Disaster Emergency Communications Division

Joint Field Office Disaster Emergency Communications Branch

June 22, 2009
Improving JFO Communications Support

- DEC Division coordinated with FCC and NCS to update the Emergency Support Function (ESF) #2 SOP to establish the DEC Branch within the Joint Field Office (JFO) under the Operations Section.

- The NCS, FEMA DEC, and the ESF-2 Support Agencies have identified a cadre of personnel to serve as the DEC Branch Director in the JFO.

- DEC represents significant shift in the Federal government’s organization/integration of emergency communications at an incident:
  - NRF shifts significant portion of communications to operations for public safety and emergency responder support
  - Deploys assets/personnel for communications support at an incident

- DEC is coordinated through single focal point-JFO Operations Section:
  - Reports to the JFO Operations Section Chief
  - Provides tactical communications services to the FCO, Federal response teams, and State and local agencies
  - Executes plans for effective use of communications resources
  - Coordinates restoration of telecommunications infrastructure
JFO Disaster Emergency Communications Branch

DEC Communications Branch was elevated in the JFO Organization Structure and now reports directly to Operations Section Chief.

NEW Structure

OLD Structure
Tactical Communications Group

**FEMA leads the Tactical Communications Group within the DEC Branch**

- Consists of three units:
  - Communications Interoperability Unit;
  - Communications Operations and Coordination Unit; and
  - Wireless Communications Unit
- Is responsible to the JFO Coordination Group for effective communications planning and execution
- Develops and executes a communications plan to make the most effective use of the communications resources assigned to the incident
- Provides tactical communications services to the PFO, FCO, and the federal response team
- Coordinates the restoration of public safety communications, PSAPs, EAS warning systems, and first-responder networks
- Requests the deployment of FEMA Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) through FEMA TECB Chief
Communications Restoration Group

NCS leads the Communications Restoration Group within the DEC Branch

- Consists of four units:
  - Cellular Unit;
  - Wireline and Internet Protocol Unit;
  - Cable and Broadcast Unit; and
  - Commercial Satellite Unit

- Coordinates the long-term restoration of the commercial telecommunications infrastructure and supports Federal agencies in procuring and coordinating National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications services

- Conveys Federal, State, local, and Tribal government requirements for commercial communications capabilities

- Assists the telecommunications industry as needed to ensure access for repair crews, availability of fuel, and security for restoration teams

- Determines the impact to, vulnerability, and availability of commercial communications capabilities (e.g., cellular, wireline, satellite, cable)
Staffing Support for National Team 1

DEC Branch Director/ FECC is designated by FEMA and NCS.

DEC Branch Director/ FECC - Rex Whitacre (DEC)
Alternate – Brian Carney (DEC)
Deputy – Regional DEC Coordinator

Branch Support Staff
Support Specialists – Wendy Bailey (DEC), Valerie Williams (DEC)
Action Officers – Tammy Moran (IT), Vacant
Government Liaisons – Booz Allen Contractor Support
Planning Coordinator – Greg Bodmer (IT)

Tactical Communications Group
Regional MERS Coordinator

Communications Interoperability Unit
Vacant

Comms Operations and Coordination Unit
Charlie Hoffman (DEC)

Wireless Communications Unit
NTIA & FCC

Communications Restoration Group
NCS Provided

Cellular Unit
NCS Provided

Wireline and IP Unit
Tracey Lewis (IT)

Cable and Broadcast Unit
FCC

Commercial Satellite Unit
NCS Provided

*Staffing support represents 12 hour shifts
The DEC Branch will work to procure all remaining assets through the use of surge funds. Incident Occurs

State requests Federal Support

Delivers Action Request Form to JFO

Communications requirements are sent to the Operations Section

NCS coordinates with Industry partners for commercial telecommunications restoration

The DEC Branch will request additional assets from other Federal agencies through Mission Assignments

The DEC Branch will coordinate fulfillment of communications requirements with existing FEMA DEC assets

All Communications Action Request Forms are fulfilled by the DEC Branch Director

Federal Agencies integrate their communications assets through the DEC Branch
- FAA
- DoD
- FCC
- DOJ
- NTIA
- DHS Agencies
- Other

The DEC Branch
In 2006, the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau of the FCC and the Disaster Operations Directorate of FEMA formed a new partnership.

- FCC acts as FEMA’s spectrum management and communications experts
- Jointly developed Project Roll Call
- FCC developed four Pre-Scripted Mission Assignments.
  - Deploy FCC manager with the Incident Management Assistant Team (IMAT) to conduct initial impact assessment (Project Roll Call)
  - Deploy FCC personnel to support DEC tactical groups in the JFO to conduct activities such as on-scene damage assessments, spectrum, and restoration of services
  - Deploy Department of Defense (DoD) mobile self-sustained vehicle (Hurricane Gustav and Ike)
  - Deploy FCC personnel to conduct logistical coordination assistance to “for-profit” communications companies
The purpose of the Pre-Declaration Conference Call is to determine requirements and begin securing assets necessary for standing-up a JFO.

- The Pre-Declaration Conference Call is initiated and led by the Regional LOG and/or IT Branch.
- Participants on the call include:
  - Regional IT and DEC staff
  - MERS
  - DRT
  - National DEC Coordinator
- Participants work through pre-developed decision trees, and agree upon pre-defined requirements.
- Outputs generated from the call are:
  - Confirm timeframe for anticipated incident
  - Confirm actions required on the DEC activation checklist
  - Identify surge requirements
  - Develop surge and response plan
  - Authorize assets and begin the surge response
  - Identify JFO requirements and the number of circuits that will be necessary
FCC Roles and Responsibilities

FCC and NTIA support the Wireless Communications Unit within the Tactical Communications Group

- Manages the electromagnetic spectrum, including frequency management
- Processes request for frequency assignments and Special Temporary Authority
- Resolves frequency use conflicts
- Deploy Project Roll Call when requested
- Coordinates all assignments through the JFO DEC Branch Director
DEC HQ Points of Contact

DEC PROGRAMS
Charles Hoffman
Chief
202-212-4422 or Charles.Hoffman2@dhs.gov

TECB
Eric Edwards
TEC Branch Chief
202-646-2979 or Eric.edwards@dhs.gov

RECCWG
Brian Carney
National RECC Coordinator
202-212-4419 or brian.carney1@dhs.gov

STATE/REGIONAL PLANNING
Frank Lalley
Special Assistant to the Assistant Administrator
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NATIONAL RESPONSE COORDINATOR
Rex Whitacre
Chief
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# Regional DEC Points of Contact

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