



May 31, 2016

Via ECFS

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

Re: NOTICE OF EX PARTE
PS Docket Nos. 13-239, 11-60: *Improving Resiliency, Reliability, and Continuity of Mobile Wireless Communications Networks*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Competitive Carriers Association (“CCA”) writes in response to the Federal Communications Commission’s (“FCC” or “Commission”) Public Notice¹ seeking comment on the “Wireless Network Resiliency Cooperative Framework” (“Framework”) submitted by AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, US Cellular, and Verizon, together with CTIA.² CCA is the nation’s leading association for competitive wireless providers and stakeholders across the United States. CCA’s membership includes nearly 100 competitive wireless providers ranging from small, rural carriers serving fewer than 5,000 customers to regional and national providers serving millions of customers. CCA also represents approximately 200 associate members consisting of businesses, vendors, and suppliers that serve carriers of all sizes. CCA’s members are committed to ensuring that their networks are resilient, especially during disasters and emergencies. To that end, CCA supports the Framework and commits to many of the same principles as outlined below.³ CCA particularly commends House Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone for his leadership on this issue, including the introduction of H.R. 3998, the Securing Access to Networks in Disasters Act – or the SANDY Act – which inspired the Framework and seeks to improve the nation’s communications networks during disasters.⁴

¹ *Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Seeks Comment on Wireless Carriers’ Proposal to Increase Resiliency and Enhance Information Sharing During Disasters*, Public Notice, PS Docket Nos. 13-239, 11-60 (Apr. 28, 2016).

² *See Ex Parte* Letter from Joan Marsh, AT&T, Charles McKee, Sprint, Grant Spellmeyer, US Cellular, Scott Bergman, CTIA, Steve Sharkey, T-Mobile USA, and William H. Johnson, Verizon, to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, PS Docket Nos. 13-239, 11-60 at 1 (filed Apr. 27, 2016) (“Framework”).

³ CCA makes this commitment on behalf of many of its carrier members. As noted above, CCA represents nearly 100 competitive carriers. While many of CCA’s carrier members support and agree to this commitment, there may be some carriers who may not commit, for various reasons, to the principles outlined herein.

⁴ *See* Press Release, House Energy & Commerce Committee, “CTIA & Pallone Announce ‘Wireless Network Resiliency Cooperative Framework’ for Disasters and Emergencies” (Apr. 27, 2016), *available at*



Reasonable Roaming Arrangements

Coordination and preparation by wireless providers, and among and between consumers and industry stakeholders, is imperative to maintaining communications before, during, and after emergencies and disasters. To achieve this, CCA supports the Framework’s application of reasonable roaming arrangements during emergencies.⁵ As the Framework notes, application of these arrangements will be triggered by the National Response Coordination Center’s (“NRCC”) activation of Emergency Support Function #2 (“ESF-2”) and the Commission’s activation of the Disaster Information Response System (“DIRS”).⁶

During an emergency, CCA, on behalf of many of its members, commits to offering roaming arrangements where feasible when: (1) a carrier’s network has become inoperable and has not been fixed by any reasonably feasible means; and, (2) the home carrier can offer roaming capabilities without harming its own subscribers.⁷ CCA agrees that roaming arrangements during an emergency should be temporary and contingent upon the requesting carrier taking all reasonably feasible steps to restore its own network before initiating a roaming request.⁸ With these conditions in place, CCA on behalf of many of its members, commits to reasonable roaming arrangements during emergencies and disasters where technically feasible.

Mutual Aid

CCA, on behalf of many of its members, similarly commits to sharing physical assets, including network infrastructure, with other wireless carriers when necessary, available, and reasonable. In fact, CCA members have done this in other instances.⁹ As described in the

<https://democrats-energycommerce.house.gov/newsroom/press-releases/ctia-pallone-announce-wireless-network-resiliency-cooperative-framework-for>.

⁵ Framework at 2.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *See id.*; *see also Ex Parte Letter* from Rebecca Murphy Thompson, General Counsel, CCA to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, PS Docket Nos. 13-239, 11-60 (filed Feb. 13, 2015); *and Ex Parte Letter* from Rebecca Murphy Thompson, General Counsel, CCA to Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary, FCC, PS Docket Nos. 13-239, 11-60 (filed Feb. 25, 2015).

