Homeland Security

Priority Telecommunications Services (PTS)

Emergency Communications Division

March 14, 2019

Objectives

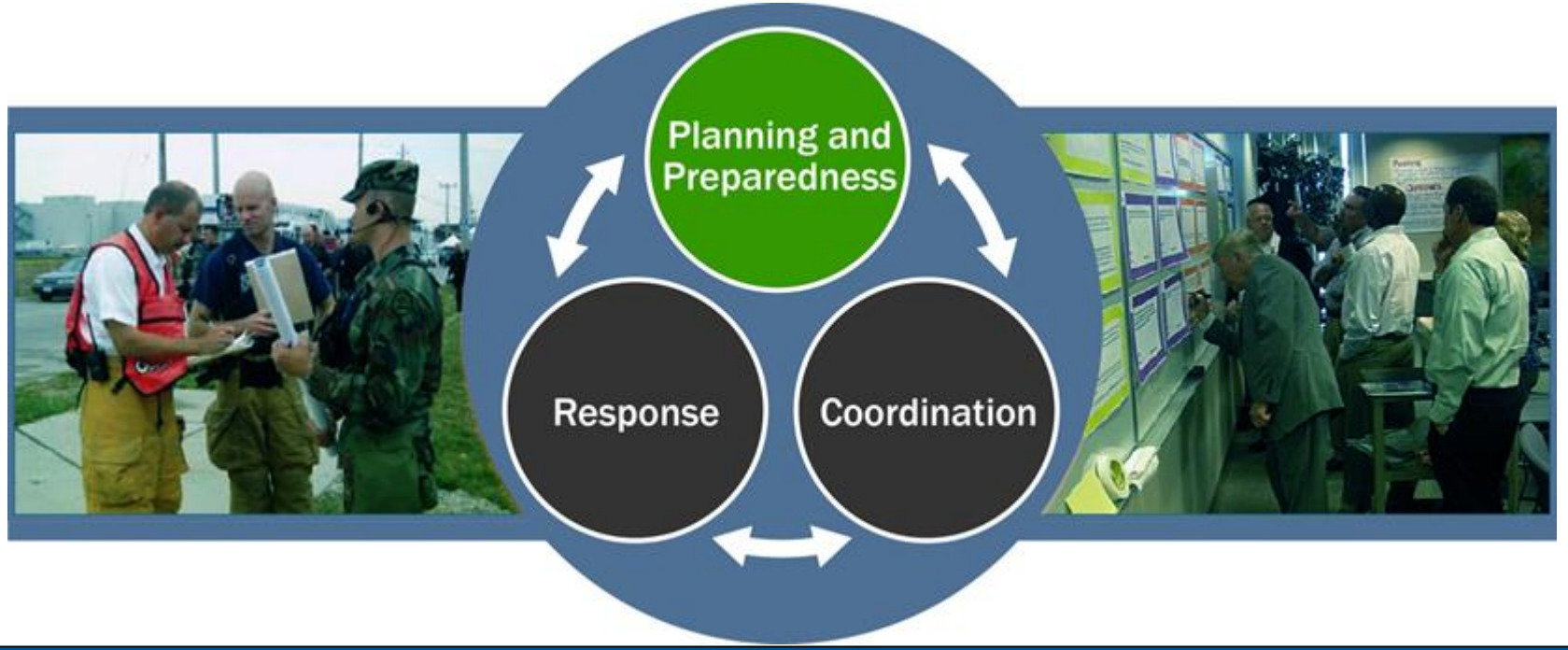
- Describe DHS' Priority Telecommunications Services (PTS)
- Illustrate How They Work to Overcome Network Congestion
- Provide Information on How to Subscribe to the Services
- Answer Questions

Agenda

- Emergency Communications Division
- Priority Telecommunications Services Area Representatives (PARs) Mission
- Hazard Mitigation Plans
- Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)
- Wireless Priority Service (WPS)
- Why Both WPS and GETS?
- Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP)
- Budgeting for Priority Telecommunications Services
- Requesting GETS/WPS/TSP
- Resources

Emergency Communications Division: Mission

- ECD provides and manages communications capabilities used by emergency responders and government officials to keep America safe, secure, and resilient.
- ECD's Regional Coordinators are located across the U.S. to build partnerships between the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government stakeholders as well as the private sector to improve the nation's operable and interoperable emergency communications.

