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Telecommunications: Preventing Service Disruption

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Australia's Emergency Management Philosophy

- Emergency management is a partnership between all levels of government and the community;

- Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR) from the local level up;

- Self-help at the local community level in the early stages of a disaster; and

- Managing risk appropriately.

Government Responsibilities

- **Local Government**

  – Major role in mitigation, planning, and response.

- **State and Territory Governments**

  – Prime responsibility for the protection of life and property; and

  – The key players in emergency management in Australia.

- **Australian Government**

  – Provides assistance and support.

Australian Government Responsibilities

- Support for States & Territories in developing emergency management capabilities;

- Provision of physical assistance;

- Provision of financial assistance;

- Preparedness support;

- Overseas assistance; and

- Support in developing emergency management capabilities and awareness in Australia's region.

Emergency Management Australia (EMA)

- Lead Australian Government agency dedicated to emergency management aspects of community safety and sustainability; and

- Promotes a national approach to emergency management through comprehensive measures which embrace:

  – risk assessment,

  – risk treatment,

  – coordination of disaster response, and

  – community recovery activities

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Planning Framework

- **EMA Sponsored Australian Government Disaster Response Plans:**

  – AUSASSISTPLAN,

  – AUSCONPLAN-SPRED,

  – CAVDISPLAN,

  – COMARRPLAN,

  – **COMDISPLAN**,

  – COMRECEPLAN, and

  – OSMASSCASPLAN

Australian Government Disaster Plan (COMDISPLAN)

- Provides the framework for addressing State/Territory requests for Australian Government physical assistance arising from any type of disaster or emergency;

- Normally activated when Australian Government emergency or disaster response or short-term recovery assistance is requested or is likely to be requested; and

- May also be activated when pre-disaster measures are taken or to support the provision of longer-term recovery and reconstruction assistance.

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COMDISPLAN (continued)

- The plan lists some of the advisory, analysis and liaison resources that Australian Government agencies can also provide to support emergency response operations.

- These resources may be called upon by EMA under COMDISPLAN to support the Australian Government role or to provide assistance to the States.

- The range of resources available changes as technology and responsibilities change but includes:

COMDISPLAN (continued)

- **Australian Federal Police**
  Access to national police communications networks for transmission of urgent traffic;

- **Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA)**
  Emergency broadcasting arrangements and advice on broadcasting and communications;

- **Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs**
  Radio (except Western Australia) and mobile telecommunications networks in all States; and

- **Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation**
  Advice on communications.

Disaster Coordination

Role of EMA

National Emergency Management Coordination Centre (NEMCC)

- Develop and maintain Australian Government disaster plans
- Monitor current and emerging sources of risk
- Provide disaster information
- Process requests for disaster assistance
- Coordinate Australian Government assistance
- Inform senior decision makers

Telecommunications Act (1997)

- **Part 16 – Defence Requirements and Disaster Plans**

    - Places obligations on carriers and carriage service providers to supply carriage services to Defence organisations or for the management of natural disasters;

    - To cooperate with Defence authorities in planning for network survival and operational requirements in times of crisis;

    - Crisis is defined within the Act as being:
        - war, war-like conflict or war-like operations; or
        - civil disturbance; or
        - terrorism; or
        - earthquakes, floods, fire, cyclones, storms or other disasters (whether natural or resulting from the acts or omissions of humans).

Telecommunications Act (1997) (continued)

- **Part 16 – Defence Requirements and Disaster Plans (continued)**

    - Carriers or Carriage Service Providers (CSPs) must supply the service unless the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) considers it unreasonable to do so;

    - Defence may prepare a draft agreement about planning for network survival and/or operational requirements in times of crisis;

    - ACMA may certify the agreement if it is of the opinion it is reasonable; and

    - Carriers or carriage service providers must comply with a notice from ACMA to enter into an agreement and, once entered into the agreement, comply with it.

Australian Communications Industry Forum (ACIF) Standard

- **ACIF G596:2002 Communication Support for Emergency Response**

    - Provides a standard procedure for the cooperative handling by Carriers and CSPs of incidents that require the coordination and communication support of emergency response.

ACIF Standard (continued)

- **ACIF G596:2002 Communication Support for Emergency Response (continued)**

  Objectives:

  - Framework where a Pre-planned Service Provider (PSP) acts as single point of contact to provide ad hoc services to meet the emergency situation;

  - Outlines how other Carriers and CSPs interact with each other to meet the needs of Emergency Service Organisations (ESOs) where the PSP cannot efficiently supply the requisite services; and

  - Provision of ad hoc services in support of response operations and is predicated on the existence of pre-existing commercial arrangements and operational protocols between ESOs, PSPs and Secondary Service Providers.

