



## Policy Roundtable #2 Summary June 26, 2005

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NENA convened the second meeting of the Next Generation (NG) E-9-1-1 Policy Roundtable on June 26, 2005 at the Hyatt Hotel in Long Beach, preceding the NENA Annual Conference. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Bob Cobb, NG E9-1-1 Project Manager for NENA; Patrick Halley, NENA’s Government Affairs Director; and Chris Ternet, then-Chairman of the NENA Regulatory/Legislative Committee. Representatives from 10 of the 13 organizations with seats on the Policy Roundtable were present. (See the attached list of the Policy Roundtable Partners.) Also in attendance as an observer was Mary Brooner from Motorola.

**Background:** NENA’s NG E9-1-1 Partnership is a collaboration between public and private stakeholders. It was created to anticipate the impact of emerging telecommunications technologies on 9-1-1 services. The ultimate goal of NENA’s initiative is to ensure that everyone has access to emergency services anytime, anywhere, from any device.

The NG E9-1-1 Partnership management team provides strategic oversight for the program. The team establishes goals, timelines and the general process for reaching consensus and recommendations. It consists of senior executives from the participating partners along with top elected leadership and key staff support from NENA.

The Policy Roundtable is one of three convened by the management team at its initial January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2005 meeting. (The other two Roundtables address Operations/Education and Technology, respectively) Each Roundtable will meet three times in 2005.

The Policy Roundtable first broached the topic of emerging technology and public policy in its March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting and subsequent conference calls. Jurisdictional perspectives (federal, state and local) was the topic for the June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting in Long Beach. Alternative funding solutions will be the topic of the final 2005 Roundtable to be held this fall. The final product from the Policy Roundtable will be a series of working papers that provide consensus guidance on 9-1-1 issues with a project management perspective for recommendations and implementation.

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## **June 26 Policy Roundtable**

### **Topic 2: Jurisdictional Perspectives**

Roundtable Number Two began with a series of briefings from invited guests on current and upcoming issues that pertain to the future of 9-1-1. Guests included Ray Fitzgerald, Legislative Director for Rep. John Shimkus (R-IL); Dana Lichtenberg, Legislative Assistant for Rep. Bart Gordon (D-TN); Drew Dawson, Chief, EMS Division, National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA); Tim Stelzig, Wireless Competition Bureau, FCC; Paul Fahey, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Board and Secretary of the National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators (NASNA); Crafton Timmerman, Public Technology, Inc.; and Greg Rohde, Executive Director of the E 9-1-1 Institute.

The invited guests addressed issues such as the efforts to appropriate federal monies to fund the national 9-1-1 Implementation and Coordination Office (ICO) and grant program, the upcoming Telecom Act re-write, the FCC's VoIP E9-1-1 Order, current VoIP legislation and NHTSA's Next Generation 9-1-1 Initiative.

### **Connecting the Policy and Technical Roundtables**

At the end of the meeting the Policy and Technical Roundtables met jointly to provide each other with an update on the issues being addressed by each group. Partners agreed that as we move forward it is important for all three roundtables to share information, as any recommendations that are made by the Policy Roundtable will ultimately affect technical and operational considerations.

## **Roundtable #2 Consensus Conclusions on Federal, State, Local Jurisdictional Roles**

### **1. THE FEDERAL ROLE**

It is important to distinguish the different roles various federal agencies have regarding emergency communications in general and 9-1-1 in particular. All 9-1-1 specific functions at the federal level should be managed by the joint NHTSA/NTIA national Implementation and Coordination Office (ICO) when it is established. The ICO is uniquely positioned to coordinate and provide guidance to multiple ongoing 9-1-1 efforts at the national, state and local level. This will ensure that individual efforts are not occurring in a void and are not duplicated or at cross purposes. It will be critical that the ICO coordinate with other federal entities that have an interest in 9-1-1, including the FCC and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

### **Functions of the Implementation and Coordination Office (ICO)**

The ICO should:

- Manage all 9-1-1 specific functions at the federal level.
- Publicize and coordinate standards and architecture development efforts specific to 9-1-1.



- Where appropriate, work to ensure 9-1-1 specific standards efforts are being considered in the broader context of work being done elsewhere on emergency communications standards.
- Publicize the results of next generation 9-1-1 trials to ensure the results are shared as best practices for future next generation trials.
- Maintain a central depository of information (for standards, trials, architectures, etc.) in order to promote best practices
- Determine the criteria for receiving and providing grants to state, local and tribal governments for 9-1-1 system upgrades and next generation trials, as required by the ENHANCE 911 Act of 2004. (Ideally, grants will not be distributed to upgrade 9-1-1 systems with a focus only on today's technology. There should be a clear focus on developing and maintaining an IP-enabled emergency services infrastructure at the state and local level.)

