

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554**

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FCC Office of the Secretary

In the Matter of)
)
Wireline Competition Bureau Short Term)
Network Change Notification filed by)
Verizon New York Inc.)

Report No. NCD-2353

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Wireline Competition Bureau Short Term)
Network Change Notification filed by)
Verizon Virginia LLC.)

Report No. NCD-2354

MAY 27 2014

FCC-Competition Policy Division

**COMMENTS OF THE
ALARM INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Alarm Industry Communications Committee ("AICC"), on behalf of its members¹ hereby files comments on the network change notifications filed by Verizon New York, Inc. and Verizon Virginia LLC to retire copper in the Belle Harbor New York wire center and Ocean View Virginia wire center, respectively, and "to serve all customers over a fiber infrastructure." As shown herein, the Commission's network change notification process is not sufficient in this circumstance to provide residential consumers and businesses with information they need to manage their communication services. In addition, AICC believes that the type of changes proposed by Verizon should be subject to the Commission's Section 214 process because the

¹ Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA), Electronic Security Association (ESA), Security Industry Association (SIA), Bosch Security Systems, Digital Monitoring Products, Digital Security Control, Telular Corp, Honeywell Security, Vector Security, Inc., ADT LLC, AESIntelliNet, Alarm.com, Bay Alarm, Intertek Testing, Security Network of America, United Central Control, AFA Protective Systems, Vivint (formerly APX Alarm), COPS Monitoring, DGA Security, Security Networks, Universal Atlantic Systems, Axis Communications, Interlogix, LogicMark, Napco Security, Alarm Detection, ASG Security, Security Networks, Select Security, Inovonics, Linear Corp., Numerex, Tyco Integrated Security, FM Approvals, the Underwriters Laboratories, CRN Wireless, LLC and Axesstel.

proposed changes will result in a reduction or impairment of service and they will impair the adequacy or quality of service to customers in the affected areas.

Introduction

AICC member companies protect over 30 million residential, business and sensitive facilities and their occupants from fire, burglaries, sabotage and other emergencies. Protected facilities include government offices, power plants, hospitals, dam and water authorities, pharmaceutical plants, chemical plants, banks, schools and universities. In addition to these commercial and governmental applications, alarm companies protect a large and increasing number of residences and their occupants from fire, intruders, and carbon monoxide poisoning. Alarm companies also provide Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) services for obtaining medical services and ambulances in the event of medical emergencies.

The majority of alarm customers and customers of PERS service still rely on TDM-based telephone service over copper lines as their underlying communication service. For these customers, their alarm service, in conjunction with their telephone service, allows necessary functions like line seizure and the detection of a loss in communications path and tone messages sent by the alarm panel are properly encoded and decoded. In addition, because the TDM-based network was engineered to be highly reliable, with quality of service standards and because copper lines have an independent power source, traditional telephone service over copper lines has provided alarm customers with a highly reliable service that they have come to expect and rely on. Accordingly, any changes to the network should ensure that these customers continue to receive a highly reliable service. At a minimum, they must be informed of any changes that affect their service.

The Commission's Network Change Process does not Provide Adequate Notice to Consumers and Businesses

The Commission's network change notification and certification process is wholly inadequate with respect to providing the information consumers and alarm service providers need to ensure that alarm and PERS services will continue to operate after Verizon's proposed network changes. In fact, pursuant to the Commission's network change process, Verizon is able to provide no information to consumers concerning how the network change will impact their communication service. Significantly, Verizon's website notification and Commission certification do not advise consumers that their service will no longer operate during power outages after the network change.

Not only does Verizon's website notification fail to disclose the impact of the network change on the ability of the consumer's existing communication service to operate during power outages, it appears that Verizon's website provides misleading information. Specifically, Verizon's website shows that Verizon offers two types of residential telephone service, Verizon FiOS Digital Voice over fiber optic facilities, and Standard Phone service, which Verizon states is offered over copper facilities.² Under its description of Standard Phone service, Verizon informs consumers that calling "works during emergencies and power outages."³ It is AICC's understanding that the service provided to consumers affected by the proposed network changes will continue to be Standard Phone service and priced as such service. Accordingly, consumers may naturally expect that the advertised features of this service will continue to apply. However, with respect to the provision of service during power outages, this will not be the case.

² "Standard Verizon Internet and Standard Phone services run on a copper wire network..." <http://www.verizon.com/home/services/>, last visited on May 19, 2014.

³ <http://www.verizon.com/home/phone/>, last visited on May 19, 2014.

Verizon's notice and certification also provide no information on whether or how the network change will affect other aspects of the communication functionality that may affect the operation of the consumer's alarm services. As AICC explained in its comments on AT&T's proposed IP transition trial, a number of problems can and have occurred when a customer's TDM-based service is disconnected and an alternative service is used in connection with alarm services. For example, the line seizure function has been bypassed when installing alternative services, which prevents alarm signals from being transmitted to the alarm monitoring station. Some alternative services do not properly encode and decode alarm signals. Most alternative services do not have sufficient back up power at the customer premise and throughout the network to ensure operation during emergencies. Some alternative providers have made changes to various technical parameters of their service, like compression, without notification, which impacts the functioning of alarm services. Because of the total lack of information provided through the network change process, AICC can only guess which, if any, of these problems may occur as a result of the proposed network changes.

