EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION OVERVIEW

Emergency Communications Division

Who We Are

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Emergency Communications Division (ECD) was established within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2007 to deliver Title 6 United States Code, Title XVIII and Executive Order 13618 functions, and affirmed by the CISA Act of 2018, to address these challenges and build the nation's emergency communications capabilities

OUR HISTORY

During the events of September 11, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the nation faced several emergency communications challenges that impacted its ability to respond, such as:

- Limited Technical Standards
- Limited Training & Exercises
- Lack of National and Statewide Plans
- Lack of Governance
- Lack of Standard Operating Procedures

Emergency Communications Division

Who We Are

OUR EVOLUTION

In order to evolve to address these threats, CISA was created within DHS to lead the Federal Government's emergency communications, cybersecurity, and critical infrastructure protection efforts

Since the establishment of CISA ECD, the threats the Nation faces — digital and physical, human, technological, and natural — have become more complex, and the threat actors more diverse, than at any point in our history

We Are CISA

CISA leads the national effort to understand and manage cyber and physical risk to our critical infrastructure

CISA Emergency Communications
"Defend Today, Secure Tomorrow"

VISION

Interoperable, secure, and resilient emergency communications enable daily operations and incident response throughout the Nation

MISSION

Advance emergency communications in partnership with Public Safety and National Security/Emergency Preparedness communities

TENETS

- Stakeholder Driven
- Multidisciplinary
- Comprehensive
- Collaborative
- Impact Focused
- Data Driven
- Accountability

4

What is Emergency Communications?

Emergency Communications are the means and methods for exchanging the information necessary for successful incident management - all day, every day.

Each day in cities and towns across the Nation, emergency response personnel respond to incidents of varying scope and magnitude. Their ability to communicate in real time is critical to establishing command and control at the scene of an emergency, maintaining event situational awareness, and operating within a broad range of incidents.

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Emergency Communications Complexity

Although 911 is what most people think of when they hear emergency communications, there are various concepts that play critical roles in ensuring access to reliable, secure, and interoperable emergency communications every day in order to save lives, protect property and the environment, and stabilize communities

What Most People See

911
- Voice Systems (Telephone)
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Systems
- Transition to Next Generation 911 (NG911)

What People Don't See

Radio Communications Systems
- Mobile and Portable Land Mobile Radio (LMR)
- Interoperability Maintenance Costs
- Communication Towers
- Tower Equipment Sheds

Broadband & Data Systems
- Mobile Data Terminals (MDT)
- FirstNet
- Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)
- Wireless Priority Service (WPS)

Alerts & Warnings
- Outdoor Warning Systems
- Emergency Alert System (EAS)
- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)
- IPAWS (including silver/amber alerts)
- TV/Radio/Website/Media Updates
- Social Media Outlets

Governance
- SWIC / Communications Champion
- Statewide Communications Office
- Strategic Planning

Training & Exercises
- Telecommunicator/Dispatch Training and Retention
- Agency LMR, Telephone, Alerts/Warning procedures
- Agency System Maintenance staff (technicians, engineers)
- Incident Communications Training
- Communications Exercise (tabletop, functional)
- Technical Emergency Response Training (TERT)
- Incident Communications Unit staff training

Cybersecurity
- Expertise and Planning
- Tools and Solutions
- Risk and Vulnerability Management
- Prevention Equipment and Training

6

Who We Support

CISA ECD works with Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial stakeholders across 56 States and Territories to enhance emergency communications interoperability

900K
Police Officers

825K
EMS Professionals

1.9M
Fire Personnel

566
Federally Recognized Tribal Nations

1,200
Certified Emergency Managers

19,400
Municipalities, Governors, Mayors, Public Works, Council Members

20,500
Critical Infrastructure (Hospitals, Banks, Power Plants, Wireline Carriers)

Organizational Functions

CISA EMERGENCY COMMUNCIATIONS DIVISION

NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICAL ASSISSTANCE (ICTAP)

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES

NATIONAL PLANNING AND POLICY

PRIORITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

CHIEF OF STAFF

NATIONAL PLANNING AND POLICY

Leads the design and implementation of national-level plans to improve public safety communications capabilities across the country, and the development, coordination, and analysis of federal financial assistance policy.

