Summary of January 14, 2011 FCC Emergency Access Advisory Committee (EAAC) Meeting, distributed by
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Chairman Genachowski Remarks: Emphasized need for accessibility to be addressed early in the product development process; we want to see fast implementation of the EAAC’s recommendations and goals.

CGB Chief Joel Gurin and PSHSB Chief Barnett made brief remarks as well. Gurin emphasized a desire for the EAAC to move expeditiously.

Karen Peltz Strauss (KPS) Opening Remarks: Emphasized that the EAAC is looking at all issues, including transmission, PSAP capabilities, and end user devices. Recommendations/responsibilities will include: deadlines for service provider deployments to the extent “achievable” (although she noted that the EAAC and FCC will separately need to consider how the Accessibility Act’s “achievable” standard may apply in this context since it’s not included in this part of the statute); the potential to phase-out legacy TTY technologies, to extent that new technologies become available (seems notable that she already received pushback on this from several panelists, even before any meaningful discussion); the merits of real time text v. texting generally; and the potential for video communications (which, in Karen’s view are becoming increasingly mainstream).

- In response to a question concerning the TTY phase out issue, she emphasized that EAAC members shouldn’t feel compelled to reach a particular conclusion on any issue, and the FCC understands that there may not be consensus on all points; we understand that the TTY phase out issue in particular will need a lot of discussion.
- In response to a question regarding the use of 311 and “reverse 911” for persons with disabilities, and whether those are within the EAAC’s mandate, KPS noted that there is a definition of “emergency” in the video programming rules that we may want to use, but we’re looking into that issue. (Patrick Donovan also encouraged people to address that issue in the NG911 NOI.)
- In response to a question concerning the interplay with DOJ’s NG911 ANPRM she (or Patrick) stated that FCC will be working with DOJ; there’s some overlap, but DOJ has principal authority to address PSAPs’ responsibilities; our principal role relates to transmission, but the NOI also addresses PSAP issues. A DOJ representative in attendance noted the ANPRM deadline 1/24, and it will deal with interim solutions as well.
- KPS also confirmed that short-term solutions are within the EAAC’s mandate.

Cheryl King of CGB asked for any concerns/comments on EAAC charter/bylaws by next Friday.

Patrick Donovan of PSHSB presentation on NG911 NOI: Noted that the FCC regulates carriers, not PSAPs. The NOI is a factfinding exercise; we’ll then move to an NPRM before any new rules. NOI seeks comment on messaging, RTT, video, and telemetry (did he mean telematics?). The NOI intentionally includes a thorough discussion of text messaging; we focused on texting because of the consumer benefits and because it will be the most controversial issue. We’re aware of the 4GAmericas White Paper expressing concern for SMS in NG911, and we sought
comment on SMS limitations (e.g. delayed delivery, PSAP routing, PSAP location capability, security vulnerabilities such as spoofing, lack of acknowledgement) for that reason. Specific comments sought on disabilities/special needs & which media types are best for those individuals, including the role of RTT. Other issues include: NG911 network architecture, including transport and the role of equipment/software vendors; PSAPs’ needs, including the possibility of “virtual PSAPs,” so-called “device-initiated emergency services” (highway cameras, sensors, medical devices, consumer electronics in automobiles, etc.), and whether there’s any need to modify existing laws to; the use of social media (facebook, twitter); the potential use of 211/311/511 and 1-800 poison control numbers on NG911 network; providing auxiliary data to PSAPs, (caller’s medical history, residence) including related privacy implications; NG911 and disaster planning; MLTS/PBX systems and NG911; jurisdictional issues (role of states, extent of FCC jurisdiction); and coordination with other agencies. We don’t have a target date for implementing rules or deployment of NG911, as much of those issues are dependent on state/local funding issues. We don’t tee up reverse 911 issue in the NOI.

- In response to a question concerning whether the FCC will coordinate with forthcoming NENA recommendations on NG911 call center handling, stated that FCC will work closely with NENA on this, and that NENA be filing comments on the NOI; FCC is just in the factfinding stage now, haven’t determined which if any standards may be required.
- In response to a question re the status of policymakers’ efforts to develop of federal framework for NG911, Patrick stated he’s aware that NENA has had discussions with Congress in this regard.
- In response to a question regarding PSAP needs/cost limitations in rural areas and some states Henning Schulzrinne of PSHSB noted that stakeholders need to make important decisions going forward and specifically cited to Phase I/II wireless E911 an example of how “backfitting” can be problematic.

Henning Schulzrinne of PSHSB: Discussed the current state of affairs for NG911 re accessibility. We don’t want to re-argue standards that are already done if possible. Location information is a major complicating factor. RTT is also very important – he described it as a “one character” protocol, and stated that multiple platforms can support it. Answered a number of questions re the possibility of interim solution using SMS as transition to RTT, but noted that SMS raises complex issues.

Gunnar Helstrom – reported on EU’s Reach 112 Project, which is similar to NG911 effort. Stated that RTT, video and voice all supported; it’s a 3-year deployment project (2009-2012); interoperability will be important. Projects are under way using “text-only” and other 3G handsets; Reach 112 adopted a preference for a single standard, but would allow other standards in some circumstances.

Richard Ray – Described 911 call handling for relay services. Stated that VRS/IP relay providers still have problems with 911 calls. Important that users have direct access to PSAPs, with location information.

Henning Schulzrinne led the EAAC’s consideration on a principal action item: the statutorily-mandated EAAC consumer questionnaire/survey re consumer preferences for 911 calling (SMS/text, email, video, voice). Need to decide how to structure the survey, methodology,
questions, etc. Needs to be short; respondents’ privacy needs to be addressed. Panelists expressed concern that internet-based surveys aren’t targeted enough, and that ASL users need to be included. KPS noted that the survey needs to be done quickly in order to ensure that the EAAC recommendations are done by December 6, 2011. A subgroup will be preparing a draft proposal, which will be circulated to the larger group for comment as soon as possible.