

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

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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

REPLY COMMENTS OF NEXTEL COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nextel Communications, Inc. ("Nextel") respectfully submits these Reply Comments in response to the July 10, 2001 Public Notice of the Federal Communications Commission ("Commission") in the above-referenced docket.¹ Recognizing that Section 20.18(j) of its Rules could be subject to varying interpretations, the Commission sought comment on whether to amend the rule or "adopt some objective criteria" to provide clarification for wireless carriers and Public Safety Answering Points ("PSAPs") as they initiate deployment of Phase II Enhanced 911 ("E911") service.²

Nextel appreciates the Commission's efforts to more clearly define what is essentially the "launch pad" for a wireless carrier's obligation to invest time and critical resources in provisioning the necessary network and system infrastructure to transmit Phase II E911 information from its network, through the Local Exchange Carrier's ("LEC's") network, and ultimately to the PSAP dispatcher's display screen. With thousands of PSAPs nationwide, wireless carriers do not have sufficient resources to

¹ Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks Further Comment on the Commission's Rules Concerning Public Safety Answering Point Requests for Phase II Enhanced 911, Public Notice, CC Docket No. 94-102 (released July 10, 2001) ("Public Notice").

² *Id.* at p. 2.

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deploy every PSAP simultaneously. Thus, wireless carriers must commit their limited resources to and focus their provisioning efforts on those PSAPs that are truly prepared to accept and use the critical Phase II E911 information.

Under the current regulatory scheme, some PSAPs believe they have unlimited authority to request that carriers to invest time, money and resources in Phase II E911 infrastructure in a particular market without regard to their own readiness. On the other extreme, some carriers have insisted that a PSAP's request is not valid until after that PSAP is fully Phase II-capable. As a result, deployment of wireless E911 services is delayed by the complexities of PSAP, carrier and LEC readiness and the "finger pointing" that naturally results when consumers are not receiving wireless E911 services within six months after the PSAP request. Herein, the Commission has an opportunity to inject common sense and objectivity into the Phase II deployment process, thereby resolving most of these disputes before they begin and ultimately facilitating expeditious deployment of Phase II E911 services throughout the country.

II. DISCUSSION

Specifically, Nextel supports the Comments submitted on July 25, 2001 by the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association ("CTIA"). Like other commenters in this proceeding, CTIA proposes specific objective criteria by which PSAP requests would be judged "valid" under Section 20.18(j). Similarly, the City of Richardson, Texas ("Richardson") proposed a set of criteria to which a PSAP would have to certify to demonstrate the validity of its Phase II request.³ Nextel believes that the

³ Comments of the City of Richardson, Texas ("Comments of Richardson"). The Texas 9-1-1 Agencies also submitted suggested criteria, including providing the carrier "written commitments from [the PSAP's] vendors that within the six-month wireless carrier deadline" the PSAP's CPE will be capable of receiving and utilizing the Phase II location information, its 911 network and

proposals of CTIA and Richardson offer the Commission reasonable and objective criteria that provide a balanced approach to Phase II E911 deployment. Taken together, these criteria will properly clarify Section 20.18(j) to facilitate Phase II E911 deployment.

In its Comments, Richardson proposes four specific criteria for determining PSAP readiness and, therefore, a “valid” PSAP request. These criteria are:

- (1) a showing by the PSAP that a funding mechanism exists for the PSAP to become capable of receiving and utilizing Phase II data;
- (2) a showing that the PSAP has placed an order for Phase II capable CPE and/or mapping solutions as are necessary to receive and utilize the Phase II data;
- (3) a showing that a work plan is in place to have the ordered equipment in place within six months of the PSAP’s request to the carrier; and
- (4) a showing that the PSAP has contacted its LEC and requested that the LEC make any necessary arrangements for the initiation of Phase II service (such as requesting that the LEC provide any necessary trunking, and any other necessary facilities or capabilities to receive and utilize the Phase II data.)⁴

CTIA, in its Comments, proposes the following three objective criteria:

- (1) the PSAP’s ALI database meets the J-STD-036 E2 interface standard or a qualifying interim solution;
- (2) the PSAP’s CPE must be certified to either be able to utilize latitude, longitude and confidence level data or the PSAP’s management must have entered into a contractual agreement with a vendor that will provide this capability within six months of the date of the Phase II request; and
- (3) the PSAP is able to provide the data necessary to support Phase II deployment.⁵

database management system will be capable of transmitting and accepting Phase II location information and its “chosen plotting or mapping mechanism” will be available within the six-month period. Comments of the Texas 9-1-1 Agencies.