While it is difficult to determine what the funding levels for the ICO will be this year and beyond, it is important that in the near future the ICO to be set up with a plan to begin operating with either zero or full funding from Congress with a forward-looking mission. Program Partners agreed that one of the first things the ICO should do is initiate a cost/benefit analysis comparing the current 9-1-1 system with the model being proposed here and in related efforts such as the FCC's Network Reliability and Interoperability Council (NRIC) 1B and 1D Focus Groups.

### **The Federal Role in Building a National Infrastructure**

While the ICO should be focused on national 9-1-1 specific coordination efforts, other efforts that focus on developing a national emergency services internetwork (a "system of systems") that includes 9-1-1 need to be continued. As we move toward IP-enabled emergency service networks, providing guidelines and funding for a national IP emergency services infrastructure that is coordinated at the state level is the most important role for the federal government. This will come in the form of physical infrastructure (the pipes), along with the coordination of national standards, system interfaces and overall system architecture. The federal government should not dictate specific solutions; rather, it should provide detailed guidelines for state and local governments to meet when implementing IP emergency services networks. Funding requirements must be tied to these guidelines, which is akin to the 1950's federal government program that designed and funded the creation of a national highway program. A similar effort is needed here. As one invited guest representing local government organizations stated, "We need governance, we need direction, we need structure, and we need policies."

As 9-1-1 has traditionally been viewed and operated as a local service, the existing 9-1-1 system typically has been developed with technology that is only capable of using or sharing information at the local/regional level. Recognizing this limitation, efforts at the federal level need to focus on facilitating the development of national standardized system interfaces. This will enable existing systems at the local level to more easily



connect with state and national emergency services networks. The overall goal of these efforts will be to avoid having to create individual solutions for more than 6,000 PSAPs and to instead focus on the national deployment of standardized 9-1-1 services.

**Coordination and Sharing of the Public Safety Infrastructure:**

This internetwork needs to include but not be limited to 9-1-1. Developing stand-alone 9-1-1 IP networks should be avoided. Economies of scale will be created through the use of shared IP networks in which 9-1-1, law enforcement, public health networks and others operate on a shared IP backbone. PSAPs will be a node on a broader emergency services network involving all stakeholders, including law enforcement, fire, EMS, emergency management, medical, public health and other relevant emergency service entities.

An entity, likely a department or advisory group within DHS, needs to coordinate the efforts within the federal government concerning emergency communications standards and architecture development (in which 9-1-1 must be included), including work being done by DHS, DOJ, DOT, FEMA, HHS, the FCC and others. These federal entities must reference recognized national 9-1-1 and emergency communications standards when issuing public notices and RFPs concerning 9-1-1 and emergency communications.

**The FCC Role: Increased 9-1-1 Directive Influence and Coordination**

In addition to its existing role as a telecommunications regulatory body, the FCC should be responsible for convening and providing guidance to all constituents involved in emergency communications system development. The FCC has direct or indirect jurisdiction over all elements of communications (manufacturing, licensing, wireless, frequency issues, etc.), all of which impact communications involving the public or among emergency responders. In the past the FCC has exercised this jurisdiction in a relatively narrow manner and on an ad-hoc basis in the area of emergency communications. Examples of this include public safety spectrum, E 9-1-1 and the Emergency Alert System (EAS). The FCC's charge in the NRIC VII process to look more broadly into 9-1-1 and emergency service issues generally is a step in the right direction. As a matter of policy, the FCC should be more proactive and place a higher priority on 9-1-1 and emergency communications than it traditionally has done in the past. In doing so, the FCC should seek out all available on-going work and perspectives before they undertake rule-making, and it should be a priority of the FCC to closely coordinate its actions with all entities affected by a ruling, including appropriate non-government organizations, as well as others in the federal government.

**9-1-1 and Homeland Security: Need to Increase Awareness and Voice of 9-1-1**

It is also important to note that 9-1-1 has not been recognized as a "first responder" by the federal Department of Homeland Security and thus has not been as integrated into homeland security discussions and initiatives as much as it should. Most outside of public safety assume that 9-1-1 is represented on equal footing with other first responder groups such as police, fire and EMS when it comes to homeland security. Unfortunately,



this typically has not been the case at the national and state level. Leaders in homeland security and 9-1-1 need to work together to fix this oversight.

## **2. THE ROLE OF THE STATE**

As we move toward an IP-based 9-1-1 and emergency services network, a significant shift in the responsibilities between state and local government is needed. The role of the state should be enhanced by making the state responsible for the delivery of 9-1-1 calls to the appropriate local PSAP. It is recognized that existing state legislation will need to be updated based on the continuing evolution of technology in most, if not all, states to allow this policy measure to become a reality. All states should have a statewide 9-1-1/emergency communications entity that is responsible for managing a statewide IP emergency communications network, on which 9-1-1 is a node. It will be critical for state networks to be in conformance with national standards and infrastructure requirements referenced in the federal section of this summary report. Essentially, the state should be a knowledge broker for local governments and PSAPs, providing them with up-to-date technical, regulatory and legislative information that those local entities are often unable to manage.

