



December 15, 2008

Dear 9-1-1 Call Center Manager/Coordinator:

As you are aware, it is imperative that call takers are familiar with the unique processes involved in ensuring that all emergency calls are handled as efficiently and effectively as possible. Calls using Video Relay Service (VRS) or Internet Protocol (IP) Relay Service present additional challenges for call takers, but with the December 31 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandate upon us, we must take action to ensure our preparedness.

The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International have collaborated to develop an important training package for 9-1-1 communication centers throughout the United States. This training will provide 9-1-1 call takers with vital information about 9-1-1 calls from individuals who may be deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, or have speech disabilities. Included in this package are materials to assist you in educating your call takers about potential emergency calls using VRS or IP Relay Service.

For a number of years, an increasing number of individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, or have a speech disability have been utilizing VRS and IP Relay service for effective communication. While these communications changes have greatly benefited users, they have resulted in a reduction of the TTY/TDD devices, which causes limitations to directly report emergencies to Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs).

The FCC has mandated that by **December 31, 2008** VRS and IP Relay service providers must deliver emergency calls to PSAPs via the existing 9-1-1 networks. This includes providing on the ANI/ALI screens the caller's registered location and callback number, as well as the VRS provider company name with Video Interpreter (VI) identification number or IP Relay provider company name with Communication Assistant (CA) identification number.

All 9-1-1 communication centers are encouraged to share the information in the training package with your trainers and call takers to prepare them for potential calls, and to include this information in your training curriculum. The training package includes:

- a) Overview of VRS and IP Relay Services
- b) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)
- c) Model Standard Operating Procedure Guidelines

NENA and APCO International continue to develop additional materials to help educate 9-1-1 communication centers and public safety professionals about these changes. It is the goal of all parties involved to assist in saving lives and we appreciate your support and guidance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. S. Rice, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

George S. Rice, Jr.
Executive Director
APCO International

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Fontes", written over a horizontal line.

Brian Fontes
Chief Executive Officer
National Emergency Number Association