

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)	
)	
Revision of the Commission's Rules to)	
Ensure Compatibility With Enhanced 911)	CC Docket No. 94-102
Emergency Calling Systems)	
)	
Amendment of Parts 2 and 25 to)	
Implement the Global Mobile Personal)	
Communications by Satellite (GMPCS))	
Memorandum of Understanding and)	IB Docket No. 99-67
Arrangements; Petition of the National)	
Telecommunications and Information)	
Administration to Amend Part 25 of the)	
Commission's Rules to Establish)	
Emissions Limits for Mobile and Portable)	
Earth Stations Operating in the 1610-)	
1660.5 MHz Band)	

COMMENTS OF INTRADO INC.

Intrado Inc. (Intrado)¹ hereby submits these comments in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (Commission) Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) released December 20, 2002 in the above captioned proceedings.² The Commission is currently re-evaluating the scope of communications services and devices that should provide access to emergency services.

Specifically, the Commission seeks comment on the need to extend compliance with its basic and E911 rules to mobile wireless services such as telematics and certain

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² Further Notice of proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM), FCC 02-326, Public Notice, DA 03-209, rel. January 27, 2003 extending comment deadlines.

wireline services such as MLTS. The Commission also seeks comment on a proposal to require mobile satellite service providers (MSS) providing interconnected voice service to establish national call centers. Intrado submits comment on several general areas raised in the FNPRM but acknowledges that these comments are not exhaustive of the inquiry set forth in the Commission's rulemaking.

OVERVIEW

In its broadest sense, this FNPRM seeks to re-fresh the record on a number of issues related to E911 to determine which services and devices should be subject to basic and E911 requirements. Intrado commends the Commission for its continued foresight and its commitment of time, effort and resources dedicated to this rulemaking. The Commission's efforts demonstrate a comprehensive understanding and a true appreciation of the substantive issues involved in assuring consumers access to emergency services.

Intrado appreciates the opportunity to provide input and guidance on the need to extend current E911 rules to existing and emerging technologies and services. Regulations often don't keep pace with technological developments and it serves the public interest for the Commission to periodically re-examine 911 rules in light of the advances made in technology. These developments, coupled with the public's heightened awareness since September 11th, underscore the critical need for consumers to be able to communicate with emergency personnel any time, anywhere and on any device.

While this rulemaking permits the Commission to accelerate the advent of 911 call delivery to new technologies and services, Intrado cautions the Commission to not

prematurely approve new rules without a full examination of the roles played by all industry participants. Nor should this rulemaking be used to inject undue delay or otherwise impede implementation of current rules under already established deadlines.

To that end, Intrado suggests that the Commission undertake this rulemaking from a lessons-learned perspective. The FCC's mandate of universal 911 for all subscribers, while laudable, has had some unintended effects. First, many communities, especially those located in rural areas, deployed basic 911 services to fill the void of non-existent 911 and as a result have little impetus to now deploy enhanced 911. Secondly, current 911 regulations are imposed on services that by necessity must integrate into a legacy system maintained by incumbent monopoly telephone companies that for the most part provide fixed location local exchange telephone service. The use of non-traditional devices is similar to the wireless industry in the early 1990s that experienced explosive growth and difficult and costly integration with the current infrastructure. It is against this backdrop that Intrado suggests the Commission keep in mind several considerations in its deliberations.

The Commission must consider the role of all industry participants, to include the incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs), the economic consequences and funding mechanism impacts and the expectations of a technically literate consumer base when rendering its decisions for E911 deployment. The 911 systems in place today require those providing communications services and those providing emergency assistance to coordinate their efforts and facilities. Emerging technologies will require a higher degree of flexibility on the part of the current 911 infrastructure in order to integrate into these legacy systems. The Commission's proposed rules will have a serious impact on

the industry and public safety alike if consideration is not given to how these types of telecommunications services interface with current E9-1-1 systems.

DISCUSSION

One of the Commission's statutory mandates under the Communications Act is to promote the safety of life and property through the use of wire and radio communication.³ This mandate impacts the industry and the public safety community regarding consumers' ability to benefit from advanced technologies to access emergency capabilities of current E911 systems. The overall success and long-term viability of non-traditional devices will be directly impacted by how well the issues raised by the FNRPM are addressed by this Commission, public and private sector participants and consumers.

Generally speaking, non-traditional devices are those devices that fall outside of the traditional technologies the public safety community currently accommodates. This means that a non-traditional device is neither a wireline nor a wireless phone in the classic sense. These devices often contain the intelligence to send a wireless signal and/or location data in an emergency situation. Currently these devices are not seamlessly integrated into the existing 9-1-1 infrastructure nor are there accepted funding mechanisms to support them on an ongoing basis. Non-traditional devices are gaining various levels of consumer acceptance and although the public safety community recognizes that these devices need to be integrated into the current infrastructure, there is no agreement on how to accomplish this.

