

# **Position Paper regarding the re-alignment of the New York State 911 Board**

## **Rationalization for proposal**

It is the opinion of this State's most knowledgeable E9-1-1 organizations that the creation of a State E9-1-1 Office working with a re-aligned State 9-1-1 Board would be appropriate to address existing and imminent issues. These issues include:

- 1) The need for a standard level of Enhanced 9-1-1 service throughout the State.
- 2) The failure of some centers to provide lifesaving emergency medical instructions to E9-1-1 callers.
- 3) Excessive and unnecessary transferring of E9-1-1 calls delaying delivery of emergency services.
- 4) Answering of E9-1-1 calls at many PSAPs with untrained and uncertified call takers.
- 5) Failure of some centers to meet minimum staffing standards.
- 6) Answering of wireless 9-1-1 calls without automatic map displays.
- 7) Lack of suitable backup facilities in the event of a catastrophic failure of the main E9-1-1 center.
- 8) Inability of E9-1-1 centers in some areas of the State to properly transfer E9-1-1 calls to adjoining municipalities.
- 9) Poor utilization of taxpayer's dollars due to a systemic failure to share resources and information on a statewide basis.
- 10) The arrival of Next Generation 9-1-1 which without a coordinated State effort will result in the unnecessary expenditure measured in the tens of millions of dollars.

## **History**

County Law Article 6A defines the New York State 911 Board. This Board has been tasked with advancing Enhanced 911 service throughout the State. The Board has been instrumental in creating standards that govern a local PSAP's ability to receive wireless 911 calls and has been tasked with the stewardship of the Expedited Deployment Grant for Wireless 911 call Location Technology.

This State has made great strides in the expedited deployment of location technology for wireless devices, but the fact remains new and emerging technologies are outpacing our ability to plan and budget for future upgrades. The evolution of Next Generation 9-1-1 will totally revise the traditional 9-1-1 platform as it stands today.

New and emerging technologies continue to put a strain on 911 resources. If we do not plan and upgrade our equipment to meet this need, the ability for 911 Centers to accept information from countless IP based communications devices will inevitably undermine the effectiveness of the emergency response and lives will hang in the balance.

Service provided by the local PSAP is essential to public safety and security. Therefore, the mission of the 9-1-1 Board must evolve to provide leadership and coordination for the implementation of comprehensive and technologically-enhanced services in order to continue to deliver adequate emergency services responses to those living and traveling throughout New York State.

## Position

The re-alignment of the New York State 911 Board should include the establishment of the Office of New York State Coordinator for Enhanced 911 Services.

Requirements for the position of Coordinator should include:

1. Strong working experience and knowledge in 911 operations.
2. Knowledge of existing conditions in NY State.
3. Masters degree in a related field or ENP (Emergency Number Professional) or comparable certification.
4. Organizational skills and aptitude to carry out the mission

Duties of the Coordinator to include:

- 1) Improve coordination and communication between State and local emergency communication systems, emergency personnel, public safety organizations, telecommunications carriers, and telecommunications equipment manufacturers.
- 2) Develop, collect and disseminate information concerning practices, procedures and technology used in the implementation of E9-1-1 services.
- 3) Encourage and facilitate municipalities to explore regional approaches to interoperable communications systems, shared services and cooperative purchasing of Technology related to this industry.
- 4) Act as a legislative advocate for municipalities, promoting legislation that forwards the delivery of E9-1-1 services.
- 5) Ensure that the delivery of E9-1-1 services is ubiquitous across the State such that citizens calling 9-1-1 will receive a minimum level of service no matter where they are in the State.
- 6) Work with the Office of General Services to ensure that the equipment and services necessary to provide E9-1-1 services is available via suitable procurement contracts.
- 7) Equitably distribute all surcharge funds collected for the advancement of technology used in the delivery and dissemination of emergency call information.
- 8) Act as the Chairperson of an Advisory Board created to advance these ideas.

The Advisory Board should include officers of the New York State 911 Coordinators Association, Officers of the New York State Chapter of NENA, and Regional representatives of APCO and County PSAP's, Representatives of the State Sheriffs and Fire and EMS Associations.

The Office of the New York State Coordinator for Enhanced 911 Services shall work within the Department of State as an independent authority. In addition, the Coordinator should be a member of and/or appointed to other committees as an adjunct as necessary and appropriate.

## **Summary**

The Office of Fire Prevention and Control has done an admirable job in facilitating our standards and overseeing our progress thus far. It would be counterproductive to expect that given the complexity and expense of our future growth that the responsibilities remain with OFPC.

By realigning the Chairmanship of the current Board from the Office of Fire Prevention and Control, and forming this new position under the Department of State, the delivery of 911 services and the ability to remain abreast with the latest technology will be better realized. This office will operate independently and for the benefit of all emergency services in the Empire State.

The Office will then have the ability to remain focused on the single objective to deliver quality E9-1-1 services without the distractions of other obligations or influences.

## **Fiscal impact**

Utilization of the E911 wireless surcharge and transferring staff costs associated with 911 efforts carried out in the Office of Fire Prevention and Control will incur a negative fiscal impact for the State.

In addition, the creation and defining the mission of this office will position New York State to meet the National objective for Transitioning to a Next Generation 911 System.