

BEFORE THE
Federal Communications Commission
WASHINGTON, DC 20554

In the Matter of)
)
Revision of the Commission's Rules to Ensure) CC Docket No. 94-102
Compatibility with Enhanced 911 Emergency)
Calling Systems)

RECEIVED
OCT 17 1997
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**COMMENTS OF BELL SOUTH CORPORATION
IN SUPPORT OF JOINT LETTER**

BellSouth Corporation ("BellSouth"), on behalf of its wireless subsidiaries and affiliates, hereby submits its comments in response to the Commission's Public Notice in the above-referenced proceeding.¹ BellSouth supports the proposed changes to the Commission's wireless Enhanced 911 ("E-911") rules as set forth in the September 25, 1997 written *ex parte* presentation jointly filed by industry and public safety associations.²

BellSouth has actively participated in this proceeding, most recently through its membership in the Wireless E-911 Coalition. The Coalition, together with other wireless carriers and public safety organizations, has presented the Commission with a substantial record demonstrating that the current wireless E-911 rules will not serve the public

¹ Public Notice, Additional Comment Sought in Wireless Enhanced 911 Reconsideration Proceeding Regarding Rules and Schedules, CC Docket No. 94-102, DA 97-2751 (Oct. 3, 1997) ("Public Notice").

² *Ex Parte* Presentation in CC Docket No. 94-102, jointly filed by the Cellular Telecommunications Industry Ass'n, Personal Communications Industry Ass'n, Ass'n of Public-Safety Communications Officials-Int'l, Inc., Nat'l Emergency Number Ass'n, and Nat'l Ass'n of State 911 Administrators, September 25, 1997 ("Joint Letter").

No. of Copies rec'd 014
List ABCDE

interest and will pose impossible compliance obligations on carriers.³ The record supports the rule amendments and changes to the E-911 implementation schedule proposed in the Joint Letter.

The Joint Letter is a solid first step toward a consensus-based approach to E-911 implementation. Furthermore, the Ad Hoc Alliance's unfounded implication that the public safety signatories to the Joint Letter have somehow been misled by industry belies the fact that the public safety associations have considerable technical expertise of their own, and that the state and local officials and agencies the associations represent are charged with protecting public safety. The Alliance also fails to acknowledge that the rule changes requested in the Joint Letter are based on engineering realities and are supported in the record. The Commission should accordingly reject the Alliance's unsupported statements and endorse the Joint Letter proposals.

The Joint Letter first proposes to eliminate "code identification" as the basis for imposing basic 911 obligations, instead differentiating between "successfully validated" calls and "all 911 wireless calls."⁴ BellSouth supports the Joint Letter proposal, and also agrees with the Joint Letter's related request that if the code identification standard is eliminated, the Commission's rules must also reflect that a carrier's ability to pass all wireless 911 calls will depend on the availability of Phase II location technology.

³ See CTIA Ex Parte Presentation, September 25, 1997; Wireless E-911 Coalition, Request for Extension of Time to Implement E911/TTY Compatibility Requirements for Wireless Operators, August 29, 1997; Wireless E-911 Coalition, Ex Parte Presentation, filed July 10, 1997; GTE Service Corp., Ex Parte Presentation in CC Docket No. 94-102, filed July 7, 1997.

⁴ The Wireless Coalition explained to the Commission in considerable detail the shortcomings of the existing rules, and BellSouth will not repeat them here. See July 10, 1997 Coalition Presentation at 1-6.

BellSouth also supports the proposed 18 month extension of the Section 20.18(b) TTY compatibility deadline, as originally requested by the Coalition. In its comments on the original Consensus Agreement more than one and one-half years ago, BellSouth warned that significant technical obstacles would need to be overcome before carriers could comply with such a requirement.⁵ In light of the product and standards development involved in bringing the necessary technology to market, the nine month extension advocated by the National Association for the Deaf is simply insufficient time for wireless service providers — who would be liable for violation of the requirements — to come into compliance.⁶

Finally, BellSouth urges the Commission to refrain from addressing issues currently under reconsideration, such as current Phase I and Phase II rules, non-service initialized phones, and carrier liability.⁷ Although BellSouth continues to believe that these lingering issues must be resolved,⁸ the record in this proceeding is continuing to develop and it would be premature to pass judgment on these issues at this time.

⁵ BellSouth Comments, filed March 4, 1996, at 9.

⁶ Wireless E-911 Coalition, Request for Extension of Time to Implement E911/TTY Compatibility Requirements for Wireless Operators, August 29, 1997

⁷ Joint Letter at 4.

⁸ See BellSouth Comments, filed March 4, 1996, at 4-10.

For the reasons discussed herein, in the Joint Letter, and in the Coalition's earlier filings, BellSouth urges the Commission to adopt the rule changes proposed in the Joint Letter.

Respectfully submitted,

BELLSOUTH CORPORATION

By: 
William B. Barfield
Jim O. Llewellyn
1155 Peachtree Street, NE, Suite 1800
Atlanta, GA 30309-2641
(404) 249-4445

By: 
David G. Frolio
1133 21st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 463-4132

Its Attorneys

October 17, 1997