



# NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **HOMELAND SECURITY: INDUSTRY LEADERS CONSIDER EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WARNING SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Washington, D.C. – Leaders from the broadcast, cable and satellite industries today began consideration of best practices recommendations to ensure effective delivery of emergency information through public warning systems.

The recommendations were presented to members of the Media Security and Reliability Council (MSRC) at its biannual meeting today at the FCC. The 41-member Federal Advisory Committee will complete voting on these recommendations by June 18, 2003.

FCC Chairman Michael Powell said, “The most important responsibility the government and media share during times of crisis is to ensure the safety and well-being of our citizens. Making sure that people receive urgent information that is timely and accurate is truly a life-saving service that warrants our utmost attention and support. The recommendations we have seen today address some of the biggest challenges we must face regarding the delivery of a reliable public warning system.”

Dennis J. FitzSimons, MSRC chairman and president and chief executive officer of Tribune Company said, "September 11 was a wake-up call for all concerned--media, interest groups, government. We have to review what works and what doesn't. We simply have to communicate in a timely and accurate fashion. The public depends on us and we must come through."

The Public Communications and Safety working group presented to the Council its interim report and offered for consideration twenty-six best practices recommendations aimed at ensuring the effective delivery of emergency information and warnings to the public.

### **Public Communications and Safety best practices recommendations include:**

- A single federal entity should be responsible for public warning and all-hazard risk communication.
- Effective emergency communications should be achieved through a public/private partnership.

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- Local and state governments should coordinate with media to create, review and update emergency communications procedures.
- Local media should form emergency jurisdiction/market cooperatives to assure coordinated delivery of local emergency messages to all constituencies.
- The Emergency Alert System should be periodically tested, upgraded as necessary and implemented and maintained at local, state and national levels.
- Research into development of alternative, redundant and/or supplemental means of communicating emergency information to the public should be accelerated.
- Local jurisdiction/market cooperatives should share their locally developed best practices for coordination, delivering risk communications and continuity planning under crisis conditions.

The Communication Infrastructure Security, Access and Restoration working group also presented its initial recommendations that will be further refined at the November 6, 2003 MSRC meeting.

**Communications Infrastructure Security, Access and Restoration best practices recommendations include:**

- National media companies should reassess their vulnerabilities and take appropriate measures to prevent loss of service and expedite rapid recovery.
- News media should consider agreements to allow flexibility in local use and retransmission of content under government declared emergencies.
- Local media facilities should conduct vulnerability assessments and have disaster recovery plans that are periodically reviewed, updated and practiced.
- Local media outlets should assess their collective vulnerabilities and develop cooperative agreements and plans to ensure some media remains in service under extreme conditions.
- Government should coordinate the creation of a Media Common Alert Protocol to deliver emergency messages via digital networks.

Today marked the third and mid-term meeting of the Media Security and Reliability Council. The next meeting will be on November 6, 2003 at the FCC.

MSRC is a Federal Advisory Committee that reports to FCC Chairman Powell. Chairman Powell formed MSRC following the events of September 11, 2001, in order to study, develop and report on best practices designed to assure the optimal reliability, robustness and security of the broadcast and multichannel video programming distribution industries.

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