



Emergency Support Function #2

Communications Annex

Primary Agency:	National Communications System
Support Agencies:	Department of Agriculture Department of Commerce Department of Defense Department of the Interior Federal Communications Commission Federal Emergency Management Agency General Services Administration

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #2 — Communications ensures the provision of Federal telecommunications support to Federal, State, and local response efforts following a presidentially declared major disaster, emergency, or extraordinary situation under the Federal Response Plan (FRP). This ESF supplements the provisions of the National Plan for Telecommunications Support in Non-Wartime Emergencies, hereafter referred to as the National Telecommunications Support Plan (NTSP).

B. Scope

ESF #2 coordinates Federal actions to be taken to provide the required national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications support to Federal, State, and local disaster response elements. This ESF will coordinate the establishment of required temporary NS/EP telecommunications and the restoration of permanent telecommunications. Where appropriate, services may be furnished under provisions of the Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) system. ESF #2 applies to all Federal departments and agencies that may require telecommunications services or whose telecommunications assets may be employed during a disaster response.

II. Policies

- A. The NTSP serves as a basis for planning and use of national telecommunications assets and resources in support of the provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The NTSP is issued by the Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Executive Office of the President, in accordance with National Security Council policy direction, and is applicable to all Federal agencies.

- B. The NTSP contains the authority for the National Communications System (NCS) to develop plans and coordinate and manage telecommunications support for Federal organizations in nonwartime emergencies. This authority is derived from Executive Order 12472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions, April 3, 1984.
- C. In the letter of agreement between OSTP and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) dated June 7, 1995, OSTP states that the Office of the Manager, NCS, will execute FRP primary agency functional responsibilities on its behalf.

III. Situation

A. Disaster Condition

1. A disaster condition may result from a significant natural disaster, nuclear accident, or any other incident that causes extensive damage and/or results in a high volume of requests from all levels of government authority for services required to save lives and alleviate human suffering. These authorities require accurate and timely information on which to base decisions and guide response actions. Concurrently, commercial telecommunications facilities may sustain widespread damage. At a time when the need for real-time electronically processed information is greatest, the capability to acquire it may be seriously restricted or nonexistent. In such situations, all surviving telecommunications assets of the various levels of government, augmented by extra-regional assets, will be needed immediately to ensure a proper response to the needs of victims of the event.
2. When activated, ESF #2 will coordinate and support NS/EP telecommunications requirements across the emergency continuum.

B. Planning Assumptions

1. Initially, State and local government officials focus on coordinating lifesaving activities concurrent with reestablishing control in the disaster area. Working with the telecommunications industry, these officials will restore and reconstruct telecommunications facilities as the situation permits.
2. Initial damage reports may be fragmented and provide an incomplete picture concerning the extent of damage to telecommunications facilities.
3. Weather and other environmental factors may restrict the ability of suppliers to deploy mobile or transportable telecommunications equipment into the affected area.
4. The affected region's ability to communicate with the rest of the country may be impaired. Some key individuals may be isolated from their regional offices and/or operational centers.
5. The type of disaster and the potential for related disasters will require the careful consideration of a site for establishing a Disaster Field Office (DFO) in the least vulnerable location supportable by available telecommunications facilities.

IV. Concept of Operations

A. General

During an emergency, the following guidelines will be observed to allow ESF #2 to meet its disaster response responsibilities:

1. Telecommunications management will occur on a bottom-up basis; decisions will be made at the lowest level, with only those issues requiring adjudication or additional resources being referred to the next higher management level. FEMA's Telecommunications Information Management and Control System (TIMACS) will be used for Stafford Act expenditures for telecommunications support.
2. Uniform emergency telecommunications management and operational plans, procedures, and handbooks will be used throughout the entire ESF #2 operating environment.
3. The Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) has overall responsibility for the coordination of telecommunications support in the response area. When General Services Administration (GSA) assistance is requested during a disaster response, a Federal Emergency Communications Coordinator (FECC) is appointed. The FECC prioritizes conflicting requests and recommends solutions to the FCO.
4. FEMA controls its communications assets, i.e., Mobile Air Transportable Telecommunications System/Mobile Emergency Response Support (MATTS/MERS), in the disaster area but coordinates their use with the FECC. Other agencies that provide telecommunications assets in support of the disaster response also would control their organic assets, but would coordinate their use with the FECC.
5. The FECC will be the telecommunications industry's single Federal point of contact (POC) in the disaster area for Federal telecommunications requirements and will coordinate industry's response. The FECC will coordinate with the State telecommunications officer to ensure that Federal communications requirements do not conflict with State needs.

