Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Updating Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Outage Contact Information

Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions

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Abstract

This document provides information on how Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) contact information is to be collected and documented. Today, due to FCC requirements to notify PSAPs, it is necessary to obtain accurate outage contact information for each PSAP. There is no centralized repository for PSAP outage contact information; therefore, companies have developed independent notification databases.

Please note: this document recommends practices to standardize and improve outage reporting. Some recommendations proposed herein may not be entirely consistent with existing FCC rules or individual carrier agreements with the FCC. Please consult your regulatory counsel before implementing the recommendations in this document.

Foreword

The Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) serves the public through improved understanding between carriers, customers, and manufacturers. The Network Reliability Steering Committee (NRSC) strives to improve network reliability by providing timely consensus-based technical and operational expert guidance to all segments of the public communications industry.

The Network Reliability Steering Committee (NRSC) Situational Awareness for 9-1-1 Outages Task Force (NSA-TF) is a joint Task Force composed of industry, 9-1-1 association, and PSAP representatives. The NSA-TF has a goal of providing actionable information to Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and Service Providers in the case of a 9-1-1 outage.

The mandatory requirements are designated by the word *shall* and recommendations by the word *should*. Where both a mandatory requirement and a recommendation are specified for the same criterion, the recommendation represents a goal currently identifiable as having distinct compatibility or performance advantages. The word *may* denotes an optional capability that could augment the standard. The standard is fully functional without the incorporation of this optional capability.

Suggestions for improvement of this document are welcome. They should be sent to the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions, NRSC, 1200 G Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005.

At the time of consensus on this document, NRSC, which was responsible for its development, had the following leadership:

NRSC Leadership:

Andy Gormley (T-Mobile), NRSC Co-Chair

Andis Kalnins (Verizon), NRSC Co-Chair

NSA-TF Leadership:

Andy Gormley (T-Mobile), NSA-TF Co-Chair

Mary Boyd (West Safety Services), NSA-TF Co-Chair

The NRSC Situational Awareness for 9-1-1 Outages Task Force Subcommittee was responsible for the development of this document.

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Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Updating Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Outage Contact Information

1 Scope, Purpose, & Process

1.1 Scope

This document provides information on how Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) contact information is to be collected and documented. This process addresses the challenges associated with identifying PSAP and 9-1-1 authority recipients of outage notifications and the mechanisms for collecting and standardizing contact information. One of the industry challenges in the delivery of outage notifications is knowing who to notify, by telephone and electronic means, in the event of a potentially impacting 9-1-1 outage.[1][2] Today, due to FCC requirements to notify PSAPs, it is necessary to obtain accurate outage contact information for each PSAP. There is no centralized repository for PSAP outage contact information; therefore, companies have developed independent notification databases.

In September 2017, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) convened the 9-1-1 Industry stakeholders involved in PSAP notifications to discuss improvements in the current system. This document represents an industry consensus for improvements for collecting PSAP contact information.

Overview of Current Environment

Covered[3] and Originating 9-1-1 Service Providers are currently required to notify PSAPs in accordance with the FCC's Part 4 Rules. Due to the continued lack of a common database containing contact information for both carriers and PSAPs, Service Providers that maintain PSAP databases may request information from PSAPs individually, multiple times a year by telephone and electronic means. Service Providers may be given inconsistent PSAP contact information, and PSAPs may not have current information on industry contacts. The PSAPs do not have the ability to push changes in contact information to all Service Providers simultaneously. The logistics of coordinating tens of thousands of information requests is proving unreasonably burdensome for Service Providers and PSAPs alike.

Another challenge faced by Service Providers and PSAPs is inconsistent PSAP naming conventions. Due to inconsistency, Service Providers may not be able to provide timely notifications to the correct PSAP. Using different PSAP naming conventions leads to confusion among interested parties.

Multiple medias (e.g., text, e-mail, phone call) of notifications creates additional challenges for Service Providers and PSAPs. In addition to providing notifications via telephone and electronic means, Service Providers can make alternative agreements, in advance with PSAPs, regarding notifications.

1.2 Purpose

On September 11, 2017, the FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) hosted a workshop to discuss Best Practices for improving situational awareness during 9-1-1 outages. In particular, the PSHSB

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[1] For 9-1-1 Authorities seeking Service Provider contact information, please work with your local PSAP.

[2] APCO's position is that an additional problem that should be addressed by this SOP is that PSAPs do not necessarily know who and how to contact wireless carriers when they self-detect an outage that is impacting the ability of the public they serve to place a call to 9-1-1. APCO further explains that in order to fully address the identification and resolution of outages in wireless networks impacting the ability of the public to reach 9-1-1, the SOP should include a means to identify a contact list of wireless service providers in addition to a PSAP contact list. APCO believes the wireless industry can easily assemble a contact list for its own members. However, the consensus position rejected APCO's position.

