

Department of Transportation

Office of the Secretary

Washington, D.C.

ORDER

DOT 4540.1

11-23-73

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION POLICY ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSAL EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER (911) CONCEPT

1. PURPOSE. This Order establishes Department of Transportation (DOT) policy concerning implementation of the Universal Emergency Telephone Number (911) concept.
2. SCOPE. The provisions of the Order apply to the Office of the Secretary (DOT) and the operating administrations. In addition, pursuant to delegation by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) under Section 5.(m) of the DOT Act, this directive is applicable to the NTSB.
3. DEFINITIONS. The Universal Emergency Telephone Number (911) concept combines coordination of emergency response resources and single telephone number area wide access to these resources. It provides the means for reporting emergencies and summoning assistance. A "Resource Coordination Communications" (RCC) center is a call handling office with full-time answering capabilities for routing all types of emergency calls to appropriate public-service agencies. "Nine-one-one" (911) is the three digit emergency telephone number that is being made available by the U. S. telephone industry on a nationwide basis for citizen access to emergency response resources.
4. BACKGROUND.
 - a. Safety is emphasized as one of the Department of Transportation's responsibilities. This includes the prevention of conditions prejudicial to safety and to taking the necessary action in responding to emergency conditions, when preventive measures have failed or otherwise do not exist.
 - b. Telecommunications is essential to effectively mobilize capabilities during emergencies. It is the means for citizen access to all forms of emergency assistance, whether on land, at sea, or in the air, for reducing response time, and for coordinating resources during emergencies.

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- c. Numerous governmental commissions, legislative bodies, private organizations, and citizens' groups have recommended the establishment of a single, universal, emergency telephone number and its availability-nationwide-for the reporting of emergencies and summoning of emergency assistance. Such a telephone number has now been made available; this number (911) also enhances coordination of emergency services. The Bell Telephone System and the United States Independent Telephone Association-the latter representing the independent telephone companies in the Nation-support the implementation of the Universal Emergency Telephone Number concept on a nationwide basis. The Director of the Office of Telecommunications Policy, Executive Office of the President, has promulgated a national policy for Emergency Telephone Number (911).
 - d. Citizen participation and the cooperation and coordination of the telephone companies and other public service agencies within a community are required to implement a Resource Coordination Communications (RCC) center served by a single area wide emergency telephone number. When the boundaries of the local telephone exchanges do not correspond with political and other jurisdictions, the Resource Coordination Communications (RCC) center must incorporate the necessary operational techniques to insure emergency telephone number access for the entire areas as well as response by the appropriate agency.
5. POLICY. It is the policy of the Department of Transportation to encourage States and political subdivisions to adopt and implement the Universal Emergency Telephone Number (911) concept including:
- a. The establishment of Resource Coordination Communications (RCC) centers.
 - b. Single emergency telephone number (911) access.
6. IMPLEMENTATION.
- a. With emphasis directed to reduction of mortality and injuries which occur on the nation's highways, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is designated to serve as the lead administration in the Department for the development and provision of information relating to implementation of the Universal Emergency Telephone Number (911) concept, and for reporting on DOT activities in this regard.

- b. Within the policy in paragraph 5 above, operating administrations and the NTSB will—in their respective communications and safety program activities—take such action by means available to them as appropriate and authorized to encourage and support the implementation of the Universal Emergency Telephone Number (911) concept by States and political subdivisions, coordinating such activities with the NHTSA.



Claude S. Brinegar
Secretary of Transportation