

# ITU – Radiocommunication Bureau

Subject: Standard operating procedures and national spectrum management practices for use in the event of a disaster situation

Reference: Emergency and disaster relief Radiocommunication - Resolution 647 (WRC-07)  
BR Circular letter [CR/281](#) dated 13 March 2008  
BR Circular letter [CR/288](#) dated 17 July 2008

Communication received from the Administration of:

**Canada - (22 May 2008)**

With respect to the request to provide the relevant information to the Bureau concerning the national spectrum management practices for emergency and disaster relief radiocommunications, please note the following. Concerning Industry Canada Emergency Frequency Assignment Procedures, the Minister of Industry is responsible for all aspects of radio frequency spectrum management including emergency spectrum allocations to ensure the continuity of telecommunications. The Minister recognizes that the ability of first responders to communicate during an event is of paramount importance and telecommunications provides the essential communication link during emergency operations. The policy of Industry Canada is to give first responders and other related safety services priority authorization to available radio frequencies. Therefore, services involving safeguarding of life and property, in support of an emergency response or otherwise, take precedence over all other users.

During an emergency, the Department activates a regional team of emergency and operational contacts to accelerate spectrum authorizations. The team is led by one or more designated Regional and District Emergency Telecommunications Officers within Industry Canada's five operational regions (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairie and Northern Region, and Pacific). The designated emergency telecom officers' duties include: planning, advice, training, promotion of best practices, and disaster response and recovery. In response to an emergency event, if necessary, these officers work with regional and district spectrum operations personnel to coordinate and expedite the assignment of radio frequencies and associated radio authorizations. Typically, time frames for frequency assignments can be substantially shortened and critical allocation of spectrum can be approved on a very rapid basis (i.e., less than 24 hours). These radio authorizations are for the duration of the emergency and expire following the emergency.

In cases where a region is unable to perform the emergency frequency assignment, for example as a result of system degradation caused by the emergency, other regions are able to perform this function on their behalf. Should national frequency assignments be required, further assistance is provided by the National Emergency Telecommunications Group in conjunction with the Spectrum Management Operations Directorate at Industry Canada's headquarters. In all instances, Industry Canada maintains effective management of the radio spectrum.