

Oct. 6, 2020

### NPSTC Asks FCC to Dismiss CTIA's 911 Recon Petition

The National Public Safety Telecommunications Council asked the FCC today to dismiss a petition for reconsideration filed recently by CTIA asking the agency to reconsider its z-axis, or vertical, rules and deployment deadlines. The trade group cited testing delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the inability of technologies to be ready to meet the FCC-mandated location-accuracy metric (*TR Daily*, Sept. 29).

In its filing in PS docket 07-114, NPSTC rejected CTIA's justifications for its petition and argued that "the only thing that may prevent the implementation of vertical location technologies in the largest 25 cities by the April 2021 deadline is the intransigence of the carriers in preventing the deployment of the z-axis technologies that have already been demonstrated to be compliant."

CTIA filed a petition for reconsideration of a sixth report and order on reconsideration adopted in July (*TR Daily*, July 16). The item requires nationwide wireless carriers to deploy z-axis location-accuracy technology nationwide by April 2025, giving non-nationwide carriers an additional year to meet the mandate. It also affirmed a fifth report and order adopted last year that set a z-axis metric of plus or minus three meters relative to the handset for 80% of indoor calls (*TR Daily*, Nov. 22, 2019). The item required nationwide carriers to meet April 3, 2021, and April 3, 2023, milestones for complying with the metric in the top 25 and top 50 markets, respectively.

"Given the importance of highly accurate vertical location capabilities to rapidly locate and assist individuals in distress, the Commission should immediately dismiss the petition for reconsideration that was filed by CTIA ('Petition') as both untimely and relying on arguments that were fully considered and rejected by the Commission. The Petition is untimely because it seeks reconsideration of the timeline that the Commission adopted in 2015 for the implementation of wireless vertical location. CTIA acknowledges that the deadline predates the *Sixth Report and Order*, requesting reconsideration of 'the timelines affirmed in the Sixth R&O,'" NPSTC said.

"The Petition should also be dismissed because it relies extensively on arguments that were fully considered and rejected by the Commission in the *Sixth Report and Order*. For example, the Petition argues at length regarding the relative merits and availability of barometric pressure sensor-based solutions, the use of 'push' versus 'over the top' approaches to place those solutions in handsets, the adequacy of the Stage Z testbed results, the ongoing development of operating system ('OS')-based technologies by Google and Apple, and their proposal to extend the deployment timeline by an additional five years, permitting 50% accuracy in 2021 and 80% accuracy no sooner than 2025. Each of these issues was thoroughly considered and addressed by the Commission in the Sixth Report and Order

and do not merit reconsideration just six month[s] before the first implementation deadline,” NPSTC added.

“CTIA claims that its Petition merits consideration because ‘the gravity of Z-axis testing challenges has only become known since the Sixth R&O was adopted’ and therefore qualifies as an event that ‘occurred or circumstances which have changed since the last opportunity to present such matters to the Commission.’ CTIA acknowledges, however, that this assertion is not true. Prior to the adoption of the *Sixth Report and Order*, the carriers made it very clear that the COVID-19 pandemic was impacting additional testing and those statements were quoted by the Commission in the *Sixth Report and Order*. ... Thus, CTIA’s cancellation of the Stage Zb testbed was both anticipated and irrelevant given the fact that only one vendor had expressed interest in participating,” NPSTC said.

“Instead, the only thing that may prevent the implementation of vertical location technologies in the largest 25 cities by the April 2021 deadline is the intransigence of the carriers in preventing the deployment of the z-axis technologies that have already been demonstrated to be compliant,” NPSTC added. “Several of NPSTC’s members served on CTIA’s Location Accuracy Quarterly Advisory Committee and observed firsthand the efforts of CTIA and its members to impose obstacles in the path of z-axis deployment.

“First, the industry abandoned the National Emergency Address Database along with the promise for dispatchable location in a reasonable time and now they want to delay the z-axis deadline,” the filing said. “The Commission should not permit the carriers to use the pandemic as a pretext to further this agenda. Instead, the Commission should continue its leadership in the pursuit of wireless location accuracy by immediately dismissing CTIA’s petition as untimely and devoid of new arguments. The Commission should also direct the carriers to finalize their implementation of those z-axis technologies by the April 2021 deadline that have already been demonstrated to be 3 meter compliant. The critical needs of public safety and the public that it serves, necessitates this decisive action.” —Paul Kirby, [paul.kirby@wolterskluwer.com](mailto:paul.kirby@wolterskluwer.com)

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