

VPS Consulting Memo

Disaster Recovery Planning

Overview

From blizzards and flooding to wildfires and hurricanes, 2019 has been a year of weather extremes across the United States. Each season brings new challenges and new opportunities. One challenge we hope you have not had to deal with is the occurrence of a natural disaster in your area. We want to take this opportunity to remind you of network outage reporting obligations and to make sure that your disaster plan has been updated recently with your current contingency procedures and emergency contact information.

FCC Requirements:

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) has established requirements for the reporting of disruptions to communications and to the reliability and security of communications infrastructures, per Part 4 of 47 C.F.R.

Communications providers covered by these requirements include:

- Cable communications providers
- IXC or LEC tandem facilities providers
- Satellite communications providers
- SS7 providers
- Wireless service providers
- Wireline communications providers
- Interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) providers
- Covered 911 service providers

Please note that each type of provider listed above has unique reporting requirements and thresholds. In this memo, we will cover the requirements for Wireline and Interconnected VoIP providers. Reports should be filed through the Network Outage Reporting System ("NORS"), the FCC's web-based filing system. If you need assistance in determining requirements for a different type of service provider, please contact us and we will provide those to you.

Wireline Communications Providers:

Notification – All wireline communications providers shall submit electronically a Notification to the Commission within 120 minutes of discovering that they have experienced on any facilities that they own, operate, lease, or otherwise utilize, an outage of at least 30 minutes duration that:

- Potentially affects at least 900,000 user minutes of either telephony or paging;
 - User Minutes: multiply the duration of the outage, expressed in minutes, by the number of working telephone numbers potentially affected by the outage
- Affects at least 667 OC3 minutes;
- Potentially affects any special office or facilities [e.g. entities enrolled in the Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) Program at priority Levels 1 and 2, which may include, but are not limited to, major military installations, key government facilities, nuclear power plants, and those airports that are listed as current primary (PR) airports in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airports Systems (NPIAS) (as issued at least one calendar year prior to the outage)]
- Potentially affects a 911 special facility
 - The provider must notify, as soon as possible by telephone or other electronic means, any official who has been designated by the management of the affected 911 facility as the provider's contact person for communications outages at that facility, and the provider shall convey to that person all available information that may be useful to the management of the affected facility in mitigating the effects of the outage on efforts to communicate with that facility.
 - Not later than 72 hours after discovering the outage, the provider shall submit electronically an Initial Communications Outage Report to the Commission.
 - Not later than thirty days after discovering the outage, the provider shall submit electronically a Final Communications Outage Report to the Commission.
 - The Notification and the Initial and Final reports shall comply with all of the requirements of § 4.11.

Interconnected VoIP Service Providers:

Notification – All interconnected VoIP service providers shall submit electronically a Notification to the Commission:

- Within 240 minutes of discovering that they have experienced on any facilities that they own, operate, lease, or otherwise utilize, an outage of at least 30 minutes duration that potentially affects a 9-1-1 special facility, in which case they also shall notify, as soon as possible by telephone or other electronic means, any official who has been designated by the management of the affected 9-1-1 facility as the provider's contact person for communications outages at that facility, and the provider shall convey to that person all available information that may be useful to the management of the affected facility in mitigating the effects of the outage on efforts to communicate with that facility; or
- Within 24 hours of discovering that they have experienced on any facilities that they own, operate, lease, or otherwise utilize, an outage of at least 30 minutes duration:
 - that potentially affects at least 900,000 user minutes of interconnected VoIP service and results in complete loss of service; or

- that potentially affects any special offices and facilities [e.g. entities enrolled in the Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) Program at priority Levels 1 and 2, which may include, but are not limited to, major military installations, key government facilities, nuclear power plants, and those airports that are listed as current primary (PR) airports in the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airports Systems (NPIAS)]

Final Communications Outage Report – Not later than thirty days after discovering the outage, the provider shall submit electronically a Final Communications Outage Report to the Commission.

State Requirements:

In addition to the federal requirements listed above, many state-specific network outage reporting requirements exist. Please contact us if you need assistance in identifying those requirements.

Disaster Recovery Plan & Additional Assistance

Company-specific reporting requirements and associated contact information should be incorporated into your company's Disaster Recovery Plan. If you don't currently have a Disaster Recovery Plan or would like assistance with any part of the disaster recovery planning process, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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