

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION	NUMBER: DR 3300-001-J
SUBJECT: Emergency Communications Programs	DATE: March 17, 2021
OPI: Office of Homeland Security	EXPIRATION DATE: March 17, 2026

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1. PURPOSE

- a. This Departmental Regulation (DR) defines the requirements for the management and use of Emergency Communications Systems within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- b. This policy ensures that USDA’s emergency responders and key officials can continue to communicate in the event of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and man-made disasters by maintaining interoperable emergency communication systems. USDA will leverage Federally-managed enterprise capabilities to assist in meeting emergency communications.

2. SCOPE

- a. This DR applies to all USDA Federal employees, and any category of non-Federal person who performs duties in partnership with or on behalf of USDA, such as a consultant, contractor, advisor, volunteer, student, or intern.
- b. This policy applies to all communications systems used to support critical functions performed by the Department.

3. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/CANCELLATIONS

- a. This policy supersedes DR 3300-001-J, *National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications*, dated March 23, 1999, in its entirety.
- b. This policy is effective immediately when published and will remain in effect until it is superseded or expires.
- c. All USDA agencies will align processes, procedures, and any applicable policies with this DR within 6 months of the publication date, reviewing and updating them as needed annually thereafter.
- d. All Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices must align their policies and procedures with this DR within 6 months of the publication date. Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices that are in an agreement or contract that goes beyond 6 months may request a waiver from the Director, Office of Homeland Security (OHS) to delay compliance until the existing agreement ends.

4. POLICY

- a. The OHS is the primary office within USDA assigned to manage access to Interagency Enterprise Level Emergency Communications Programs.
- b. Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices that need access to emergency communications platforms and/or services must request support through the OHS National Security Systems Program (NSSP).
- c. Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices will utilize Federal partner or Departmental Enterprise Emergency Communications Systems prior to subscribing to or developing another service. Approval by the Chief Security Director, Office of Safety, Security and Protection (OSSP) and the USDA Chief Information Officer (CIO), Office of the Chief Information Office (OCIO) is required prior to the acquisition of any new system.
- d. Personnel who support essential activities, emergency response, and continuity operations will be provided Government Emergency Telecommunications Service

(GETS), Wireless Priority Service (WPS), and/or FirstNet service as required to complete their assigned duties.

- e. Personnel provided emergency communications devices or capabilities must participate in routine and emergency testing of services. Failure to comply with testing programs for two or more consecutive testing periods may result in cancellation of services.
- f. Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices who operate communications systems utilized for essential activities or emergency response must order Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) for critical circuits supporting the system.
- g. Departmental level continuity facilities will employ all required communications capabilities prescribed in accordance with White House Office of Science and Technology (OSTP)/Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Directive 16-1, *Minimum Communications Requirements for Federal Executive Branch Continuity Communications Capabilities* (OSTP/OMB D 16-1) and participate in all required interagency testing programs.
- h. The alternate and devolution sites for Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices must have, at a minimum, the following capabilities:
 - (1) Satellite telephone with a fixed external antenna;
 - (2) Fax machine, utilizing an analog telephone line;
 - (3) Secure telephone, keyed at the appropriate classification level to support their operations and reporting status, but minimally keyed for unclassified communications;
 - (4) Alternate power supply/generator that provides backup power for critical facility infrastructure (lights, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) and communication systems; and;
 - (5) Active TSP codes assigned for all mission critical data and voice communication circuits.

5. COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

- a. OHS is the primary office within USDA assigned to manage access to interagency enterprise level emergency communications programs.
 - (1) TSP is available on telecommunications circuits used to support any Primary Mission Essential Function (PMEF), Mission Essential Function (MEF), Essential Supporting Activity (ESA), and other functions that have been determined critical to USDA's ability to effectively perform its mission;

- (2) GETS and WPS services are available for personnel who support USDA critical and emergency functions who require priority services during periods with degraded or saturated telecommunications services;
 - (3) FirstNet communications are employed as appropriate to assist first responders, key Departmental continuity personnel, and others supporting critical and emergency functions; and
 - (4) Shared Resources (SHARES) High Frequency (HF) Radio Program, is a communications system that supports national security and emergency preparedness operations when traditional landline and cellular communications are unavailable.
- b. OSSP is the primary office within USDA assigned to manage Departmental Enterprise Level Emergency Notification Systems.
 - (1) One or more Emergency Notification systems processes are available to provide urgent notifications to Departmental personnel at the USDA Headquarters level in the National Capital Region.
 - (2) Regional and local field offices are encouraged to leverage the enterprise system or utilize a comparable process/system to ensure that all staff can receive urgent notifications for their area.
- c. OHS and OCIO are responsible for ensuring that the minimum continuity communications requirements for Federal Executive Departments and Agencies outlined in OSTP/OMB D 16-1 are met.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The Director of OHS will:
 - (1) Ensure that emergency communication guidance is available to Departmental Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices;
 - (2) Coordinate with OCIO and OSSP to provide a Departmental Enterprise Emergency Notification System; and
 - (3) Provide guidance, direction, and oversight for USDA's participation with Federal partner-provided emergency communications systems and services.
- b. The USDA CIO will:
 - (1) Assist OHS with the management and validation of communication circuits enrolled in the TSP program;

