

Cablefax Daily™

Monday — August 27, 2018

What the Industry Reads First

Volume 29 / No. 164

Hurricane Report: FCC Makes Recommendations, Rosenworcel Criticizes Response

As Hurricane Lane torments the Hawaiian Islands, the FCC's Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau released its 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season Impact Report. It's a move commissioner *Jessica Rosenworcel* described as too little, too late. The Democrat was a vocal critic of the agency's response to Maria and other storms last year, calling for field hearings and a speedier look into what worked and didn't. The FCC did send personnel to assist in disaster and recovery, and commissioners, including chmn *Ajit Pai* and Rosenworcel, visited affected areas. Other efforts included the creation of a Hurricane Recovery Task Force, a preparedness workshop with government and consumer stakeholders, daily reports on the status of communications services as well as advancing money from USF and temporarily easing some provisions of Lifeline and other programs in areas impacted by Maria. The report sums up the 2017 season as the most expensive in US history, almost double the cost of the 2005 season that included Hurricane Katrina. Initial estimates are more than \$200bln in damages in the US and its territories. Rosenworcel thanked the Bureau for its efforts, but added, "let's not kid ourselves—releasing this report 85 days into the current hurricane season and as an historic storm gets closer to Hawaii's shores, is simply too little, too late." Instead of hosting field hearing and establishing an independent panel as the FCC did after Katrina and Sandy, "we lump together four of the most destructive storms in recent history into one 38-page report with a list of recommended, voluntary best practices for federal government partners, service providers, 911 call centers, and consumers," Rosenworcel continued in a statement that urged the FCC to make a greater effort to learn from disasters in a timely way. The Bureau's report found that US mainland emergency call centers survived the storms relatively well, while Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands' four 911 call centers were not fully functional for some time. It breaks down the storms' impacts on service, including cell site outages. During Hurricane Harvey, approx 150K cable subs lacked service at some point from Aug 26-Sept 5. For Irma and Maria, wireless services were greatly impacted (at its worst, 95.6% of cell sites were out of service in Puerto Rico). Throughout Irma, the number of cable system subscribers that suffered loss of service fluctuated widely, reaching a high of several million at one point throughout all affected areas (i.e., Florida, Puerto Rico, and the USVI). In the case of Maria, communications services were at a "virtual standstill" for weeks after the storm. "Cable system and wireline phone service remained generally non-existent, owing mostly to the

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Publication Date: October 15, 2018

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Ad Space deadline: September 17

Artwork due: September 21

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lack of power,” the report said. On Dec 6, several weeks after landfall, the US Virgin Islands had no operational television broadcasting, cable system, and wireline service; and only two AM and two FM radio stations were confirmed functioning. Observations from 2017 include that broadcasters lagged other communications sectors in reporting outages through the FCC’s Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS) and that cable providers in Puerto Rico and the USVI didn’t provide detailed info via the reporting system. As a result, the Bureau said it will deploy a vigorous outreach program targeted at providers to promote the value of DIRS participation. Other takeaways include disseminating more emergency info in non-English languages. Recommendations for service providers include coordinating with proper state and local authorities to help technicians gain access to restricted area and rigorous system maintenance.

Fostering Good Will: Verizon has removed all speed cap restrictions for first responders on the West Coast, an effort to make good after throttling the data of California firefighters during the Mendocino fire. Santa Clara County fire chief *Anthony Bowden* called it a safety issue in his declaration in a brief submitted to the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit Court in support of Title II-based open internet rules. “We didn’t live up to our own promise of service and performance excellence when our process failed some first responders on the line, battling a massive California wildfire,” Verizon svp of public sector *Mike Maiorana* said in a blog post on the company’s site. “For that, we are truly sorry.” Maiorana also said Verizon is removing speed cap restrictions in Hawaii for those supporting Hurricane Lane efforts. The company also announced it’ll be releasing a new plan next week with unlimited data, meaning no caps on mobile solutions, and an automatic upgrade to priority access. More details on the plan and its pricing are to be revealed next week.

