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Priority Access Service

Preliminary Requirements

INTRODUCTION

In its Second Report and Order - Establishment of Rules and Requirements For Priority Access Service, WT Docket No. 96-86, Adopted July 3, 2000 - the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) determined that there is a need and demand for Priority Access Service (PAS) to public safety personnel at the Federal, State and local levels to help meet the national security and emergency preparedness (NSEP) needs of the Nation. Consequently, the Commission authorized the voluntary provision by commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) providers for such service. In the *Second Report and Order*, the FCC will permit, but not require, CMRS providers to offer PAS to NSEP personnel. If carriers choose to offer PAS, the FCC is requiring them to adhere to uniform operating protocols. The FCC also adopted the PAS priority levels proposed by NCS and designate NCS as the day-to-day administrator of PAS.

Immediate Requirements

PAS provides the means for NSEP telecommunications users to obtain priority access to available radio channels when necessary to initiate emergency calls. It does not preempt calls in progress and is to be used during situations when CMRS network congestion is blocking NSEP call attempts. PAS is to be available to authorized NSEP users at all times in equipped CMRS markets where the service provider has voluntarily decided to provide such service. Authorized users would activate the feature on a per call basis by dialing a feature code such as *XX. PAS priorities 1 through 5 are reserved for qualified and authorized NSEP users, and those users are provided access to CMRS channels before any other CMRS callers. In addition, we conclude that: (a) PAS will include five priority levels, with non-government NSEP personnel receiving entitlement to a priority level as appropriate; (b) access to PAS should be limited to key personnel and those with

leadership responsibilities; and (c) the National Communications System (NCS)[1] will have responsibility for the day-to-day administration of PAS, with oversight responsibilities residing with the Commission.

Future Requirements

There is a need for priority communications among governmental, civil, and other essential users of public telecommunications services in crisis situations, such as earthquakes, severe storms, and floods. Telecommunication services are often restricted during these events due to damage, congestion, and failures. ITU-T Recommendation E.106, International Emergency Preference Scheme (IEPS) and ITU-T Draft Recommendation F.706, International Emergency Multimedia Service (IEMS) describe requirements for emergency telecommunication services that will support recovery activities during crisis situations.

For future consideration, requirements are being proposed to the ITU that say subscribers to Priority Services shall be able to subscribe to the IMS Basic Multimedia Service as well as the Basic Voice Service. When supporting their NS/EP mission, the Priority Service subscribers shall receive priority over other 3G subscribers in the establishment and completion of a voice call or a data (multimedia) session. Should a service disruption occur, NS/EP voice and data services must be capable of being re-provisioned, repaired, or restored to required service levels on a priority basis.

The system must be able to identify NS/EP Priority Service subscribers and set a priority indicator to identify or mark the priority traffic (voice calls or data/multimedia sessions). There must be procedures and processes to handle priority service traffic that maintains the end QoS to support the communication. The types of processes required for priority service include priority access, priority call set up or session establishment, priority termination, and exemption from restrictive management controls.

ACTION SOUGHT

It is proposed that these immediate and future requirements be taken into consideration while progressing the work on PAS. In addition, as expeditiously as possible, an evaluation be made of the suitability of using GSM 02.30, GSM 02.67, GSM 03.67, GSM 04.67 as well as 3GPP TS 22.067, 23.067 and 24/067 to satisfy these requirements and identify any modifications that are needed to these specifications. These modifications should then be proposed, in the form of Change Requests, to the appropriate 3GPP Working Groups.

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[1] NCS is an organization created by Executive Order to administer and manage the telecommunications assets of 23 Federal organizations in serving the NSEP needs of the Federal, State and local governments. *See* Executive Order 12,472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions, 49 Fed. Reg. 13,471 (1984). *See also* NCS Petition at 1-2 n.1.