



FEMA

Disaster Emergency Communications

Serving as a key coordination point for Federal, State, and local emergency responders at a regional level for emergency communications.

Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups

What Are RECCWGs?

The Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups (RECCWG), as mandated by Congress in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations Act of 2007, are planning and coordinating bodies responsible for providing a forum to assess and address the survivability, sustainability, operability, and interoperability of emergency communications systems at all government levels. The RECCWGs provide a vision into regional preparedness efforts by serving as a mechanism for State, local, and Tribal agencies to help FEMA and other Federal agencies define and integrate emergency communications support during an incident. A RECCWG has been established in 10 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions. Each RECCWG has unique membership dependent on regional government structure and processes.

DHS 2007 Appropriations Act Title XVIII Statutory Duties

- Assessing the survivability, sustainability, and interoperability of local emergency communications systems.
- Reporting annually to Federal stakeholders on the regional status of interoperable voice and data emergency communications networks.
- Ensuring a process for coordinating effective multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency emergency communications networks for use during disasters.
- Coordinating the establishment of Federal, State, local, and Tribal support services and networks.

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
<p>Goal 1: To facilitate interaction between Federal, State, and local agencies at the regional level by serving as a coordination point on all emergency communications-related matters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote consistent and collaborative efforts for communications plans, technical solutions, and regional communications-related exercises Provide guidance and support on Federal emergency communications grant programs Support national, regional, State, and local training and exercise efforts related to emergency communications Provide a consistent format for Federal interaction
<p>Goal 2: To foster a comprehensive understanding of regional emergency communications challenges at the National level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform and support State and local agencies' participation in emergency communications efforts at the National level Assess priority communications vulnerabilities and develop mitigation strategies Conduct communications systems disaster impact analyses Ensure development and implementation of communications operations continuity plans during and following a disaster Provide evaluations of emergency communications systems before, during, and after a disaster Report on status of regional communications

Why Are RECCWGs Important?

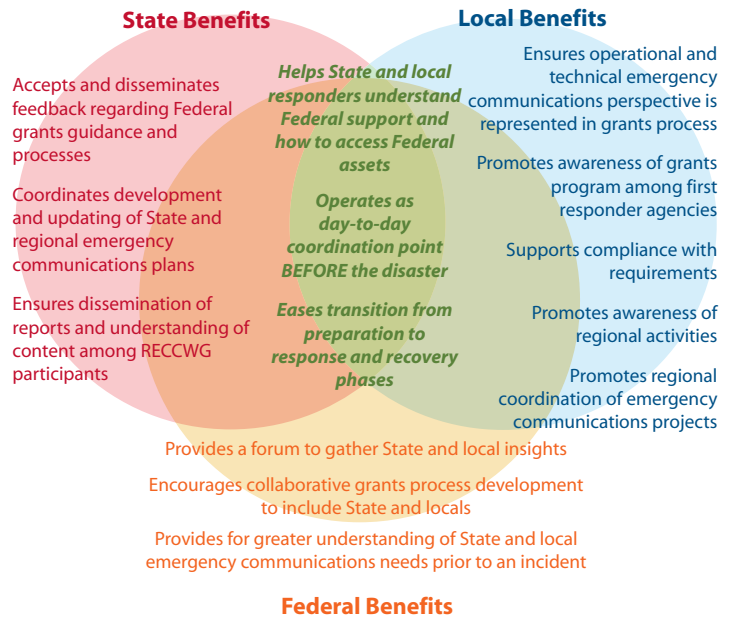
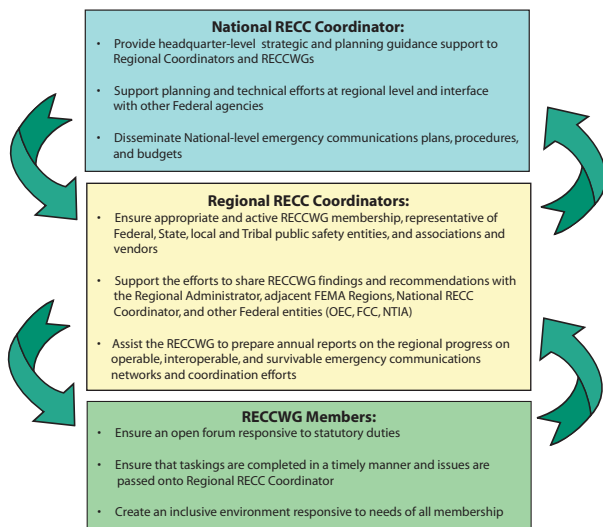
The RECCWGs provide a venue for all types of emergency response organizations—Federal, State, local, Tribal, and private sector—to improve facilitation and integration of emergency communications response and recovery. The RECCWGs assist Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities in coordinating and identifying emergency communications needs and priorities to ensure operability, interoperability, and survivability of communications capabilities during an incident throughout the

region. Further, Federal agencies can leverage the RECCWGs as a mechanism to inform State, local, and Tribal entities of national and regional emergency communications capabilities and resources (e.g., what types of communications capabilities FEMA Mobile Emergency Response Support can deploy, what types of grants are available for emergency communications). As for State and local agencies, the RECCWGs support the ability to influence and provide input to National and regional emergency communications-related activities including grants application processes, communications planning requirements, and training and exercises.

How Are RECCWGs Supported?

Each Regional Administrator is responsible for serving as the Chairperson of the RECCWG or appointing a designee, and ensuring that the RECCWGs successfully meet the emergency communications coordination needs of agencies within the region. To support the Regional Administrator, Regional RECC Coordinators are located in each of the 10 FEMA regions to coordinate the establishment and administration of the RECCWGs, support the RECCWG's efforts to meet emergency communications priorities, and help define the RECCWG's processes to ensure that the membership is representative of the regional environment.

To support the Regional Coordinators, a National RECC Coordinator from the FEMA Disaster Emergency Communications (DEC) Division provides headquarters-level guidance and support to promote the goals and objectives of the RECCWGs and ensures consistency and coordination among the FEMA regions. The DEC Division has the principal responsibility for ensuring establishment and support of the RECCWGs. The DEC Division provides National support to the regional process and facilitates coordination with Federal support agencies including, the DHS Office of Emergency Communications, Federal Communications Commission, and National Communications System, that are also central to the success of the RECCWGs. The figure below illustrates additional roles and responsibilities of the National and Regional Coordinators, and the RECCWGs.



Who Should Be Involved?

Title XVIII legislation requires that RECCWG membership include Federal, State, local, and Tribal public safety agencies and emergency response organizations representative of the region. Membership includes elected officials, government officials, law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services (EMS), and emergency managers. Federal departments that provide emergency support services also are represented.

The membership of each RECCWG determines the focus and priority of the regional, State, and local areas of concern relating to emergency communications. The FEMA RECC Coordinator and RECCWG members take into consideration emerging threats, industry input, technology standards, and National-level guidance when identifying regional activity priorities. Furthermore, the RECCWGs coordinate with private sector entities and non-governmental organizations (e.g., hospitals, amateur radio operators, and transportation and transit services) to understand their communications capabilities and how to integrate them into the emergency response and recovery efforts.

Emergency communications improvement efforts are being conducted nationwide through RECCWG activities. To learn more about the RECCWG in your region, please log on to www.FEMA.gov to identify your FEMA Region and associated Regional RECC Coordinator.

For more information please contact:
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