

NorthmarkCommunications

Field Deployable Telecom Solutions

Application Note: **Priority Telecommunications Services**

Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) is a low-cost (7-10 cents/minute – no registration or monthly fees) emergency telephone communications service designed to be used when National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) personnel are unable to complete emergency calls through their regular telecommunications means. GETS uses a calling card to provide federal, state, local government, and industry NS/EP users with a higher probability of call completion during periods of natural or man-made disasters or emergencies that cause congestion or network outages. GETS features are implemented as software enhancements to the telephone switches throughout the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN).

GETS access control is accomplished through the use of a unique dialing plan and Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) to ensure only authorized users gain access to GETS features and to protect against fraud.

Wireless Priority Service (WPS) allows authorized NS/EP personnel to initiate calls during an emergency when participating GSM and TDMA cellular networks are congested with public calls. To facilitate completion of critical calls during emergencies, WPS gives authorized NS/EP personnel priority cellular access before subscribers who do not have WPS. WPS will not preempt calls in progress and does not guarantee call completion. WPS currently works only on cellular networks operated by Verizon, T-Mobile, AT&T, Nextel, and SouthernLINC.

In addition, WPS can be used in conjunction with the GETS card. This ensures a high probability of call completion in both the landline and cellular portions of the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN). Not all wireless providers currently offer the WPS feature. If your current wireless provider does not offer WPS, you must be willing to cancel service with your provider and establish service with a vendor who does offer the feature. There is a small cost associated with WPS for registration (\$10), monthly service (\$4.50), and for each call (75 cents per minute). Prices may vary with the wireless service provider.

Plan ahead – GETS and WPS cannot be arranged for at the last minute!

To learn how to subscribe to GETS and WPS in your area, contact the Priority Telecommunications Service Center toll free at 866-627-2255 (DC metro area, use 703-760-2255) or visit www.ncs.gov.