



December 5, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: NENA Members

FR: John Melcher, Chair, NENA SWAT Initiative
Richard Taylor, President

RE: Report on Strategic Wireless Action Team (SWAT) –
Accomplishments and Next Steps

As you are aware, in November 2002, NENA launched its Strategic Wireless Action Team (SWAT) initiative to examine issues affecting the timely deployment of advanced emergency services throughout the country, with an emphasis on wireless enhanced 9-1-1 (WE9-1-1) and the future path of the industry. With the major initial projects stemming from SWAT coming to a close soon, we want to brief you, on behalf of the Board, about what has been accomplished and what happens next.

SWAT was predicated on the belief that we could accomplish a great deal if we brought the “right” people to the table and organized a results-oriented discussion, with financial support from the PSAP Readiness Fund, created by Nextel. NENA convened technical and operational experts and other national leaders to identify the steps needed to overcome current obstacles and assure continuous improvement in 9-1-1 systems throughout the country. We made a special effort to build on the ongoing work of other organizations, while bringing new resources, participants and vision into the process. Many of you made valuable contributions to this process, for which we are very grateful.

Today, we’re pleased to report that SWAT has yielded new tools and resources that will strengthen our collective efforts to improve 9-1-1 services. Our goals were to:

- Complete a national E9-1-1 infrastructure for wireline and wireless technologies as rapidly as possible;
- Ensure continuous modernization of 9-1-1 systems as new technologies emerge; and
- Urge policy makers at the national, state and local levels to create a policy environment conducive to stronger E9-1-1 systems.

And here are some of our major accomplishments under SWAT:

- We have provided customized technical support to local and state agencies seeking to deploy enhanced wireless E9-1-1.
- We have developed broad evaluation criteria and a detailed checklist to assist in creation and upgrading of PSAPs, including technical and operational necessities for fully enhanced 9-1-1 (both wireless and wireline) capabilities and day-to-day operational functions.
- We have refined existing analytical tools and developed new ones that will strengthen the 9-1-1 community in our day-to-day work and policy advocacy.
- We have augmented our work with the U.S. Department of Transportation to identify the status of wireless E9-1-1 in every state and county, by examining in detail the nature of deployment barriers, along with related public policy issues and costs. The wireless deployment profiles and maps located at <http://dot.nena.org> have been instrumental in educating reporters and policy makers about the status of E9-1-1.
- We have earned significant news coverage of the E9-1-1 challenge by providing compelling facts, high-profile leaders, and user-friendly background materials to reporters on the public safety and telecom beats. In 2003, NENA has been cited as an authority by ABC, CNN, FOX, PBS, Associated Press, Reuters, Bloomberg, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, U.S. News & World Report, Consumer Reports, Business Week, newspapers and TV stations across the country.
- We have conducted a public opinion survey that covered a wide variety of topics related to public safety and 9-1-1. Emphasizing the importance of emergency communications to the public, these results were used both in the E9-1-1 Stakeholders Initiative discussed below, and in NENA's Report Card to the Nation (RCN), Congressional Report 2003.

Let's also review the "big picture" of 9-1-1 progress that has occurred over the last year:

- Carrier deployments are happening more rapidly;
- The FCC has stepped up its leadership and enforcement activities;
- Congress is more attuned and is poised to enact landmark E9-1-1 legislation;
- State cost-recovery measures have moved forward in some states;
- The raiding of state 9-1-1 funds has been publicized; and
- All stakeholders have begun to recognize their individual exposure to PSAP readiness issues.

We still have much more work to do. But NENA SWAT deserves much of the credit for fostering the dialogue, accelerating progress in 2003, and laying the foundation for continuing improvements in the future.

What follows is a bit more detail about the major SWAT projects.

Technical

For the first time in the 9-1-1 system's history, the cost of implementing ubiquitous, universal, national enhanced 9-1-1 service was explored in detail and calculated. This is a major accomplishment, setting the stage for a truly national enhanced wireless 9-1-1 system. Among the work products of this team are:

- A clearer definition of E9-1-1 infrastructure requirements and costs, now and into the future, including the costs of upgrading so-called "greenfield" communities where there is no 9-1-1 service or only basic service;
- The estimated timeframes for selected solutions and costs;
- The development of service model configurations; and
- The collection of data elements needed for technical solutions.

