



# 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. Circ 1974).

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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## **FCC ADOPTS RULES TO ENHANCE NETWORK OUTAGE REPORTING TO FACILITATE MORE RELIABLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PROMOTE HOMELAND SECURITY**

Washington, D.C. - The FCC today adopted new rules requiring wireless, wireline, cable, and satellite telecommunications providers to report information electronically to the Commission about significant disruptions or outages to their communications systems. The Commission also ruled that all sensitive information collected as a result of these new rules will be protected from public disclosure.

The FCC's actions are in response to the increasing reliance consumers place on various forms of two-way communications, and the Commission's need for prompt information about significant disruptions to those communications during this time of increasing concern about homeland security and national defense. These actions will facilitate more reliable telecommunications throughout the United States and promote Homeland Security, building on the telecommunications industry's efforts to date to improve outage reporting.

Under the new rules, both wireless and satellite providers will be subject, for the first time, to the Commission's reporting requirements. Currently, only wireline and cable telephony communications providers are required to report. The increasing use of cell phones and pagers, as well as the Nation's growing dependence on satellite communications as critical infrastructure, necessitated these changes to the Commission's rules.

In addition, the Commission will require network outage reports whenever certain critical facilities are affected, including, for example, E911 facilities and the nation's larger airports. The Commission will also require network outage reports whenever especially critical transmission and network control technologies are disrupted, such as Signaling System 7 (SS7) and DS-3 transmission failures.

Furthermore, the Commission recognized that the information collected as a result of these new rules is likely to be sensitive information that would cause substantial competitive harm and/or seriously undermine national defense and public safety if publicly disclosed. Thus, the

Commission found that the information in outage reports will need to be protected from public disclosure to the full extent of the law.

To promote security and ease outage reporting, communications providers will use an electronic template to provide the requested information in encrypted form. The electronic template was derived from the Commission's experience in administering network outage reporting requirements for wireline telephone companies, and will simplify and improve the Commission's reporting requirements.

Finally, in a Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, the Commission is seeking comment on additional issues in the area of network outage reporting affecting telecommunications service to airports, including appropriate reporting requirements for smaller airports and for facilities not connected with the Public Switched Telecommunications Network (PSTN).

Action by the Commission August 4, 2004, by Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 04-188). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin and Adelstein. Separate statements issued by Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin, and Adelstein

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