FEMA Directive: Emergency Notification System (ENS)
Directive #262-3, Revision 2

BACKGROUND

This Directive applies to all Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) organizations and personnel. This Directive supersedes the Emergency Notification Directive 262-3, Revision 1, dated March 17, 2015.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Directive is to designate the Emergency Notification System (ENS) as the standard notification tool for activating teams and disseminating information and to define the rules for its proper and effective use.

PRINCIPLES

A. Enhance FEMA's ability to provide national warning, notifications, situational awareness and analyses to FEMA leadership, staff, and partners to ensure effective response operations.
B. Maximize the utility of the ENS as the primary tool for facilitating efficient, effective and optimal response operations.

REQUIREMENTS
A. RESPONSIBILITIES

Outcome: Fulfill FEMA requirements for alerting and notification within the Agency, as well as requirements for interagency notification responsibilities in support of continuity and disaster response.

1. The FEMA Operations Center (FOC) is designated as the DHS Executive Agent for oversight and management of the ENS as well as notification and warnings and the associated dissemination process. The FOC also serves as the ENS system owner and steward.
   a. The FOC is responsible for formulating guidance and ensuring that all FEMA and participating DHS components follow the established policies.
   b. The FOC oversees and administers the operation of the ENS and facilitates ENS orientation and training as appropriate.
   c. The FOC maintains a secure environment to fulfill Federal Certification and Accreditation (C&A) requirements.
   d. The FOC may activate notifications, or scenarios, on behalf of FEMA leadership, programs, internal reporting thresholds, and participating DHS components.
   e. For each FEMA and participating DHS component, the FOC is responsible for maintaining a list of staff positions having authority to request ENS scenario activation for exercise and real-world incidents, technical support, and assistance from the ENS Administration Team (see section A.3 below).

2. Each DHS Organizational component using the system is responsible for appointing a Primary and Secondary Point of Contact (POC) as an emergency coordinator to serve as both program manager and component POC for coordinating agency alert and notification activities.
   a. The component information worksheet must be requested and submitted to the ENS Administration Team at ENS-admin@fema.dhs.gov.
   b. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding ENS use must be jointly developed and signed by the DHS component and the FOC Director.
   c. A component POC(s) must be identified by each component.
   d. The component POC must attend formal ENS training and ENS training specific to DHS mission and requirements.
   e. The component POC must work with the ENS Administration Team to establish ENS requirements and define groups, scenarios, etc.
   f. Component POCs are responsible for assigning membership in their groups and for the accuracy of all members' contact information.
      i. Component POCs should periodically review and confirm the accuracy of their groups and the contact information.
      ii. It is recommended to review and confirm groups and contact information on a quarterly basis but this should occur at least once a year.
   g. The DHS and DHS components sharing in system usage will provide support staff to ensure system integrity and a high level of readiness and operational capability.
      i. Funding between agencies will be established via Interagency Agreement (IAA), as needed for ENS system usage and expansion.
   h. All contacts within the prospective component must understand the rules of system security located on the ENS Collaboration SharePoint site. (See Additional Information: Monitoring and Evaluation)
   i. All POCs must be trained and be able to respond to notifications as required.
   j. All organizational components using the ENS shall plan and conduct tests, training, and exercises to demonstrate viability and interoperability of ENS operations.
   k. Each component must designate a primary and alternate official who will be authorized to initiate activations.
      i. This information must be provided to the FOC and updated as needed.
      ii. Only authorizing officials may initiate activations.

3. The ENS Administration Team is responsible for the administration, management and maintenance of the ENS. Close coordination and cooperation among team members is critical to ensure successful development of the system as it expands to other components within DHS. The FOC functions as the primary steward and overall POC for the ENS.
   a. Team members may include DHS staff, FEMA staff, contractors, and employees from other departments and agencies.
   b. The FOC provides guidance regarding system usage, Standard Operating Procedures, best practices, system security and training on the ENS Collaboration SharePoint site. (See Additional Information: Monitoring and Evaluation)
      i. All users are expected to comply with these policies and procedures.
   c. The ENS Administration Team manages internal ENS security safeguards.