³ Section 1 of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. §151.

First, without a defined funding model the integration of non-traditional devices into the native 9-1-1 systems is destined to follow the same path as wireless Phase I and II adoption. The delays in deployment of wireless Phase I technology were due in part to the absence of 911 network service providers and the corollary lack of a cost recovery mechanisms to recoup the investment required to upgrade the network to accommodate ten and 20 digit Automatic Number Identification (ANI). Non-traditional devices will likely experience similar delays unless a funding mechanism is in place for the public safety community to recover the cost of implementation.

Traditionally, the entity that introduces the call and/or data into the 9-1-1 networks pays for the cost of the delivery of the call. In the case of non-traditional devices there is no precedent for how an emergency call is delivered other than contacting a public safety agency via the public service telephone network (PSTN) using local telephone numbers. It is critical for the funding issues to be resolved in order for the public safety community to be in a position to effectively respond to new and emerging communications devices.

Second as noted above, the 9-1-1 infrastructure has developed over the last thirty years and contains many legacy telephony components that are still used only by public safety. Due to the technical limitations of the 9-1-1 network, the flexibility of the current network is limited in its ability to accept new technologies.

The carriers, manufacturers and the public safety community have made significant investments in the existing infrastructure and these investments

should be considered wherever possible. Evolving the existing infrastructure will serve to provide all stakeholders in public safety with a solution that doesn't require wholesale changes to the network. Evolving the current 9-1-1 network may also serve to avoid disenfranchising any portion of the public safety community that does not have funding to replace the existing infrastructure.

Third, the key to successfully deploying the seamless integration of new technologies into the existing infrastructure will require the setting of national standards. The adoption of Telematics, ACN, and other data-only devices are not currently supported by industry standards. The cooperation of industry representatives from each of these technologies will be critical to reach acceptable standards by both the public safety community and the technology companies.

From the public safety perspective, new technologies should deliver 9-1-1 calls to public safety answering points in a manner similar to existing wireline or wireless emergency calls. In life threatening situations, call takers should not have different procedures for each emergency call form factor. Rather, the various types of form factors should deliver a request for service in a standardized format.

National standards for non-traditional devices will keep implementation costs for the technology providers, carriers and public safety to a minimum. Multiple standards will cause confusion to each industry segment and polarize the public safety community over technology issues. Additionally, both a lack of

standards or multiple standards will cause delays in the adoption and acceptance of new technology as a means for access to emergency service.

Existing organizations, vendors and non-traditional technology providers should coordinate to develop balanced industry-driven standards without those standards favoring one segment over another. Wherever possible, companies introducing safety devices should seek partnerships with public safety and the existing carriers who provide 9-1-1 services.

MOBILE SATELLITE SERVICES

The current status of the MSS industry presents a significant potential to provide universally available emergency communication services to remote and under-served populations throughout the country. Thus it is in the public interest for the Commission to reconsider imposing some E911 requirements on MSS.

The Commission has previously found that certain MSS carriers offering dispatch to their customers can meet E911 requirements by either dialing 911 directly or by routing these calls through the service provider's dispatcher. The Commission is now proposing that all MSS licensees providing real-time, two-way, switched voice service, interconnected with the public switched network must establish national call centers to which all subscriber emergency calls are routed.

Intrado does not oppose the establishment of a national call center, but notes the limitations of this proposal. The Commission's proposal appears to strike a fair balance. It fulfills the public's expectation of service when dialing 911 from a satellite phone while at the same time, it does not appear to place too onerous of a burden on a developing market with evolving technology.

Call Centers must be staffed with call takers trained to respond to emergency calls and the centers must have accurate and current information on PSAPs to whom the Call Center passes the call. The calls from the Call Center are initially triaged and are either transferred or “conferenced” to the PSAP via the PSTN to a local telephone number at the PSAP. Thus one of the limitations is that these PSAP telephone lines are not treated with the same priority as 911 lines and as a result, valuable minutes can be lost while waiting for the PSAP to answer the incoming emergency call from the MSS Call Center.

Additionally, Call Centers are likely be equipped with PBX systems, which will pass out-going trunk telephone number or station identification information to the appropriate PSAP on a local exchange line. This is of little value to a PSAP where the call back number that is passed into the 911 system is that of the Call Center rather than the original caller.

Ideally, the MSS Call Center should be required to deliver an emergency call to a designated PSAP as a native 911 call with callback and location information. As an interim solution however, Intrado would suggest that the industry and the public safety community cooperate in field testing new solutions and technologies to develop new and cost effective systems to meet 911 challenges which may be more effective than setting regulatory mandates.