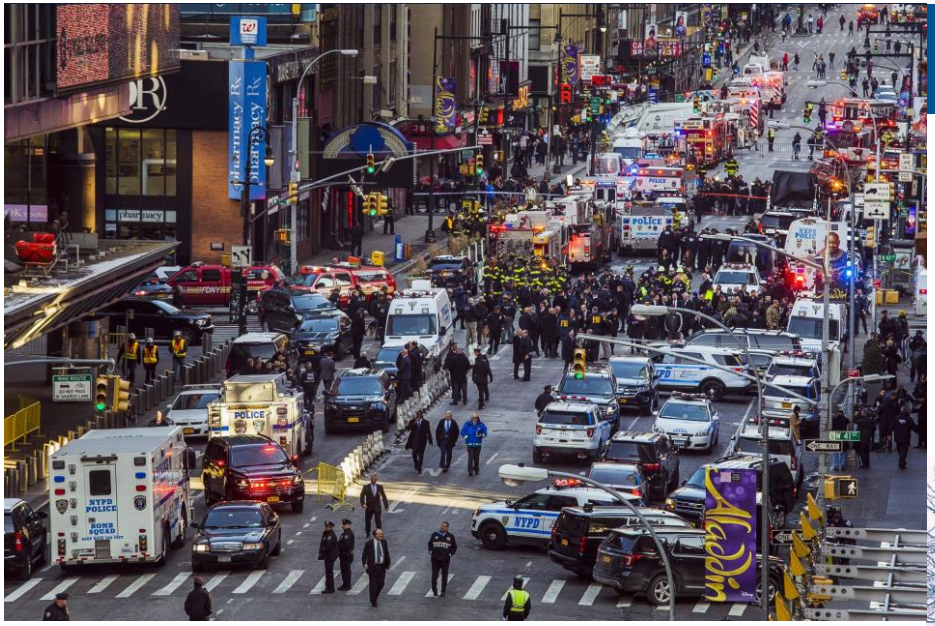


Priority Telecommunications Services Area Representatives (PARs): Mission

- PARs support the DHS Regional Coordinators by providing user education to organizations within Federal, State, Local, Tribal and Territorial governments; the first responder community; and other authorized national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) users on the value and use of Priority Telecommunications Services (GETS/WPS/TSP).

- PARs Areas of Responsibility align with FEMA regions.

Overload and Outage Scenarios



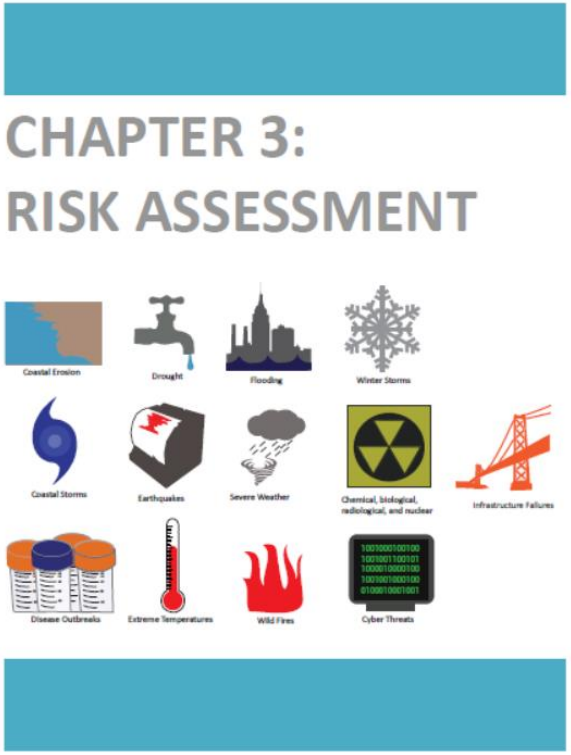
Mass Casualty Events

Compromise of Network Infrastructure

Hazard Mitigation Plans

Plan includes:

- Identification of Hazards
- Risk Assessments
- Mitigation Strategies



Problem: Key Personnel May Not Be Able to Communicate at a Critical Moment

- Emergency responders and government officials rely on a mix of devices to communicate during an emergency:
  - Land mobile radio
  - Cellular
  - Landline
  - Private network
  - Satellite
- Commercial networks can become congested due to high call volumes (overload) or other outage