- (2) Coordinate with OHS on enterprise level communications support contracts to ensure that emergency support capabilities are evaluated;
 - (3) Assist the OHS with the operation, maintenance, and testing of all of the Department's primary alternate location and devolution site's Memorandum of Understanding; and
 - (4) Coordinate with system owners to ensure that the communication systems approved to operate within the Department have adequate disaster recovery plans
 - (5) Ensure Departmental communications portfolio management implementation of all emergency communications systems;
 - (6) Assist Mission Area Assistant CIOs and agency site support personnel with implementation of emergency communication requirements.
- c. The Director of OSSP will:
- (1) Serve as the Office of Primary Responsibility for the Departmental enterprise level Emergency Notification System;
 - (2) Manage the selection and implementation of a Departmental Emergency Notification System;
 - (3) Coordinate with the OCIO to determine an appropriate information technology infrastructure that provides an acceptable level of resiliency for the Departmental Emergency Notification System; and
 - (4) Coordinate with agencies and staff office to ensure that they have the capability to develop and implement procedures to meet their respective notification requirements.
- d. The OHS NSSP Manager will:
- (1) Manage USDA's GETS/WPS Program;
 - (a) Serve as the USDA office approving, denying, and managing subscriptions;
 - (b) Train USDA personnel on the GETS/WPS program, including official use policy;
 - (c) Represent USDA at interagency meetings/discussions; and
 - (d) Track the USDA official's conduct of quarterly GETS/WPS testing.

- (2) Manage USDA's TSP Program;
 - (a) Serve as the focal point for managing TSP codes;
 - (b) Advise Telecommunications Mission Area Control Officers of TSP code assignment by DHS; and
 - (c) Coordinate with validation with DHS for TSP code validations assignments accordance with OSTP/OMB D 16-1.
- (3) Serve as the Agency Point of Contact (POC) for the FirstNet Program;
 - (a) Define personnel eligibility requirements for the following two service categories:
 - 1 Primary Users
 - a Sworn law enforcement officials.
 - b Fire fighting officials.
 - c Departmental level continuity officials.
 - 2 Support Users
 - a Public health officials.
 - b Select agency and staff office continuity officials.
 - c Designated on-call personnel that support "Primary Users" when activated.
 - d Other personnel and/or devices that support USDAs critical response efforts during an emergency.
 - (b) Manage the process to elevate "Support Users" to "Primary Users" when operations dictate.
 - (c) Establish procedures to request support from the FirstNet service provider for service. Process should include instructions for both preplanned events and emergency events that require additional communication support.
 - (d) Coordinate with OCIO, users, and application providers to ensure that applications used on FirstNet have an authority to operate and an assigned application manager if required.

Note: Several applications have been developed, reviewed, and certified to operate on the FirstNet infrastructure. Most of these applications are not FirstNet applications but are approved to operate on FirstNet devices. Many of these applications have restrictions based on multiple factors as to who can access the application. Users must request access to restricted applications from the application manager.

- (e) Coordinate with OCIO and the Procurement Operations Division to maintain a contract to procure FirstNet.
 - (4) Manage USDA's compliance with OSTP/OMB Directive 16-1;
 - (a) Represent USDA at Continuity Communications Manager Group meetings;
 - (b) Ensure that USDA maintains required systems and user proficiency;
 - (c) Manage USDA's compliance with Interagency Testing Programs;
 - 1 Coordinate testing for Departmental level continuity sites.
 - 2 Respond to testing results.
 - (5) Manage the receipt and internal handling and distribution of the interagency Continuity Communications Plan.
- e. Mission Area, Agency, and Staff Office Heads will:
- (1) Coordinate emergency communications needs with OHS;
 - (2) Identify an appropriate number of POCs to manage their organization's GETS/WPS subscriptions;
 - (3) Coordinate with OHS to manage their TSP codes for telecommunications circuits requiring priority restoration services; and
 - (4) Designate an appropriate number of POCs to manage their organization's FirstNet subscriptions and any USDA developed application(s).
- f. Authorized users will:
- (1) Order and cancel service for emergency communications as changes occur;
 - (2) Report the loss, theft, or damage to any emergency communications equipment;
 - (3) Participate in testing as requested; and

- (4) Utilize priority services only when operationally necessary, for training or testing purposes.

