

# Today

## VERIZON RESPONDS TO SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> ATTACKS

BY JACK KENNEDY

*Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, we have been inundated with stories of struggle and triumph surrounding this event. The telecommunications industry has its own story to tell as well about the impact to the network and the important lessons learned.*

**S**OUTHERN MANHATTAN, the financial capital of the world, is supported by the most intensive communications infrastructure in the world. The nerve center of that infrastructure is the Verizon building at 140 West Street, which serves 300,000 voice lines, 3.5 million data circuits, and the circuits connected to other telecommunications providers. The September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks not only destroyed one of the most powerful symbols of American commerce, it also brought to a halt the flow of financial information that makes our economy run.

While getting Wall Street back to business was a national priority, Verizon's first and most immediate priority was accounting for its employees and getting them to safety. About 500 employees worked in the World Trade Center itself, while an additional 1,700 worked directly across the street at the West Street facility. Although the overwhelming majority of employees were safely evacuated and relocated to other Verizon facilities in the region, unfortunately two Verizon employees in Manhattan (and one in the Pentagon) lost their lives in the attacks.

Even as they were evacuating and looking after their employees in the immediate area, Verizon began meeting the requirements of emergency crews and authorities. This included Verizon employees staying on the scene and running cables for special lines in the staging areas even as debris continued to fall.

The 140 West Street building is directly across the street from the World Trade Center and was severely damaged by the collapse of the World Trade Center complex. At least one girder penetrated seven stories through concrete floors. Water from broken mains and fire hoses flooded the five-story basement vaults, shorting out cables that had not been cut by falling debris. Exterior ducts were covered by 30 feet of debris.

Despite the massive damage, 140 West Street continued to process calls until later that evening. However, after flooding cut off the emergency power



supply, the facility went dark. With the loss of power, air compressors stopped supplying air pressure to the conduit, leaving the cables vulnerable to water. With the West Street facility inoperative, One Police Plaza, City Hall and Federal Plaza were without dial tone. Verizon began the massive, days-long task of rerouting traffic to other central offices, with priority rerouting for emergency organizations. Throughout the crisis, a team led by Verizon's group president for New York held twice-a-day conference calls with city government.

To serve customers in lower Manhattan without phone service, Verizon deployed more than 180 wireless pay phones, bringing the total to more than 200 in the area. Customers using the phones could make free, three-minute calls to anywhere in the continental U.S. On September 17<sup>th</sup>, Verizon continued to offer free local calling within the five boroughs from all curbside pay phones below Broome Street in Manhattan, the area most affected by service problems.

Verizon's Wholesale Services group established a Web site with information for wholesale customers. Verizon established and posted emergency contingency procedures and new numbers for the Collocation Care Center and for access and local service maintenance and provisioning. They also established and posted provisioning priorities. Verizon maintained around-the-clock communications with competitive local exchange carriers (CLECs), interexchange carriers (IXCs) and wireless carriers to update them on progress and determine their needs.

continued on page 3

# FCC UNDERGOES REORGANIZATION UNDER NEW BUSINESS PLAN



Michael Powell

**I**N MARCH 2001, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), under the leadership of Chairman Michael Powell, began a new business plan, which requires a comprehensive retooling and redirection of the FCC's mission, designed to make the Commission more efficient, effective and responsive. As part of the new business plan, a reorganization of the FCC bureaus was approved in January 2002 by the Commission, Congress and National Treasury Employees Union Local 209 and went into effect March 25<sup>th</sup>.

The bureaus affected by the reorganization are: the Media Bureau (formerly the Cable Services and Mass Media Bureaus); the Wireline Competition Bureau (formerly Common Carrier Bureau); the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (formerly Consumer Information Bureau); the International Bureau; the Enforcement Bureau; the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau; and the Office of Legislative Affairs (formerly Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs).