For this model to be effective, emphasis needs to be placed on the importance of establishing a single, recognized central 9-1-1 planning or administrative function in every state. This state 9-1-1 entity should not be based on a particular technology (e.g. a wireless 9-1-1 board), but should instead cover all aspects of 9-1-1. According to the National Association of State 9-1-1 Administrators (NASNA) there are 34 existing state 9-1-1 entities.

### **Management and Guidance**

It is perhaps most important that states be responsible for managing technical interfaces and requirements for PSAPs to access IP networks and maintaining the overall security and maintenance of the system. The state should be a central point where all 9-1-1 calls are routed over an IP network. Based on the location of the call, a state-level entity will then be responsible for routing the call to the correct local PSAP. Thus, most vendor relationships concerning call routing issues will be managed at the state level, taking the responsibility off of local PSAPs who often do not have the time or expertise to manage these relationships. Similar to the federal role with states, state governments should not dictate specific solutions at the local level, but should provide detailed guidelines that local governments must meet when connecting to statewide IP emergency services networks. Funding requirements should be tied to meeting these guidelines.

### **Coordination**

As at the federal level, one entity within the state needs to coordinate all efforts concerning 9-1-1 and emergency communications within a state. Ideally, this body will be a state 9-1-1/emergency communications board but may also include the state CIO's office, emergency management agency and other relevant bodies. The state should be responsible for managing the allocation of its resources to ensure that all areas within a



state are properly covered. This should include the assurance that fees collected for 9-1-1 are used for 9-1-1. However, the current 9-1-1 funding mechanism may need to be modified to accommodate the migration from today's model to the next generation 9-1-1 system, an issue that will be examined during the next Policy Roundtable meeting.

### **3. THE LOCAL ROLE**

While routing the 9-1-1 call to the right PSAP should become the responsibility of the state, answering that call and providing the best possible response should be the role of the local PSAP. That is, while call delivery should be the role of the state, assurance of service delivery (answering 9-1-1 calls from any device and properly dispatching the appropriate response) should be the primary role of the local PSAP. 9-1-1 service will still be locally managed and maintained. As local PSAPs evolve into entities responsible solely for maintaining the overall 9-1-1 service, they will be responsible for much less technology and vendor relationship management. 9-1-1 calls and other related data will be delivered in a standardized format regardless of the originating source, whether a wireless carrier, a telematics service provider or some other entity. This is not to suggest that local governments cannot manage their own private IP networks that are linked to state and national networks. Those local jurisdictions that have the funding, technical knowledge and desire to manage and operate local/regional private networks will have the ability to do so as long as they are in conformance with national standards and operated in a manner consistent with overall system requirements set by the state.

Maintaining and managing information contained in databases that can only be obtained at the local level, such as the current master street address guide (MSAG) for fixed addresses should remain the responsibility of local government. Additionally, more and more IP services are being offered (e.g. wireless hotspots, wi-fi and wi-max networks) in cities across the country. Whether owned by a private entity or government, the physical location of known wireless access points, should be continually updated and provided in databases accessible to appropriate call-routing entities. Data collection and maintenance of this information should be done at the local level and provided to a state entity that is managing the statewide emergency services network to enable the appropriate routing of 9-1-1 calls.

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#### **Roundtable #2 Area of Outstanding Concern: Funding**

As the public's ability to access 9-1-1 grows by any number of devices and technologies, it is imperative that current 9-1-1 funding mechanisms established largely to support the existing patchwork collection of individual PSAPs do not become a contributing factor to further fragmentation of the nation's 9-1-1 system. There are too many instances where the funding mechanism doesn't match the appropriate authority implementing and serving the 9-1-1 system. The funding model needs to ensure system investments as well as operating expenses for the state and local authorities who operate PSAPs. One member suggests: "We differentiate between 9-1-1-only expenses, and those that can be shared



with other emergency agencies. 9-1-1 fees on wireless and wireline bills are 9-1-1 only. Broader Homeland Security grants could pay for shared assets and capabilities. We need to get to an IP network quickly... Not only do we need standards; we need a place for them to run.”

9-1-1 seems to be in a “Catch 22” today in terms of funding. 9-1-1 has a unique funding model where funds from telephone bills are dedicated to 9-1-1. However, these funds are often diverted by state governments for non-9-1-1 uses. Also, as more and more consumers sign up for IP-enabled services instead of traditional phone service, this dedicated funding source is drying up. Acknowledging that some fees are being collected for IP-based service today, efforts need to be made to ensure that the funding model for 9-1-1 is sustainable as technology evolves. While these problems persist, billions of dollars are being spent on homeland security which most assume includes 9-1-1. However, these funds typically do not actually reach 9-1-1. For example, a police department which is also a primary PSAP may receive homeland security funding, but the money gets spent on interoperable radio systems or mobile command units, not 9-1-1 upgrades.

