



Australian Government

Department of Communications and the Arts

Secretary

PDR ID: EC18-001327

Mr Chris Beatson
Chair, NECWG-A/NZ
Director, PoliceLink
NSW Police Force

By email: s 22

Dear Mr Beatson

Advanced Mobile Location for the Triple Zero Emergency Call Service

Thank you for your letter dated 19 October 2018 regarding the introduction of Advanced Mobile Location (AML) in Australia for the Triple Zero Emergency Call Service (ECS).

On Monday 22 October 2018, the Minister for Communications, the Hon Mitch Fifield, announced the findings of the Department of Communications and the Arts' (the department) investigation into the Triple Zero outages of May 2018.

I am pleased to advise that as part of the announcement, the Minister indicated that the department is in discussion with Telstra (in its role as the Emergency Call Person) to implement a new Internet-Protocol (IP) platform to facilitate next generation Triple Zero capabilities, as well as AML to provide more accurate location information by automatically sending coordinates from mobile handsets to Triple Zero.

I understand that members of the National Emergency Communication Working Group (NECWG) have been supportive of the introduction of AML in Australia for some time now. I commend your involvement with these discussions to date and encourage you to continue working with stakeholders, and do everything necessary to ensure that AML can be implemented for the benefit of the Australian community. NECWG's coordination of the responsibilities for Emergency Service Organisation's will be pivotal to successful implementation of AML in Australia.

The implementation of AML will require amendment of the Communications Alliance *G557:2014 Location Information for Emergency Calls* documentation, and *AS/CA S042.1:2018 Requirements for Connection to an Air Interface of a Telecommunications Network*. To this end, Carriers and Carriage Service Providers have recently convened meetings at the Communications Alliance to discuss the technical solution and specifications for implementation of AML.

My department is asking stakeholders to work together to implement AML prior to the end of 2019. While this is a tight timeframe, I trust that mobile carriers, emergency service organisations, the Emergency Call Person, Google (for Android handsets), Apple (for iOS handsets), and the Australian Government can work together to achieve this important upgrade to Australia's capabilities. I have written separately to mobile carriers encouraging them to continue working with Communications Alliance to implement AML.

Investigation Recommendations

The department's investigation report into the Triple Zero outages makes 11 recommendations designed to help prevent or minimise the impact of any future disruptions to the Triple Zero Service.

Implementation of a number of these recommendations has already commenced, and my department will coordinate input to each recommendation from stakeholders. I am conscious that all recommendations invariably require the cooperation and input from all stakeholders pertinent to the end-to-end delivery of the ECS. Of the 11 recommendations, there are 3 that specifically require the assistance of NECWG at this time:

Recommendation 1:

That communications from the Emergency Call Person (ECP) to Emergency Service Organisations (ESOs), public safety agencies, telecommunications carriers, carriage service providers, media, other government stakeholders and Ministers are improved through the development of Triple Zero Disruption Protocols.

Development of these protocols should be led by the ECP, and approved by members of NECWG-A/NZ and the Department of Communications Triple Zero Coordination Committee.

Recommendation 3:

That Telstra and ESOs (through NECWG-A/NZ) identify procedures and trigger points for reporting and investigation of the reasons for overflow calls (or observed routing difficulties) to ensure that the reasons for overflow are correctly identified and understood by all impacted parties

Recommendation 8:

State and Territory ESOs and their respective government agencies should review their current business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements to ensure there are adequate processes in place to manage incidents within each jurisdiction, including the management of media messaging and communications to the public during a disruption to the Triple Zero service (that is coordinated with the processes set out in the Triple Zero Disruption Protocols).

I understand NECWG is already working on these recommendations and I look forward to the ongoing support and co-operation of NECWG in implementing them.

The relevant contact for this work is Kathleen Silleri, Assistant Secretary Consumer Safeguards, on ^{s 22} [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

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 Mike Mrdak AO

20 November 2018