



FEMA

Disaster Emergency Communications Region VI

Overview

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Greg Boren/Regional Emergency Communication Coordinator

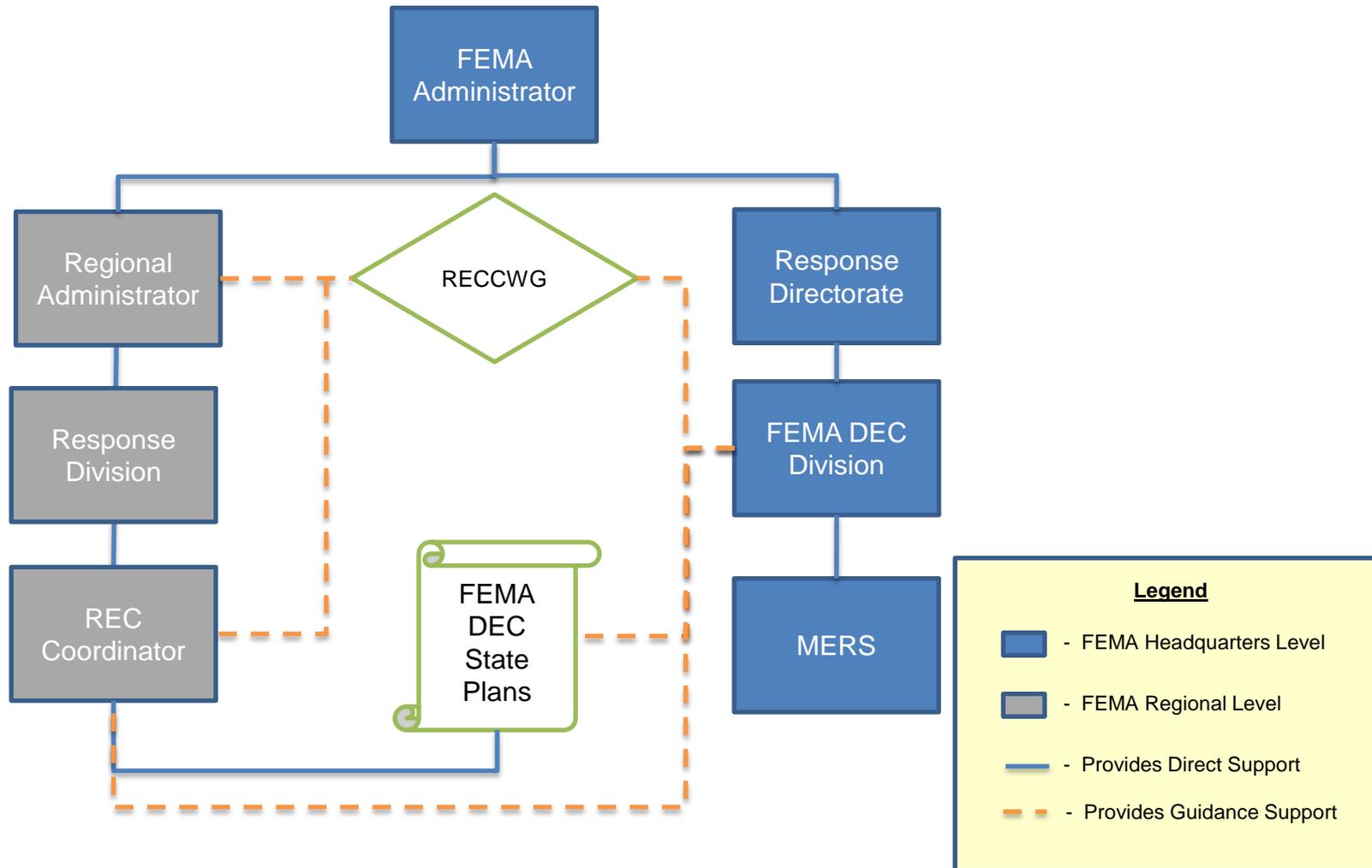


FEMA Organizational Overview

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards

- FEMA is led by Administrator Craig Fugate
- The ten FEMA Regions are led by Regional Administrators (RAs)
- The FEMA DEC Division falls within FEMA's Response Directorate
- The Regional Emergency Communications (REC) Coordinators in each of the ten FEMA Regions were established with the support from the FEMA DEC Division—
 - REC Coordinators report directly to the Response Operations Directors within each of the FEMA Regions
 - Serve as Technical Advisor to the RA
 - The FEMA DEC Division provides National level guidance and policy coordination to the ten REC Coordinators

