



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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## PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY BUREAU ANNOUNCES INVESTIGATION INTO AT&T MOBILITY OUTAGES ON MARCH 8, AND MARCH 11, 2017

PS Docket No. 17-68

**Comment Date: April 7, 2017**

On March 8, 2017, AT&T Mobility suffered a nationwide Voice over LTE (VoLTE) 911 outage, affecting localities across the United States.<sup>1</sup> The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) reported that callers received fast busy signals when attempting to call 911.<sup>2</sup> Many public safety officials posted alternative phone numbers for emergency services on social media in response to the outage.<sup>3</sup> Separately, on March 11, 2017, AT&T Mobility experienced a VoLTE service outage affecting several states.<sup>4</sup> According to press reports, AT&T Mobility noted that a hardware issue prevented their customers from connecting “during a brief period” on March 11.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See AT&T, Twitter (Mar. 8, 2017, 6:49 pm), <https://twitter.com/ATT/status/839669490363338752> (last visited Mar. 13, 2017) (“Aware of issue affecting some calls to 911 for wireless customers. Working to resolve ASAP. We apologize to those affected.”); AT&T, Twitter (Mar. 8, 2017, 10:30 pm), [https://twitter.com/ATT/status/839679792345657344?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw](https://twitter.com/ATT/status/839679792345657344?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw) (last visited Mar. 13, 2017) (“Issue has been resolved that affected some calls to 911 from wireless customers. We apologize to those who were affected.”); Alex Johnson, Chris Essner, *FCC Investigating Coast-to-Coast 911 Outage for AT&T Wireless Users*, NBCNews (Mar. 8, 2017, 10:56 pm EST), <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/fcc-investigating-coast-coast-911-outage-t-wireless-users-n730961> (referring to the outage as “nationwide”).

<sup>2</sup> See National Emergency Number Association, Facebook (Mar. 8, 2017, 10:04 pm), <https://www.facebook.com/911NENA911/> (last visited Mar. 13, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> See Claire Cardona, *AT&T Says It’s Resolved Issue Preventing Callers from Reaching 911*, Dallas News (Mar. 9, 2017, 9:45 pm), <http://www.dallasnews.com/business/att/2017/03/08/att-customers-reporting-issues-reaching-911-dallas-fort-worth>.

<sup>4</sup> See AT&T Mar. 11, 2017 Outage Report, <http://outage.report/att#2017-03-11> (last visited Mar. 12, 2017); *Second Service Outage This Week for AT&T*, KARE 11 (Mar. 11, 2017, 6:15 pm CST), <http://www.kare11.com/news/second-service-outage-this-week-for-att/421765776>; Feroze Dhanoa, *AT&T Phone Outage Affects Several Customers Saturday*, Patch (Mar. 11, 2017, 5:39 pm EST), <http://patch.com/us/across-america/t-phone-outage-affecting-several-customers> (both attributing the outage to a “hardware issue”).

<sup>5</sup> See *AT&T Apologized to Customers After a Brief “Hardware Issue” Caused Major Outages*, Circa News (Mar. 11, 2017), [circa.com/scitech/techtrends/att-apologized-to-customers-after-a-brief-hardware-issue](http://circa.com/scitech/techtrends/att-apologized-to-customers-after-a-brief-hardware-issue).

The Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (Bureau) is conducting an investigation into these outages given the large area impacted and the critical importance of dependable and resilient 911 service throughout the United States. To ensure that the Commission receives all relevant information to permit a thorough and accurate analysis, the Bureau has opened a public docket and invites interested parties to provide information concerning the causes, effects, and implications of either outage.

In particular, we seek comment on the impact of these outages from the perspective of affected public safety entities, state and local governments, and consumers. Is there an estimate of how many 911 calls could not be completed? Is there an estimate of how many 911 calls were completed using alternative means, such as directly calling ten-digit numbers? Were Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) able to receive any 911 calls from AT&T subscribers during the outages, with or without Automatic Number Identification (ANI) and Automatic Location Identification (ALI)?<sup>6</sup> Besides the degradation of service availability, what consequences, if any, resulted from these service outages?<sup>7</sup> What impact did the outages have on other sectors of the user community, including businesses and providers of critical services, such as hospitals?

