

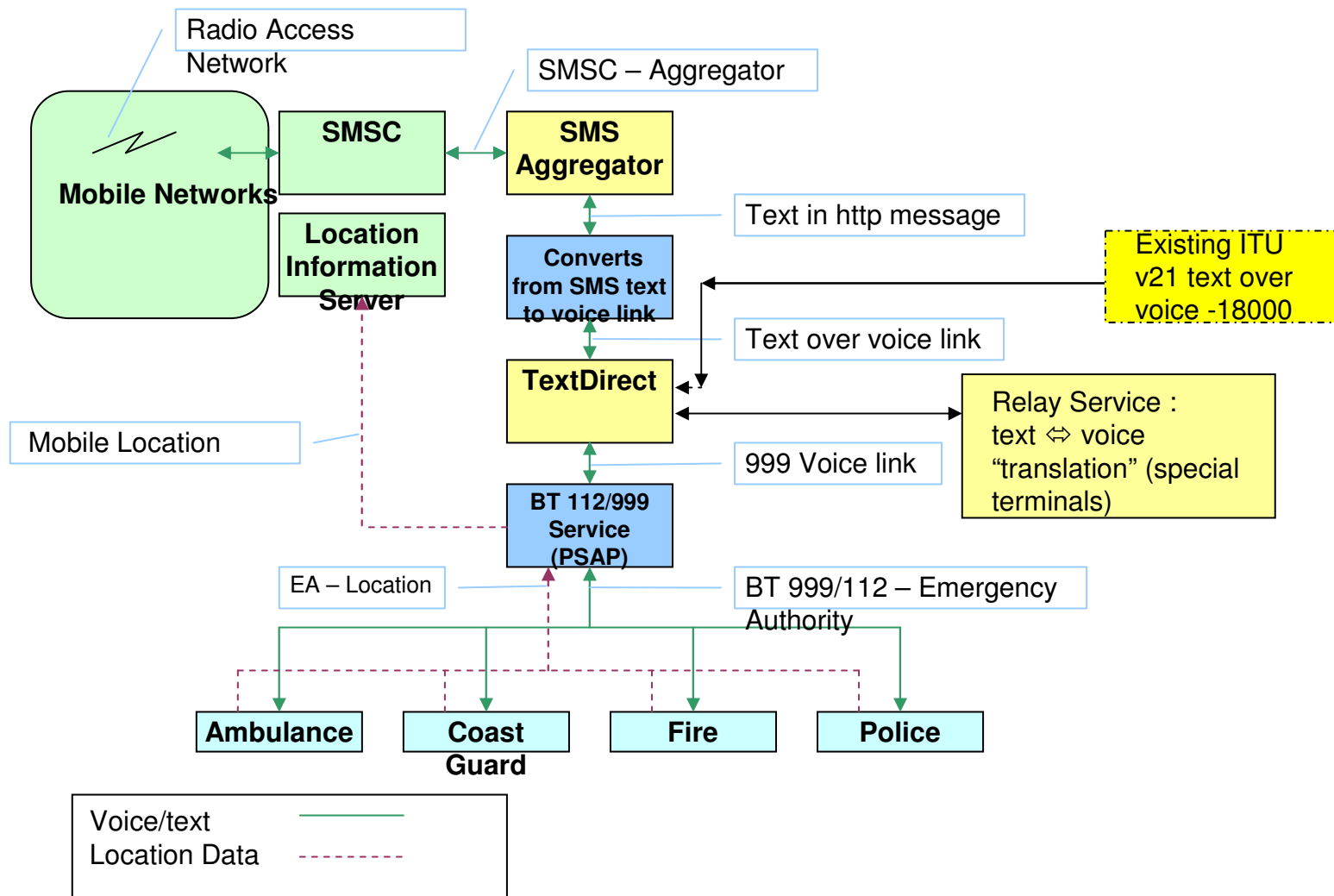
UK - Emergency SMS Trial



John Medland – BT 999/112 Policy Manager

Background to emergency SMS trial

- Real-time text service already exists in UK – requires special terminals (modem based)
- Demand from deaf users : know SMS limitations but want something that fits with how they normally communicate
- Police services in some areas of the UK already have (different) SMS contact numbers
- Limitations and risks of SMS outweighed by user view that :-
 - current situation is often even riskier (where a person can make no report by voice, and has to spend time searching for someone to make a voice call to report an incident)
 - no current widely available alternatives to SMS
- Trial commenced 14 September 2009



Trial objectives

- Single national access mechanism for SMS messages to the 999 service for speech and hearing impaired users
- In addition to real time text service (modem based)
- Registered users to limit use by those that have better options (open registration) :
- Specific instruction when users register : users told they must continue to seek help until text is acknowledged by PSAP
- Direct access to **all** the emergency service PSAPs that should not need to make changes to their call handling equipment or operator training
- Access to same automated location systems that are available to voice and text phone calls

Experience from trial

- Registered Users – steadily increasing, currently 4,365 (3/2010)
 - Registration allows conditions of use to be communicated and limits misuse of the service
 - Trial recruitment through RNID (+)
 - Websites
- Use for genuine emergencies averages 1 incident / day
 - comfort message sent early (within 1.5 minutes)
 - average duration of message exchange ~10 minutes
 - examples.....

Inappropriate use (from registered users!) is around 4 eSMS contacts /day

- good intention, not an emergency
- no clear problem/abusive
- hoax messages

(Use “barring” of MSISDN from eSMS to further reduce misuse)

- Training
 - Relay Assistants and PSAP call takers
 - Processes developed / training guides circulated
 - limit call takers if possible / develop local experts

Summary

- eSMS Trial with registered users in UK has demonstrated that such a service is helpful and practical to provide
- At least one life has been saved
- Trial continues with plans being progressed to make it more robust and fully prepare all PSAPs
- Likely launch date for a long term service is October 2010

Any Questions??

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