FEMA Organizational Support Structure



FEMA DEC Division Overview

- The FEMA DEC Division provides and integrates Federal communications support to emergency responders at all levels of government.
- DEC Division objectives include:
 - Ensuring effective interoperable communications for response teams
 - Developing a communications coordination framework based on identified communications requirements and associated solutions
 - Promoting communications interoperability with State and local response organizations through Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups (RECCWGs)



FEMA DEC Response Support

- FEMA DEC Division provides communications support for Federal Responders:
 - Mission Essential Functions
 - Emergency Support Functions (ESF)
 - National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R)
 - Health and Human Services (HHS) National Disaster Medical System (NDMS)
 - Federal Response Teams
 - Establishment of the IOFs and JFOs
 - Federal Agencies within the incident area
 - National Special Security Events (NSSE)
 - Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMAT)
- Provides mobile and tactical communications capabilities to support State and local agencies requesting emergency communications support
- Serves as ESF #2 Co-Lead when activated, more specifically lead of the Tactical Communications Group



DEC Coordination with the Regions, States and Localities

DEC integrates with State and local agencies through the Regions to provide emergency communications assistance throughout all phases of an incident

- **FEMA Regional Emergency Communications (REC) Coordinators** report to the RA on emergency communications issues in the Region, establish relationships with State and local emergency responders, and serve as the FEMA focal point to coordinate disaster emergency communications capabilities and requirements prior to and during a response at the regional level
- **FEMA DEC Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS)** provide mobile and tactical communications capabilities to support State and local agencies requesting emergency communications support
- **RECCWGs** serve as a coordination point for Federal, State, local, and Tribal agencies at the regional level on emergency communications-related matters
- **FEMA State Emergency Communications Plans** describe the primary and backup communications systems used by Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities and identify resources that States may request during a catastrophic event

DEC Roles and Responsibilities

Disaster Emergency Communications must be integrated at all government levels to effectively serve as the backbone of emergency response.

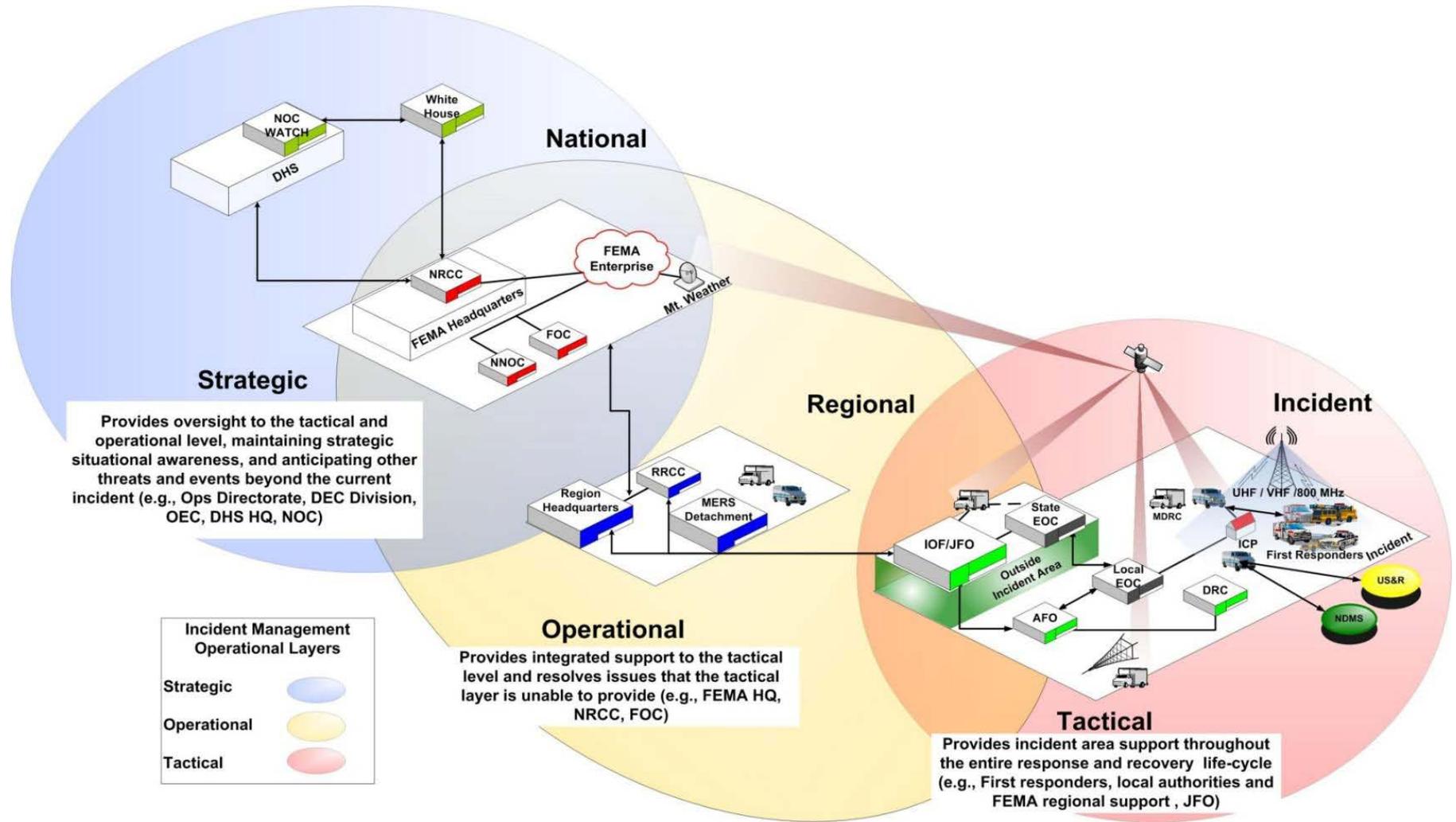
- Lead integrator of Federal resources during an incident to support the emergency communications needs of State, local, and tribal governments
- Deploy communications assets during incidents
- Establish and support the communications needs of Joint Field Offices (JFO)
- Develop State-specific operational emergency communications plans
- Support Regional Emergency Communications Coordination Working Groups (RECCWG)
- Coordinate efforts with Federal government agencies and industry partners

