

Article: eCall providers uniting to improve European emergency response

Source: The Intelligent Highways, Volume 19 • Issue 13 • July 1, 2008

## **Ecall providers uniting to improve European emergency response**

ATX Group ([www.atxg.com](http://www.atxg.com)) of Dusseldorf, Germany, the world's largest independent telematics services provider to the global automotive industry, is among 30 major organizations named by the European Emergency Number Association (EENA) to a new Advisory Board dedicated to reinforcing the advocacy organization's leading role as the "Voice of 1-1-2" in the European Union.

This new Board represents a variety of stakeholders—politicians, professional user organizations, and technology and solution providers—committed to enhancing emergency response across Europe, the implementation and operation of a pan-European 1-1-2 number (similar to 9-1-1 in North America). A list of Board members is available at [www.eena.org](http://www.eena.org).

ATX's menu of Telematics services includes monitoring and verifying location-based eCalls from

vehicles, including advanced automatic collision notification, which provides emergency responders with crash severity information aggregated from various in-vehicle sensors along with vehicle location (via satellite positioning), vehicle description, direction of travel, and a voice connection into the vehicle. Since its inception, ATX has worked closely with Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) in both North America and Europe, bridging emergency responders with motorists in need regardless of the level of technology in the local PSAP or the native language of the PSAP or motorist.

Seventeen years after the creation of the European emergency number 1-1-2 by the European Union, the latest *Eurobarometer* survey reported that 78% of Europeans remain unaware of the 3 digits that can save their lives everywhere in the EU.

Diana Wallis, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Member of newly formed EENA Advisory Board, admits that she did not know the European emergency number 1-1-2 before getting involved with EENA. “We need a large publicity campaign to make sure that all Europeans know this number,” she added.

“Together with all the members of EENA Advisory Board we will highlight and award citizens and emergency services who have contributed to a better 1-1-2 during the 1-1-2 Awards Ceremony on June 3rd,” said Diana Wallis. “We want to highlight some great initiatives undertaken throughout the EU that will help to raise the awareness to those authorities which have not yet fully engaged in improving their 1-1-2 service. The participation of Commissioner Viviane Reding in this event also shows the positive will of the European Commission to promote good practices in this field,” she concluded.

Through a new committee organization operating under direction from the Advisory Board, EENA intends to promote the European emergency number 1-1-2 by launching a Europe-wide 1-1-2 Community Education project, create a network of 1-1-2 First Responders active in their countries via EENA 112 Chapters, contribute to official legislative documents related to 1-1-2, and improve recognition of and response to 1-1-2 calls through a 1-1-2 Excellence Centre project.

“Large support from the European Parliament to improve the 1-1-2 service has provided us with a great opportunity to gather all actors that

that can contribute to its improvement,” said Olivier Paul-Morandini, President and Founder of EENA. “Our whole emergency communications and response service today is facing great challenges. Caller-location is still not available to several emergency services, multilingual calls are not appropriately handled, and the number of false calls to 1-1-2 remains very high due to the lack of education campaigns. As a result, intervention times are much too high with regards to what can be expected in the EU,” he added.

The European Emergency Number Association ([www.eena.org](http://www.eena.org)), was set up in 1999 as a non-profit association registered in Belgium to serve as a neutral discussion platform for emergency services, industry, and informed citizens with the aim of getting efficient, interoperable, and harmonized emergency telecommunications in accordance with citizens’ requirements. EENA has been advocating to authorities the issues related to the 1-1-2 as more and more EU citizens travel for business or leisure. EENA is also promoting the establishment of a general, pan-European, multilingual, accessible, simplified, and efficient system for alerting citizens about imminent or developing emergencies. **THI**