



FEDERAL EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATION

Emergency Communications Preparedness Center

OneDHS Emergency Communications Committee

Canada-United States Communications Interoperability Working Group

Federal Departments and Agencies rely on emergency communications capabilities to support mission critical operations, such as law enforcement, homeland defense, and response to man-made or natural disasters. Lessons learned from the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Hurricane Katrina and Super Storm Sandy illustrate the need for improved emergency communications coordination across the Federal government and among State, Local, Tribal, and international agencies. To address these issues, Congress created the Emergency Communications Preparedness Center (ECPC), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano established the OneDHS Emergency Communications Committee, a sub-group of the ECPC, to coordinate intra-DHS emergency communications activities. The DHS Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) administers both the ECPC and the OneDHS Emergency Communications Committee. To address interoperability issues along the U.S.-Canada border, DHS and Public Safety Canada established the Canada-United States (CANUS) Communications Interoperability Working Group (CIWG). OEC serves as co-chair of the CANUS CIWG.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PREPAREDNESS CENTER (ECPC)

Improving Federal Emergency Communications

The ECPC is the Federal interagency focal point for interoperable and operable emergency communications coordination. The 14 Federal Departments and Agencies ECPC members represent the Federal government's broad role in emergency communications, including planning, regulation, policy, operations, grants, and technical assistance. The ECPC's mission is to improve emergency communications collaboration across the Federal government and align initiatives with national goals, policy, and guidance.

ECPC Members	
	U.S. Department of Agriculture
	U.S. Department of Commerce
	U.S. Department of Defense
	U.S. Department of Energy
	Federal Communications Commission
	General Services Administration
	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
	U.S. Department of the Interior
	U.S. Department of Justice
	U.S. Department of Labor
	U.S. Department of State
	U.S. Department of Transportation
	U.S. Department of Treasury

The ECPC provides senior Federal leadership with a means to identify and coordinate shared emergency communications interests and convey them in a collective voice. The ECPC is comprised of an Executive Committee and a Steering Committee. As the primary decision-making body for the ECPC, the Executive Committee includes representatives from each department and agency, and establishes the ECPC's strategic agenda. The Steering Committee is responsible for developing action plans based on the priorities identified by the Executive Committee and for monitoring progress on implementation.

As part of its responsibilities, the Steering Committee is also tasked with establishing focus groups to address issues identified by the ECPC membership. In September 2013, the Steering Committee established the ECPC R&D Focus Group to serve as a forum for Federal coordination and collaboration. The Focus Group is intended to identify R&D gaps and provide Federal departments and agencies with the opportunity to share intellectual capital and facilitate the planning and execution of joint emergency communications R&D efforts. Comprised of nine Federal departments, the Focus Group finalized its charter and scoping statement in December 2013.

In August 2013, the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) formalized its relationship with the ECPC; FirstNet intends to leverage the ECPC as the primary body for Federal consultation. The ECPC is setting up a Federal FirstNet Consultation Group to collect stakeholder information related to users' operational needs and available assets that may be leveraged for the NPSBN.

ECPC Strategic Agenda

The ECPC's strategic agenda lays the foundation for continued improvements in Federal emergency communications coordination. The ECPC's strategic objectives include:

- Increasing efficiencies at the Federal level through joint investment and resource sharing.
- Improving alignment of strategic and operational emergency communications planning across levels of government.
- Improving alignment of Federal investments in State, Local, and Tribal capabilities to ensure focus on critical gaps and priorities.
- Leveraging collective resources to drive Research & Development (R&D) and standards for existing and emerging technologies.

The ECPC's notable progress in advancing ECPC strategic objectives include:

- Coordinating Federal programs that support emergency communications grant funding and developing program guidance to improve alignment of Federal investment in State, Local, and Tribal capabilities. *The ECPC Recommendations for Federal Agencies on Financial Assistance for*

Emergency Communications provides guidance for grant policy across more than 40 Federal emergency communications grant programs to address critical gaps and emerging priorities.

- Coordinating Federal involvement in broadband planning to align strategic and operational planning across all levels of government. *The Federal Broadband Mission Needs Assessment*, submitted to FirstNet in November 2012, documents how Federal Agencies and Departments might leverage a broadband network to accomplish their emergency communications missions.
- Supporting expanded State, Local, and Tribal access to General Service Administration contract vehicles to expand disaster preparedness and response support.