This modeling effort, which was reviewed favorably by the U.S. General Accounting Office in a recent report on 9-1-1 services, can be applied at many levels. The tools involved will be published soon and provided to you directly.

Operations

Working with the NENA 9-1-1 Center Operations Committee, this team examined a variety of current PSAP models and operational issues, including:

- A review of Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) operational requirements, including the size and capability of PSAPs, call routing procedures, national operational procedures for E9-1-1, human resource issues, and the "next generation" of training tools and technologies;
- An analysis of jurisdictions without 9-1-1 service;
- An exploration and definition of methods of service consolidation, along with a realistic examination of the benefits and costs of consolidation;
- Development of education tools and resources for PSAP readiness assessment; and
- The definition of service readiness and ongoing maintenance programs for PSAPs.

The major products of this track are a PSAP Operational Evaluation Checklist, and a PSAP Staffing Assessment Instrument. While the Checklist can be used immediately, it will also remain on the agenda of NENA's Operations Committee for future refinements as needed. The PSAP Staffing Guidelines Report was prepared by L. Robert Kimball and Associates, Inc. and 9-1-1 SME Consulting under commission to NENA SWAT. The objectives of the study were to develop staffing and budget models that could be used by PSAPs to address staffing and operational needs. This report has been passed on to NENA's Operations Committee for future expansion and refinements as needed. Both of these documents will be provided to you soon.

Policy and Finance

Working together, the Policy and Finance Teams examined the public policy changes needed to allow technological and operational changes to occur within the industry. The team also reached out to leaders in the public and private sectors to make them aware that 9-1-1 is not only a local

service; but with the advent of wireless and other new technologies, and homeland security concerns, it must become a more unified, national system that meets higher standards.

Because funding for 9-1-1 services varies tremendously across the country, the issues surrounding financing and cost recovery are a major challenge. With support from the Monitor Group, a nationally recognized research firm, the policy and finance teams worked on:

- The deployment of customized technical assistance and support directly to states and localities, as described below;
- An examination of various methodologies and mechanisms for financing 9-1-1;
- The engagement of third party leaders, CEO's and government executives in addressing these issues; and
- The building of consensus on the most effective approaches to wireless enhanced 9-1-1, as well as the next generation of 9-1-1.

With regard to technical assistance, SWAT supplemented its staff capacity through a contract with Ron Whinery and Associates. With Mr. Whinery's assistance, SWAT has provided specific assistance to states and localities including Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, Wyoming, the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe. There is a critical need for this kind of coordination and help, and this effort will be continued as resources allow.

E9-1-1 Stakeholders' Initiative

Perhaps the best-known project undertaken by SWAT was the E9-1-1 Stakeholders Initiative, which brought together leading representatives of all the partners involved in the 9-1-1 system, and was facilitated by the Monitor Group, a high-level research firm based in Cambridge, Mass. The stakeholders identified six public policy criteria for evaluating policy options, including ubiquity, efficient use of scarce resources, fairness to all parties, timely deployment, future proofing, and maintenance of service quality. Building on these areas of consensus, the Monitor Group facilitated an exploration of ways to improve the public policy framework of the 9-1-1 system, including a great deal of supporting analysis. The Monitor Group's study will be published and provided to you soon.

While the results of the Stakeholder Initiative are extremely important, one of the greatest benefits of the effort was the opportunity it provided for stakeholders to engage in a closer dialogue, to understand (perhaps for the first time) each others' perspective, and to explore together the intricacies and challenges we all face in implementing our critical public safety service. That kind of proactive dialogue was long overdue and will have lasting effects as we necessarily continue to work together to implement this critical public safety service, both for wireless and emerging technologies.

Concluding Thoughts

In the weeks and months to come, all of these work products will be distributed to the entire NENA membership and will be posted on our Web site. We'll also be engaged in follow-up communications with the 9-1-1 system stakeholders, policy makers, and the media, sharing the

data we've developed and the lessons learned, and continuing our advocacy and leadership toward a stronger 9-1-1 system.

For all of your efforts and input, we are truly grateful. But there is still much work to be done. We have learned a lot in this process, and it is now time to put that awareness to work. In the weeks and months to come, we will be following up with you to encourage contacts with local policy makers, reporters, and stakeholders, in our ongoing efforts to share NENA's expertise and win the changes needed to complete a national E9-1-1 infrastructure as rapidly as possible.

In the meantime, we thank you for your support and active involvement in this effort. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact any NENA board member.

Thank you.