



Homeland  
Security

# Fact Sheet

## NCS NS/EP Priority Telecommunications Service Center

**Purpose:** The National Communications System (NCS) National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) Priority Telecommunications Service Center enables customers to acquire information on NCS priority telecommunications services, programs, and operations from a single source by consolidating user support, operational, subscription, and help-desk services.

**Background:** The NCS is comprised of 23 federal departments and agencies that share the responsibility to assist the President, the National Security Council, Homeland Security Council, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget in assuring the availability of NS/EP telecommunications under all circumstances, including crisis or emergency, attack, recovery, and reconstitution. The NCS became part of the Department of Homeland Security in March 2003 and moved to the National Protection and Programs Directorate in 2005 following the department's second stage review. The NCS currently provides NS/EP priority telecommunications services to Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, industry, and other authorized NS/EP organizations.

The goal of the Service Center is to provide an efficient and effective means of managing and supporting the consolidated operations/user support missions and functions of the NCS and provide all NCS users/customers with priority communications services and coordination/help-desk services and operations during any circumstance. The Service Center began its implementation in September 2002 and includes user and operational support for the following programs:

- **Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)** - provides NS/EP personnel emergency access and priority processing in the local and long distance segments of the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN). GETS provides NS/EP users with a higher probability of call completion during periods of natural or man-made disasters or emergencies that cause congestion or network outages.
- **Wireless Priority Service (WPS)** - provides a means for NS/EP telecommunications users to obtain priority access to available wireless radio channels when necessary to initiate emergency calls. While all GETS users will not be WPS users, all WPS users are encouraged to become GETS users in order to complete end-to-end priority service telephone calls.
- **Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) Program** - is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program, managed and operated by the NCS that provides for priority provisioning and restoration of critical NS/EP communications assets/circuits. Critical NS/EP circuits are defined as those that are critical to maintaining a state of readiness for, responding to, or managing telecommunications during an event or crisis that could cause harm to the population, damage property, or threaten the security of the United States.

- **SHared RESources (SHARES) High Frequency (HF) Radio Program** provides a single, interagency emergency message handling system by bringing together existing HF radio resources of Federal, State, and industry organizations when normal communications are destroyed or unavailable for the transmission of NS/EP information.

### **Highlights:**

- As an initial implementation, the Service Center has implemented a virtual call center that provides a centralized access point with menu selections for the various NCS priority telecommunications services. The Service Center can be reached at 1-866-NCS-CALL (866-627-2255), or in the metro Washington, DC area at 703-760-CALL (703-760-2255).
- A consolidated web-based approach for NCS priority telecommunications services has also been implemented using a web portal to maximize the overall benefits of the Service Center. The NCS home page will act as the portal and will provide top-level information on the various services available. Users can follow links to the appropriate web pages for specific services.
- The architecture used for consolidation of the technical/information processes for all NCS priority telecommunications services/programs will utilize web-based technology. The database scope will be expanded to serve as the foundation and become the authoritative database for NS/EP communications services information. Consolidation of the technical/information processes for administration and operations of these services/programs provides an efficient method for continuing to process them on an ongoing basis while transitioning to the consolidated environment. Partitions or other security measures will be established within the database(s) to protect more sensitive information as required.
- Consolidating the support for the operational/administrative process activities for all NCS priority telecommunications services under a single organizational environment provides continuity and integrity of management for the services/programs. This provides an understanding of the needs of organizations with NS/EP responsibilities across all levels of government, industry, and critical infrastructure sectors and to determine how to assist them with NS/EP services provided by the NCS.
- **Contact Information:** Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Service Center. Telephone: 1-866-NCS-CALL (866-627-2255) or, in the metro Washington, DC area, at 703-760-CALL (703-760-2255), Fax: 703-848-0299.