DEC Responds

DEC provides disaster communications support during an incident

- Helps enable the emergency response community to effectively communicate, exchange information, and manage all-hazards events
- Provides communications capabilities at command and control facilities when requested
- Connects incident area responders and commanders to officials at the Regional and National levels
- Facilitates short and long-term restoration of communications networks in affected areas to include tactical communications infrastructure for emergency responders at all levels of government
- Conducts damage assessments and short-term solutions for damaged critical communications infrastructure

DEC - Center of Coordination



RECCWG Overview

The Department of the Homeland Security Act of 2007, Title XVIII Section 1805 (Pub.L. 109-295) established the RECCWGs

- RECCWGs are planning and coordinating bodies responsible for providing a forum to assess and address the survivability, sustainability, operability, and interoperability of emergency communications at all levels
- RECCWGs serve as a single coordination point for emergency communications at the regional level
- RECCWGs are regionally focused and are expected to have unique membership dependent on regional government structure and processes
- Membership includes Federal, State, local, and Tribal representatives from emergency response organizations

FEMA has principle responsibility to help establish and support the RECCWGs, but the focus and direction of the RECCWGs is determined by the RECCWG members



RECCWG Statutory Duties

Each RECCWG must report to the RA and coordinate their activities with the relevant Regional Advisory Council

- Assess the survivability, sustainability, and interoperability of local emergency communications systems to meet the goals of the NECP
- Ensure a process for the coordination of effective multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency emergency communications networks for use during natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters through the expanded use of emergency management and public safety communications mutual aid agreements
- Coordinate the establishment of Federal, State, local, and Tribal support services and networks designed to address the immediate and critical human needs in responding to natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters
- Report annually to the relevant RA, the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) on the status of its region in building robust and sustainable interoperable voice and data emergency communications networks

RECCWG Membership and Partnership

Membership

(1) NON-FEDERAL.—Organizations representing the interests of the following:

- (A) State officials
- (B) Local government officials, including sheriffs
- (C) State police departments
- (D) Local police departments
- (E) Local fire departments
- (F) Public safety answering points (9–1–1 services)
- (G) State emergency managers, homeland security directors, or representatives of State Administrative Agencies
- (H) Local emergency managers or homeland security directors.
- (I) Other emergency response providers as appropriate