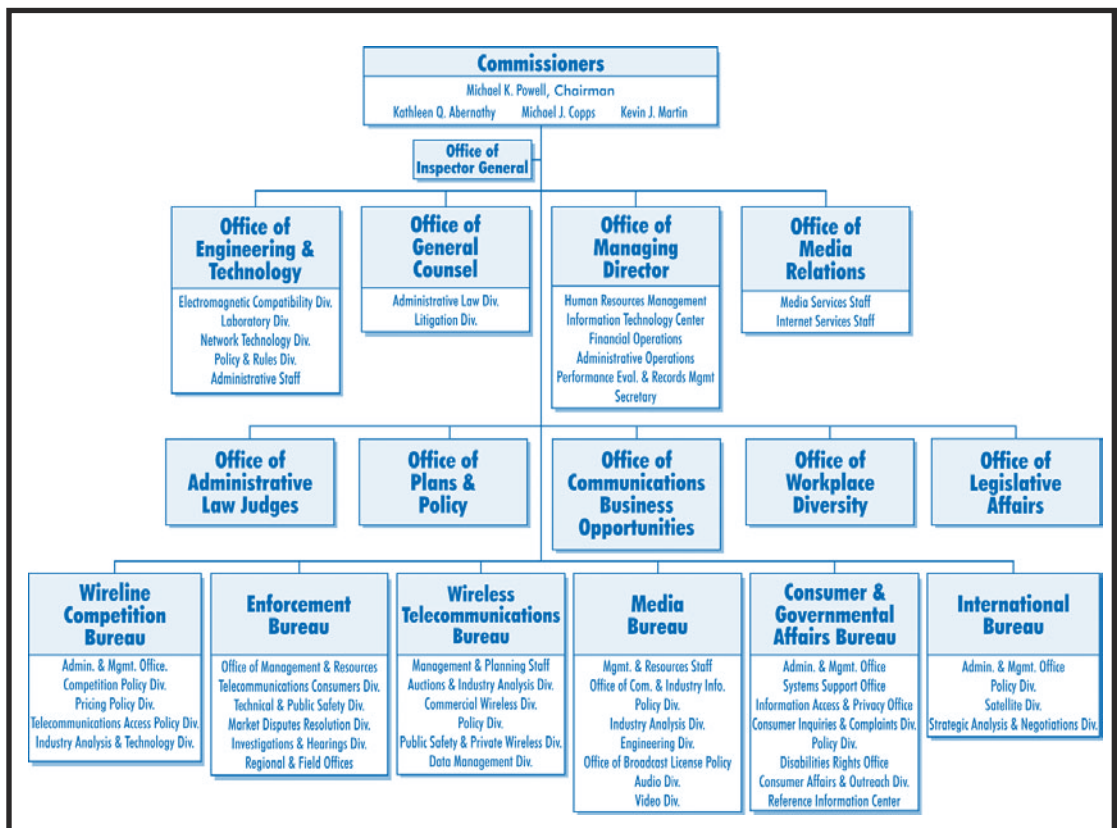
The newly established Media Bureau is responsible for developing, recommending and administering the policy and licensing programs related to electronic media, including cable television, broadcast television and radio in the United States and its territories. It is also handling post-licensing

matters regarding Direct Broadcast Satellite Service. The organizational units of the Bureau include the Office of the Bureau Chief; the Office of Broadcast Licensing, which includes the Audio and Video Divisions; the Office of Communications and Industry Information; and the Management and Resources staff.

Formerly known as the Common Carrier Bureau, the Wireline Competition Bureau's mission is promoting competition, reducing market barriers, ensuring universal service and encouraging investment in and innovation of advanced technologies. By reorganizing the Bureau into four divisions (previously there were six), the Wireline Competition Bureau is consolidating its expertise and eliminating duplicative efforts.

The four divisions are: the Competition Policy Division; the Pricing Policy Division; the Industry Analysis and Technology Division; and the Telecommunications Access Policy Division.

The Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau is replacing the Consumer Information Bureau with greater policymaking and intergovernmental affairs responsibility (intra-agency coordination, relationship building with other federal agencies and tribal, state and local governments). The new Bureau is also responsible for soliciting consumers' views on matters important to the Commission and engaging consumers, states, other governmental organizations and the industry in ongoing discussions including timely topics such as the competitive telecom marketplace. [continued on back](#)



# VERIZON RESPONDS

continued from page 1

Verizon contacted the seven of the largest wholesale customers – including AT&T, WorldCom, Sprint, Qwest, Broadwing and Global Crossing – to determine their needs and assigned a Verizon executive to each one to ensure that they received exceptional service during the crisis. Verizon restored or rerouted more than 100,000 circuits that wholesale customers used to serve their customers.

The day after the attacks, Verizon senior executives met with the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the chairman of the New York Stock Exchange, the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, representatives of the Federal Reserve and major member firms to discuss plans for reopening the exchange. Thereafter, Verizon held daily status calls for all major member firms, interexchange carrier partners, Office of Emergency Management and NYPD to update customers on the health of the network, city issues and police activities. Participants discussed the readiness and plans of member firms and a schedule of testing through the weekend.

