



Homeland
Security

Fact Sheet

Government Emergency Telecommunications Service

Purpose: The Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) is an emergency service designed for use 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).

Background: The National Communications System developed GETS in response to White House tasking to provide NS/EP users emergency access and specialized processing in local and long distance telephone networks. The PSTN is the backbone for GETS because of its survivability, ease of use, availability, robustness, reliability, and technological currency. GETS can be accessed through the Federal Technology Service, the Diplomatic Telecommunications Service, and the Defense Switched Network, and is maintained in a constant state of readiness, maximizing the use of all available PSTN resources in the event of congestion or outages caused by emergency, crisis, or war.

Highlights of GETS Features:

- ❑ **Access Authorization:** GETS access control is accomplished through the use of Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) to protect against fraud and ensure only authorized users gain access to GETS features. GETS is initiated by dialing 710-NCS-GETS (627-4387), waiting for the tone, and then entering the assigned PIN located on your GETS card, followed by the destination number.
- ❑ **Enhanced Routing:** GETS calls use extensive software enhancements to the PSTN's robust network of interconnecting paths between switches. With these enhancements to the grid of multiple switch connections, numerous switch failures in the PSTN could occur without disrupting GETS calls.
- ❑ **Ubiquitous Coverage:** GETS is supported by the major PSTN service providers, providing nationwide connectivity.
- ❑ **Priority Treatment:**
 - Unique NS/EP codepoint carried across the signaling network; used to trigger priority features such as trunk queuing
 - Priority within the signaling network
 - Exemption from restrictive network management controls used to reduce network congestion

Contact Information. NCS NS/EP Priority Telecommunications Service Center, 866-NCS-CALL or, in the Washington DC metro area, 703-760-2255, option 1.

◆ Web Site: <http://gets.ncs.gov/> ◆ E-mail: gets@dhs.gov.