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**California  
Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Management**

**Hearing:  
"Are We Prepared? Assessing California's Emergency Response  
Capabilities"**

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Chairwoman Jackson, Vice Chair Lowenthal, and members of the Joint Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony today to brief you on the activities of Public Safety Communications.

As you just heard from Director Ghilarducci, under the Governor's Reorganization Plan #2, PSC has transitioned to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), which has been a positive move based on our strong working relationship with Cal OES and our mission of serving the emergency management and public safety needs of our state are very much aligned.

In our first month with Cal OES, PSC is already seeing the positive effects of the transition. For example, Director Ghilarducci clearly recognized the role and responsibility of the 9-1-1 Advisory Board during a recent meeting. And the deployment coordination of our Telecommunications Technicians was clearly strengthened in support of Cal FIRE during recent wildfires.

Director Ghilarducci has also been very supportive of projects that PSC is currently working on and I would like to brief you on those projects today. I will begin with the NF9-1-1

pilot projects. In December 2012, we completed the Northeastern NG9-1-1 Grant Project. Through this project, we established California's first Emergency Services IP Network (ESInet) connecting 37 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) in 13 counties. This project was the first in the nation to perform location-based routing of wireless 9-1-1 calls over an IP backbone and is the first premise-based hosted 9-1-1 solution for California. During the time period of September 2012 through the end of December 2012, approximately 25,000 wireless 9-1-1 calls were routed. Our most notable success was the 29 hours in reduced transfer time, which equates to approximately 50 seconds saved in transfer time per call.

There are several remaining NG9-1-1 pilot projects. One such project is the Imperial County hosted solution, which was accepted in November 2012. This hosted solution provides the ability to take 9-1-1 calls at any work station within four participating PSAPs. Another project is taking place in Ventura County, which gives the participating PSAPs the ability to intelligently route 9-1-1 calls at peak hours to any workstation; Phase 2 of the pilot project will provide location based routing of wireless 9-1-1 calls over an IP backbone. Finally, the Pasadena Regional Integrated Next Generation (RING) and Mendocino County hosted solution will be a turnkey end-to-end NG9-1-1 solution. It provides for geographic diversity for redundancy and network survivability and allows 9-1-1 calls at any work station within the participating PSAPs.

We will also be conducting Text-to-9-1-1 pilot projects to analyze data and determine the best path for implementation in California. The pilot projects will be held in Northern and Southern California and will incorporate California State Universities where high text volumes are expected to occur, and will be evaluated on several types of applications. This will include short message service (SMS) to TTY, which is a teleprinter specifically designed for text communication over the public switched telephone network that has been used by the deaf or hearing impaired for many years. It will also include SMS to TTY Gateway, which allows other Wireless Service Providers (WSP) to aggregate into the PSAP and SMS to Web interface, where SMS is received via web browser at the PSAP. Finally, the evaluation will include SMS to IP enabled text solution 9-1-1 CPE, or customer premise call handling equipment at the PSAP.

Next, I would like to provide a brief update in our efforts to advance the State to a dedicated Public Safety Broadband Network. California participated in the FirstNet Regional Meeting on May 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of this year, along with eight other states and territories. The participating Board Members were there to discuss the needs, challenges, and potential

opportunities of rolling out the first ever Public Safety Network. The overall message was that FirstNet will roll out a cost effective network to meet public safety needs but cannot do it alone. They will look to the states, counties, and cities to leverage existing infrastructure and expressed their support in ensuring local control of the network and expressed the desire for open communication in moving forward. California is currently awaiting the award of the State and Local Implementation Grant Program (SLIPG) funding to begin planning for the National Public Safety Network. We anticipate the grant award sometime in August; however no specific date has been provided. California has been earmarked to receive \$5.9 million, which will be awarded in two phases. Phase 1 will focus on providing the state with funding for developing the governance structure and outreach. Phase 2 will focus on FirstNet data gathering and FirstNet is currently in the process of developing the guidelines and metrics for the data gathering phase.

FirstNet has approved the Los Angeles Regional Interoperable Communications System (LA-RICS). California is fortunate to have gained this approval. As you may recall, this project was awarded \$150 million from the Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) grant, but was then put on hold to ensure the project was consistent with the direction of FirstNet. The Bay Area Regional Interoperable Communications System (BayRICS) continues spectrum lease negotiations with FirstNet. A resolution was passed at the FirstNet Board meeting to continue the negotiations between FirstNet and BayRICS, with an end date of September 30, 2013. We are hopeful any issues can be resolved within that timeframe.

Lastly, I would like to update you on the Wireless Emergency Alerts and National Weather Service Alert Information. Many of you may have received the recent Amber Alert on your wireless phone. This project is a partnership between the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), FEMA, and the wireless industry. The FCC facilitated agreements, FEMA developed the technology and manages the alerting infrastructure, and the wireless industry broadcasts the alerts over cell towers to their customers' phones. Wireless Emergency Alerts were launched in April and the National Weather Service information, which is one of our many authorized originators, was launched this summer. Currently, not all wireless phones have the capability to receive the alerts, but for those that do, the service is automatic with nothing to download or sign-up for; however users do have the option to unsubscribe. The alerts do not use a phone number, but instead use a feature similar to a radio broadcast where cell phones pick up alerts from cell towers within range of both the phone and the warning. Currently, three types of

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alerts may be sent out through this system, which includes Amber Alerts, Imminent Threats, such as weather, and Presidential messages in the event of a national emergency.

Thank you for the opportunity to brief you on the activities of Cal OES's Public Safety Communications. I welcome any questions you might have at this time, or at any time in the future.