Ready to Talk: The FTC is kicking off its hearings on competition and consumer protection in the 21st Century with two full-day sessions at the Georgetown University Law Center. FTC chmn *Joe Simons* will present opening remarks before panels kick off with discussions surrounding current competition, antitrust law, vertical mergers and the regulation of consumer data. The sessions will be held Sept 13-14. Public comments can be submitted electronically until Oct 14.

Hurricane Lane: Hawaiian Telcom said a core team is meeting daily to update the company’s action plans with regards to the changing weather conditions. As with **Charter**, facilities have generators with backup batteries and data centers are well protected. “Our strategic investment in fiber deployment statewide has not only allowed us to provide faster Internet but has also resulted in a stronger and more resilient network. In addition, our recent combination with **Cincinnati Bell** provides us with additional resources and expertise,” a spokesperson said. Several key members of Cincinnati Bell are actually on the ground in Hawaii (trips were previously planned) and are participating in planning and updates.

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Gamer Perks: PlayStation owners are in luck. Sony announced a new Cloud Remote for PS4 that's designed more for TV use than for gaming. With a purchase of the \$30 remote, gamers get a free 30-day trial of the PlayStation Vue Core plan worth \$49.99. The device pairs via Bluetooth to a PS4 system and additionally can control some TV functions such as volume and power. It is currently available for pre-order at GameStop locations and Amazon, and will be released on Sept 19.

Thursday Tariffs: The Consumer Technology Association struck out at the Trump administration regarding the 25% tariff on \$16bln worth of Chinese goods that went into effect on Thursday, declaring that it's not working. "Not only is the White House failing to change China's behavior on IP, but it is also putting extreme pressure on American innovation and businesses that invent, design and engineer their IP in the United States," pres/CEO Gary Shapiro said in a statement. "The Trump administration has prioritized economic policies—such as tax reform—to help American workers and businesses. But if the administration continues to implement tariffs, our country will face a weaker economy, job losses and American families stuck with a higher cost of living."

People: Walt Baum was named pres of the Texas Cable Association, with the Amarillo native to start the job Sept 17. He has served as the exec dir of the TX Public Power Association since December 2015.

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i know we are in a cat 4 hurricane but i need the internet for a couple hours. can you help a friend out? @Ask_Spectrum

8:48 PM - 23 Aug 2018

Maureen Marshall @maurmarshall Following

Love, light, prayers and good wishes to @SenJohnMcCain and his family. Your service to our country, your integrity and strength of character are appreciated beyond words.

Rep. Joe Kennedy III @RepJoeKennedy
Senator John McCain is a warrior in every sense of the word. To an inspiring man and a loving family, our thoughts are with you.

12:45 PM - 24 Aug 2018

Up Ahead

- September 12-14:** Mobile World Congress Americas; LA
- September 25-28:** CableLabs Innovation Boot Camp; Louisville, Colorado
- October 15-16:** WICT Leadership Conference; New York
- October 16-17:** NAMIC Annual Conference; New York
- October 17:** Kaitz Dinner, New York
- November 15:** Cablefax Most Powerful Women Luncheon; New York

Research

- > While Gen Z may be known for its affinity for technology, they still make surprisingly traditional choices when it comes to when they do (and don't) use it.
- > Despite the rise of e-books, 77% of college students ages 17-23 prefer to read printed books.
- > They don't overshare, with 59% not trusting Facebook with their personal information. 78% allows some apps to know their location.
- > 93% own a laptop while only 44% own a tablet. In the US, 41% of students prefer watching streaming services on a laptop.
- > 40% still send emails when reaching out to a brand.

(Source: UNiDAYS)

Quotable

"My primary effort has been reducing business travel as much as I can so my wife is alone as little as possible. And I'm getting old. What else do people expect? Am I going to jump off all these boards all of a sudden? No."

– **John Malone** speaking to Bloomberg on his retirement from the boards of Lionsgate and Charter.

Cablefax Industry Jobs

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