ACIF Standard (continued)

B. APPENDIX – PROCEDURE FOR COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE
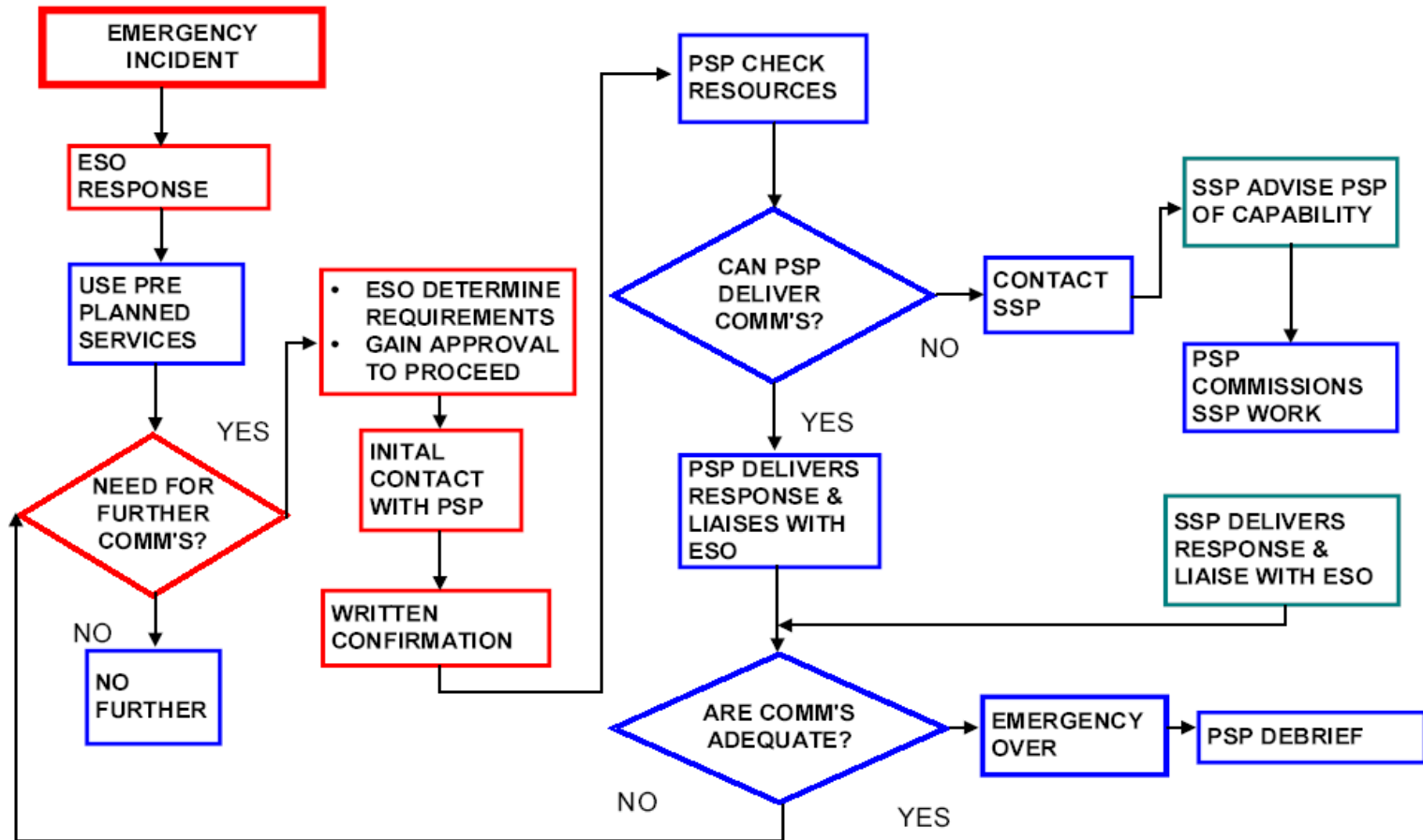
Protection of Australia's Critical Communications Infrastructure

- Australian Government recognises health, safety and prosperity of the nation is dependent on uninterrupted availability of key services and supporting infrastructure to industry and the community;

- Telecommunications infrastructure has been identified as critical infrastructure that the nation is reliant on;

- Communications extends across many areas of the country and of the economy, and Australia's communications capabilities are a key contributor to the nation's security and economic welfare;

Protection of Australia's Critical Communications Infrastructure (continued)

- The Attorney-General's Department is responsible for coordinating the whole of government approach to critical infrastructure protection;

- Much of Australia's critical infrastructure is privately owned or operated, protection cannot be carried out solely by governments or by individual companies; and

- Initiatives have been taken to raise awareness of security risks and build cooperative arrangements, such as the Trusted Information Sharing Network for Critical Infrastructure Protection.

What is Critical Communications Infrastructure?

- Those physical facilities and those information technologies and communication networks which would, if destroyed, degraded or rendered unavailable for an extended period, impact on the social or economic well-being of the nation, or affect Australia's ability to conduct national defence and ensure national security.

- Critical infrastructure extends many sectors including communications and key government services and national icons.

- DCITA coordinates and provides secretariat support for the Communications Sector Infrastructure Assurance Advisory Group that was established in June 2003.

Questions?

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