PTS Services: GETS and WPS

GETS

Government Emergency Telecommunications Service

WPS

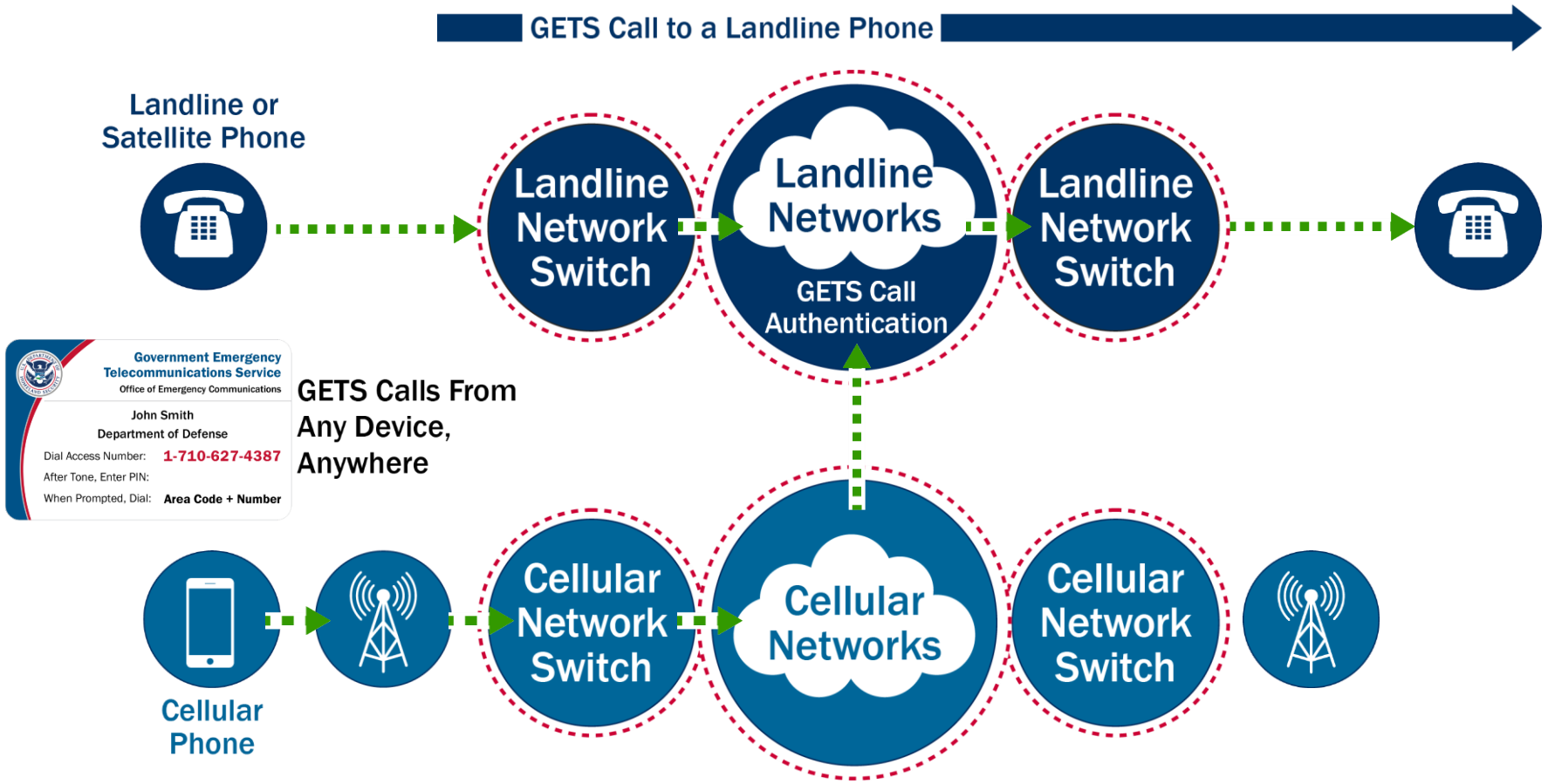
Wireless Priority Service

Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)