B. Organizational Structure (After a Presidentially Declared Disaster Response Requiring the Appointment of an FECC)

1. National-Level Response Structure

Response operations for a major disaster will normally begin when the FRP is implemented. FEMA will selectively activate ESFs based on the nature and scope of the event and the Federal resources required to support State and local responses.

National-level ESF #2 operations will normally commence at the same time that the ESF #2 position on the Emergency Support Team (EST) is activated under the FRP. The EST, which comprises representatives from all the ESFs, is located at FEMA Headquarters. Once notified of a disaster, the National Coordinating Center (NCC) for Telecommunications staff assesses anticipated/actual damage, identifies NS/EP service requirements, prioritizes requirements, monitors the developing situation/response, renders status reports,

and coordinates service provisioning and restoration as required. The NCC staff makes assessments based on reports from the FECC and NCC industry representatives, who coordinate with their parent company emergency operations centers (EOCs). The Manager, NCC, appoints ESF #2 representatives to the EST, providing for 24-hour coverage if required. If the Catastrophic Disaster Response Group (CDRG) is convened to address priority issues, the Deputy Manager, NCS, will represent ESF #2 at such meetings. The Manager, NCS, may dispatch an NCS Disaster Area Liaison Officer (DALO) to the disaster site to assist the FECC in coordinating national-level telecommunications support to the disaster response. The FECC also may request the deployment of an NCS DALO through the Manager, NCS. FEMA will dispatch an agency representative to the disaster area to assist in coordinating FEMA's telecommunications support.

2. Regional-Level Response Structure

For a major disaster, the FCO will request the appointment of an FECC. GSA will ensure that a qualified person capable of performing the required functions is identified (that person could be the GSA Regional Emergency Services Communications Planner (RECP) who serves as NCS Regional Manager for that region). The FECC will deploy to the scene of a presidentially declared disaster as the principal Federal telecommunications manager in the disaster area. The FECC will normally deploy to the affected State EOC as part of the Advance Element of the Emergency Response Team (ERT-A) and will assist ESF #7 — Resource Support in selecting a DFO site. FEMA will provide an agency representative to assist in coordinating FEMA's telecommunications support in the setup of the DFO. Federal disaster response operations are coordinated from the Regional Operations Center (ROC) until the DFO is operational, which is normally a period of 48 to 96 hours. The FECC deploys to the disaster area and works with FEMA communications personnel to establish telecommunications services for the DFO. At the DFO, the FECC is assisted by the Emergency Communications Staff (ECS), a group of government and industry telecommunications managers trained in emergency response and DFO operations. Conflicts over priorities and/or resources that cannot be resolved by the FCO and FECC will be passed to the CDRG and, if still not resolved, to the Joint Telecommunications Resources Board (JTRB).

C. Notification Procedures

1. Headquarters

The NCC is always available to assist industry and Federal response operations during day-to-day planning and coordination of national telecommunications support, including disaster response activities. If ESF #2 is activated, FEMA will notify the Manager, NCC, immediately. The Manager, NCC, will then alert all NCC personnel and assume national-level coordination of telecommunications assets as necessary. During nonduty hours, the National Communications System/Defense Information Systems Agency-Global Operations Security Center (NCS/DISA-GOSC) will alert the Manager, NCC, who will direct that an NCC Initial Response Team (IRT) be formed to assess the situation.

Immediately upon receipt of information about the disaster or emergency and upon notification of any FRP activation, the NCC will contact FEMA for information and guidance on the situation and ongoing response planning, and coordinate ESF #2 response preparations. If the Manager, NCC, determines that an FECC will be activated, the Manager will notify the appropriate GSA Regional Emergency Coordinator (REC) that FEMA has requested an FECC. The GSA REC will notify the appropriate GSA regional office to activate the FECC.

2. Region

The FECC will coordinate with the Manager, NCC, to request Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) support.

