

# Telecom mergers will aid during disasters

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A study released Friday reports that telecom consolidation will aid network reliability during disasters.

The current consolidation occurring in the telecommunications industry is a step toward ensuring network reliability following threats to U.S. security, according to a study by homeland security expert Lee Zeichner, who heads Zeichner Risk Analytics LLC.

In the study entitled, "State Public Utility Commissioners: Homeland Security & National Preparedness Responsibilities," Zeichner concludes that state public utility commissioners' current review of major telecom mergers must address not only traditional regulatory issues, such as consumer protection, but also issues like network reliability and resilience, which will continue to affect consumers well into the future.

In reviewing the mergers in the telecom industry, Zeichner said, "telecommunications regulators can affect state and local government response to catastrophic disasters in profound and meaningful ways, directly impacting consumers as well as small to large-sized corporations."

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