⁸ *See* Framework at 2.

⁹ *See* C Spire, “Let’s Talk Tech Podcast #3 Transcript” at 5, *available at* https://www.cspire.com/resources/docs/podcast/CSpire_LTT_podcast3_transcript.pdf (explaining that “[e]ach year, prior to the start of the hurricane season, we review and update our emergency response plans. We begin by making sure we’re prepared with staffing and alternate power supplies (generators) for all of our retail locations. We periodically test those generators and keep them in storage for easy staging and distribution”); *and* CTIA, *Wireless Wave*, Fall 2006 at 19, *available at* http://files.ctia.org/pdf/WW_Fall2006_Katrina.pdf (noting that “Cellular South [was] in the middle of putting a very large, high capacity microwave ring around the entire Gulf Coast to help offset the problems with the landlines,” and “added a \$2.5 million switch in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, so it can handle increased capacity in the event of another disaster”). *See also* Holbrook Mohr, *The Washington Post*, “Wireless Firms Prepare for Storm Season” (June 1, 2006), *available at*



Framework, sharing of these assets will be triggered when the NRCC activates ESF-2 and the FCC activates the electronic DIRS during times of emergency.¹⁰ CCA agrees that mutual aid should be contingent upon a carrier managing its own network prior to extending aid where reasonably practicable.¹¹

Improving Public Safety Awareness of Service Conditions and Restoration Status

CCA's members have an ongoing interest in fostering adequate and reliable communication with Public Safety Answering Points ("PSAPs"). In this vein, CCA on behalf of many of its members, commits to providing relevant contact information for appropriate carrier and PSAP databases within a reasonable period of time when an emergency situation is announced, subject to promises of confidentiality. CCA agrees that open and fluid communication is critical to ensuring network organization and consumer safety during and after emergencies.¹²

Improving Public Awareness of Service Conditions and Restoration Status

Similarly, once the ESF-2 and DIRS are activated for a given emergency, CCA supports the Commission publishing on its website data regarding the total number of cell sites out of service at that time. As noted in the Framework, this data should be aggregated by geographic area and regularly revised once updated information is conveyed by a carrier.¹³

CCA members are committed to ensuring network continuity and resiliency, especially during emergencies and disasters. Once each carrier has assessed the security of its own network, and after it determines it can accomplish the principles set out in the Framework, that carrier will commit to entering into reasonable roaming arrangements, to providing mutual aid, and improving consumer and public safety awareness of network status and restoration efforts. CCA looks forward to ongoing cooperation with Congress, the FCC, and other industry stakeholders to ensure that consumers and wireless networks are adequately prepared to respond to emergencies and disasters.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wdyn/content/article/2006/06/01/AR2006060101096_pf.html; PR Newswire, "Cellular South Mobilizes for Hurricane Gustav" (Aug. 28, 2008), *available at* <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cellular-south-mobilizes-for-hurricane-gustav-64964727.html>; and General Communication, Inc., GCI Emergency Direct (Oct. 2015), *available at* <http://www.gcibusiness.com/emergency-direct/> ("ensure[s] the continuity of your Internet, voice, and video with GCI's satellite-based Emergency Direct service"). CCA members also have offered to provide solar mobile cellular sites to facilitate service in areas where coverage has been dismantled by disasters like forest fires, among other disasters, and equipment and space to other providers while building out their networks in dangerous or unwieldy terrain.

¹⁰ Framework at 3.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² To enhance communication and safeguard resilient call services in the event of a satellite outage, some CCA members have in the past deployed mobile switching center servers ("MSCs") and equipment to local villages in their network footprint. This preparation ensures all calls, especially emergency calls that are local, can still be completed in the event of a link failure stemming from weather or other disasters.

¹³ *Id.*



This *ex parte* notification is being filed electronically with your office pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's Rules. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

/s/ Rebecca Murphy Thompson

Rebecca Murphy Thompson
EVP & General Counsel
Competitive Carriers Association

cc (via email): David Simpson, Rear Admiral (Ret.), USN
Jessica Almond
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