⁴ Comments of Richardson at pp. 2-3.

⁵ Comments of CTIA at p. 2.

Each of the above-listed criteria, whether from Richardson or CTIA, require that the PSAP objectively demonstrate that its Phase II request is a realistic, valid request for a service that the PSAP itself is prepared to deploy. CTIA's standards, however, more specifically define the prerequisites necessary for successfully launching Phase II E911 services. For example, Richardson's criteria would have the PSAP demonstrate that it has "contacted its LEC and requested . . . any necessary arrangements" for Phase II service.⁶ CTIA's proposed criteria, on the other hand, require that the PSAP not only "contact" and "request" Phase II arrangements from the LEC, but also that the PSAP obtain a commitment from the LEC to fulfill the request within six months.⁷ Richardson, moreover, makes no attempt to define the commitment the LEC will be making to the PSAP for Phase II E911 service, despite the fact that the wireless industry and the Public Safety industry agreed on specific interface standards for the deployment of Phase II services. Therefore, CTIA is correct in requiring that the PSAP demonstrate that its contracts with the LEC or other ALI vendors are in conformity with the mutually agreed upon J-STD-036 E2 interface.

As other commenters noted in this proceeding, the J-STD-036 E2 interface is the "guideline[] for the way in which information is to be exchanged,"⁸ and wireless carriers are now simply asking that all Phase II E911 participants work toward that mutually

⁶ Comments of Richardson at p. 2.

⁷ Comments of CTIA at p. 4 ("Since the PSAP is responsible for all necessary upgrades to the ALI database and selective routers and is the customer of the ALI database, it is essential that the PSAP provide adequate assurances to wireless carriers that the appropriate interface is in place.")

⁸ Comments of Sprint PCS at p. 2.

agreed-upon standard. Therefore, rather than simply allowing PSAPs to make a showing that they have “contacted” the LEC regarding Phase II upgrades, PSAPs should be prepared to demonstrate – as proposed by CTIA – that those upgrade requests contemplated deployment of the J-STD-036 or an approved interim solution, and that the LEC or other ALI vendor has demonstrated some commitment to that standard.

Thus, while Richardson asserts that a funding mechanism must be in place, that there must be an “order” for the necessary CPE and a work plan in place for deploying that CPE within six months,⁹ and that there must be a showing that the PSAP has requested Phase II upgrades from the LEC, CTIA’s proposal states exactly what those LEC upgrade requests must encompass. If a PSAP is requesting upgrades that are not consistent with industry standards or specifically exempt as an interim solution, significant time and resources will be wasted as the PSAP and wireless carrier wade through these issues – and potentially attempt to work around them in a patchwork fashion -- after the “request.” Thus, the specificity of the criteria proposed by CTIA is critical to their usefulness in facilitating rapid Phase II E911 deployment.

III. CONCLUSION

For the reasons discussed herein, the Commission should adopt the criteria provided by both CTIA and Richardson for determining a “valid” PSAP request pursuant to Section 20.18(j) of the Commission’s Rules. With these valid, objective criteria in place, the Commission can facilitate Phase II deployment by diverting carrier, PSAP and

⁹ While Nextel supports a work plan as prerequisite to a valid PSAP request, Nextel believes that this work plan must include specific dates and timelines for testing the wireless carriers’ and the LEC’s Phase II upgrades, including the Phase II connectivity of those systems, within the six month time frame. Until such testing is successfully completed, Phase II services cannot be deployed. Therefore, this system testing is a significant aspect of the PSAP, LEC and wireless carrier Phase II deployment process and must be a part of the PSAP’s work plan.

LEC resources to those areas of the country where Phase II services are a near-term reality.

Respectfully submitted,
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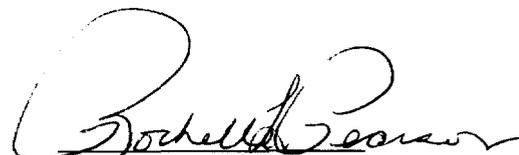
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Rochelle L. Pearson, hereby certify that on this 1st day of August 2001, caused a copy of the attached Reply Comments of Nextel Communications, Inc. to be served by hand to the following:

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