Press Office
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Fact Sheet

Telecommunications Service Priority System

Purpose: The Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) System is the regulatory, administrative, and operational system authorizing and providing for priority treatment (i.e., provisioning and restoration) of national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications services. NS/EP telecommunications services are those 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. Whether NS/EP users are responding to natural disasters, supporting civil or military crises, or maintaining emergency communications networks, the TSP System is their only authorized mechanism for receiving priority provisioning and restoration of NS/EP telecommunications services.

Background: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a Report and Order on November 17, 1988, that established the TSP System and officially adopted the TSP System rules as part of the Code of Federal Regulations. National Communications System (NCS) Directive 3-1, signed by the Executive Office of the President, implements the TSP System within the Federal Government. Under TSP System rules, service vendors are authorized and required to provision and restore services with TSP assignments before services that do not have such assignments.

Highlights:

❒ TSP ensures priority treatment for the Nation's most important telecommunications services—those that serve our national security leadership; national security posture and U.S. population warning; public health, safety, and maintenance of law and order; and public welfare and maintenance of the national economic posture
❒ TSP supports response to natural disasters and civil and military crises. Due to the 2005 hurricane season, more than three times the normal number of telecommunications services received priority treatment.
❒ State, local, and foreign governments and private industry may be sponsored by a Federal organization to obtain TSP restoration or provisioning priority.

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