[3] Provides processing and delivery of 9-1-1 calls and data to a set of PSAPs.

examined how to strengthen PSAP 9-1-1 service outage notifications.[4] The workshop participants included state and local 9-1-1 administrators, PSAP directors, industry technology and policy experts, public safety advocacy organizations, and disability access representatives. This event launched the efforts of the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) Network Reliability Steering Committee (NRSC) Situational Awareness for 9-1-1 Outages Task Force on September 11, 2017.[5]

1.3 Process

Today, every Service Provider has its own process and timeline to gather PSAP outage contact information, which causes undue stress on all parties, including government and the private sector. In order to streamline the process, this Task Force developed this document to aid in the standardization of data collection and to ease the impact on the government and private sector, as well as mitigate the above referenced issues.

2 Normative References

The following standards contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this Standard. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the standards indicated below.

ATIS-0100066, *Service Providers: Outage Reporting Structure and Potential Types of 9-1-1 Outages.*[6]

DA 18-6, PS Docket No. 17-68, *Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Shares Recommended Practices from September 11, 2017 911 Workshop.*[7]

3 Definitions, Acronyms, & Abbreviations

For a list of common communications terms and definitions, please visit the *ATIS Telecom Glossary*, which is located at < http://glossary.atis.org/>.

3.1 Acronyms & Abbreviations

ATIS	Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point

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[4] The workshop also examined how to best communicate with consumers about alternative methods of accessing emergency services during 9-1-1 outages.

[5] DA 18-6, PS Docket No. 17-68, *Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Shares Recommended Practices from September 11, 2017 911 Workshop*

[6] This document is available from the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) at <https://www.atis.org/docstore>.

[7] This document is available from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-18-6A1.docx>.

4 Data Collection Process

The items below were identified as primary considerations to support the data collection process.

- Data Updating: If a common contact database is implemented, each company will no longer need to maintain its own internal processes and responsibilities to work independently with each 9-1-1 authority to collect and manage specific outage notification data.[8] Should a common contact database not be implemented, it is understood that each company will update their internal systems utilizing their own internal processes.
  - A common contact database would facilitate the ability of PSAPs to furnish accurate contact information to the providers and update such information when there is a change in contact information.

- Timeframe for Collecting Data: After the common contact database is initially populated, the NRSC recommends putting out a call for data (new or updated information) twice a year in the months of May and November. This time frame is just before and after common natural disaster timeframes, reducing the operational impact to the PSAP community.

- Collection Methodology: The NRSC recommends that the common database utilize electronic means for gathering PSAP contact data for outage notifications. This includes but is not limited to e-mail and secure web portals.

- Standardized Data: The data to be collected from the PSAP community is contained within Annex A. The NRSC recommends this data as a standardized/best practice approach to ensure continuity throughout the industry.

- Email Contact Address: It is also strongly recommended that each Public Safety entity develop and dedicate a group e-mail address for the purpose of outage notification and data collection efforts (e.g., PSAPOutageNotification@Comanche.gov). This e-mail inbox should be monitored 24/7.

- Escalation Process: The NRSC believes that it would be helpful to have regional or state-level contact information in addition to local data. However, the reality is contact information may come from a local PSAP, county, region, or a state level-entity that is authorized to represent a PSAP or group of PSAPs. The desire would be to have the PSAP community proactively manage their notification data. PSAPs not adopting this process may not receive critical outage notifications due to outdated or errant data collected through manual efforts by each Service Provider.

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[8] For this approach to be successful, the FCC would need to acknowledge that a centralized database would meet certain requirements, as carriers who are or were under consent decrees may be hesitant to participate without such an acknowledgement.

A   Names and Definitions of Fields for PSAP Contact Information

PSAP Name: The name of the PSAP (e.g., Fairfax County Department of Public Safety Communications, Seattle Police Department).

PSAP FCC ID: The FCC issued Identification Number (e.g., 7346) of the PSAP.

PSAP County: The county (or city) in which the PSAP is physically located.

PSAP State: The state in which the PSAP is physically located.

PSAP Zip Code: The zip code and/or optional extended zip code in which the PSAP is located.

PSAP Designated Contact Name: The designated contact for the 911 facility to be notified of an outage or service disruption. *FCC Title 47: Part: 4 Disruption of Communications Section: 4.9 (4).*

PSAP Designated Contact Title: The title of the designated contact at the PSAP that is being contacted (e.g., Director of PSAP).

PSAP Designated Contact Telephone Number: The contact telephone number of the designated contact of the PSAP. This should be a 24/7 contact number.

PSAP Designated Contact E-mail Address: The e-mail address of the designated contact of the PSAP.

PSAP Administrative Contact: The PSAP contact during business hours for follow-up or non-outage communications.

PSAP Administrative Contact Telephone Number: The contact telephone number of the administrative contact of the PSAP during business hours.

PSAP Administrative E-Mail Address: The e-mail address of the administrative contact of the PSAP.

911 Authority: A local government, council, or appointed board, responsible for overseeing 9-1-1 Emergency Communications, if applicable.

911 Authority Contact Name: The contact name of the 911 Authority.

911 Authority Contact Telephone Number: The contact telephone number of the 911 Authority.

911 Authority Contact E-Mail Address: The e-mail address of the 911 Authority.

Date Last Update/Validation - Application Feature: The date the information was updated or last validated. This data is provided by the application.

Authority to Modify PSAP Contact Information (State Authority, COG, etc.): This is the name of the entity that has permission to modify PSAP contact information.