A special software system, critical to NYSE operations, had to be retrieved from the upper floors of the severely damaged West Street building. Ten Verizon employees donned moon suits with respirators, entered the building, walked

up to the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor of the darkened building, and retrieved the servers containing the software system. By Monday morning, September 17<sup>th</sup>, Verizon had reconstructed more than two million circuits, rerouted 1.5 million lines, constructed 18 synchronous optical network rings and rebuilt a proprietary software system that managed data traffic and interconnected member firms, in time to handle the largest trading day (2.3 billion shares) in NYSE history.

If September 11<sup>th</sup> showed the worst of what humankind

is capable, the night of the national telethon headlined by the entertainment industry demonstrated the essence of

goodness that is at our core. That night, just 10 days after the attacks, the Verizon contact center in Marion was set aside to help accept pledges during the national telethon. I was privileged and honored to work alongside 800 other Verizon volunteers in Marion that night in which common, everyday Americans came together and donated millions of dollars to help the victims in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. That night was truly special and demonstrated more than anything the true character of our nation. The memories of that very special night when the nation came together are what I choose to remember most about the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks.



## COMPANY PROFILE

### A Very Busy Woman

*Profile of Tami Pontious*

“IT’S NEVER BORING...”, words Tami Pontious, General Manager of the Ayersville Telephone Company, uses to describe her day. This from a woman who is a wife, mother, CPA, general manager, OTA and OSLECA Board Member and an active member of numerous church, community and business organizations and committees.

Tami grew up in Stryker, Ohio, in Williams County. She has been married to Norm for 11 years and is the proud mother of Mandy, 8 and Emily, 7. Tami is grateful that Norm has been able to be a stay-at-home dad for the past year, providing the support and encouragement needed with her hectic schedule.

She received her degree from Northwest State Community College in 1986. Tami spent four years at Pry CPA, working with Martin Ellerbrock, currently an employee of Sycamore Telephone Company, as a CPA focused on the small telephone company sector. Her first responsibility at Pry CPA was the Part 32 conversion – a daunting task to be sure. She joined the Ayersville Telephone Company in December 1991.

Tami is proud to share the many accomplishments and innovations which the Ayersville Telephone Company has made. They converted to digital switching in January 1991, rolled out DSL in April 2001, have full fiber connectivity and since 1995, have provided an information hot line on the Company’s voicemail system to the local school at no cost. This last service demonstrates the community involvement of Ayersville Telephone Company. The voicemail system is heavily used, providing up-to-the-minute news on what’s going on at school today – good for homework, weather-related delays and cancellations, etc.

Just when we thought we had learned all we could about her, Tami shared her latest accomplishment: she completed her first 5K Run. Tami competed in the Polar Bear Run held this past December in Defiance, Ohio and is looking forward to entering more running events this season.

The Ayersville Telephone Company has been a member of the OTA since 1965. It was formed in 1916 by

the members of the community and was operated from a residence until moving to its current facilities in 1965. During 2001, a major renovation has been completed, expanding and improving the previous facilities. The company serves more than 1,200 access lines in Defiance County and currently employs five people.



**Tami Pontious**

*Jack Kennedy is the recently retired President of Verizon Ohio. He was with Verizon from 1970 – 2002.*

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## FCC UNDERGOES REORGANIZATION

continued from page 2

The Bureau is organized into the Policy Division; an expanded Disabilities Rights Office; the Information Access and Privacy Office; the Consumer Affairs and Outreach Division; the Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division; and the Reference Information Center.

The restructured International Bureau combines the International Bureau's work on international policy and spectrum issues and the Commission's role in bilateral, regional and multilateral organizations. The three divisions within the Bureau are: the Policy Division; the Satellite Division; and the Strategic Analysis and Negotiations Division.

New roles have been assigned to the Divisions of the Enforcement Bureau as part of the reorganization. The Market Disputes Resolution Division is

responsible for pole attachment and Part 68 complaints. The Investigations and Hearings Division is handling common carrier auditing functions and related merger compliance. Formal closed captioning and pending cable programming tier complaints are addressed by the Telecommunications Consumers Division. The Technical and Public Safety Division, in conjunction with the Bureau's field offices, is responsible for all cable technical enforcement.

The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau is assuming responsibility for all regulatory issues related to the Instructional Television Fixed Service and the Multipoint Distribution Service/ Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service as well as the handling of regulatory duties associated with these

services, including all licensing and legal matters. Divisions within the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau include: the Auctions and Industry Analysis Division; the Commercial Wireless Division; the Data Management Division; the Policy Division; and the Public Safety and Private Wireless Division.

*Further information regarding the FCC Reform may be found on the FCC Web site at: [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov).*