National Emergency Number Association
The Voice of 9-1-1™

Funding Issues the Focus of NENA's First NG E9-1-1 Program Meeting of 2006

Arlington, VA – The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) released a summary of the recently convened 9-1-1 funding topic area meeting of the 2006 Next Generation (NG) E-9-1-1 Program today. The meeting was the first of a series designed to address important policy, technical and operational issues related to the migration and sustainability of a fully IP-enabled NG 9-1-1 system. The summary is available at www.nena.org.

"Next generation technologies and capabilities have exposed the need for a more cogent and predictable funding paradigm for the 9-1-1 system. As the public's ability to access 9-1-1 grows by any number of devices and technologies, it is imperative that current 9-1-1 funding mechanisms are closely examined and revised as necessary to accommodate next generation technologies," said NENA President David Jones, ENP.

During the session, NG E9-1-1 Program Partners closely examined the various components that will be required for next generation IP-enabled 9-1-1 and emergency communications networks. In doing so, the costs associated with each of the elements, from standards development to physical infrastructure, were looked at to determine expected costs, funding sources and potential cost savings. With the realization that all entities with emergency communications responsibilities (along with other non-public safety government services) will benefit from, and contribute to the costs of, shared, open architecture networks, the fixed and recurring costs for individual professions (including 9-1-1) and individual agencies is expected to be reduced over time.

Participants concluded that it is imperative for future 9-1-1 and emergency communications funding to closely parallel next generation architecture and principles. Current 9-1-1 and emergency communications funding is typically fragmented and uncoordinated among and within states, with almost all costs assumed exclusively by individual agencies for their communications needs. "We envision a next generation environment with numerous shared networks, databases, and applications connected together through national standards and system interfaces," said Patrick Halley, NENA's Government Affairs Director.

In order for such a vision to become reality, the summary report suggests that "states should be encouraged to ensure that 9-1-1 is adequately funded and to develop shared statewide managed IP networks that all government emergency agencies access. Every state should be required to have a state level entity or mechanism with the responsibility, authority and wherewithal to manage the network aspects of emergency communications for the state, including the delivery of voice and data to all PSAPs, and ensuring that all aspects of 9-1-1 are coordinated within the state."

Participating NG E9-1-1 Program Partners agreed that a goal must be to seek as much uniformity as possible among states but that it is simply not possible for one specific funding model to work

in every state. The key is to determine what minimum level of uniformity is necessary to support the interconnected nature of NG systems, while acknowledging the state and local nature of most funding systems. To that end, NG E9-1-1 Program partners will be closely examining existing federal and state regulations and legislation related to the funding of 9-1-1 and will make recommendations on needed policy changes to ensure that future policy directives properly enable the funding of the next generation architecture.

Finally, meeting participants agreed that it is essential that efforts to educate federal, state and local government leaders be accelerated if NG 9-1-1 is going to be a reality. "Federal and state governments have a significant leadership role to play as we migrate to a more advanced IP-enabled 9-1-1 and emergency communications system," said NENA Executive Director Robert Martin. "Federal, state and local government leaders need to be better aware of the possibilities, funding issues and potential cost savings associated with an NG 9-1-1 system versus the legacy technology currently in place. It is the responsibility of NENA and our NG E9-1-1

Program Partners to provide such outreach and that will be a major focus of the 2006 NG E9-1-1 Program," added Martin.

A full summary of the meeting can be found on NENA's website at http://www.nena.org/pages/Content.asp?CID=208&CTID=14. More information on NENA's NG E9-1-1 Program, including an overview, Program Partner information and the *Initial Findings and Recommendations* of the 2005 NG E9-1-1 Program are also available at http://nena.org/pages/ContentList.asp?CTID=14.

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About the National Emergency Number Association
NENA is *The Voice of 9-1-1*™. Now celebrating its 25th year, NENA was established to promote implementation and awareness of 9-1-1 as North America's universal emergency number. NENA has grown to become the leading professional non-profit organization dedicated solely to 9-1-1 emergency communications issues. NENA serves its more than 7,000 members in 46 chapters across the U.S. and Canada through policy advocacy, establishment of technical and operational standards, certification programs and a broad spectrum of educational offerings.
Find out more at www.nena.org.