

October 7, 2014

**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *In the Matter of Facilitating the Deployment of Text-to-911 and Other Next Generation 911 Applications, PS Docket No 11-153; and In the Matter of Framework for Next Generation 911 Deployment, PS Docket No. 10-255*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

CTIA – The Wireless Association® (“CTIA”) and its members have long been at the forefront of ensuring that all wireless subscribers can access emergency communications services in times of need. To this end, CTIA’s wireless provider members have been diligently working toward incorporating the Commission’s newly adopted text-to-911 rules into their systems and practices.<sup>1</sup> The wireless industry appreciates the opportunity to work together with the Commission to develop innovative text-to-911 solutions. As part of this on-going process, CTIA’s service provider members wish to outline for the Commission how texts-to-911 will be handled under the existing ATIS standard when a user attempts to text 9-1-1 using a multimedia messaging service (“MMS”) platform. It would be helpful to CTIA’s members if the Commission could, in turn, clarify that the dictates of its recent Second Report & Order reflect and are consistent with these procedures.

When a service provider has opted to use its SMS-based platform to handle 9-1-1 texts, but a user attempts to send a text-to-911 using a multimedia format, under the existing ATIS standard the user will receive a bounce-back message. Thus, for example, if a user attempts to text 9-1-1 and attaches a photo or video to the message, or sends the message to multiple numbers in addition to 9-1-1, the user will receive a bounce-back message advising the user to contact emergency services by alternate means. As discussed further below, this approach is consistent with the Commission’s position that CMRS providers may select “any reliable method,” including SMS, to deliver and route texts-to-911.<sup>2</sup> In addition to fitting with the Commission’s preference for technological neutrality, this approach follows the underlying ATIS standard and aligns with the December 2012 voluntary agreement of CTIA

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<sup>1</sup> See *In the Matter of Facilitating the Deployment of Text-to-911 and Other Next Generation 911 Applications*, PS Docket No. 11-153; and *In the Matter of Framework for Next Generation 911 Deployment*, PS Docket No. 10-255, Second Report & Order, FCC 14-118 (rel. Aug. 13, 2014) (“Second Report & Order”).

<sup>2</sup> Second Report & Order ¶ 44 (emphasis added).

member companies AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon to enable SMS-to-9-1-1 on their networks.<sup>3</sup>

Paragraph 44 of the Second Report & Order provides that, although covered text providers may use “a messaging platform that can support multiple addresses or enable sending images and videos, covered text providers must ensure that these features do not interfere with the delivery of the text portion of the message to the PSAP.”<sup>4</sup> CTIA respectfully requests that the Commission clarify that paragraph 44 simply intends to make clear that if a carrier elects to use a platform *other than* SMS to deliver and route texts-to-911 (such as MMS), it must ensure that the features of that platform do not affect the delivery and routing of the text to, and two-way text exchange with, the appropriate PSAP. The Second Report & Order provides that the Commission’s text-to-911 rules are “technologically neutral,” meaning that service providers are not compelled to choose MMS as their platform for delivering and routing texts to 9-1-1; rather, service providers may choose either SMS or MMS as their platform of choice.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, the Commission should make clear that, if a carrier elects to use SMS as its platform for delivering and routing texts to 9-1-1, it will meet its obligations under the new rules if it provides a bounce-back message to users that attempt to text 9-1-1 via MMS. With this clarification, the scenarios described in footnote 134 of the Second Report & Order would be applicable only if a carrier no longer offers SMS and has opted to instead use an alternate platform, like MMS, for texts-to-911.

In light of the above, CTIA respectfully requests that the Commission issue a clarification explaining that paragraph 44 only delineates the obligations of carriers who elect to use a platform *other than* SMS to deliver and route texts-to-9-1-1. Such a clarification would align with the Commission’s “technologically neutral” stance towards the text-to-911 rules, conform to carriers’ existing practices, follow the existing ATIS standard, and promote the efficient deployment of reliable text-to-911 services.

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<sup>3</sup> See Letter from Terry Hall, APCO International, Barbara Jaeger, NENA, Charles W. McKee, Sprint Nextel, Robert W. Quinn Jr., AT&T, Kathleen O’Brien Ham, T-Mobile USA, and Kathleen Grillo, Verizon, to Julius Genachowski, Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, and Commissioners McDowell, Clyburn, Rosenworcel, and Pai, PS Docket 11-153, PS Docket 10-255, at 3 (Dec. 6, 2012) (“Carrier-NENA-APCO Agreement”) (explaining that the “voluntary SMS-to-9-1-1 solution will be limited to the capabilities of the existing SMS service offered by a participating wireless service provider”); ATIS & TIA, *Joint ATIS/TIA Native SMS to 9-1-1 Requirements and Architecture Specification*, J-STD-110, at 1 (2013) (“ATIS/TIA Standard”) (noting that the scope of the Standard is limited to SMS capabilities).

<sup>4</sup> Second Report & Order ¶ 44.

<sup>5</sup> See *id.*

Pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206, this letter is being electronically filed via ECFS with your office. Please direct any questions to the undersigned.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Brian M. Josef*

Brian M. Josef  
Assistant Vice President – Regulatory Affairs  
CTIA – The Wireless Association®