(2) FEDERAL.—

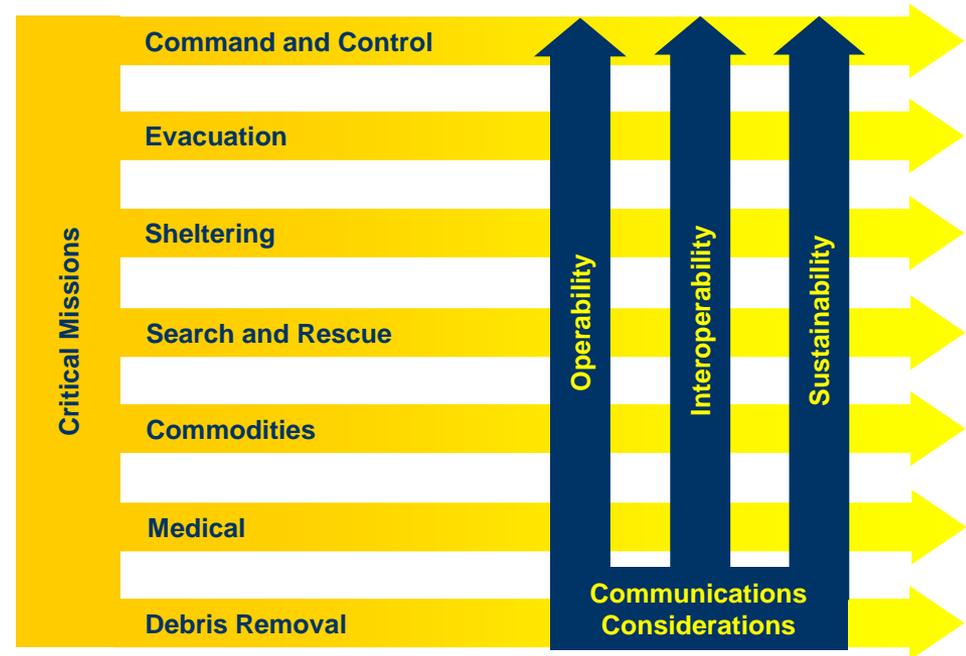
Representatives from the Department, the FCC, and other Federal departments and agencies with responsibility for coordinating interoperable emergency communications with or providing emergency support services to State, local, and tribal governments

Partnerships

- Communications equipment manufacturers and vendors (including broadband data service providers)
- Local exchange carriers
- Local broadcast media
- Wireless carriers
- Satellite communications services
- Cable operators
- Hospitals
- Public utility services
- Emergency evacuation transit services
- Ambulance services
- HAM and amateur radio operators
- Representatives from other private sector entities and nongovernmental organizations as the Regional Administrator determines appropriate

State Emergency Communications Plan (ECP) Overview

- Establishes an integrated Federal, State, local, and Tribal approach to ensuring effective communications coordination prior to and immediately following an incident
- Identifies key Federal, State and local emergency response agencies, and technical capabilities and resources
- Provides a comprehensive view of communications requirements and mitigation strategies for seven mission areas
- Establishes relationships with key response organizations at all levels of government as we typically invite other Federal agencies to participate in addition to State and local agencies
- Supplements and leverages existing State and local communications plans (e.g., SCIP, TICP)



Federal Response Communication Systems Roles

- Disaster Emergency Communications
- DEC-ESF-2 Response
 - Who
 - Region VI DEC
 - Where
 - RRCC
 - What
 - Develop Common Operating Picture (Communications)
 - Provide technical guidance and direction to RA & OPS Chief
 - State communication support requests (ARF)
 - Interoperability coordination
 - Coordinate Federal Response of Tactical Assets
 - Transition support to DEC Branch stand-up at JFO
- National Communication Service
 - NCS-ESF-2 Restoration
 - Who
 - Region VI NCS/NCC
 - Where
 - IOF/JFO
 - What
 - Support Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources (CIKR) of impacted area
 - Public Safety Restoration
 - Radio/911 Systems
 - Commercial Restoration
 - Telephone & Cellular
 - Internet & Broadband
 - Broadcast (TV/AM/FM)
 - Towers
- Communication Logistics
 - COML
- Internal Federal Support
 - Who
 - Region IT & MERS
 - Where
 - RRCC
 - State EOC's/IOF/JFO
 - What
 - IMAT Connectivity
 - IT Services
 - Internet
 - LAN/WiFi
 - Sat-Phone Voice/Data
 - VTC
 - Area & On-Site Radios
 - FNARS (COOP/COG)

“What we have here is a failure to Communicate.”



Katrina Lessons Learned

Public Safety has traditionally planned for short term events/disasters – not long term widespread catastrophes

Five outcomes from Katrina stand out in the reports:

- 1. Tower/Infrastructure Failures
- 2. Power Failures
Tower Sites, Dispatch Centers, Portable Radio Batteries
- 3. Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and
Network Infrastructure Failures (landline & microwave)
- 4. Public Safety personnel issues
- 5. Need for more deployable systems

Region VI FEMA DEC Coordinator

Region VI

Greg Boren

FEMA REC Coordinator

Gregory.Boren@dhs.gov

940-898-5287 (office)

940-235-5636 (cell)

