

Date: Tuesday, July 22, 2014
Subject: FCC to Vote on Report and Order addressing Text-to-911 at August 8 Open Meeting

On August 8, the FCC will take a vote on whether to adopt new rules requiring text-to-911. Text-to-911 provides a way to contact 911 directly by sending a text message. On July 18, 2014, FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler commented on this proceeding in a [blog](#), which states, in part:

“The fact is our 911 system has struggled to keep pace with new technology. Witness the long-standing inability to text to 911. We’ve made significant progress on this issue this year. Consistent with a [Policy Statement unanimously adopted by the Commission in January 2014](#) the four major wireless carriers, which serve 95 percent of U.S. customers now support text-to-911. More than 100 emergency call centers in 17 states now support text-to-911, and others have initiated plans to come online. I commend the four nationwide wireless carriers for following through on their commitment, and while I’m pleased to see that PSAPs are beginning to respond there remains more to be done.

Other than the four major wireless carriers, no other providers of text services have offered voluntary commitments to implement text-to-911. On the PSAP side, despite recent progress, the majority still do not support text-to-911.

When you consider how Americans increasingly rely on text as a primary means of communication, and the approximately 48 million Americans who are deaf and hard of hearing and 7.5 million Americans with speech disabilities, all of whom are even more reliant on text, these shortcomings are unacceptable.

I’ve often spoken about the regulatory see-saw: if industry acts in the public interest, FCC involvement will be low, but if the public interest is not being served, the Commission will not hesitate to act. In the case of text-to-911, it is time for the Commission to act. And today, I am circulating an item for consideration at our August open meeting that will take definitive action to implement the Policy Statement we unanimously adopted in January.”

For more information about the logistics and agenda for the August 8 open meeting:
<http://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-announces-tentative-agenda-august-open-meeting-0>.

The meeting site is fully accessible to people using wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Sign language interpreters, open captioning, and assistive listening devices will be provided on site. Other reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Include a description of the accommodation you will need and tell us how to contact you if we need more information. Make your request as early as possible. Last minute requests will be accepted, but may be impossible to fill. Send an e-mail to: fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530 (voice), 202-418-0432 (tty).