D. Response Actions

1. Initial Actions

- a. Immediately upon notification of a disaster, the Manager, NCC, will begin gathering damage assessment data from the NCC government and industry representatives. The Manager, NCC, in coordination with FEMA and GSA, will determine the appropriate level of response for national-level ESF #2 elements. The initial focus of the NCC will be to identify:
 - (1) Operational telecommunications assets available for use within the affected area;
 - (2) Telecommunications assets not within the affected area that may be brought physically or employed electronically to support the affected area; and
 - (3) Actual and planned actions of the commercial telecommunications companies toward recovery and reconstruction of their facilities.
- b. The FECC will determine the ESF #2 regional and disaster area response requirements with the applicable FEMA Regional Director.
- c. Until the FECC and the ECS are deployed and operational, FEMA communications staff will accumulate damage information obtained from the FEMA Regional Director, other Federal agencies, and industry sources. Additionally, FEMA communications staff may make initial estimates of the level of Federal telecommunications support that may be required. This information will be provided to the FECC upon arrival in the affected area. The FECC will also receive a status report on the telecommunications situation, Federal telecommunications assets that have arrived in the disaster area, telecommunications services provided, and any open telecommunications requests.
- d. The ECS will be organized in the disaster area and expanded as necessary by drawing on experienced personnel from unaffected areas.
- e. NCC personnel, in coordination with the FECC, will begin an inventory of Federal communications assets available to support the recovery mission. Federal

agencies with communications assets may be asked to contribute these assets to the response effort. The Manager, NCC, will be kept informed of these assets and their status.

- f. Potential NCC actions include the following:
 - (1) Obtaining the location of the proposed DFO;
 - (2) Obtaining the latest weather report for the area, including present conditions, the 24-hour forecast, and the long-range forecast;
 - (3) Obtaining information from ESF #1 — Transportation about road, rail, and all transportation conditions in the area and whether they can be used to get mobile telecommunications systems into the area; and
 - (4) Determining from FEMA and/or ESF #7 the location of possible sources of secondary response facilities in the disaster area, e.g., staging areas, satellite DFOs.
- g. The FECC, when activated, will assess the need for mobile and transportable telecommunications equipment. The FECC, through the NCC, may request NCS member organizations to identify assets for possible deployment.
- h. The NCC, in coordination with the FECC, will assess the need for telecommunications industry support and ensure that such support is available as needed.

2. Continuing Actions

- a. The FECC will prepare and process any required reports.
- b. The representatives of the NCS member organizations that have been tasked to provide assets will confirm to the NCC that those assets have been prepared for movement to the disaster area, as and when needed, and will report when they have been deployed and have become operational.
- c. The FECC, assisted by the ECS, will:
 - (1) Coordinate Federal telecommunications support to responding Federal agencies, State and local governments, and quasi-governmental and voluntary relief organizations as directed by the FCO;
 - (2) Recommend release of Federal telecommunications resources when they are no longer required; and
 - (3) Maintain a record for audit of all telecommunications support provided. NCS member organizations' procedures will be used to accomplish this audit.
- d. The NCC will provide damage information to the EST ESF #2 representative and the FECC regularly, and to other Federal agencies upon request.
- e. Requests for telecommunications support will come from many sources. The FECC will forward unresolved requests to the NCC. When the allocation of

telecommunications resources cannot be resolved by the NCC to the satisfaction of the parties involved, the issues will be presented to the CDRG and then, if necessary, to the JTRB for resolution.

- f. The NCC develops and promulgates information collection guidelines and procedures to enhance assessment, allocation, and coordination of government and industry telecommunications assets.

V. Responsibilities

A. Primary Agency: National Communications System

1. The Manager, NCS, will ensure the provision of adequate telecommunications support to Federal response operations. The Manager, NCS, through the NCC, will provide information and assistance to the JTRB as required.
2. The Manager, NCS, is responsible for:
 - a. Supporting the JTRB as required in accordance with standard operating procedures issued by the Director, OSTP;
 - b. Ensuring that all information regarding potential and/or actual emergency situations with significant telecommunications implications is brought to the attention of the Director, OSTP;
 - c. Coordinating response activities with FEMA, GSA, and other JTRB member organizations;
 - d. Monitoring the status of crucial situations that have the potential for developing into a major disaster, emergency, or extraordinary situation, and those that may require emergency telecommunications support;
 - e. Coordinating with ESF #12 — Energy regarding telecommunications industry requests for support under the Electric Service Priority (ESP) initiative, emergency fuel resupply, and safe access for telecommunications work crews into disaster areas;
 - f. Supporting the ESP initiative by providing updated data to and from the Department of Energy and the participating telecommunications companies;
 - g. Monitoring the recovery efforts and, as required, coordinating the provision of telecommunications needed by the Federal Government;
 - h. Providing situation status to the JTRB as required;
 - i. Appointing an NCS Disaster Area Liaison Officer to provide on-site assistance to the FECC in coordinating national-level telecommunications support in the disaster area; and
 - j. Activating IMAs to support disaster responses at the DFO, regional, and national levels.

