

GETS PROGRAM

National Communications System (NCS), the Government Emergency Telecommunications System (GETS), the Wireless Priority System (WPS), and InfraGard Members

Background

- 1) NCS has two programs that can provide value to InfraGard members: the GETS program and the WPS program. (An FAQ that addresses questions about GETS and WPS is attached to this introduction under Appendix A.)
- 2) **The NCS is responsible for coordinating the GETS and WPS programs and is solely responsible for the criteria that are used to evaluate any participant's eligibility for either program (outlined under Appendix B of this introduction).**
- 3) It is the InfraGard National Members Alliance's (INMA) view that many Infragard Members represent ideal candidates for participation in the NCS programs.
- 4) Infragard Members represent a unique pool of FBI vetted private sector individuals. Many InfraGard members are actively involved in securing their enterprise's infrastructure and often qualify under the NCS criteria for participation in the GETS and WPS programs. However, many InfraGard members are employed by small and medium size businesses. This segment of the business community is often unrepresented by an NCS qualified "Point of Contact" (POC).
- 5) The FBI is willing to facilitate the enrollment of qualified InfraGard Members in the GETS and WPS programs by acting as a single POC for Members that are not currently represented by an enterprise or corporate POC. The FBI makes no warranties to NCS regarding InfraGard Members other than they have passed an FBI records check. **InfraGard Members must meet the criteria for participation that has been established by NCS outside of their participation in the InfraGard Program.**
- 6) The INMA Board of Directors and Officers engaged the NCS, earlier this year, to highlight the unique nature of the InfraGard Membership and the benefits of working with local IMAs in conjunction with the FBI to facilitate the enrollment of InfraGard Members in the GETS and WPS programs

Current Status

The INMA and the NCS are currently working toward the development of an MOU (or similar document) that would outline a well defined set of procedures for IMAs and individual InfraGard Members to engage with the GETS and WPS programs.

APPENDIX A

GETS/WPS FAQ

What is GETS?

The Government Emergency Telecommunications System (GETS) provides National Security/Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) personnel a high probability of completion for their phone calls when normal calling methods are unsuccessful. It is designed for periods of severe network congestion or disruption and works through a series of enhancements to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN). GETS is in a constant state of readiness. Users receive a GETS “calling card” to access the service. This card provides access phone numbers, a Personal Identification Number (PIN), and simple dialing instructions.

Why is GETS important to me?

Natural disasters, power outages, cable cuts, and software problems can cripple the telephone services of an entire region. Congestion alone (e.g., the Mother’s Day phenomenon) can prevent access to circuits. During times of emergency, the NS/EP community needs to know their calls will go through.

When do I use GETS?

GETS is used in an emergency or crisis situation when the PSTN is overloaded (congested) and the ability to complete a call by normal means is significantly decreased.

How does GETS work?

GETS is accessed through a universal number (1-710-NCS-GETS) using everyday telephone equipment (e.g., standard desk set, fax, modem, STU III). A series of prompts directs you to enter your 12-digit card number and destination phone number. Once authenticated, your call receives priority treatment.

Where can I use GETS?

GETS is primarily designed for calls within the United States and its territories. You can request international calling privileges for calls to or from international destinations. However, note that GETS provides priority treatment only in the United States portion of the call.

Do I need extra hardware or software?

No. You will only need a GETS card, which will have both the universal access number and a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Will GETS work on my cell phone?

You can place a GETS call from any cell phone. However, it will not receive priority treatment until it reaches a landline network. To receive priority treatment in wireless networks, you must register for the Wireless Priority Service (WPS).

What functions does GETS support?

- Presidential Communication
- Continuity of Operations (COOP)
- Disaster Response

- Agency essential emergency functions
- State Emergency Operations Centers
- Emergency Broadcast Interface
- International interface for diplomatic and defense telecommunications

What features and enhancements does GETS provide?

GETS provides a higher probability of call completion even in damaged or congested networks by providing numerous enhancements and key features.

- Access control using Personal Identification Numbers (PINs)
- Toll-free access number with alternate numbers for direct carrier access
- Failsafe access - if the access control system fails, GETS calls would automatically be allowed to complete
- Enhanced routing to one of the three interexchange (long distance) carriers
- Alternate carrier routing in the event one of the carriers is unavailable
- Priority treatment with trunk queuing, sub-grouping, and reservation
- Exemption from restrictive network management controls during congestion
- International calling (when requested and authorized in advance)
- Interoperability with other networks
- Number translation (for special users)

How much does GETS cost?