We further seek comment on the flow of information during these outages and the extent to which stakeholders had adequate situational awareness and adequate resources to continue operations. In the absence of receiving notification of the outage directly from the service provider, what, if any, reliable sources of information about ongoing outages are available to PSAPs and consumers? In instances where PSAPs were not notified in connection with the outages on March 8 and March 11, what impact did this have on those entities' ability to provide adequate 911 call-handling resources to those potentially in distress? To what extent was the public informed of these outages? If so, how were they informed of these outages? Were consumers provided with information on how they could receive emergency services during the outages? If so, how were they provided with this information? What plans do public safety entities have in place for public notification during 911 outages, including the provision of alternative emergency contact information, and how effective were these alternatives?<sup>8</sup>

### **Procedural Matters**

Pursuant to sections 1.415 and 1.419 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 1.415, 1.419, interested parties may file comments on or before the date indicated on the first page of this document. Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS). See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 FR 24121 (1998).

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/ecfs2/>.
- Paper Filers: Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number.

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<sup>6</sup> See *Wireless E911 Location Accuracy Requirements*, Fourth Report and Order, 30 FCC Rcd 1259, PS Docket No. 07-114 (2015).

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., Winnie Wright, *Former Shannon Hills Police Chief Dies During AT&T 911 Outage*, THV11 (Mar. 10, 2017, 5:45 am CST), <http://www.thv11.com/news/local/former-shannon-hills-police-chief-killed-in-fire-during-att-911-outage/421260651>.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., Fort Worth Police, Twitter (Mar. 8, 2017, 7:23 PM), <https://twitter.com/fortworthpd/status/839632810310844416> (last visited Mar. 15, 2017) (“All AT&T cellular customers who need police/fire assistance in FW should call 817-392-4222.”).

Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.

- All hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary must be delivered to FCC Headquarters at 445 12<sup>th</sup> St., SW, Room TW-A325, Washington, DC 20554. The filing hours are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners. Any envelopes and boxes must be disposed of before entering the building.
- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743.
- U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, Washington DC 20554.

People with Disabilities: To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov) or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at (202) 418-0530 (voice), (202) 418-0432 (tty).

Parties wishing to file materials with a claim of confidentiality should follow the procedures set forth in section 0.459 of the Commission's rules. Casual claims of confidentiality are not accepted. Confidential submissions may not be filed via ECFS but rather should be filed with the Secretary's Office following the procedures set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 0.459. Redacted versions of confidential submissions may be filed via ECFS. Parties are advised that the Commission looks with disfavor on claims of confidentiality for entire documents. When a claim of confidentiality is made, a public, redacted version of the document should also be filed.

The proceeding of which this Notice is a part is a "permit-but-disclose" proceeding conducted in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.<sup>9</sup> Persons making *ex parte* presentations must file a copy of any written presentation or a memorandum summarizing any oral presentation within two business days after the presentation (unless a different deadline applicable to the Sunshine period applies). Persons making oral *ex parte* presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must (1) list all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the *ex parte* presentation was made, and (2) summarize all data presented and arguments made during the presentation. If the presentation consisted in whole or in part of the presentation of data or arguments already reflected in the presenter's written comments, memoranda or other filings in the proceeding, the presenter may provide citations to such data or arguments in his or her prior comments, memoranda, or other filings (specifying the relevant page and/or paragraph numbers where such data or arguments can be found) in lieu of summarizing them in the memorandum. Documents shown or given to Commission staff during *ex parte* meetings are deemed to be written *ex parte* presentations and must be filed consistent with rule 1.1206(b). In proceedings governed by rule 1.49(f) or for which the Commission has made available a method of electronic filing, written *ex parte* presentations and memoranda summarizing oral *ex parte* presentations, and all attachments thereto, must be filed through the electronic comment filing system available for that proceeding, and must be filed in their native format (e.g., .doc, .xml, .ppt, searchable .pdf). Participants in this proceeding should familiarize themselves with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.

For further information regarding this proceeding, contact James Wiley, Cybersecurity and Communications Reliability Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau at (202) 418-1678 or [james.wiley@fcc.gov](mailto:james.wiley@fcc.gov).

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<sup>9</sup> 47 C.F.R. §§ 1.1200 *et seq.*

The Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau issues this Public Notice under delegated authority pursuant to Sections 0.191 and 0.392 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 0.191, 0.392.

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