National Planning

Conducts national-level assessments of emergency communications capabilities, specifically the National Communications Baseline Assessment (NCBA), to determine the degree of emergency communications capabilities that have been attained and develops reports and plans accordingly, specifically the Biennial Progress Report (BPR) to Congress and the National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP)

Grants

Develops products and provides services that inform the use of federal financial assistance programs to execute NS/EP and Public Safety emergency communications projects and activities; awards and administers any grant funding appropriated to CISA ECD; and develops the annual SAFECOM Guidance on Emergency Communications Grants

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NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

Facilitates the development of requirements to achieve interoperability among all levels of government through coordination and support of public safety and NS/EP stakeholder groups. Develops best practices, creates guidance documents, and executes initiatives to improve emergency communications interoperability and cybersecurity across all levels of government.

State, Local, Tribal, Territorial, & International Emergency Communications (SLTTIEC) Governance

Provides program management and facilitates the development of requirements and best practices to achieve interoperability among state, local, tribal, and territorial public safety agencies, assisting in planning, as well as executing against and furthering the priorities of SAFECOM, the National Council of Statewide Interoperability Coordinators (NCSWIC), the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) and associated Committees within each

Federal Emergency Communications (FEC) Governance

Leads and provides program management, as well as administrative and policy support to Federal Departments and Agencies such as the ECPC, the Federal Partnership for Interoperable Communications (FPIC), the NS/EP Executive Committee Joint Program Office (NS/EP EXCOM JPO), and the Accelerating Broadband Deployment on Federal Property Working Group

Advanced Technology

Assesses and communicates the impact of technology and policy changes to the operability, interoperability, cybersecurity, and resiliency of emergency communications and provides direct subject matter expertise across the Branch and to the stakeholder community as appropriate

INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Serves all 56 states and territories and provides direct support to state, local, and tribal emergency responders and government officials through the development and delivery of training, tools, and onsite assistance to advance public safety interoperable communications capabilities.

Technical Assistance (TA)

Provides, at no cost, instruction, such as Communications Unit Training & Support (COMU), and assistance with the planning, governance, operational, and technical aspects of developing and implementing interoperable communications initiatives designed to help emergency responders continue to communicate during disasters or large-scale planned events

CISA ECD Field Coordination

Builds trusted relationships, enhances collaboration, and fosters the sharing of best practices and information between the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government stakeholders, critical infrastructure owners and operators, the private sector, and other key non-government organizations

Statewide Communication Interoperability Plan (SCIP)

Coordinates locally-driven, multi-jurisdictional, and multi-disciplinary statewide plans to enhance emergency communications; creates a single resource for all stakeholders and a unified approach for enhancing interoperable communications for public safety and officials at all levels of government

PRIORITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Collaborates with the public and private sectors to ensure the NS/EP communications community has access to priority telecommunications and restoration services to communicate under all circumstances.

Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)

Provides NS/EP personnel priority access and prioritized processing in the local and long-distance segments of the landline networks, greatly increasing the probability of call completion

Wireless Priority Service (WPS)

Provides NS/EP personnel priority access and prioritized processing in all nationwide and several regional cellular networks, greatly increasing the probability of call completion

Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP)

Authorizes NS/EP organizations to receive priority repair and installation of vital voice and data circuits or other telecommunications services and enable carriers to prioritize restoration in the event of a disaster

Next Generation Networks Priority Services (NGN–PS)

Enables users to have priority voice, data, and video communications as the communications networks evolve

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Performance Management

CISA ECD administers a performance management program to measure the Nation's interoperability progress in the following areas:

National & Federal

- Federal Interoperability Markers (in progress)
- Internal Operational Measures

State/Territorial & Tribal

- NCSWIC State Interoperability Markers
- Tribal Interoperability Markers (in-progress)

Local

- Incident Measures (in-progress)

Program Benefits:

- Better understanding of interoperability gaps
- Improved services and offerings
- Raise awareness with decision-makers
- Better alignment of resources