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Standards that Drive the Business of Communications

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RE: Request for Input/Comments Regarding the ATIS ESIF Evaluation of Location Acquisition Protocols

Dear Leader:

The Next Generation Emergency Services (NGES) Subcommittee of the Emergency Services Interconnection Forum (ESIF) of the Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions (ATIS) is sending this liaison letter to a number of Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) to request comments as described in this liaison letter. SDO recipients are invited to provide a response by March 1, 2007. SDO responses to this liaison letter should be sent to the ESIF Chair. The reader is referred to the accompanying draft document entitled, "Location Acquisition and Location Parameter Conveyance for Internet Access Networks in Support of Emergency Services" which provides extensive information related to this request. The NGES Subcommittee will evaluate the feedback received in response to this liaison letter, and this information will be considered in a final recommendation, an ATIS Technical Report, which will be based on the accompanying document.

Background

In response to a request from the National Emergency Number Association (NENA), the NGES Subcommittee is evaluating options for recommendations on the implementation of the Location Information Server (LIS) functionality identified in the NENA i2 standard for VoIP emergency services and as applicable to the upcoming NENA i2.5 and i3 standards. NENA has defined requirements for the LIS function and the NGES Subcommittee has evaluated options against these requirements.

The NGES Subcommittee considerations have been broken into two specific aspects. The first aspect is the recommendation on the protocol used for location acquisition. That is, which protocol should be recommended for use by LIS clients to perform requests for location information? The second aspect is related to the manner in which the LIS performs location determination in individual access network types; what general approach can be adopted to facilitate the conveyance of network parameters and which can be used for location determination in various access network technologies.

The location acquisition protocols that were evaluated for this analysis are DHCP, LLDP-MED, HELD, RELO, LREP-SIP, and LCP. References covering each of these protocols are included in the accompanying document. The results of the analysis to date indicates that while most protocols meet most of the NENA requirements, only the HELD protocol meets all of the NENA requirements.

Recognizing the separation of access and service providers in the generic VoIP architecture, the NGES Subcommittee has also described a general architecture in the accompanying document which introduces a new logical network component referred to as an Access Location Entity (ALE). The functionality of the ALE is to convey access-specific network parameters to the LIS so that they can be used for the purposes of location calculation for a device with a specific IP address. The document also describes a protocol called the Flexible LIS-ALE Protocol (FLAP) which may be used to support communication of these network parameters between the ALE and the LIS.

The ESIF is requesting each SDO to provide input/comments to help with the NGES Subcommittee location acquisition protocol evaluation. Below are some areas on which you may choose to provide input:

1. Comments regarding the protocols evaluated against the NENA VoIP Location Requirements.
2. Comments on specifying a single protocol, such as HELD, to be used as the location acquisition protocol supported by the LIS function.
3. Comments regarding the proposal that a general architecture for location parameter conveyance be defined and recommended. For example:
   a. The extent to which it is useful to decouple the location parameter determination and conveyance function from the LIS location determination function.
   b. Whether your organization would support the formal specification of a protocol like FLAP for this purpose.

The ATIS ESIF would like to thank your organization for taking the time to evaluate and respond to this request. It is important that the remaining uncertainties associated with the implementation of the NENA i2 migratory solution for VoIP emergency services are addressed in a timely fashion. This will give the industry the confidence necessary to implement quickly and begin to deliver the same level of life-saving emergency services features to VoIP users that are currently available to users of the existing PSTN. Please provide comments by March 1, 2007. For more information in regards to ATIS ESIF NGES, please visit our website http://www.atis.org/esif/nges.asp.

Best Regards,

Robert Montgomery

Bob Montgomery
ESIF Chair

Attachments: Recipients of the ESIF NGES Liaison Letter
NGES Draft Document, Location Acquisition and Location Parameter Conveyance for Internet Access Networks in Support of Emergency Services

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This liaison has been submitted on behalf of the ESIF NGES to the following organizations:

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