



A Letter from Brussels

The European Emergency Number Association shares news from abroad.

Telecommunications Regulatory Framework

Following the reports of the European Parliament in September, the Council issued its common positions on the proposed directives on December 20, 2008 (documents 15896/08, 15899/08, 15758/08, 15695/08, 15702/08 and 15901/08 all available at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>). EENA has issued a position paper on the outstanding issues pertaining to the 1-1-2 (namely the automatic availability of caller location information to emergency services) and will follow the issue through the second reading process. Stay tuned.

The 1-1-2 Is Now Available All Over Europe

Just before the Christmas holidays the Commission announced¹ that the 1-1-2 is now available in all the 27 Member States of the EU including Bulgaria (which was lagging behind). The Commission will now focus on the quality of the implementation, as demonstrated by the infringement procedure opened against Italy for problems in the answering and handling of calls to the 1-1-2. Most of these problems have been communicated to Commission by EENA, which will continue transferring to the Commission citizens' complaints about improper answering and handlings of calls to the 1-1-2.

European 1-1-2 Day for 2009 Officially Announced

Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Telecommunications, in a speech² on November 13, 2008 before the Annual General Assembly of the BEUC (European Bureau of Consumers' Unions), officially announced that "There will be a special 1-1-2 event on the 11th of February in 2009 organized together with the European Parliament and the Council." Reding also asked BEUC to inform citizens widely about the 1-1-2 number. EENA is actively participating in the preparation of this event (Annual 1-1-2 Awards, special event for the 1-2-2 anthem, etc.).

Major Project for Upgrading 1-1-2 Call Centers

The European Commission officially announced on October, 24 2008, the selection of the project REACH1-1-2 (Responding To All Citizens Needing Help) that intends to improve the accessibility of the EU emergency services for people with disabilities as well as person-to-person communication. REACH1-1-2 is a project proposed by the EENA Advisory Board, launched as part of the 1-1-2 Excellence Center concept that intends to support the upgrading of 1-1-2 emergency services and highlight them as best practices in Europe. France, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom have been the five pilot countries selected for this 9 million Euros project.

In parallel, on the basis of amendments introduced in the context of the budgetary procedure, support will be ensured for the deployment across the EU of interoperable emergency services and 1-1-2 for all citizens, enabling quicker, more efficient reactions and life saving. Through a remodeling of the traditional emergency calling technical architecture and a lowering of its cost and complexity, the ultimate aim is to provide an optimal answer to 1-1-2 calls made by all citizens, including users with disabilities.

Proposal for a Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare

EENA continues lobbying for the inclusion of Emergency Medical Services in this directive which is before the European Parliament for a first reading. EENA will keep you informed about any new development in this respect.

For more information about EENA, the European Emergency Number Association, contact **Gary Machado** at gm@eena.org or visit www.eena.org.
 1. <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/08/1968&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN>
 2. <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=SPEECH/08/615&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN>

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Opportunities Ahead

President-Elect Obama and the Democratic majority in Congress that rode his coattails to a near super majority ran on a platform of "change we can believe in." Let's hope change we can believe in takes the shape of policies that recognize the need for the modernization of our nation's 9-1-1 and emergency communications system. Let's hope it means increased federal funding for 9-1-1 systems and better prioritization and purpose for emergency communications and homeland security grant programs. Let's hope the transition to Next Generation 9-1-1 becomes a clear national policy priority. Let's hope that the Department of Homeland Security recognizes the pivotal role 9-1-1 plays in our nation's homeland security. Let's hope that the FCC provides leadership to ensure effective 9-1-1 regulation resulting in real results for consumers and public safety agencies. I remain hopeful that the "change we can believe in" will bring positive developments for 9-1-1 and emergency communications.

Notwithstanding the current economic climate, President-Elect Obama and his team, in conjunction with Congress, have a real opportunity to advance emergency communications in this country. They

have gotten off to a good start by reaching out to NENA and other public safety leaders during the transition to discuss near and long term 9-1-1/emergency communications priorities. We look forward to an ongoing dialogue on these issues.

With our support and guidance, the change we can believe in will be shaped by the change that we help influence, based on the best ideas and effective advocacy. NENA and our allies in Washington are gearing up for an action-filled 2009 and we look forward to working with our entire membership to make sure your voices are heard by the new Administration and the leaders of the 111th Congress. All of this makes it clear that this year's 9-1-1 Goes to Washington event will be as important as ever. I hope you are able to make the trip to Washington this year to ensure the change we can believe in is the change we have made happen.

For more information on 9-1-1 Goes to Washington, turn to **page 19** for a preview or visit www.nena.org/911GTW.

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