The only charge is for usage when making calls using a GETS card. GETS calls are billed at a rate of 7¢ or 10¢ per minute (depending on carrier and other factors) for calls within the United States and its territories, Canada, and most of the Caribbean. International calls are billed at commercial rates, though international calling privileges are restricted to those cards so authorized by your organization's Point of Contact (POC) or alternate.

Federal government organizations are exempt from billing until an annual threshold for GETS calls has been exceeded. However, the NCS reserves the right to bill federal users for GETS calls if there has been fraud, waste, or abuse using your GETS card.

For organizations outside the Federal government, a Program Designator Code (PDC) is required to establish a billing account for payment of GETS calls placed by members of your organization. GETS charges are payable to our contracting office, the Defense Information Technology Contracting Organization (DITCO). Details on paying these charges would be included with the bill you receive from them. NOTE: You will not normally be billed for calls to confirm receipt of individual GETS cards, familiarization calls, or short-duration test calls to the familiarization line (703-818-3924). However, we reserve the right to bill for all calls, especially if there has been fraud, waste, or abuse using your GETS card(s).

APPENDIX B

Criteria for Participation in the NCS Programs

There are five broad categories that serve as guidelines for determining who may qualify as a potential GETS user. These users may be in federal, state, local, or tribal government, critical infrastructure sectors in industry, or non-profit organizations that perform critical National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) functions. Typical GETS users are responsible for the command and control functions critical to management of and response to national security and emergency situations, particularly during the first 24 to 72 hours following an event.

1) National Security Leadership

This user performs NS/EP functions essential to national survival when nuclear attack threatens or occurs. In addition, this user provides support to critical orderwire and control services necessary to ensure the rapid and efficient provisioning or restoration of other NS/EP services. These user functions may include the following:

- Critical orderwire or control service supporting other NS/EP functions
- Presidential support critical to continuity of Government and national security leadership
- National Command Authority support for military command and control critical to national survival
- Intelligence critical to warning of potentially catastrophic attack
- Support for the conduct of diplomatic negotiations critical to arresting or limiting hostilities

2) National Security Posture and US Population Attack Warning

This user type performs additional NS/EP functions essential to maintaining an optimum defense, diplomatic, or continuity of government posture before, during, and after crisis situations. Such situations are those ranging from national emergencies to international crises, including nuclear attack. These user functions may include the following:

- Threat assessment and attack warning
- Conduct of diplomacy
- Collection, processing, and dissemination of intelligence
- Command and control of military forces
- Military mobilization
- Continuity of Federal Government before, during, and after crisis situations
- Continuity of state and local government functions supporting the Federal Government during and after national emergencies
- Recovery of critical national functions after crisis situations
- National space operations

3) Public Health, Safety, and Maintenance of Law and Order

The user type performs NS/EP functions necessary for giving civil alert to the US population by maintaining law and order and the health and safety of the US

population in times of national, regional, or serious local emergency. These user functions may include the following:

- Population warning (other than attack warning)
- Law enforcement
- Continuity of critical state and local government functions (other than support of the Federal Government during and after national emergencies)
- Hospitals and distribution of medical supplies
- Critical logistic functions and public utility services
- Civil air traffic control
- Military assistance to civil authorities
- Defense and protection of critical industrial facilities
- Critical weather services
- Transportation to accomplish foregoing NS/EP functions

4) Public Welfare and Maintenance of National Economic Posture

This user type performs NS/EP functions necessary for maintaining the public welfare and national economic posture during any national or regional emergency. These user functions may include the following:

- Distribution of food and other essential supplies
- Maintenance of national monetary, credit, and financial systems
- Maintenance of price, wage, rent, and salary stabilization, and consumer rationing programs
- Control of production and distribution of strategic materials and energy supplies
- Prevention and control of environmental hazards or damage
- Transportation to accomplish the foregoing NS/EP functions

5) Disaster Recovery

This user type performs NS/EP functions of managing a variety of recovery operations after the initial response has been accomplished. These user functions may include the following:

- Managing medical resources such as supplies, personnel, or patients in medical facilities
- Other activities such as coordination to establish and stock shelters, to obtain detailed damage assessments, or to support key disaster field office personnel may be included.

Examples of those eligible include:

- Medical recovery operations leadership
- Detailed damage assessment leadership
- Disaster shelter coordination and management
- Critical Disaster Field Office support personnel