

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

In the Matter of)
)
Revision of the Commission's)
Rules to Ensure Compatibility) CC Docket No. 94-102
with Enhanced 911 Emergency) RM-8143
Calling Systems)

COMMENTS OF APCO, NENA AND NASNA

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International, Inc. ("APCO"), the National Emergency Number Association ("NENA"), and the National Association of State Nine One One Administrators ("NASNA") hereby submit the following brief comments in response to the Commission's Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the above-captioned proceeding, FCC 01-175, released May 25, 2001.

The Commission is seeking comments on methods of providing PSAPs call-back capability for 9-1-1 calls from non-initialized wireless telephones. In 1997, the Commission required wireless carriers to forward all 9-1-1 calls to PSAPs, including calls from non-subscribers using non-initialized phones. From the beginning, APCO, NENA, and NASNA have raised concerns regarding the need for call-back numbers (and eventually location information) for such calls, and reiterated those concerns in a joint letter to the Commission, dated April 28, 2000.

Call-back numbers are essential to reconnect with calls that are dropped, or because the caller may "hang up" before providing enough information regarding the nature and location of the emergency. Call-backs are also important to verify suspicious 9-1-1 calls and to weed out

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prank calls before dispatching scarce emergency personnel. Finally, PSAPs across the country have been receiving an alarming number of accidental 9-1-1 calls generated by inadvertent pressing of pre-programming 9-1-1 keys on handsets.¹ Only by breaking the connection, and calling back can the PSAP verify a 9-1-1 call is intentional and is reporting a real emergency.

The Commission called for public comment on the letter of April 28, 2000 from Public Safety Entities. (DA 00-1098, released May 18, 2000). The Public Safety Entities, including APCO, NENA and NASNA, filed comments and replies. In their reply of July 5, 2000, at 6, the Public Safety Entities said they were “disappointed that the wireless industry did not take this opportunity to offer more technical solutions to the call back issue for further evaluation.” The reply added that requiring all handsets to be service-initialized would be “premature . . . until such time as the Commission is fully satisfied that affordable technical solutions are not currently available.” APCO, NENA and NASNA trust that the Further Notice will yield more fruitful responses from carriers, manufacturers and third-party vendors.

The Further Notice describes three types of non-initialized phones that might place 9-1-1 calls. First are wireless handsets donated by carriers (or other groups) to at risk members of the public, such as victims of domestic violence and the elderly, or to entities such as community patrols and school bus drivers. A second group are “9-1-1 only” non-initialized handsets that are manufactured and marketed by entities taking advantage of the Commissions’ 1997 ruling that all 9-1-1 calls be passed by carriers to PSAPs. Finally, a third set are an undetermined number of “old” handsets that are no longer initialized, but which have been retained by the (former) subscriber (or given to a friend or relative) for emergency call purposes.

¹ *E.g.*, the City Mesa, Arizona, receives an average of over 2,100 of such “open-line” calls each month, representing 25% of its wireless 9-1-1 calls, and over 11% of its total 9-1-1 calls.

At least for donor phones and 9-1-1 only phones, the FCC proposes that it take one of three approaches to address the call-back problem: require a technical solution to provide a call-back number or its equivalent, require initialization at least for purposes of placing a 9-1-1 call, or require some form of automatic labeling to inform PSAPs upon receiving a call that no-call back number will be available.² Given the importance of carrier, manufacturer and third-party vendor input, we will defer comment on the first two approaches until the reply comment stage of this proceeding. One or both of those approaches are necessary, however, as the third option of merely labeling calls is unacceptable and ultimately of limited value.

With Phase I E9-1-1 capability, call-back numbers for initialized phones are immediately displayed on a PSAPs console. There is no such display for calls from non-initialized phones, providing the call-taking with an immediate warning that there is no call-back capability. This will occur with or without any other notification such as a standardized nondialable telephone number used by Magnavox. The notification approach used by Magnavox may be of some value today, as there are still many PSAPs without Phase I capability and thus no way to distinguish between initialized and non-initialized phones. Going forward however, the real need is for actual call-back capability.

² *E.g.*, a standardized non-dialable telephone number such as that provided by 9-1-1 only phones manufactured by Magnavox.

CONCLUSION

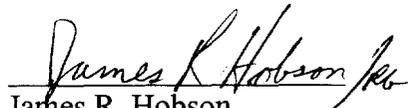
For the reasons set forth above and in prior submissions, APCO urges the Commission to adopt rule to require non-initialized phones, especially donor phones and 9-1-1 only phones, to provide a call-back number when placing a 9-1-1 call.

Respectfully submitted,



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