-911 service by May 15, 2014, to PSAPs that are capable of, and request to receive, text-to-911 service (“Carrier-NENA-APCO Agreement”). See In the Matter of Facilitating the Deployment of Text-to-911 and Other Next Generation 911 Applications, Framework for Next Generation 911 Deployment, PS Docket No 11-153, PS Docket No. 10-255, *Policy Statement and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, at Para. 8 (rel. Jan. 31, 2014) (2014 Second Further Notice) available at <http://www.fcc.gov/document/text-911-policy-statement-and-second-fnprm>.

³ See Facilitating the Deployment of Text-to-911 & Other Next Generation 911 Applications, PS Dockets No. 11-153, 10-255, *Report and Order*, 28 FCC Rcd 7556 (2013) (*Bounce-Back Order*).

campaign with the educational efforts at the federal level by wireless carriers, the National Emergency Number Association, the National 9-1-1 Office and the FCC to ensure that Nebraska's consumers receive an educational message that is consistent throughout the U.S.

- *GIS Mapping & Databases.* On Pg. 29, the Initial Report states “NENA’s draft NG9-1-1 GIS Data Model standard, expected to be published in the first quarter of 2014, is designed to meet the needs of an i3-compliant NG9-1-1 system *and be backwards compatible with today’s E9-1-1 systems.*” (emphasis added)

In Application No. 911-057/PI-187, the Commission is currently considering whether to authorize the allocation of Enhanced Wireless 9-1-1 Fund (“Fund”) resources to support the development of an “address point layer” database (“GIS Project”). Consistent with CTIA’s recent comments that allocating significant resources from the Fund may impact wireless consumers who pay into the fund⁴, CTIA encourages the Commission to verify in the Final Report that the GIS Project contemplated in that proceeding will be compatible with the Initial Report’s description of NG9-1-1 GIS Requirements.

CTIA appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Initial Report and believes that incorporating and addressing these points will greatly enhance the utility and completeness of the Final Report. Please note that CTIA’s comments are limited to the issues described above and should not be considered support for other sections of the Initial Report that CTIA does not address.

Please contact the undersigned should the Commission have any additional questions about these or other wireless emergency communications issues.

Sincerely,

_____/s/_____

Matthew Gerst
Director, State Regulatory & External Affairs
CTIA-The Wireless Association®

⁴ See Comments of CTIA-The Wireless Association® before the Nebraska Public Service Commission, Application No. 911-057 / PI-187 (Feb. 14, 2014).