

NATIONAL EMERGENCY NUMBER ASSOCIATION (NENA)

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February 17, 2005

ATTENTION 9-1-1 LEADERS, PUBLIC SAFETY EXPERTS, HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICIALS, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROVIDERS:

NENA Policy on 9-1-1 Calling Through Voice over Internet (VoI)

STATEMENT BY NENA EXECUTIVE BOARD

Providing our citizens with easy access to police, fire and paramedic services through an Enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1) system is a guiding principal of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA).

As the only international association solely focused on the delivery of 9-1-1 services, NENA is very concerned with how the public connects to the 9-1-1 system through Voice Over the Internet (VOI) services.

NENA has made significant efforts to work with VOI providers to assure that consumers are not faced with the choice of selecting price and options over access to their local 9-1-1 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

In NENA's view, it is unacceptable for a VOI service provider to block customer access to 9-1-1. For fixed location customers using telephone numbers local to their service area, blocking of 9-1-1 calls or delivery to ten-digit digit numbers is unacceptable. As NENA finds, provision of E9-1-1 capabilities can be achieved through several readily available techniques.

Migrating to E9-1-1 capabilities, interconnections are now widely available through Competitive Local Exchange Carriers (CLECs), cable companies, and other access methods that avoid blocking of 9-1-1 calling.

NENA believes that all VOI service providers can and must aggressively pursue implementing full support for E9-1-1 in the safety interests of their consumers; this is vital to interests of their consumer's personal safety, as well as for the general safety of the public and our nation's homeland security.

Since 1968, Americans have increasingly relied on 9-1-1 to contact local police, fire and paramedic services when they need help. NENA is actively working to address and meet the challenges of VoI and 9-1-1, as well as other emerging telecommunications technologies and capabilities.

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