

Fact or Fiction?

FICTION: NG9-1-1 interoperability among 9-1-1 centers only matters for voice communications.

FACT: It is essential for 9-1-1 professionals and first responders to have real-time information – including voice communications, scene-specific information, computer aided dispatch notes, GIS information, and other data – when arriving on-scene regardless of what agency they are dispatched from and what vendor they use.

FICTION: The interoperability problem has been solved for voice calls to 9-1-1.

FACT: Emergency Communications Centers still have interoperability problems when it comes to transferring voice calls to other Emergency Communications Centers, even when both centers have deployed Emergency Services IP Networks.

FICTION: Achieving NG9-1-1 means having the ability to handle voice calls to 9-1-1 as IP traffic.

FACT: NG9-1-1, as defined in the legislation, means Emergency Communications Centers can receive, process, and analyze all types of 9-1-1 requests for emergency assistance and share relevant information with other Emergency Communications Centers and emergency responders.

FICTION: Emergency Services IP Networks (ESINets) are by design fully interoperable and multimedia capable.

FACT: ESINets in deployment lack interoperability and multimedia capabilities. ESINets by design must include the delivery and sharing of voice, video, text, and other emergency services requests among Emergency Communications Centers and first responders without the

need for proprietary interfaces, and be based upon “commonly accepted standards” as defined within the draft legislation.

FICTION: Funding of 9-1-1 and emergency services is sufficient to allow NG9-1-1 to be adopted uniformly in every community.

FACT: While some well-funded agencies might have the ability to fully transition to NG9-1-1, achieving NG9-1-1 uniformly throughout the United States will require an influx of sufficient federal funding in the amount of \$15 billion to ensure NG9-1-1 will be implemented in an effective, cost-efficient, innovative, interoperable, and secure manner nationwide.

FICTION: 9-1-1 Public Safety Telecommunicators can manage emergency service requests from a variety of sources beyond voice calls without additional training.

FACT: Public Safety Telecommunicators must be trained on new hardware and software technology and operational procedures to take full advantage of NG9-1-1 capabilities that when implemented in a uniform and interoperable manner will improve the public safety response.

FICTION: NG9-1-1 Grant funding does not need coordination and input from Public Safety and 9-1-1 Professionals.

FACT: For a federal grant program of the scale and importance called for in transitioning the nation to NG9-1-1, the development of program requirements, grant guidance, and application criteria are essential. Public safety practitioners and 9-1-1 professionals will provide a variety of recommendations through a Next Generation 9-1-1 Advisory Board regarding the importance of deploying NG9-1-1 in both rural and urban areas, ensuring flexibility for technology improvements, the value of

creating efficiencies, the value of enabling effective coordination among government entities, and the relevance of existing cyber security resources to NG9-1-1 procurement and deployment.

FICTION: ESINets and other NG9-1-1 elements are not subject to disruption by cyber threats.

FACT: ESINets and eventual NG9-1-1 deployment are high visibility targets to intrusion and disruption by criminal elements. Disrupting the ability of the public to reach emergency services through a cyber-attack can endanger the lives, property, and privacy of those attempting to reach help, as well as the safety of 9-1-1 professionals and first responders. This legislation provides funding for and identifies Cyber Security as a priority.

FICTION: Prior investments in NG9-1-1 through local investment or previous 9-1-1 grants will be lost.

FACT: Prior investment in ESINet technology and traditional 9-1-1 telephony require continual adaptation to achieve full NG9-1-1 capabilities that are interoperable and based on commonly accepted standards as defined in the legislation. This legislation would preserve and improve upon existing deployments to achieve these necessary goals for the benefit of Emergency Communications Centers, first responders, and the public they serve.

FICTION: This \$15 billion NG9-1-1 Grant Program will add unnecessary barriers and costs to deployment of NG9-1-1 services throughout the nation.

FACT: The process for allocating funding to local Emergency Communications Centers will be efficient and targeted to achieve important objectives including interoperability and sustainability. Grant conditions will not be onerous, and federal overhead should be minimized. The Next Generation 9-1-1 Advisory Board will help ensure

the deployment of NG9-1-1 will be efficient, competitive, innovative, and interoperable across the United States.

FICTION: Commonly Accepted Standards within NG9-1-1 do not need to provide interoperability between Emergency Communications Centers.

FACT: The purpose of Commonly Accepted Standards as defined within the legislation ensures that Emergency Communications Centers will have the capability to receive emergency assistance requests and related data and be able to process and share this information without the need for proprietary interfaces, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries, equipment, software, or service provider.

FICTION: There is no need to promote competition and innovation of NG9-1-1 equipment.

FACT: This legislation provides for the Director of the National Institute for Standards and Technology to assist in the research and development of technologies and applications to advance NG9-1-1 through a research plan addressing the needs of public safety communications officials and by convening workgroups and seeking recommendations from the Next Generation 9-1-1 Advisory Board.

DEFINITIONS

Next Generation 9-1-1 – The term Next Generation 9–1–1 means an interoperable, secure, Internet Protocol-based system that—

(A) employs commonly accepted standards;

(B) enables the appropriate emergency communications centers to

receive, process,
and analyze all types of 9-1-1 requests for emergency assistance;
(C) acquires and integrates additional information useful to handling 9-1-1 requests
for emergency assistance; and
(D) supports sharing information related to 9-1-1 requests for emergency
assistance among emergency communications centers and emergency response
providers.

Interoperable – The term ‘interoperable’ or ‘interoperability’ means the capability of emergency communications centers to receive 9-1-1 requests for emergency assistance and related data such as location information and callback numbers from the public, then process and share the 9-1-1 requests for emergency assistance and related data with other emergency communications centers and emergency response providers without the need for proprietary interfaces and regardless of jurisdiction, equipment, device, software, service provider, or other relevant factors.

Commonly Accepted Standards – The term ‘commonly accepted standards’ means the technical standards followed by the communications industry for network, device, and Internet Protocol connectivity that enable interoperability, including but not limited to, (A) standards developed by the Third Generation Partnership Project

(3GPP), the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS), the Internet Engineering Taskforce (IETF), and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU); and (B) standards approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) that meet the definition of interoperable as defined above.

Emergency Communications Center – The term ‘emergency communications center’ means a facility that is designated to receive a 9-1-1 request for emergency assistance and perform one or more of the following functions:

(A) process and analyze 9-1-1 requests for emergency assistance and other

gathered information.

(B) dispatch appropriate emergency response providers.

(C) transfer or exchange 9-1-1 requests for emergency assistance and other

gathered information with other emergency communications centers and emergency response providers.

(D) analyze any communications received from emergency response providers.

(E) support incident command functions.

9-1-1 Request for Emergency Assistance – The term ‘9-1-1 request for emergency assistance’ means a communication, such voice, text, picture, multimedia, or any other type of data that is sent to an emergency communications center for the purpose of requesting emergency assistance.

Public Safety Telecommunicator – An individual employed by a public safety agency as the first of the first responders whose primary responsibility is to receive, process, transmit, and/or dispatch emergency and non-emergency calls for service for law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and other public safety services via telephone, radio, and other communication devices.