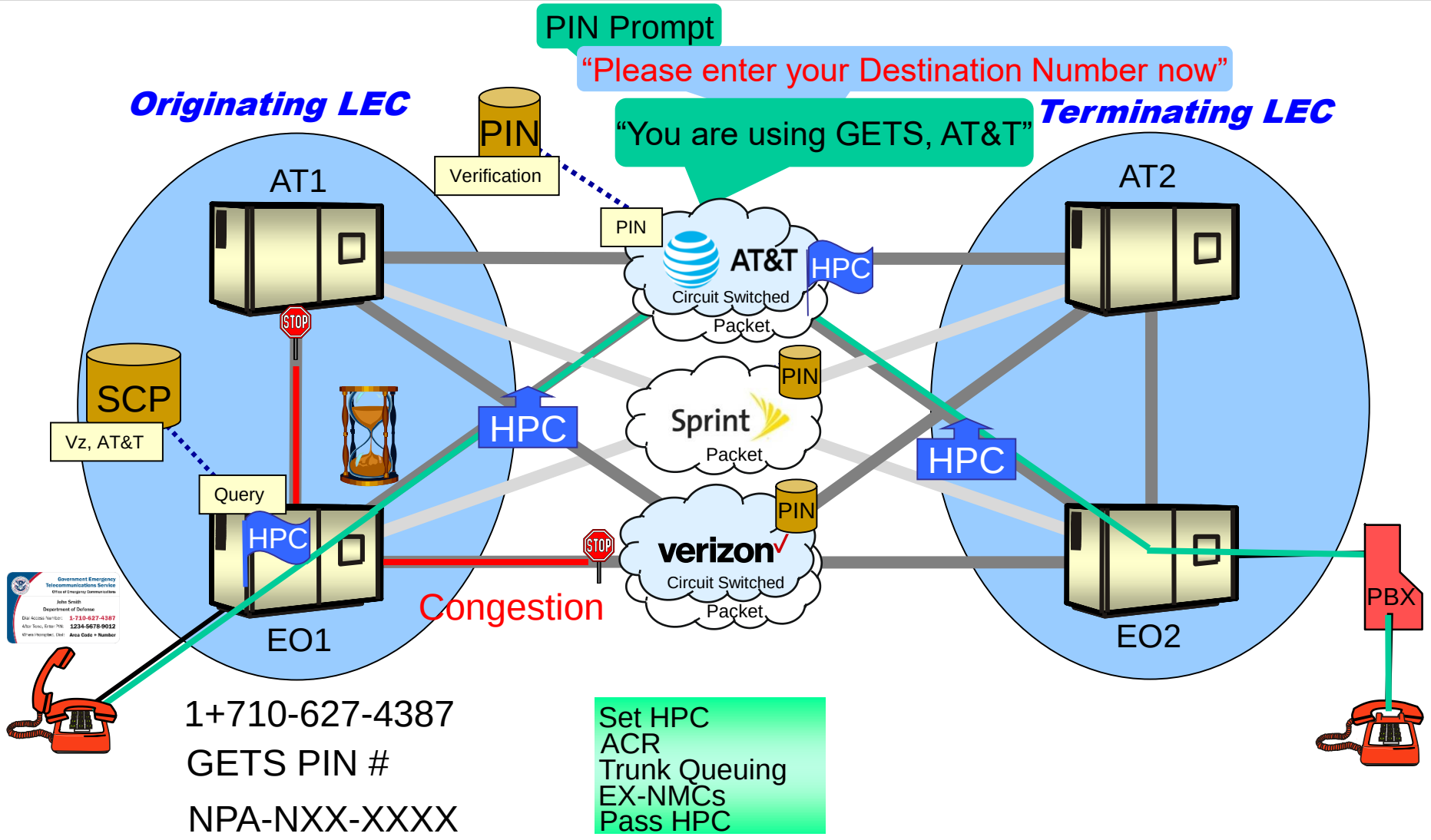
GETS: Enhances Voice Call Completion When Commercial Networks are Overloaded/Impaired

- GETS provides end-to-end priority over landline commercial networks
- There are some GETS priority features in WPS-capable cellular networks
- Greater than 95% call completion rates
- Over 370,000 GETS cards issued

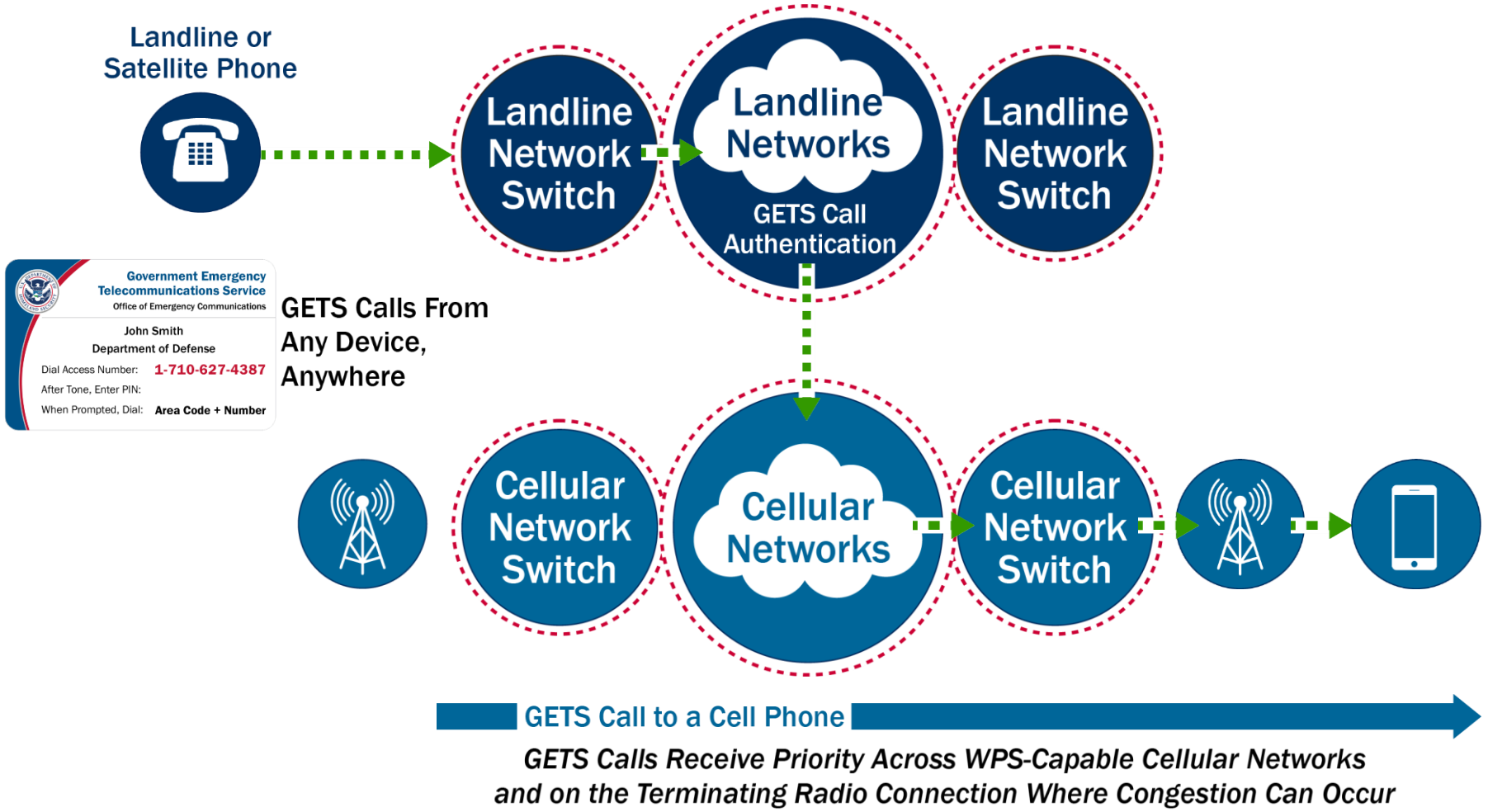
GETS Provides Priority Across Networks to the Destination Landline Phone



