



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FCC TAKES ACTION TO IMPROVE WIRELESS 9-1-1 SERVICES

Washington, D.C. -- Today the Federal Communications Commission took action to help strengthen and improve the ability of Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs, or 9-1-1 call centers) to quickly locate wireless 9-1-1 callers and dispatch emergency responders to assist them during emergencies.

More than 240 million 9-1-1 calls, or nearly two-thirds of all calls received by 9-1-1 centers nationwide, are made annually from mobile handheld devices in the United States. As more and more Americans rely on their mobile handheld devices, such as cell phones and smartphones, the FCC's new rules are essential to ensuring that wireless carriers are taking the necessary steps to provide more accurate 9-1-1 caller locations.

9-1-1 call centers can readily pinpoint the address of most calls made from landline phones, but up to 40 percent of emergency calls made from mobile devices fail to provide accurate caller location information, known as Enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1) service. The Commission has unanimously adopted a Second Report and Order that requires wireless carriers to meet the Commission's wireless location accuracy requirements in more numerous and geographically smaller areas. As a result, wireless 9-1-1 location information will be reported to PSAPs more accurately in many areas throughout the country.

The Order requires wireless carriers to provide reliability data on each 9-1-1 call upon the request of a PSAP, which will improve the ability of public safety personnel to assess the accuracy of location information. Most importantly, the Commission's actions today will help save lives by enabling emergency response personnel in many places to reach people who call 9-1-1 from mobile devices sooner.

The Commission also unanimously adopted a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) and Notice of Inquiry (NOI), as recommended in the National Broadband Plan, that explores how to further improve the location capability of 9-1-1 and E9-1-1 services for existing and new voice communications technologies, including new broadband technologies associated with the deployment of Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG 9-1-1) networks.

The FNPRM seeks public comment on a number of issues, including whether the FCC should adopt a technologically neutral location accuracy standard, methodologies for verifying compliance, and how wireless 9-1-1 caller location accuracy can be improved in challenging environments, such as in high-rise buildings, urban canyons and mountainous and forested terrain.

The NOI seeks public comment on whether to require interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service providers to automatically identify the caller's location, rather than requiring the caller to self-report his or her location, and whether other forms of VoIP services should be subject to the 9-1-1 rules. The NOI also focuses on the potential impact of future NG 9-1-1 deployment on location accuracy and automatic location identification.

Additionally, the NOI explores whether to extend 9-1-1 and E9-1-1 requirements to new and emerging voice communications services, devices, and application enabled by broadband technologies.

Action by the Commission, September 23, 2010, by Second Report and Order (FCC 10-176). Chairman Genachowski, and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn and Baker. PS Docket No. 07-114. Action by the Commission, September 23, 2010 by Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Notice of Inquiry (FCC 10-177). Chairman Genachowski, and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn and Baker. Public comments may be filed in PS Docket No. 07-114 and WC Docket No. 05-196.

Separate Statements issued by Chairman Genachowski, and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn and Baker.

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