

For Immediate Release

## **CTIA-The Wireless Association®, The Wireless Foundation, The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Syniverse Announce Transition Plan for AMBER Alert Program™**

*Effective Dec. 31, 2012, Wireless AMBER Alert program™ to transition to Wireless Emergency Alerts platform, which already provides other emergency alerts to millions of wireless users nationwide*

**WASHINGTON, Dec. 14, 2012** – CTIA-The Wireless Association®, The Wireless Foundation™, The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) and Syniverse announced today that on Dec. 31, 2012, the Wireless AMBER Alerts™ program will end operations, as a part of the nation's transition to the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) program. Millions of cellphone users across the country will now receive free, automatic notifications about abducted children in their area as part of the WEA program.

CTIA and the wireless industry joined the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to offer WEA to supplement the existing Emergency Alert System. Consumers with WEA-capable smartphones and feature phones and services are automatically enrolled to receive AMBER Alerts for free, along with the Presidential and Imminent Threat Alerts.

Unlike Wireless AMBER Alerts, the WEA AMBER Alerts use the latest technology to send messages to wireless customers with WEA-capable devices in the area where a child has been abducted, even if the wireless customer isn't from the area. For example, if a Chicago resident was visiting Boston and a WEA AMBER Alert was issued in Boston, the subscriber would receive the alert. At the same time, if an alert was issued in Chicago, the subscriber would not receive it while in Boston.

"Since people were increasingly relying on their wireless devices in 2005, it made sense to send a succinct text message to alert users so they would be on the lookout for the kidnapped child and abductor in their area. We are proud to have worked with these entities on this outstanding program and know the WEA AMBER Alerts will be an even better tool to help find abducted children," said Steve Largent, President and CEO of CTIA-The Wireless Association and President of The Wireless Foundation.

Statistics show that the first three hours after an abduction are the most critical in recovery efforts, and being able to quickly engage the public in the search for an abducted child can help law enforcement bring that child home safely. The Office of Justice Program's [AMBER \(America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response\) Alert Program](#), named after 9-year-old Amber Hagerman, is a voluntary partnership among law enforcement agencies, the wireless industry, transportation officials, broadcasters and other entities to activate an urgent bulletin to find abducted children. Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs Mary Lou Leary is the National AMBER Alert Coordinator responsible for this national network.

"The AMBER Alert program was based on the idea that when armed with the right information, we can all play a part in bringing abducted children home safely," said John Ryan, NCMEC CEO. "Wireless AMBER Alerts were an important evolution of that program and we are grateful to those that made it possible. They understand that the eyes and ears of many are better than the eyes and ears of few when a child's life is at stake."

Before Wireless AMBER Alerts, AMBER Alerts were issued via television, radio and Department of Transportation highway signs when a child was believed to have been abducted and in extreme danger. The wireless industry launched the Wireless AMBER Alerts program in 2005 because its members believed its technology could expand the Alerts' reach to aid in the recovery of abducted children.

The 700,000 wireless customers currently enrolled in Wireless AMBER Alerts will receive text messages about the transition and alternative sources for receiving AMBER Alerts. For more information about the alternative sources please visit <http://www.missingkids.com/ambersignup/>.

Wireless Emergency Alerts information is available here: <http://bit.ly/MTjpsg> and AMBER Alerts information is available here: <http://ctia.it/RzEVLN>

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About CTIA-The Wireless Association:

CTIA-The Wireless Association@ ([www.ctia.org](http://www.ctia.org)) is an international organization representing the wireless communications industry. Membership in the association includes wireless carriers and their suppliers, as well as providers and manufacturers of wireless data services and products. CTIA advocates on behalf of its members at all levels of government. The association also coordinates the industry's voluntary best practices and initiatives, and sponsors the industry's leading wireless tradeshows. CTIA was founded in 1984 and is based in Washington, D.C.

Twitter: [@ctia](https://twitter.com/ctia) | Blog: <http://ctia.it/Na6erv> | Facebook: <http://ctia.it/LCm4Nn> | LinkedIn Group: <http://ctia.it/Na6cA2>

About the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children:

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1984. Designated by Congress to serve as the nation's clearinghouse on issues related to missing and exploited children, the organization operates the toll-free 24-hour national missing children's hotline which has handled more than 3,670,000 calls. It has assisted law enforcement in the recovery of more than 180,000 children. The organization's CyberTipline has handled more than 1,692,700 reports of child sexual exploitation and its Child Victim Identification Program has reviewed and analyzed more than 77,594,300 child pornography images and videos. The organization works in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. To learn more about NCMC, call its toll-free, 24-hour hotline at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or visit its web site at [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com).

About Syniverse Technologies:

Syniverse makes mobile work for more than 900 mobile operators, cable and Internet providers, and enterprises in over 160 countries. With unmatched expertise and 25 years simplifying the complexities of roaming, messaging and networking, Syniverse serves as the force at the center of the mobile communications universe, keeping people connected today and forging new connections for tomorrow. Nobody knows mobile like Syniverse. For more information, visit [www.syniverse.com](http://www.syniverse.com), follow [Syniverse on Twitter](#) or find [Syniverse on Facebook](#)

About the AMBER Alert Program:

The AMBER Alert System began in 1996 when Dallas-Fort Worth broadcasters teamed with local police to develop an early warning system to help find abducted children. AMBER stands for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response and was created as a legacy to 9-year-old Amber Hagerman, who was kidnapped while riding her bicycle in Arlington, TX, and then brutally murdered. Other states and communities soon set up their own AMBER plans as the idea was adopted across the nation. More information about the AMBER Alert Program is available at [www.amberalert.gov](http://www.amberalert.gov).

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