GETS: End-to-End in Circuit Switched Networks



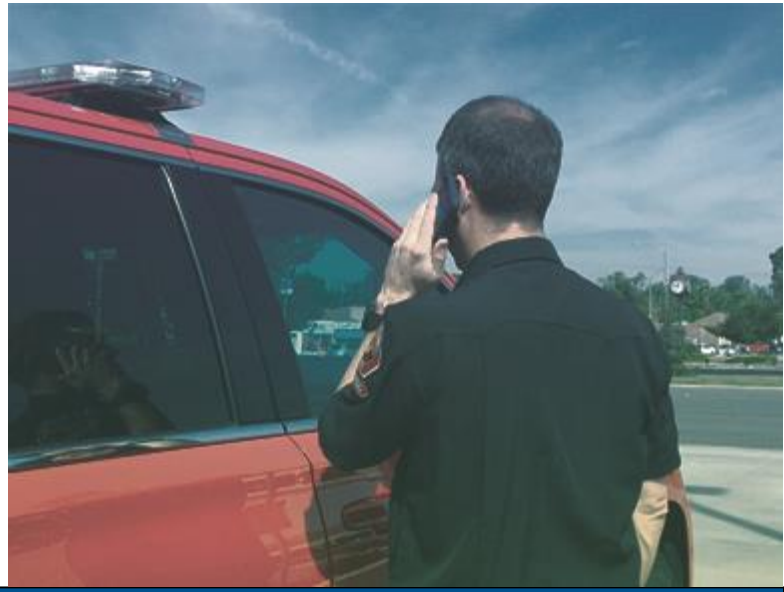
GETS Provides Priority Across Networks to the Destination Cellular Phone



Wireless Priority Service (WPS)

WPS: Enhances Call Completion When Cellular Networks are Overloaded/Impaired

- WPS is an add-on feature to existing cellular service
- WPS provides priority on the radio connection between the user's cellular device and the cell tower, and provides priority processing in the core wireless networks
- Available on all nationwide and some regional cellular carriers
- Provides greater than 90% call completion rates
- There are over 190,000 WPS users



