

FCC Fines Companies for 911 Outage

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Earlier this week, the FCC [Fined CenturyLink \\$400,000](#) and [West Safety Communications \\$175,000](#) for a multi-state 911 outage that occurred in August 2018. To resolve the dispute, both companies also entered into a Compliance Plan.

The outage stemmed from an inadvertent switch configuration change, which disrupted the delivery of 911 calls in nine states. The FCC calculated that the ensuing 65-minute outage resulted in more than 460,000 calls to 911 not being delivered.

The Order notes that the outage impacted only one of West Safety's two routing facilities. Carriers that load-balanced their traffic between the two facilities were able to complete 911 calls during the outage. Carriers that did not load-balance their traffic were impacted.

Both companies are required to (i) develop operating procedures to ensure compliance with the 911 service rules; (ii) conduct employee training; and (iii) develop a compliance manual. In addition, the FCC requires both parties to file annual compliance reports, appoint a Compliance Officer to oversee the program, and report instances of material noncompliance uncovered in the next 3 years.

A previous blog post [here](#) describes some additional common components of a Compliance Plan.

The FCC fined the parties for the outage and for failing to deliver 911 calls to a PSAP. The Commission alleged this violates a [rule](#) that requires common carriers to transmit *all* 911 calls to a PSAP. Similar outages in the past have also resulted in fines for not complying with the FCC's [network outage reporting \(NORS\) rules](#), but the companies appear to have complied with the NORS rules – and resolved the outage within 65 minutes – so no NORS violation occurred.

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