CTIA – The Wireless Association™

Presentation to

Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy

on

Outage Reporting

ET Docket 04-35

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Wireless Industry Concerns Regarding the Outage Reporting NPRM

- Several wireless issues of concern exist regarding the Commission's proposed rules on outage reporting:
  - The definition of a "reportable outage."
  - The requirement to report outages in two hours.
  - The requirement to have multiple parties report on the same outage.
  - The FCC's ability to protect the data from disclosure.
- CTIA and the wireless industry believe that the voluntary reporting effort will provide the Commission with the data it requires.

The Commission's Proposed Definition of an Outage Does Not Make Sense in the Wireless Environment

- The use of "total call capacity of the affected MSC, multiplied by a concentration factor of ten" would grossly exaggerate and overestimate the effect of any outage in the wireless environment.
- The Commission's proposed calculation would be difficult to complete and extremely burdensome for carriers.
  - Measuring the capacity of a switch is not an easy calculation – it is a fluid number that changes based on a variety of factors.
  - Multiplying any outage by a factor of ten, but keeping the threshold at 900,000 user minutes, will increase reporting significantly.
- The Commission's rules should not be based on the exception – the catastrophic outage that represents a negligible percentage of measurable outages.

The Commission's Outage Reporting "Trigger" Should Measure Actual Impact

- The Commission should measure outages based on:

  Any unplanned loss, for 30 minutes or more, totaling at least 90,000 blocked calls on an individual switch, of the ability of end users to establish and maintain a channel of communications due to a failure in the performance of a service provider's/network operator's network.

- A "blocked call" measurement tracks actual impact of an outage, not an arbitrary multiplication of the capacity of a switch.

The Commission's Reporting Requirements Should Not Impede Efforts to Fix an Outage or be Overly Burdensome

- Filing Initial Reports within two hours will take resources away from actually fixing the problem.
  - Many wireless carriers do not have enough resources to simultaneously fix the problem and file reports with the Commission.
- The initial period of an outage is critical to isolating, stopping and then fixing the problem.
- Reportable outages can extend beyond the two hour reporting requirement, forcing carriers to transfer resources away from fixing a problem.
- Manufacturers should not be required to report outages that otherwise would be reported by carriers.

Outage Reporting Data Should be Protected under the Critical Infrastructure Information Act (CIIA)

- The outage reporting data must be protected against disclosure – it includes sensitive data on network stress points and vulnerabilities that should not be exposed to bad actors
  - "The errant disclosure to an adversary of this information concerning even a single event may present a grave risk to that infrastructure. The potential availability of all reports, across all of the platforms proposed in the Commission's Notice, could provide a potential adversary with a virtual road map targeting network stress points and vulnerabilities and field guide to defeating "best practices" and protective measures. The Commission's apparent proposal to make outage reports available to the public electronically over the Internet increases the risk exponentially." (DHS Comments)
- The CIIA was passed by Congress specifically to protect this sensitive data.
- A FCC process to gather and review data on network outages should be consistent with other Homeland Security government initiatives.

A Voluntary Outage Reporting System Will Provide the Commission with the Information it Requires

- The Wireless industry is committed to the voluntary initiative and it should be given a chance to work.
  - Over 85% of subscribers represented by carriers that are participating in the voluntary initiative – greater participation is possible.
  - The voluntary Industry Led Outage Reporting Initiative process provides an incentive for carriers to report outage problems in a constructive manner.
- Voluntary reporting is collecting almost exactly the same data the FCC will collect under mandatory efforts.
- Voluntary reporting data is reviewed by subject matter experts with the goals of promoting network reliability and developing Best Practices.
- Voluntary reporting can be adjusted quickly to address changing market conditions or changing needs.