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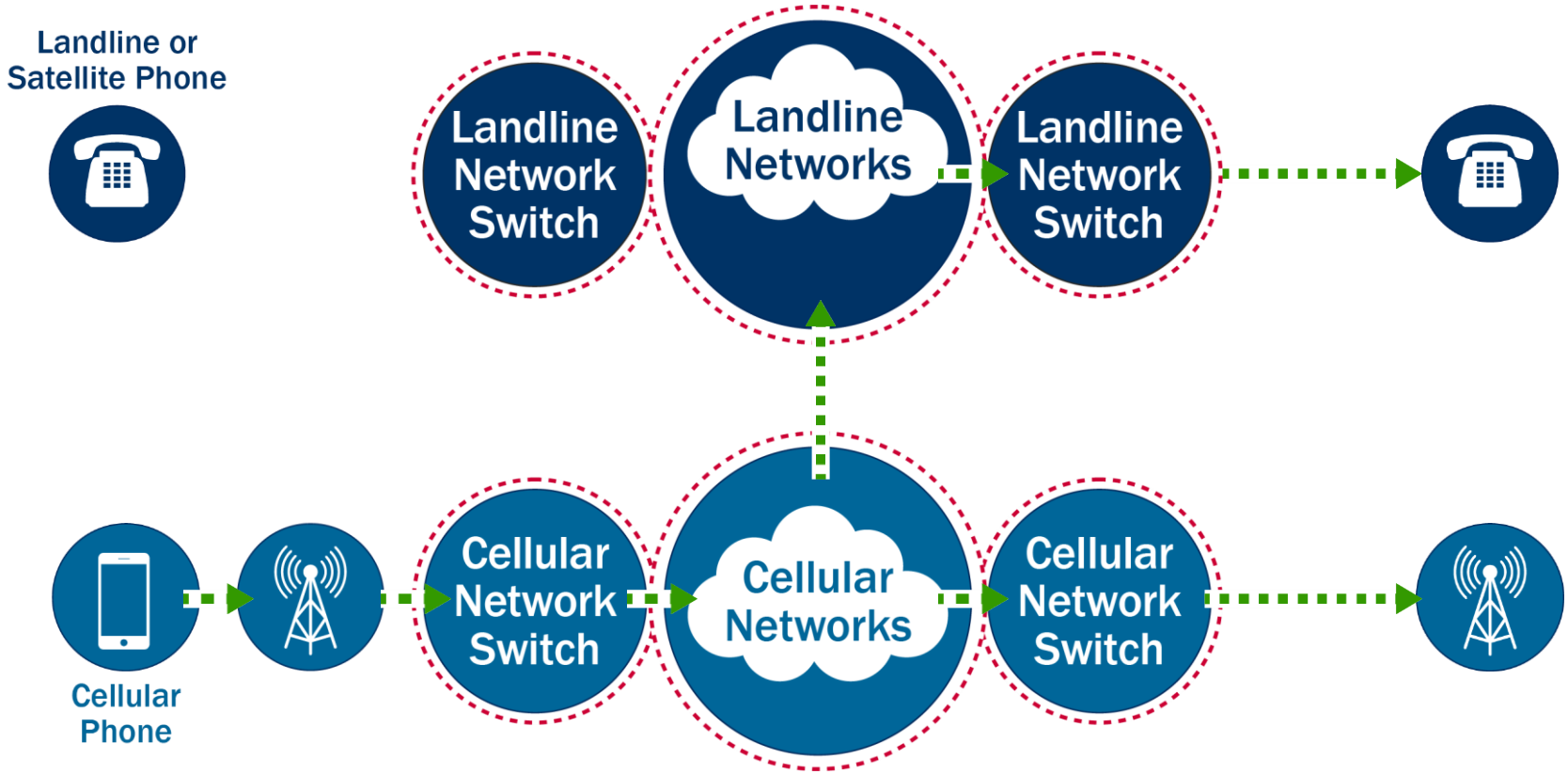