For example, the Verizon website states that FiOS Digital Voice requires an Optical Network Terminal that "has a power cord that goes into your home through a Battery Back-Up Unit (BBU), where it plugs into an existing standard AC outlet." According to Verizon, the ONT converts the fiber optic light into electric signals that can be "read" by the consumer's telephones and computers. Similarly, information on outgoing calls from the premise will be converted from electric signals to light inside the ONT. It is not clear if an ONT and BBU will be provided to consumers affected by the proposed network changes. If an ONT is to be provided, it is not clear if alarm signals will be properly transmitted from the alarm panel in the

home to the ONT and on to Verizon's soft switch. It also is not clear if the line seizure function could be bypassed during the installation of the ONT.

Verizon's webpage also states that the ONT will be installed either on the side of the home or in the home and that the BBU is installed in the customer's home or garage. It is unusual for access to the home to be necessary for network changes, which leads to further uncertainty as to whether and how an ONT and BBU will be provided.

It also is not clear whether Verizon's fiber network and its telephone service over fiber facilities meet the National Fire Protection Association fire code standard in NFPA 72, which contains certain requirements that managed facilities-based voice networks (MFVN) must meet to be an acceptable method for fire alarm signaling transmission from a protected premises to a supervising central monitoring station. The current edition of NFPA 72 was specifically developed in recognition of changes in traditional telephone company networks, the evolution of digital communications technologies and the provision of service by entities other than regulated telephone companies to set standards to be followed by MFVNs equivalent to traditional TDM-based service. The NFPA 72 standards for MFVNs are intended to ensure that their services meet the rigorous quality assurance, operational stability and consistent features that were the hallmarks of the traditional networks operated by telephone companies.

Pursuant to NFPA 72, a MFVN service should be functionally equivalent to traditional TDM-based telephone service provided by authorized common carriers with respect to dialing, dial plan, call completion, carriage of signals and protocols, and loop voltage treatment. In addition, MFVN must provide a number of features, including 8 hours of standby power supply capacity for MFVN communications and equipment located at the protected premise or field

deployed and 24 hours of standby power supply capacity for MFVN communications equipment located at the communication service provider's central office.

In its comments on AT&T's proposed IP-transition trial, AICC urged the Commission to require AT&T to provide information directly to consumers concerning the effect a change from TDM-based service to IP-based service may have on a customer's alarm service; to directly provide information to consumers about the impact of power failures on its network and the customer's equipment; and to advise customers whether the company is complying with MFVN standards. In addition, to ensure that the alarm system continues to work properly, AICC stated that AT&T should advise the customer at the time of installation of new service to contact the alarm company and test the alarm system, which also is a requirement of NFPA 72.⁴ Since many, if not all, of the same issues are raised by Verizon's proposed network changes, AICC urges the Commission to require Verizon to provide the same type of notice before retiring copper loops and replacing them with fiber facilities.

Verizon Should be Required to Obtain Section 214 Permission in This Circumstance

AICC believes that Verizon is required to seek permission pursuant to Section 214 of the Act before it retires copper loops and replaces them with fiber optic facilities. Section 214 states that no carrier "shall discontinue, reduce, or impair service to a community, or part of a community, unless and until there shall first have been obtained from the Commission a certificate that neither the present nor future public convenience and necessity will be adversely

⁴ NFPA 72 requires MFVN providers, when providing service to a new customer, to give notice to the customer of the need to have any connected alarm system tested by authorized fire alarm service personnel to make certain that all signal transmission features have remained operational, including the proper functioning of line seizure and the successful transmission of signals to the supervising station.

affected thereby...". Section 214 further states that Commission authorization is not required "for any installation, replacement, or other changes in plant, operation, or equipment, other than new construction, which will not impair the adequacy or quality of service provided."

Simply put, telephone service provided over copper loops continues to operate during power outages without a source of backup power at the customer premise, whereas service provided over fiber optic facilities requires back up power for equipment located at the premise and then only provides a limited ability to operate during a power outage. Accordingly, Verizon's proposed network change will result in the impairment of service and an impairment in the adequacy and quality of service for all customers of traditional phone service over copper loops, including alarm and PERS customers who require reliable communications for these life safety services. In addition, to the extent Verizon's fiber optic network and voice over fiber optic facilities service does not meet the standards in NFPA 72, this, too, would be a reduction or impairment of service from the traditional voice service over copper loops, which does meet the NFPA 72 standards and, therefore, is an acceptable method for fire alarm signaling transmission from a protected premises to a supervising central monitoring station. Accordingly, AICC urges the Commission to require Verizon to seek Section 214 authority for its proposed network changes.

Conclusion

The Commission's network change notification process is not sufficient to provide residential consumers and businesses with information they need to manage their

communications services where a carrier seeks to retire copper loops and to serve all customers over a fiber infrastructure. In addition, as shown herein, this type of network change will result in a reduction or impairment of service and it will impair the adequacy or quality of service to customers in the affected areas. Accordingly, Verizon should be required to seek Section 214 authority before it is authorized to retire the copper loops.

Respectfully submitted,

**ALARM INDUSTRY
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Louis T. Fiore

By: _____
Louis T. Fiore

Dated: May 20, 2014

DECLARATION UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY

I, Louis T. Fiore, under oath and subject to penalty for perjury, certify that I have read this objection, that the statements contained in it are true, that there is good ground to support the objection, and that it is not interposed for purposes of delay. I have appropriate authority to make this certification on behalf of the Alarm Industry Communications Committee and I agree to provide any information the Commission may request to allow the Commission to evaluate the truthfulness and validity of the statements contained in this objection.

Louis T. Fiore

Signed: _____
Louis T. Fiore

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that on May 20, 2014, a copy of the forgoing **Comments of the Alarm Industry Communications Committee** was sent via electronic mail and U.S. Mail to:

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