TELEMATICS SERVICES

The Commission seeks general comment on its current regulatory and future approaches to the telematics industry. In its most elementary sense, telematics devices combine electronic sensors in automobiles with wireless communication devices

equipped with location-determination capabilities connected to a call center. These devices provide users a new level of traveling convenience and safety with a variety of features, such as emergency roadside assistance, stolen vehicle tracking, navigation assistance, remote vehicle unlock, and concierge services. The consumer actively initiates their services by pressing a button in the vehicle, which serves as a communications link with a telematics call center.

Intrado recently filed comments in the OnStar⁴ docket and for the sake of brevity, will not repeat its comments here. Notwithstanding the limitations noted above, Call Centers provide a valuable function of triaging emergency calls and filtering events that do not require public safety engagement. Early telematics industry statistics reported that nearly 25% of all calls start as emergency calls and that only 5% of those calls require public safety assistance. Telematics calls should be distinguished from ACN calls that are triggered by air bag or other instrument sensors and these calls will in fact require emergency assistance.

The Commission should give consideration to the cost of delivering telematics calls into the 911 system. Telematics devices operating in a private wireless network to a Call Center are not currently financially supporting the 911 systems, yet PSAPs continue to incur staffing and telephony costs to answer these calls. Telematics service providers should be required to support the interface of telematics call centers into the legacy 911 networks as well as any PSAP equipment upgrades to accommodate the new ALI screen elements introduced by telematics calls.

⁴ See *Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks Comment on OnStar Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding the Applicability of the Commission's E911 Phase II Requirements for Wireless Handsets to In-Vehicle, Embedded Telematics Units*, CC Docket No. 94-102, *Public Notice* DA 02-3565 (rel. Dec. 20, 2002).

The delivery of ACN data to PSAPs also merits further Commission consideration. Many PSAPs do not require the degree of detail provided by ACN devices. While some elements are crucial, such as the number of occupants and the degree of injury, many more precise data elements delivered by ACN are superfluous for the PSAP's use. These additional data elements are however, extremely critical to secondary entities such as EMS providers and trauma room personnel. ACN manufacturers and system integrators would benefit from industry forums that explore uniform solutions for all interested parties.

MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEMS

The Commission seeks comment on whether it should require multi-line systems, including wireline, wireless and Internet Protocol-based systems, to deliver call-back and location information.⁵ Additionally, the FNPRM questions the Commission's legal authority to require certain manufacturers to comply with the Commission's 911 regulations.

Intrado does not believe that the limited state and local government action taken thus far adequately addresses the need to provide location and call-back information for multi-line systems. There are economic, operational, legal and regulatory issues that need to be addressed before 911 call delivery to a PBX environment will be widely deployed. Intrado also does not believe that either the 911 Act or the Communications Act provides the Commission with legal authority to regulate manufacturers and/or the manufacturing process. That authority to regulate manufactures appears to require legislative action.

⁵ FNPRM at 30.

There are several examples of multi-line telephone systems that do not fit into the characteristics described in the FNPRM. The majority of 911 solutions for multi-line telephone system on the market today truly only address the PBX and hybrid system market. Whatever products may be developed for the PBX 911 market, it is imperative that these new products have access to the incumbent 911 services provider's database management systems. This access requires the incumbent 911 services provider to assure that the PBX user's submitted ALI records are not overwritten by the PBX's dial tone provider's 911 records. The overwriting of records may cause erroneous data to be delivered to the PSAP.

Because most incumbent 911 service providers are also local exchange providers, it is imperative that 911 service providers should permit open access to the 911 database for the uploading of PBX ALI records. Where a PBX user subscribes to CLEC services, the ILEC providing 911 services should not deny the PBX user the ability to upload PBX station records into the 911 system. This requires coordination and clearly understood methods and procedures for PBX 911 on the part of the PBX user, the CLEC, and the 911 services provider. Ultimately the PBX administrator should be responsible for timely and accurate updates to the 911 database.

Clearly, the delivery of accurate callback and location information from a MLTS system is critical for effective emergency response services. There is a reasonable expectation on the part of the public that emergency response is available when dialing from a PBX or MLTS system and it is in the public interest for the Commission to address this to the extent of its authority. Absent any mandates to provide 911 service,

a PBX user will refrain from incurring possible liability as well as administrative costs by not providing PBX 911 service altogether, which is contrary to the public interest.

CONCLUSION

Intrado is well aware of the technical and administrative complexities surrounding the delivery of 911 calls from new and emerging services and devices. In this vein, Intrado would encourage the Commission to include all industry stakeholders in the process, to develop and evaluate industry-accepted procedures for 911 and to incorporate flexibility into any rules crafted to assist with the deployment of 911 services.

Intrado supports the Commission's goal of improving the availability and quality of E911 service across various technologies. Intrado acknowledges the efforts of the Commission to improve upon access to emergency services and urges the Commission to keep the interests of the public and public safety paramount as they consider these and other comments.

Respectfully Submitted,

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