



NEWS

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See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY ADOPTS MEASURES TO IMPROVE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS OF NATION'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

Washington, D.C. – Fifty-six senior representatives from the telecommunications, cable, Internet and satellite industries today adopted two critical measures that provide the framework for a coordinated industry response in the event of an emergency or disaster.

The measures were adopted by the Network Reliability and Interoperability Council (NRIC) VI which held its quarterly meeting today at the FCC.

The items adopted today are:

- **Industry emergency contact procedures and protocol.** This provides detailed contact information, procedures and protocol to industry members in times of emergency, identifying communications industry representatives who are essential to effective communications and Internet service restoration efforts.
- **Emergency assistance agreement.** This provides the means by which industry carriers and service providers can elect to enter agreements to collaborate to restore service in the wake of an emergency.

NRIC VI was chartered January 7, 2002 to focus on homeland security by ensuring the security and sustainability of public telecommunications networks in the event of a national disaster, emergency or terrorist attack. Membership in NRIC was significantly expanded through NRIC VI to include for the first time corporate representatives from the cable, wireless, satellite and ISP industries. It also established four new working groups to address homeland security: Physical Security, Cyber Security, Disaster Recovery and Public Safety.

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FCC Chairman Michael Powell said, “This week’s first anniversary of 9/11 reminds us all of the critical role our nation’s telecommunications networks play in an emergency event. Last year and today, this industry has demonstrated its leadership in working together to ensure the stability and reliability of our telecommunications infrastructure and has served as a model for other industries. Today’s actions are an important step forward in ensuring we meet the homeland security goals we set forth for NRIC.”

Richard C. Notebaert, NRIC Chairman and Chairman and CEO of Qwest Communications International said, “Last year, on 9/11, the industry demonstrated how well it can come together and respond quickly during a crisis. Today, it has never been more important to say to the world and to our nation that we are an industry that pulls together to ensure consistent quality of service and reliability to our customers.”

Based on the effective role NRIC has played in bringing together leaders from the telecommunications industry, on March 28, 2002 Powell established a broadcast industry counterpart – the Media Security and Reliability Council (MSRC). MSRC, comprised of members from broadcast, cable and satellite companies, is charged with facilitating broadcasters’ preparedness to act in an emergency.

NRIC was established by the FCC in 1992 to bring together leaders of the communications industry and telecommunications experts to explore and recommend measures that will enhance network reliability, security, interoperability and interconnectivity. The Council’s members are senior representatives of providers and users of telecommunications services and products, including telecommunications carriers, the satellite, cable television, wireless and computer industries, trade associations, labor and consumer representatives, manufacturers, research organizations and government-related organizations.

NRIC’s next advisory meeting will be December 6, 2002. At this meeting, the Council will vote to adopt recommendations on best industry practices for protecting critical infrastructure in the areas of physical security and cyber security.