

SUMMARY OF FCC COMMISSIONER AJIT PAI'S REMARKS AT THE 9-1-1 GOES TO WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

On March 24, 2014, Commissioner Ajit Pai of the FCC delivered a speech at the National Emergency Number Association's 9-1-1 Goes to Washington Conference. He provided an update on the multi-line telephone system (MLTS) inquiry he began in January 2014. As a part of that inquiry, he sent letters to the CEOs of the ten largest hotel chains in the U.S., asking the companies for data on the properties at which consumers would reach help by dialing 911.

- *Responses:* All ten of the hotel companies, along with the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AH&LA), have responded to Commissioner Pai's inquiry. AH&LA has also conducted a survey of lodging properties across the United States.
- *Results:* Consumers may be unable to dial 911 directly at tens of thousands of buildings across the United States.
 - AH&LA survey data indicates that guests reach emergency services if they dial 911 without an access code in only 44.5% of franchised properties and 32% of independent hotels. The vast majority of the 53,000 lodging properties in the United States are managed by independent owners or franchisees.
 - In contrast, La Quinta reports that 100% of the systems at its managed properties allow guests to connect directly with emergency services when they dial 911.
 - Hyatt, InterContinental, Marriott, Starwood, and Wyndham all report guests can connect directly with emergency services when they dial 911 in the substantial majority of their managed properties.
- *Action Being Taken:* Hotels have already begun to fix this problem.
 - AH&LA has convened a diverse, industry-wide task force to address 911 calling and is working to develop best practices.
 - La Quinta expects that the direct-dialing problem will be fixed at all of its franchised properties by April 1. This means that hundreds of hotels will have upgraded their telephone systems in less than three months.
 - InterContinental reports that the telephone provider for two of their hotel brands has agreed to push out a no-cost software update to allow for direct 911 dialing.
 - Hilton is educating its franchisees and is working with phone system providers to evaluate and recommend appropriate upgrades.
- *Next Steps:* Commissioner Pai is now launching the next step in his inquiry.
 - Because this issue affects not just hotels but other large buildings like offices and schools, Commissioner Pai sent letters on March 24 to the leading vendors of MLTS services and products.
 - These letters ask the MLTS vendors a series of questions about consumers' ability to dial 911 without the need for a "9" or any other access code and vendors' plans to upgrade systems that are currently in use to provide such functionality.