

Wireless phones are increasingly becoming more useful communication tools. You can send regular text messages (SMS) to others using your carrier's SMS technology or via apps like Apple's iMessage for iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad and soon Macs running Mac OS X Mountain Lion using an Apple ID to another user's cell phone number or Apple ID; or RIM's similar Blackberry Messenger app for Blackberry smartphones. In fact smartphones can handle Skype video chats or in the case of iOS devices and Apple Macs handle FaceTime video chats as well. Some have even established means for users to make mobile donations via text message. Just imagine the possibilities for using these new communication methods particularly SMS for 911 emergency service.

What if users could use iMessage or Blackberry Messenger to text a request for help in an emergency to 911? I believe the technical capability should be there to handle this and if its not already set up the FCC should require carriers to set up that is to enable users to do so through standard SMS if they choose so they can send 911 SMS messages but not make it the only way to text for help. Also the FCC should take carrier's requests and concerns into account before it makes a final decision on these matters. If the FCC has already crafted rules it should reconsider how the rules were implemented if they do not take these types of suggestions into account and/or carrier's concerns at all into account. Another solution is to enable users of Facebook Messenger a mobile IM application and other mobile IM applications like AIM for iPhone or AIM for Android etc to use those services to request emergency assistance. I think the technical capability to not only place 911 calls on mobile phones but text via traditional SMS and/or IM should be enabled but if carriers don't want to be required to handle too many SMS 911 messages make using SMS for 911 an option for individuals to use but not the only option. Require carriers to work with IM providers to develop a viable way for sending/receiving 911 SMS messages thru text and/or IM.