4. The ENS and Mount Weather Information Technology Support (MWITS) uses FEMA's Information Technology infrastructure. The FEMA Office of the Chief Information Officer

(OCIO) is responsible for managing and maintaining telecommunications network connections and configurations beyond the physical ENS hardware.

    a. OCIO operates and maintains the FEMA Switched Network (FSN) Wide Area Network communications and information systems that serve all FEMA locations including major IT services centers; supervises hardware and software maintenance; and oversees Local Area Network (LAN) administration support activities and information systems.

    b. OCIO's Network Operations Center (NOC) provides monitoring of the switch infrastructure which supports the FOC. This work includes 24X7 monitoring of each FEMA OCIO operated network circuits and its components, and provides 24X7 monitoring, alerting and reporting on service disruptions, and 100 performs definable repeatable processes.

    c. OCIO protects, monitors, assesses, analyzes, detects, and responds to unauthorized activity within FEMA information systems and computer networks.

    d. OCIO's Security Operations Center (SOC) provides security operations support to FEMA Networks and Endpoints. SOC Functions include IT Security Incident Response; digital media analysis; forensics investigations; firewall and small remote disaster office virtual private network (VPN) management; vulnerability scans and assessments; 24/7 network security monitoring; and security engineering consulting.

    e. MWITS provides hands-on Operations and Maintenance (O&M) support for the switch infrastructure in the FOC.

B. PROCEDURES

Outcome: The ENS, located within the FOC at the Mount Weather Emergency Operations Center (MWEOC), serves as the standard FEMA/DHS automated notification system. A secondary, back-up system is located within the FEMA Alternate Operations Center East (FAOC-E) in Thomasville, Georgia; a tertiary back-up system is located at the FEMA Alternate Operations Center West (FAOC-W) in Denver, Colorado.

1. ENS Readiness. DHS/FEMA is committed to ensuring all organizational components are operational and ready to respond in the event of an emergency, major disaster, or threat to national security.

    a. The decision to activate the ENS will be made by a participating component's authorizing official as designated by that office or component, and in accordance with component policy and procedures.

    b. If an emergency affects an individual DHS component, the leadership of that component may make the decision to activate its individual scenarios as required by the situation.

        i. For example, if an emergency occurs that affects only FEMA Headquarters, the FEMA Administrator or Deputy Administrator can direct activation of the FEMA Headquarters COOP.

2. ENS Alerts. The ENS permits messages to be sent quickly as voice calls to office, home or cellular phones, and notifications to various e-mail accounts. This system can announce or provide guidance in an emergency or crisis to communicate relevant, critical information.

    a. Any time an emergency arises that requires the issuance of an alert notification or activation notification, the appropriate notification will be issued through the ENS using the following delivery methods (either all or selective based on the situation and component requirements):

        i. Work Phone

        ii.   Home Phone
       iii.   Mobile Phone
       iv.   Short Message Service (SMS) (Text)
       v.   Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS)

  b. The ENS is used to notify FEMA and other participating DHS component personnel of emergency situations and for an all-hazard notification according to the National Response Framework (NRF). These messages serve as a notification to prompt immediate action to resolve or mitigate the situation and to further communicate the status of the situation. Operational control and administration of the system is the responsibility of the FOC. The FOC Director will direct and oversee daily operation of the system and will enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with each participating DHS component.

3. ENS Authorized Users. All FEMA and other DHS components requesting administrative rights and privileges to use the ENS require the following:
  a. FOC Director approval.
  b. FOC Director will determine whether the addition of a component to the system requires funding to expand the ENS.
  c. FEMA/OCIO, in coordination with the ENS Administration Team, will determine the impact of adding a component onto the system and the FEMA infrastructure.
  d. Departments and agencies outside the DHS are usually NOT authorized to use the ENS.
       i.   Exceptions to this policy are granted and authorized by the FOC Director or designated representative.

4. ENS Training, Testing and Exercises (TT&E). Internal component testing and exercises, testing of the organization's alert and notification procedures and systems, and interagency testing of the ENS are required under guidance in the Federal Continuity Directive (FCD) 1, Federal Executive Branch National Continuity Program and Requirements, and are to be included in the organization's multi-year TT&E program.

5. ENS Strategy and Program Management Plan. Each participating organizational component shall develop and maintain its own policies and ENS procedures specific to its operational requirements.
  a. Each plan will address both planning and program guidance to include training, testing, and exercise activities; ENS usage and implementation policy; budgetary requirements; and planning and preparedness considerations and issues.
  b. Component POCs should use the resources provided by the FOC as a guide for developing their own operational requirements.
  c. Changes and updates to this Directive and any accompanying operational documents will be made by the ENS Administration Team.
  d. All users may submit recommendations for change to any member of the team, but all changes must be approved by the component's team lead.

