



Brussels, December 2010

EENA Position Paper on the provision of mobile caller-location information in the context of calls to the European emergency number 112

This paper has been prepared by the European Emergency Number Association. It contains the position of EENA on the provision of mobile caller-location information in the context of calls to the European emergency number 112. It concerns emergency calls originated in mobile networks. Mobile VOIP emergency calls to 112 provided by third party service providers are out of scope.

1. Half of emergency calls made in the EU are from mobile phones

Among about 320 million emergency calls in the EU every year¹, 49% are launched from a mobile phone².

2. Today's location accuracy and delivery time is far from sufficient

According to the COCOM's "Report on the Implementation of 112"³, automatic caller location information provided to emergency centres is currently limited to Cell-ID only. This technology is highly inaccurate (precise to a range of 40km in some areas) and is of dubious value in locating callers in need of assistance. In addition, the delay in delivering location information is, in some countries, as high as 150 minutes.

3. Millions of lives and properties could be saved

The conclusions of the Coordination Group on Access to Location Information by Emergency Services (CGALIES)⁴ highlights that accurate caller-location is crucial for EU emergency services to intervene and rescue citizens: "considerable time is lost by emergency services during their intervention for approximately 3.5 million calls, due to the fact that the location information provided by the caller is later found to be inaccurate. It was also estimated that emergency services are not able to dispatch a rescue team for approximately 2.5 million calls, due to the absence of sufficient location information".

4. The Commission promised to review the requirements

The Commission Recommendation of 25th July 2003⁵ mandated the provision of Cell-ID location and indicated the need to review and improve the requirements of location systems following the introductory phase of the e112 service.

5. Europe is lagging behind

High-accuracy location has been implemented within the United States for a large majority of calls made to the North-American emergency number 911 since the regulatory authority (FCC) has defined caller-location accuracy requirements for e911⁶:

- For network-based location solutions: 100 meters for 67 percent of calls, 300 meters for 95 percent of calls;
- For handset-based location solutions: 50 meters for 67 percent of calls, 150 meters for 95 percent of calls.

These requirements have been effective in providing usable location information for callers in need.

¹ Estimate based on COCOM, EGEA and information provided by EENA emergency services' members

² http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_285_en.pdf

³ http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/112/docs/cocom_report2010.pdf

⁴ http://www.esafetysupport.org/download/working_groups/cgaliesfinalreportv1_0.pdf

⁵ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2003:189:0049:0051:EN:PDF>

⁶ <http://www.fcc.gov/pshs/services/911-services/enhanced911/Welcome.html>



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5. Technologies are ready to be deployed in Europe

High-accuracy location technology is available in the market, ready to be deployed and has already been successfully implemented in part of the Murcia region in Spain, therefore enabling citizens to be precisely located when calling 112⁷. Mobile handsets or SIM cards including satellite positioning systems are also spreading all over Europe.

6. EU Emergency services are asking for regulation

In June 2009, representatives of EU emergency services from 25 countries and industry leaders invited the Commission to mandate an expert group that would define caller-location accuracy requirements⁸.

7. The legal framework authorises the Commission to act

The Universal Service Directive (2009/136/EC) provides for the competent regulatory authorities to "lay down criteria for the accuracy and reliability of the caller-location information provided" and enables the Commission to "adopt technical implementing measures" to ensure effective access to "112" services in the Member States⁹.

8. The Commission should mandate an expert group to define the requirements

The EENA invites the Commission to mandate an expert group such as the CGALIES to define mandatory accuracy and reliability requirements for localising all 112 calls from mobile phones in the EU. The expert group would update the CGALIES recommendations on caller location requirements to ensure emergency services and citizens across the EU benefit from improvements in the availability of more precise locations. The Group's objectives would be to define how closely and quickly the widely available technologies can define a caller's location for 112 access, as well as what changes each technology would require from current network providers and PSAPs. The main benefit would be a quicker intervention time for 112 calls with clear guidance for legislative action and enforcement. In addition, the Commission should propose enforcement regulations to ensure caller location throughout Europe and specific performance standards for caller location in the European Union.

About the EENA:

The EENA - European Emergency Number Association - was set up in 1999 as a non-profit association registered in Belgium to serve as a neutral discussion platform for emergency services, industry and informed citizens with the aim of getting efficient, interoperable and harmonised emergency telecommunications in accordance with citizens' requirements. EENA has been advocating to authorities the issues related to the 112 as there are more and more EU citizens travelling for business or leisure. EENA is also promoting the establishment of a general, pan-European, multilingual, simplified and efficient system for alerting citizens about imminent or developing emergencies. The EENA memberships include 400 emergency services representatives from 39 European countries, 25 solution providers, 9 international associations/organisations as well as 20 Members of the European Parliament.

⁷ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YthcAqQ1RCs>

⁸ http://www.eena.org/ressource/static/files/2009_06_30_recommendations.pdf

⁹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:337:0011:0036:EN:PDF>