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## **Communications Daily**

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### **'Because It's Safe'**

## **ATIS Symposium Addresses Need for Network Security Standards**

"ATIS's goal is produce a full suite of standards" for authentication and network security, said Susan Miller, pres. of the Alliance for Telecom Industry Solutions (ATIS), speaking at the group's Network Security Symposium Tues. Speakers made the case for a standard, preferably one that emerges as quickly as possible without govt. stepping on industry's toes.

The Dept. of Homeland Security should be funded to implement a commercial satellite communications security/emergency response improvement program within the National Communications System, said David Barron, chmn. of the National Security Telecom Advisory Committee (NSTAC) Industry Executive Subcommittee. Barron, whose NSTAC task force in May presented President Bush with standards suggestions on satellite, financial and legislative telecom issues, said "there's a growing reliance on commercial satellites," necessitating more private-public co-operation to allay security concerns. NSTAC's legislative task force also submitted suggestions that the Administration look to develop a process to resolve multi-jurisdictional authentication conflicts; collaborate with Congress to modify the Critical Infrastructure Information Act (CIIA) so DHS is its clearinghouse and sole dispenser; extend the protections of the CIIA to cover departments and agencies other than DHS; and collaborate with Congress to ensure CIIA's provisions remain intact.

Also framing the need for a standards body in terms of national security was Microsoft's Phil Reitinger, chmn. of NSTAC Next Generation Networks (NGN) Task Force. Reitinger said a similar recommendation report for NGNs would go to Bush by May 2005, and "the solution may be 20 years down the road. There may need to be a regulatory regime, but maybe the private

sector can work it out." Reitingger said it's "absolutely necessary" to develop a scenario with strong identity verification, but any such situation would require definitive standards for priority treatment for data in emergency situations.

Ed Hall, ATIS vp-technology development, said ATIS should convene another symposium to discuss and agree on an approach for an interoperable protocol access control mechanism. "Such a mechanism," Hall said, "could result in cost savings, ease interworking of security systems and improved user interfaces." Hall also promoted the value of the ATIS Technology & Operations (TOPS) Council, composed of industry technology and information officers, saying TOPS coordination would "ensure that security-related issues are addressed."

Among non-panelists, several industry members expressed doubts over non-governmental authority to mandate standards, with questions of liability and consumer protection arising. One industry source seemed convinced: "The government doesn't have a mandate that I lock my door at night. I just do it because it's safe." -- *Ian Martinez*