3. The Manager, NCC, is responsible for:
 - a. Monitoring the status of crucial situations that have the potential for developing into a major disaster, emergency, or extraordinary situation to determine that adequate NS/EP telecommunications services are being provided to support response operations;
 - b. Assessing the impact on existing Federal Government NS/EP telecommunications services;
 - c. Coordinating the restoration and/or rerouting of existing Federal Government NS/EP telecommunications services and the provisioning of new NS/EP telecommunications services;
 - d. Coordinating with telecommunications service providers and prioritizing requirements as necessary when providers are unable to satisfy all telecommunications service requirements, when there are conflicts between multiple FECCs, or when the allocation of available resources cannot be fully accomplished at the field level;
 - e. Coordinating, when requested by the FECC, with NCS member organizations to obtain additional telecommunications specialists to augment the ECS;
 - f. Coordinating with Federal agencies those special telecommunications industry requests for assistance that support NS/EP activities, including support under the ESP initiative, emergency fuel resupply, and safe access for telecommunications work crews into disaster areas; and
 - g. Coordinating with appropriate government and industry representatives in support of FECC requests to meet user requirements for cellular phone assets.

B. Support Agencies

1. ESF #2 support agency representatives will be aware of their parent organizations' capabilities to provide mobile or transportable resources for telecommunications activities.
2. Any agency having substantial communications assets in the disaster area should have representation on the ECS.
3. Agencies will coordinate required connection to commercial or government telecommunications resources through the FECC.
4. The agencies listed below provide the indicated support to ESF #2 efforts under the FRP.
 - a. **Department of Agriculture, Forest Service**
 - (1) Provide radio communications systems for support of firefighters, law enforcement officers, and disaster response operations;
 - (2) Provide engineers, technical personnel, and liaison staff to assist the ECS and to maintain the National Interagency Radio Support systems;

- (3) Provide National Interagency Radio Support systems for use by damage reconnaissance teams to report information from the disaster area to the DFO, and such other applications as determined by the radio communications coordinator;
- (4) Provide a communications officer to accompany radio systems for the purpose of user training and operator maintenance indoctrination; and
- (5) Provide additional radio systems required for the establishment of a DFO radio net.

b. Department of Commerce

- (1) National Telecommunications and Information Administration
 - (a) Develop plans and procedures concerning radio spectrum assignments, priorities, and allocations for use by Federal agencies;
 - (b) Develop, maintain, and publish policy, plans, and procedures for the control and assignment of radio frequencies, including the authority to amend, modify, or revoke such assignments, in those parts of the electromagnetic spectrum allocated to the Federal Government; and
 - (c) Maintain and publish the Emergency Readiness Plan for Use of the Radio Spectrum.
- (2) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service

Provide public dissemination of critical pre- and postevent information over the all-hazards National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio (NWR) system, the NOAA Weather Wire Service, and the Emergency Managers' Weather Information Network (EMWIN).

c. Department of Defense

Provide assistance in civil emergencies in accordance with national policies, consistent with defense priorities as set forth in the Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 3025.1, Military Support to Civil Authorities. The Secretary of Defense has designated the Secretary of the Army as the executive agent for DOD support to civil emergencies.

d. Department of the Interior

Provide radio and radio-telephone systems from assets not required to meet Department of the Interior emergency missions.

e. Federal Communications Commission

- (1) Review the policies, plans, and procedures that are developed by all entities licensed or regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to provide NS/EP telecommunications services to ensure that such policies, plans, and procedures are consistent with the public interest, convenience, and necessity; and

- (2) Perform such functions as required by law with respect to all entities licensed or regulated by the FCC, including (but not limited to) the extension, discontinuance, or reduction of common-carrier facilities or services; the control of common-carrier rates, charges, practices, and classifications; the construction authorization, activation, deactivation, or closing of radio stations, services, and facilities; the assignment of radio frequencies to FCC licensees; the investigation of violations of pertinent law and regulation; and the initiation of appropriate enforcement actions.

f. Federal Emergency Management Agency

- (1) Provide a representative(s) to serve on the FECC's staff to coordinate the employment of FEMA's telecommunications assets, including MATTS/MERS, in the disaster area; coordinate FEMA requests for telephone service and connectivity; and provide expertise on MATTS/MERS and FEMA networks;
- (2) Coordinate the establishment of telecommunications support in the DFO with the FECC;
- (3) Install computers and local area networks at the DFO as required;
- (4) Provide radio equipment and other organic telecommunications support;
- (5) Provide communications support to State and local officials to assist in disseminating warnings to the populace concerning risks and hazards;
- (6) Provide frequency management and site engineering expertise to the ECS;
- (7) Provide representation on the ECS and coordinate FEMA resources and TSP requests with the FECC; and
- (8) Provide video teleconference expertise to the ECS.