7. PENALTIES AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

[DR 4070-735-001](#), *Employee Responsibilities and Conduct*, Section 16, sets forth the USDA's policies, procedures, and standards on employee responsibilities and conduct relative to the use of computers and telecommunications equipment. In addition, DR 4070-735-001, Section 21, Disciplinary or Adverse Action, states:

- a. A violation of any of the responsibilities and conduct standards contained in this directive may be cause for disciplinary or adverse action; and
- b. Disciplinary or adverse action will be effective in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

8. POLICY EXCEPTIONS

- a. All USDA Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices are required to conform to this policy. However, in the event that a specific policy requirement cannot be met as explicitly stated, Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices may submit a waiver request.
- b. The waiver request must explain the reason for the request, identify compensating security controls and actions that meet the intent of the policy, and identify how the compensating controls and actions provide a similar or greater level of defense or compliance than the policy requirement.
- c. Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices will address all policy waiver request memoranda to the OHS Director and submit the request to OHSEC-NSSP-SupportTeam@usda.gov for review and determination.

9. INQUIRIES

All questions regarding this DR should be directed to the USDA NSSP Support Team at OHSEC-NSSP-SupportTeam@usda.gov.

-END-

APPENDIX A

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CIO	Chief Information Officer
DR	Departmental Regulation
ESA	Essential Supporting Activity
GETS	Government Emergency Telecommunications Service
HF	High Frequency
MEF	Mission Essential Function
NEF	National Essential Function
NS/EP	National Security/Emergency Preparedness
NSSP	National Security Systems Program
OCIO	Office of the Chief Information Officer
OHS	Office of Homeland Security
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OSSP	Office of Safety, Security and Protection
OSTP	Office of Science and Technology
PMEF	Primary Mission Essential Function
POC	Point of Contact
TSP	Telecommunications Service Priority
WPS	Wireless Priority Service
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

APPENDIX B

DEFINITIONS

Alternate Locations: Fixed, mobile, or transportable locations, other than the headquarters facility, where D/A leadership and continuity personnel relocate in order to perform essential functions following activation of the continuity plan. These include locations to which agency leadership may devolve. These locations refer to not only locations sites but also work arrangements such as telework and mobile work. (Source: FCD-1)

Communications: Voice, video, and data capabilities that enable organizational leadership and staff to assure performance of essential functions. Robust communications enable leadership to receive coordinated and integrated policy and operational advice and recommendations. This provides government organizations and the private sector the ability to communicate internally and with other entities (including with other Federal organizations, SLTT governments, and the private sector) as necessary to perform essential functions. (Source: FCD-1)

Continuity: The ability to provide uninterrupted services and support, while maintaining organizational viability, before, during, and after an event that disrupts normal operations. (Source: FCD-1)

Critical Functions: A function that is necessary to the agency being able to effectively perform and maintain control of its mission and operations.

Devolution: The transfer of statutory authority and responsibility from an organization's primary operating staff and facilities to other staff and alternate locations to sustain essential functions when necessary. (Source: FCD-1)

Emergency Functions: is the grouping of governmental and certain private sector capabilities into an organizational structure to provide support, resources, program implementation, and services that are most likely needed to save lives, protect property and the environment, restore essential services and critical infrastructure, and help victims and communities return to normal following incidents

Essential Functions: A subset of government functions that are determined to be critical activities. These essential functions are then used to identify supporting tasks and resources that must be included in the organization's continuity planning process. In this FCD, the term "essential functions" refers to those functions an organization must continue in a continuity situation, whether the functions are MEFs, PMEfs, or ESAs. (Source: FCD-1)

FirstNet: FirstNet is an independent authority within the U.S. Department of Commerce. Authorized by Congress in 2012, its mission is to develop, build and operate the nationwide, broadband network that equips first responders to save lives and protect U.S. communities.

Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS): The Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) supports national leadership; federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments; first responders; and other authorized national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) users. It is intended to be used in an emergency or crisis when the landline network is congested and the probability of completing a normal call is reduced. (Source: www.cisa.gov)

Mission Essential Functions (MEFs): The essential functions directly related to accomplishing an organization's mission as set forth in statutory or executive charter. Generally, MEFs are unique to each organization. (Source: FCD-1)

Primary Mission Essential Functions (PMEFs): Those mission essential functions that must be continuously performed to support or implement the uninterrupted performance of NEFs. (Source: OSTP/OMD D16-1)

Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP): TSP is a program that authorizes national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) organizations to receive priority treatment for vital voice and data circuits or other telecommunications services. (Source: www.cisa.gov)

Wireless Priority Service (WPS): WPS supports national leadership; federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments; and other authorized national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) users. It is intended to be used in an emergency or crisis when the wireless network is congested and the probability of completing a normal call is reduced. (Source: www.cisa.gov)

APPENDIX C

AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

[DR 4070-735-001](#), *Employee Responsibilities and Conduct*, October 4, 2007

[Federal Continuity Directive 1](#), *Federal Executive Branch National Continuity Program and Requirements*, January 17, 2017

OSTP/OMB D-16-1, *Minimum Requirements for Federal Executive Branch Continuity Communications Capabilities*, Dec 15, 2016

(This document is FOUO and personnel wishing to review it should contact OHS NSSP at OHSEC-NSSP-SupportTeam@usda.gov or CPD Office cpd@usda.gov)

[United States Code, Title 6, Subchapter XIII Part 571-576 Emergency Communications, November 16, 2018](#)