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Iowa 9-1-1 Call Center First in Nation to Successfully Trial 9-1-1 Text Messaging

Black Hawk County First 9-1-1 Call Center to Participate in Landmark Effort Enabling Speech and Hearing Impaired Citizens to Communicate Directly With 9-1-1 for Help; Service to go live this July

Waterloo, IOWA --- The Black Hawk County Iowa 9-1-1 Service Board today announced that the Black Hawk Consolidated Public Safety Communications Center has become the first 9-1-1 Call Center in the country to successfully receive text messages sent directly to 9-1-1. This groundbreaking effort allows those with speech and hearing impairments to use text messaging to communicate directly with a 9-1-1 operator in an emergency. A broad team of communications companies including i-wireless, Intrado Inc., Positron Public Safety and RACOM Corporation of Marshalltown, IA, were involved in this effort.

The organizations worked collaboratively to support the public safety needs of the nation's 31 million citizens with speech and hearing impairments who rely upon text messaging as a primary means of communications. Currently they must communicate with 9-1-1 operators using a relay center or a specialized communications device.

"The successful testing of text messaging to 9-1-1 from a wireless telephone is a tremendous emergency services advancement for individuals who have sensory disabilities," said Richard Ray, chair of the National Emergency Number Association's (NENA) Accessibility Committee. "I urge public safety agencies to accelerate the deployment of this technology and to encourage, support and celebrate efforts such as this."

"Increasingly text is becoming the way people communicate and public safety must be able to support 9-1-1 text messaging," said Chief Thomas Jennings, chairman, Black Hawk 9-1-1 Board. "We are excited to have the opportunity to participate on a solution to enable 9-1-1 texting for the Speech and Hearing impaired community as well as set the stage for adoption by the larger texting population."

The new enhancement to 9-1-1 utilizes Short Message Service (SMS) to establish a text conversation directly between the 'caller' and the 9-1-1 operator. While SMS was not initially developed for use in public safety it has gained widespread acceptance by the Speech and Hearing Impaired Community and is becoming an increasingly popular form of communication. CTIA - the Wireless Association, a wireless industry organization, estimates that the number of SMS text messages exceeded one trillion in 2008. As part of this program techniques have been identified that will improve the overall speed and reliability of 9-1-1 SMS to make it even better for public safety communications.

"This effort was driven by our desire to support the public safety needs of the speech and hearing impaired," said George Heinrichs, Intrado president. "This breakthrough

will not only enhance their safety but the safety of others who find themselves in special circumstances where texting is the best available means to contact 9-1-1.”

“We are excited to be a part of this landmark project to enable our deaf and hard of hearing subscribers to text message to 9-1-1,” said Michael Haskins, i wireless chief executive officer and chief operating officer. “i wireless has a strong commitment to public safety and to bringing innovative services to our customers, and this pioneering project creates a new method for requesting emergency services. We are proud to be the first wireless carrier to provide this capability.”

“The ability to reach the 9-1-1 center by text message will undoubtedly benefit millions of Americans, especially those who are members of the Speech and Hearing Impaired Community who rely on text messaging as their sole form of mobile communication,” said Brian Fontes, chief executive officer, NENA. “Today’s announcement demonstrates what can be achieved through commitment and dedication to improving public safety and helping those who rely on 9-1-1 for help.”

The trial solution in Black Hawk County is in restricted test mode with plans to go live in early July of 2009. Black Hawk County citizens will be notified when the service is available. To find out when this service will be available in your area please contact your wireless carrier. It’s important to note that a voice call remains the best way to contact 9-1-1. Texting to 9-1-1 should be limited to use in situations where a voice call is not possible.

About Intrado

For over 30 years, Intrado has played a key role in helping to define, build and maintain the complex emergency communications system in North America. Intrado provides the core of the 9-1-1 infrastructure and has supported over 1 billion 9-1-1 calls. Intrado is partnering with public safety agencies and telecommunications carriers to deliver the next generation of 9-1-1 technology and services. Additional information on Intrado can be found at the Company's Web site: www.intrado.com.

About i Wireless

Founded in 1997 and headquartered in Urbandale, Iowa, i wireless is a partnership between T-Mobile USA and Iowa Network Services. i wireless has over 250 full-service company stores and authorized dealers across Iowa and western Illinois offering customers the largest regional and nationwide coverage on the most advanced all digital GSM voice and data network.

About RACOM Corporation

RACOM delivers best-of-class wireless, voice and data networks and network applications to public safety, utility and other mission-critical communications users. The company is headquartered in Marshalltown, IA and serves the upper Midwest with future-proof, cost effective and configurable network solutions. Additional information about RACOM is available at www.racom.net.