

October 26, 2011 Joint Oversight Hearing  
California Assembly Committee on Utilities and Commerce  
Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Management

Sprint Testimony

Sprint respectfully submits the following testimony regarding the September 8, 2011, Southwest Power Outage. Sprint appreciates the opportunity to submit comments to the Committees on this important matter. Sprint has implemented a robust disaster planning response program that was deployed during the September 8<sup>th</sup> Southwest Power Outage.

Sprint's Disaster Planning Response Program

Sprint has invested millions of dollars to prepare its nationwide network in the event of a man-made or natural disaster. In developing a Business Continuity Planning and Disaster Response Program, Sprint has focused its investment on four primary areas of emergency management: Preparedness, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. As part of its emphasis on preparedness, Sprint conducts risk assessments of critical network facilities, business processes, and services to develop training and market exercise scenarios to target known potential vulnerabilities. A key component of ensuring network redundancy and reliability during times of emergency is mitigation. Sprint's core network is protected by fixed generators, extended battery back-up, and the ability to tie-in an external mobile generator. At the cell site layer, Sprint installs batteries at cell sites, and uses a combination of fixed and portable generators to manage extended power outages. During disasters, Sprint's Response Team mobilizes a formal Incident Command System (ICS) structure and leverages well trained personnel, generators, Cells on Wheels (COWs), and Satellite Cells on Light Truck (SatCOLTs) as part of an integrated response. Pre-prioritized Critical and Coverage cell sites aid in initial recovery planning. Sprint's emphasis on recovery is both short and long-term. After an emergency event, Sprint not only looks at possible repairs and if any network or process enhancements can be made to ensure reliability in future events.

Sprint's Response to the September 8<sup>th</sup> Outage

Sprint experienced cell site outages due to loss of power and telco backhaul. The outages generally lasted several hours with cell site backup power functioning as expected. Sprint submitted the required outage reports to the Federal Communications Commission and California Public Utilities Commission.

Future Emergency Response Plans

Backup power is a top priority for Sprint in maintaining nationwide dependable networks. Traditionally, backup power has centered on propane or diesel-powered backup generators and lead batteries. However, through its commitment to green technology, Sprint is embracing a cleaner and more efficient approach that utilizes hydrogen fuel cells or other clean power sources when possible. In April 2009, the

United States Department of Energy awarded a \$7.3 million dollar grant to Sprint to expand its hydrogen fuel cell program. Sprint is also exploring Methanol Hydrogen Reformer Fuel Cell technology in connection with “Network Vision,” the state-of-the art network that Sprint is currently building. Sprint is investing billions of dollars in the “Network Vision” overhaul that will significantly reduce the power needs of its next generation cell sites. This will place a lower demand on the power grid and enable Sprint to continue to pursue more green solutions that tend to be limited in their power output. Sprint believes that its approach to clean, backup power is consistent with California’s environmental priorities.