The OneDHS Emergency Communications Committee includes DHS components and headquarters entities:

- Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)
- Transportation and Security Administration (TSA)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Office of Operations and Coordination (OPS)
- Customs Border and Protection (CBP)
- Science and Technology (S&T)
- United States Coast Guard (USCG)
- National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD)
- Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO)
- Office of the Chief Security Officer (OCSO)
- Office of the General Counsel (OGC)
- Office of Health Affairs (OHA)
- Office of Management (MGMT)
- Office of Policy (PLCY)
- Office of Public Affairs (OPA)
- Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA)
- Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A)
- Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA)
- Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC)
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- United States Secret Service (USSS)
- Citizen and Immigration Services (CIS)

FPS is an operational entity within DHS National Protection & Programs Directorate (NPPD)

ONEDHS EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

DHS Focal Point

DHS relies heavily on emergency communications capabilities to exchange critical information in support of the Department's core missions and diverse domains. Despite this mission critical need, many capabilities inherited by the Department were outdated, redundant, insufficiently resilient, and/or not interoperable. Furthermore, DHS efforts to improve emergency communications capabilities have been limited due to the lack of a common, coordinated approach.

The One DHS Emergency Communications Committee coordinates intra-DHS emergency communications activities and addresses the many challenges facing the Department's emergency communications programs. As new and emerging technologies, such as broadband, have become more prevalent, interdependencies among the Department's emergency communications domains and stakeholder groups has increased, further increasing the need for improved coordination. The Committee aligns these efforts and also provides a forum to identify priorities and synergies. The Committee's key functions include the following:

- Identifying critical gaps and priorities across emergency communications domains.
- Developing cross-cutting strategic plans to guide emergency communications efforts.
- Coordinating development and implementation of DHS emergency communications policy.
- Ensuring DHS inputs and positions are comprehensively represented in external emergency communications forums.
- Enabling sharing of information and improved visibility across emergency communications domains.
- Providing Department-level input and guidance to the ECPC.

The One DHS Emergency Communications Committee consists of senior executives from the 22 DHS Components. The Committee developed the first One DHS Emergency Communications Strategy to ensure access to and exchange of mission-critical information across the Homeland Security Enterprise anywhere, anytime, through unified capabilities. It serves as a

leader in intradepartmental broadband planning, interoperability planning, and common architecture development.

CANADA-UNITED STATES COMMUNICATIONS INTEROPERABILITY WORKING GROUP (CANUS CIWG)

Beyond the Border

Public safety and homeland security agencies from Canada and the United States routinely cooperate to maintain security and provide public safety along the 5,500 mile joint border. The ability of these agencies to rapidly respond to daily and emergency incidents, and to recover from disasters, is a key component of maintaining security and economic competitiveness along the border. Interoperable voice and data communications across disciplines and jurisdictions are central to successfully fulfilling critical missions and pose ongoing challenges to all agencies. The international border adds layers of complexity as regulatory, legal, and policy differences compound operational and tactical communications hurdles. Overcoming these interoperability challenges requires ongoing coordination to identify capability gaps and collaborative solutions.

In February 2011, the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Canada issued *Beyond the Border (BTB): A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness*, to solidify this security commitment between the United States and Canada. The BTB Action Plan, released in December 2011, mandated the establishment of a bi-national working group focused on harmonizing cross-border interoperable emergency communications. DHS and Public Safety Canada worked with representatives from both governments to establish the CANUSCIWG to achieve this goal.

Established in October 2012, the CANUS CIWG is comprised of Federal representatives from various agencies within the United States and Canadian governments. OEC represents the U.S. Government and is the co-chair of the CANUS CIWG together with a Public Safety Canada representative. Members work together to ensure inter-agency collaboration and coordination efforts advance daily and emergency interoperable communications along the border.

The CIWG also addresses critical cross-border communication issues related to governance, standard operating procedures, technology, education and outreach, and training and exercises. A five-year work plan that includes validation metrics guides the group's efforts.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact OEC@dhs.gov or visit www.dhs.gov (keyword OEC).