g. General Services Administration

- (1) Each Regional Administrator, GSA, will ensure that a GSA RECP who will serve as an NCS Regional Manager (NCSRM) and FECC, is identified for each of the 10 standard Federal regions. The Regional Administrator will authorize the GSA RECP/NCSRM to accept guidance from the FEMA Regional Director during the predeployment phase of a telecommunications emergency. National-level guidance will be provided by the GSA Federal Telecommunications Service (FTS) Emergency Communications Coordinator. The Regional Administrator will authorize the GSA RECP/NCSRM or designated alternate(s) to perform the functions of the FECC upon request by the FCO or senior Federal official.
- (2) The GSA RECP/NCSRM will prepare and maintain a Regional Support Plan for each designated standard Federal region, coordinating plan development with counterpart GSA RECP/NCSRMs in contiguous regions. The GSA RECP/NCSRM will supervise the training of potential FECCs within the assigned region.

- (3) When requested, the FECC will deploy to the scene of a presidentially declared major disaster, emergency, or extraordinary situation to survey the status of telecommunications and to determine residual capabilities and the extent of damage within the affected area. The FECC will coordinate with other Federal agencies to determine their emergency telecommunications service requirements.
- (4) When activated, the FECC will:
 - (a) Accumulate damage information obtained from the FEMA Regional Director, the NCC, other Federal agencies, and industry sources and conduct telecommunications status evaluations;
 - (b) Advise the FCO on all telecommunications matters;
 - (c) Act as the single government POC in the disaster area for industry, for all telecommunications requests and actions;
 - (d) Assess the need for mobile or transportable equipment;
 - (e) Release Federal telecommunications resources as soon as commercial carrier services can support the response mission;
 - (f) Coordinate with Federal, State, and local organizations, and the major voluntary relief organizations as well as other ESFs involved with disaster recovery, to ascertain their telecommunications requirements;
 - (g) Ensure that required services are provided in support of the Federal disaster response and recovery effort;
 - (h) Coordinate the distribution of cellular phone assets by appropriate government and industry representatives in support of user requirements;
 - (i) Assemble and lead the ECS;
 - (j) Maintain an audit trail of all telecommunications support provided;
 - (k) Prioritize telecommunications requirements;
 - (l) Ensure that an ESF #2 representative is deployed to support the ROC;
 - (m) Coordinate frequency management for the disaster area to include frequencies used by deployed military assets;
 - (n) Coordinate the use of military telecommunications assets;
 - (o) Coordinate TSP requests;
 - (p) Ensure that ESF #2 representatives are provided to support damage assessment personnel;

- (q) Provide an ESF #2 representative to support the ERT-A;
- (r) Coordinate telecommunications support to the disaster mobilization center as necessary; and
- (s) Prepare and process any required reports.

h. Other Federal Agencies

- (1) NCS member organizations will be prepared to assist the Manager, NCS, in the deployment and use of agency-owned/leased or otherwise unique telecommunications assets to support the response effort.
- (2) All other Federal agencies will:
 - (a) Use organizational resources to meet their mission requirements before requesting that the FECC obtain emergency telecommunications support;
 - (b) Notify the FECC promptly of all telecommunications requirements and available assets. This will eliminate the possibility of service duplications and ensure prompt provision of needed services and facilities to the proper user;
 - (c) Coordinate with the FECC when telecommunications support (other than that provided or already coordinated through the FECC) has been requested by a representative of an organization at a disaster location;
 - (d) Coordinate any requests for commercial or government telecommunications resources through the FECC;
 - (e) Coordinate with the NCC as necessary for any required national-level telecommunications support;
 - (f) Notify the FECC promptly when their telecommunications resources are to be withdrawn or discontinued; and
 - (g) Notify the FECC when telecommunications resources provided by the FECC are no longer required.

VI. References

- A. Executive Order 12472, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications Functions, April 3, 1984.
- B. National Plan for Telecommunications Support in Non-Wartime Emergencies, Office of Science and Technology Policy, January 1992.
- C. Department of Defense Directive 3025.1, Military Support to Civil Authorities, January 15, 1993.
- D. Office of Science and Technology Policy Letter of Agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, June 7, 1995.