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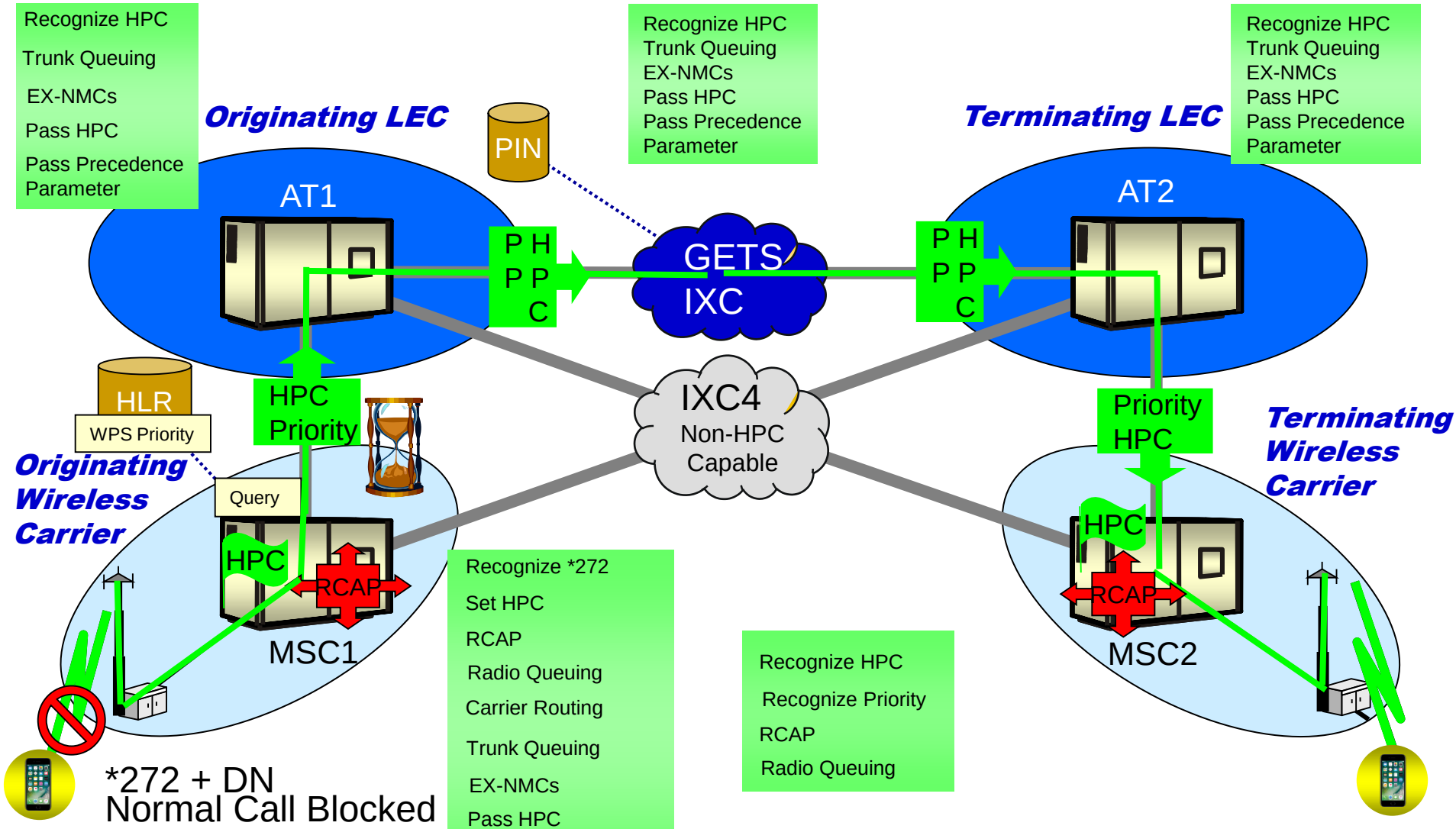


GETS and WPS Performance

Event	GETS Calls	GETS Completion Rate	WPS Calls	WPS Completion Rate
Hurricane Harvey	7,006	98%	796	98%
Hurricane Irma	3,719	98%	3,859	93%
Hurricane Maria	335	90%	511	76%*
Hurricane Florence	2,292	99.6%	1,121	98%
Hurricane Michael	2,947	98.7%	6,282	92.1%

* Extensive physical damage to the cellular networks in PR and VI (e.g., over 90% of cell sites in PR and over 60% of cell sites in VI were out of service between Sept 21-25, 2017), see https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-346920A1.pdf

Why WPS and GETS?

- WPS provides priority through a congested Radio Access Network (RAN)
  - Most notable when congestion is in the location of the caller
  - Also provides priority in the terminating congested cell

- GETS provides priority across the landline portions of the public switched network as well as in the terminating congested cell

- WPS + GETS provides priority in the originating cell, through the network, and into the terminating cell

Budgeting for Priority Services

- GETS
  - There is no charge to subscribe to GETS. The ECD reserves the right to bill for all GETS calls. See www.dhs.gov/gets for additional details

- WPS Carrier Subscription and Usage Fees

	WPS Feature Activation Fee	WPS Service Fee (monthly recurring)	WPS Usage Fee
AT&T Mobility	$0	$0	$0
Cellcom	$0	$0	$0
C Spire	$0	$0	$0
GCI	$0	$0	$0
Southern Linc	$10.00	$0	$.75 per minute
Sprint	$0	$0	$0
T-Mobile	$0	$0	$0
Verizon Wireless	$0 *	$0 *	$0 *
U.S. Cellular	$0	$0	$.75 per minute

* Verizon Wireless waives fees for public sector (Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial government) and for first responders with personal BYOD enrolled in the Verizon Volunteer First Responders Benefits Program. Verizon Wireless bills fees for private sector (industry and consumer). Please check with your account manager.

Who Should Have GETS and WPS?

Individuals

- Mayor, council members, supervisors
- City manager and staff
- CFO
- Media relations
- OEM mgmt and staff
- Police/fire chiefs and staff
- Police/fire field command
- Dept heads and staff
- SMEs and trained specialists
- Individuals with an NS/EP role

Organizations

- Cities/counties/ states/districts
- Office of Emergency Management
- Police/sheriff/fire water and power, telecom
- Public works
- Irrigation districts and flood control
- Public health
- Financial institutions
- Hospitals and medical services
- Transit agencies
- Ports and airports
- Utilities, transportation, and other industries
- Search and rescue
- School and college districts
- Red Cross and volunteer agencies
- Critical infrastructure suppliers
- Other agencies included in county emergency management plans

