

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

National Emergency  
Number Association



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## **Joint Public Safety Statement Applauds Independent E9-1-1 Report**

COLUMBUS, Ohio (October 23, 2002)—The leading emergency communications public safety organizations, NENA, APCO and NASNA, issued a joint public statement regarding the independent review of wireless E9-1-1 by telecommunications consultant Dale Hatfield. Applauding the thorough and fair review, public safety leaders thanked Mr. Hatfield for his vigilance and insight into unraveling E9-1-1 challenges and issues.

“Mr. Hatfield is to be commended and thanked for his honest and thoughtful analysis of 9-1-1, and wireless E9-1-1 in our nation,” stated John Melcher, NENA president.

Hatfield, a former chief of the FCC’s Office of Engineering and Technology, lead a six month inquiry to identify technical and operational issues of wireless E9-1-1 deployment. Reporting the results of his inquiry, Hatfield released his findings to the public on October 16.

The joint public safety statement supports a long standing position within the public safety communications community that the automatic provision of location information is "critical" for both wireless and wireline calls to 9-1-1. Referencing many of Hatfield’s observations, the statement agrees with Hatfield in that technological and operational attention has shifted from discovering and developing wireless E9-1-1 location capabilities to actual deployment.

Envisioning the creation of a national 9-1-1 program office and independent certification procedures, Hatfield references the events of September 11 by observing, “PSAPs are on the frontlines in the nation's defense against the threat of terrorism as well as in responding to more conventional emergencies.”

Seeking comments on the report, the FCC’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau has set a November 15 deadline to receive formal comments.

“We (NENA) will continue to examine the Hatfield report, the challenges set forth, and the opportunities for success,” Melcher said. “We will brief the FCC later this month on our Strategic Wireless Action Team (SWAT) implementation initiative and we intend to participate fully in the comment period opening next month.”

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A not-for-profit corporation, the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) is the only educational organization dedicated solely to the study, advancement and implementation of 9-1-1 as America's universal emergency number. With the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders and public safety entities, NENA has an

individual membership of more than 7,000 public safety executives, and is organized into 48 chapters. The organization strives to provide an effective and accessible 9-1-1 service for North America, measuring its success in the lives saved by 9-1-1 each day. NENA also develops recommended operating standards and protocol for 9-1-1 services from its headquarters in Columbus, Ohio. Learn more at [www.nena.org](http://www.nena.org)

## **JOINT STATEMENT OF NENA, APCO AND NASNA ON THE HATFIELD REPORT**

The National Emergency Number Association ("NENA"), the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International, Inc. ("APCO") and the National Association of State Nine-One-One Administrators ("NASNA") applaud the thorough review Dale Hatfield has given to technical and operational issues that impact wireless E9-1-1 deployment. We greatly appreciate his work. Each of our associations will be responding at greater length during the public comment period next month.

There is an agreement within the public safety communications community with Mr. Hatfield that the automatic provision of location information is "critical" for both wireless and wireline calls to 9-1-1. Like the author, we are pleased that "there is no longer any real disagreement regarding the technical feasibility of providing wireless E911." We have advocated the necessity and feasibility of the service for the past 10 years, often over the strenuous objections of wireline and wireless carriers. Wishing the period of disputation had been shorter, we nevertheless look forward to successful completion of the implementation.

There is also an agreement across our organizations and memberships that at the heart of this issue is a complexity that creates enormous challenges.

Well before the opening of the Hatfield inquiry, we had become aware of, and had begun to seek improvements in, the wireline E9-1-1 infrastructure. NENA's and APCO's Non-Traditional Communications Technical Committees and NENA's "Future Path Plan," together with analogous work by NASNA, are focused far beyond the present or the near term.

Later this month there will be briefings with FCC Commissioners and staff about several initiatives underway within our associations that have already demonstrated significant improvements regarding E9-1-1 implementation. These initiatives include NENA's Strategic Wireless Action Team ("SWAT") initiative and APCO's Project Locate. An important part of the SWAT initiative is to install a cost-effective, E9-1-1 capable wireline infrastructure in those largely rural and remote areas where it does not exist, and to find ways to share facilities across jurisdictional boundaries without subtracting from state and local regulatory authority. APCO's Project Locate was created to establish model communities in every state that would work with the nation's wireless telephone carriers to accelerate the deployment of 9-1-1 location technology.

We agree with Mr. Hatfield's observations that "PSAPs are on the frontlines in our nation's defense against the threat of terrorism as well as in responding to more conventional emergencies." Now more than ever, we need all parties to remain dedicated to our work of saving lives and property through modern and well-funded emergency communications systems. NENA, APCO and NASNA look forward to joining with others to increase our human and financial capital in this critical service.