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PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONDER GROUP ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF NG9-1-1 WHAT'S NEXT REPORT

Emergency Responders From Four Disciplines Discuss Needs for Future 9-1-1 System

COEUR D'ALENE, ID – August 30, 2011 – Today the Transportation Safety Advancement Group (TSAG), a multidisciplinary forum promoting technology for public safety and providing guidance to the U.S. Department of Transportation Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office, announced the release of the NG9-1-1 What's Next Forum Report, a series of white papers created by stakeholders in four emergency response disciplines—law enforcement, fire-rescue, emergency medical services and transportation—addressing the future of the Next Generation 9-1-1 system.

Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1), the migration of the emergency response system from the traditional analog to an IP-based system, will significantly change the quality and amount of information available to first responders. Officials described the Report as a critical step for emergency responders planning to organize, share and use all of the digital data available in the next generation of 9-1-1.

"To date, much of the discussion about NG9-1-1 has taken place in the technical arena," said Dia Gainor, chair of TSAG and executive director of the National Association of State EMS Officials. "The NG9-1-1 What's Next project begins the discussion about how NG9-1-1 can help emergency response groups achieve their mission and addresses the cultural, organizational and operational environments in which the new system will be implemented."

The report, released at the National Rural ITS Conference in Coeur d'Alene, ID, is the result of the NG9-1-1 What's Next Forum, held in Washington, D.C., September 23 and 24, 2010. At the Forum, panelists from the four disciplines were separated into respective groups by discipline. Each group was asked to identify major challenges facing their professions and to discuss ways in which NG9-1-1 could help them fulfill their missions as emergency responders.

The resulting discussions identified background issues relevant to each field, consensus points for future collaboration on NG9-1-1, potential obstacles to NG9-1-1 within each discipline, desired benefits, potential data points/capabilities to be prioritized, and a suggested process for moving forward. The groups also developed a comprehensive set of sample scenarios to illustrate the potential for NG9-1-1 to support their respective missions.

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The four groups collaborated independently; however, a number of common concerns emerged in their discussions. These include, in no particular order, safety, interoperability, prioritization of response-related data, consideration of hearing impaired citizens, funding, stakeholder education, implementation in rural areas and continued collaboration for acceptance and implementation of NG9-1-1.

The What's Next Report is an important first step in the collaboration across disciplines in addressing the new issues and opportunities presented through NG9-1-1.

"This report is not a step-by-step recipe for implementing NG9-1-1," said Gainor. "Rather, it is a catalyst to facilitate discussion of the process and involvement of ERGs and agencies in the planning stages of the conversion to NG9-1-1."

Moving forward, each of the four groups expressed a desire to continue collaborating on solutions and standards to leverage the benefits of NG9-1-1. The groups recommended convening a national forum to continue the conversation, prioritizing data and discussing the opportunities and challenges involved in the adoption of NG9-1-1.

Additionally, communication and outreach efforts led by TSAG will inform interested individuals and associations of the results of the What's Next? forum discussions and conclusions. The findings will be shared with the U.S. Department of Justice, the Federal Communications Commission, the Department of Transportation and other stakeholders.

To download and read the report, visit www.tsag-its.org.

About NG9-1-1
Next Generation 9-1-1, or NG9-1-1, is a system of 9-1-1 services and databases that run on an Emergency Services Internet Protocol (IP) Network (ESInet). The ESINet has been designed as an emergency services network, which will allow automatic and advanced sharing of digital data among all public safety responders, public safety answering points (PSAPs), emergency management, traffic operations, and other entities.

The new, IP-based communication of voice, text, data, photo and video information from the 9-1-1 user to the public safety answering point (PSAP) will provide enhanced information about emergency situations for public responders, increased reliability of the 9-1-1 network and ease of access to the emergency system, including texting, photo, video, and other data for all users.

About TSAG
TSAG is a multidisciplinary forum promoting technology for public safety and providing guidance to the US DOT, ITS Joint Program Office. TSAG is dedicated to promoting traveler safety on the nation's roadways thought the application of ITS and related technologies and the refinement of interdisciplinary and interagency cooperation.

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