Locations/Functions

- EOC work stations
- Back-up EOC
- City and county operations centers
- PSAPs (911 center)
- Computer/IT center
- Police/fire dispatch
- City and county yards
- Remote offices and stations
- Power and pump stations
- Shelters
- Command vehicles

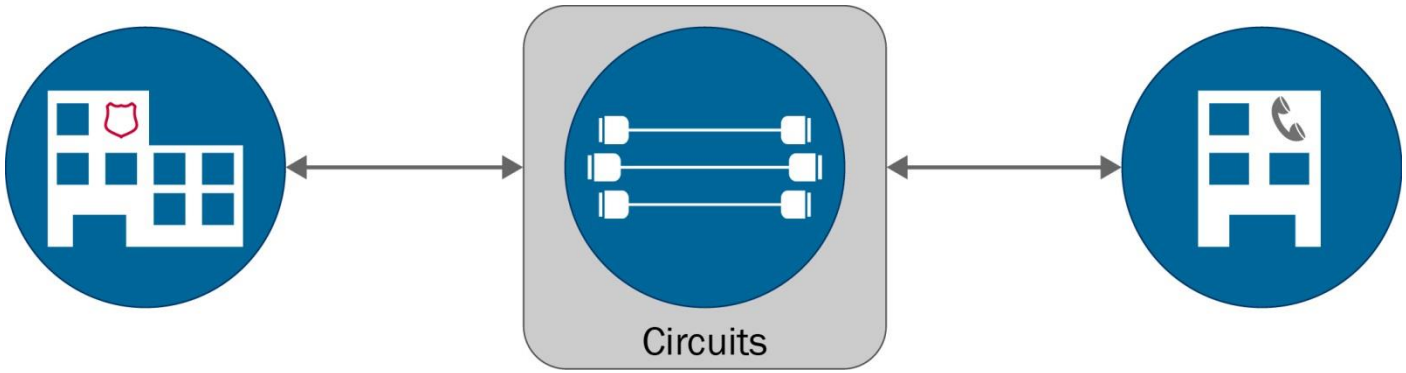
Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP)

Critical Services May Experience Outages

- Damaged facilities and service problems can disable communications!
  - Emergency Operations Center
  - 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs)
  - Hospitals
  - Critical Facilities
  - Telecommunications Service Providers

TSP: Solution for Repair of Damaged Circuits or Expediting Installation of New Circuits

- Established in November 1988 by Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Report and Order FCC 88-341
- TSP is a mandatory requirement for all FCC-regulated telecommunications companies
- Tariffed rates are approved by state utility regulators



Circumstances to Apply TSP

- TSP provides priority repair or expedited installation of critical voice and data circuits:
  - Repair and replacement of damaged circuits at EOCs, hospitals, PSAPs, power facilities, government headquarters, financial institutions, etc.
  - Priority installation of new circuits when needed to support operations such as disaster response and recovery, and large scale security events

Budgeting for TSP

No charge for TSP Code; each Circuit will have an applicable rate established by your service provider

Approximate Range of TSP Costs

Approximate Range of Most TSP Costs (Will Vary by Vendor and Location)			
TSP Provisioning	TSP Restoration (Set-Up Fee)	Recurring Cost for TSP Restoration	Change to Restoration Priority Level
$50.00 up to $416.00 (non-recurring)	$14.00 up to $358.00	$0.00 up to $9.35 monthly	$2.91 up to $131.00

Note: *For Federal Government Users, Networx Costs Apply*

Implementing GETS/WPS/TSP in Your Organization

Requesting GETS and WPS

- Designate a GETS/WPS Point of Contact (POC) for your organization
- POC establishes GETS and WPS account online using **www.dhs.gov/gets** or **www.dhs.gov/wps** or by contacting the Priority Telecommunications Service Center at **1-866-627-2255**
- POC requests GETS and WPS for an initial group of users/key functions/locations through the online system
- POC distributes GETS Cards and confirms WPS activations

Requesting TSP

- Request a TSP Account (TSP "POC") through the Priority Telecommunications Service Center at **1-866-627-2255**
- Identify specific services for TSP; Submit TSP Service Request(s) on a per service basis
- Upon approval, the Service Center sends TSP Code for each specific service
- Order TSP through your service vendor
- Update internal records and procedures to reflect implementation of TSP

Resources

- Web Sites:
  - **https://www.dhs.gov/oec-regional-coordination-program**
  - **www.dhs.gov/gets**
  - **www.dhs.gov/wps**
  - **www.dhs.gov/tsp**
  - **www.dhs.gov/publication/getswps-documents**
  - **www.dhs.gov/pts-videos**
- DHS Priority Telecommunications Service Center:
  - **1-866-627-2255**
  - Monday–Friday, 8 am–6 pm EST
  - Follow voice prompts for GETS, WPS or TSP

Contact Info

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Homeland Security