6. ENS Organizational Component Maintenance. FEMA and DHS users are required to maintain their own personal data by logging into the ENS and updating information and informing their POCs when personal data (i.e., phone number) has changed, group membership requirements change, or they leave the agency.

a. Administrator POCs are established to help users update information, manage group memberships, and provide other simple ENS support.
b. The ENS and its related policies will be reviewed annually by the program manager, the FOC Director, and ENS Administration Team member.
c. Scenarios, rosters, and contact information, as well as POC designations and training, will be updated as changes occur to ensure ENS policies remain current.

7. Successful ENS Implementation. Each organizational component within FEMA and participating DHS components must plan for, train, test, and evaluate its ENS implementation process and procedures.
   a. The information in this document should be used as a guide for operational policy, and the ENS Operational Policy document, available upon request from the FOC, should be used as a guide for all component POCs.
   b. This policy shall be modified by FEMA/FOC as operational requirements change.
   c. The ENS is an important tool that is especially critical during an emergency.
      i. As such, it is crucial that each component takes system management responsibility to ensure ENS effectiveness and success.

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Damon Penn
Assistant Administrator, Response Directorate

_9/27/2015_____
Date

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

REVIEW CYCLE
FEMA Directive #262-3, Revision 3: Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be reviewed, reissued, revised, or rescinded within 4 years of the issue date.

AUTHORITIES
Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended (42 U.S.C 5121, et seq.)
The National Security Act of 1947, as amended (50 U.S.C. 401).
The Homeland Security Act of 2002 (PL 107-296).
Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Pub. L. 109-295)

REFERENCES
Executive Order 12148, as amended, Federal Emergency Management.
Executive Order 12656, Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities.
Executive Order 13618, Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Communications Functions.
National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 51/Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 20, National Continuity Policy.
Federal Executive Branch National Continuity Program and Requirements (October 2012).
Federal Continuity Directive 1, Federal Executive Branch National Continuity Program and Requirements (January 2017).
FEMA FP-104-008-4, FEMA Watch Guide (July 2019).
FEMA Operations Center, Emergency Notification System (ENS) Rules of Behavior, June 14, 2019.
FEMA Directive 262-3, Web 2.0 Policy.

DEFINITIONS
Activation of COOP: The initiation of the process of executing the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). The ENS is the primary tool used for activation of COOP activities and is an intrinsic part of COOP planning and operations.

Components: Servicing Organizations, Agencies, Administrations, Directorates, and Offices that make up the Department of Homeland Security.

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP): Internal organizational plan that ensures that a viable capability exists to continue essential government functions during emergencies and major disasters. The COOP includes information on procedures that delineate essential functions; specifies succession plans and emergency delegations of authority; provides for the safekeeping of vital records and databases; identifies alternate operating facilities; provides for interoperable communications; and validates response capability through tests, training, and exercises.

Emergency Notification System (ENS): The ENS is capable of sending notifications to individuals and groups within FEMA and to other participating DHS components. The ENS is primarily intended to send notifications and relay messages that are critical in nature, but it may

also be used for routine and test purposes with appropriate approval and authorization. All notifications are sent to personnel via documented communication devices such as home phone, work phone, mobile phone, and/or e-mail.

FEMA Alternate Operations Centers (FAOC-E): FEMA's secondary Operations Center located in Thomasville, Georgia, part of the FEMA Mobile Emergency Response System (MERS) Detachment that hosts the secondary notification system and serves as the back-up to the FOC.

FEMA Alternate Operations Centers (FAOC-W): FEMA's tertiary Operations Center located in Denver, Colorado, part of the FEMA Mobile Emergency Response System (MERS) Detachment that hosts the tertiary notification system and serves as back-up to the FOC.

FEMA Operations Center (FOC): FEMA's primary Operations Center located at the Mount Weather Emergency Operations Center (MWEOC), in Mt. Weather, Virginia, that hosts the primary notification system. The FOC is the owner and steward of all three Emergency Notification Systems used by FEMA and serves as the central location for overall system management.

Scenario: An in-depth notification denoting the activation of the ENS response based on reporting thresholds found in the FEMA Watch Guide and situational requirements. Scenarios determine who will be notified in a given situation, what messages are received, and by which delivery methods.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION
FEMA Office of Response and Recovery is responsible for the management and maintenance of this directive and supporting or associated guidance. The procedures outlined in this directive as well as training, program management, and maintenance used to support the Emergency Notification System will be regularly reviewed to ensure effectiveness. Any adjustments to the procedures, training, management or maintenance will be incorporated into future revisions. For guidance regarding system usage, SOPs, best practices, system security and training, visit: https://intranet.fema.net/org/orr/collab/response/omd/rcb/foc/ens/Pages/default.aspx

QUESTIONS
Direct questions to *FEMA-ActionOffice-ORR-Response@fema.dhs.gov*.