Wireless Priority Service *272

When a public emergency arises, it's natural to reach for the phone to call family, friends and colleagues. We often use mobile phones, especially when landline networks are damaged or congested. Because the wireless phone system cannot always handle call volume, essential public safety personnel and government decision makers have access to Wireless Priority Service (WPS).

Telecommunications services in times of crisis

How wireless priority service works

- Provides subscribers with access to the next available wireless radio channel while minimizing the impact on consumer access;
- Activated by dialling *272 prior to the destination number;
- Improves your chances of completing priority calls;
- Interoperable with the United States, on major Global System for Mobile (GSM) networks;
- Does not interfere with calls in progress.

Availability of wireless priority service

- Wireless Priority Service is offered on 2G - GSM and CDMA networks by certain providers;
- Available to Industry Canada authorized subscribers who pay a fee to a service provider;
- Potential users should confirm their eligibility for WPS with Industry Canada prior to changing wireless contracts or acquiring devices;
- Consult your service provider to confirm availability, device compatibility and associated fees.

Wireless priority service users

- WPS is reserved for essential personnel who have emergency, public safety, continuity of government and other critical service responsibilities;
- Users include emergency management and response personnel, officials at federal, provincial/territorial and municipal levels, as well as critical industry/infrastructure personnel;
- Priority levels have been established for different categories of users so that calls can be queued according to the role of the essential personnel placing the call.

Protecting Canadians

Canada

The five priority levels of users are summarized below. Details and examples are available online. Contact information is provided at the end of this fact sheet.

Priority 1: Executive leadership and decision makers

Individuals in executive leadership and decision-making roles at the political, bureaucratic and military levels, as well as essential technicians.

Priority 2: Disaster response/military command and control

Individuals critical to managing initial response at the local, regional, provincial/ territorial, or federal level and those responsible for ensuring the viability or reconstruction of the basic infrastructure.

Priority 3: Public health and safety and law enforcement command

Individuals who direct operations critical to life, property, and maintenance of law and order during or immediately following an emergency, e.g. police, fire, medical, and search and rescue teams.

Priority 4: Public service/utilities and public welfare

Individuals whose responsibilities include managing public works and utility infrastructure damage assessment and restoration efforts, as well as transportation to perform emergency response activities, e.g. utility and transportation officials.

Priority 5: Disaster recovery

Individuals responsible for managing a variety of recovery operations following the initial response, e.g. medical, shelter and other field operations officials.

Requests for wireless priority service

- Applications must be channelled through an organization's Emergency Telecommunications Data System (ETDS) group manager.
- To identify your organization's ETDS group manager, contact Industry Canada at: wps.info@ic.gc.ca.
- The ETDS group manager makes the request for the service using the ETDS by accessing http://www.ic.gc.ca/etds.
- Applicants must confirm their eligibility for the service with Industry Canada.
- Applicants should not purchase any equipment or make any commitments until they confirm their eligibility for the service with Industry Canada.
- The cost of the service is the responsibility of the user or the user's employer.

For more information, visit Industry Canada's Emergency Telecommunications website at:

http://www.ic.gc.ca/emergencytelecom

or call us toll-free at 1-866-266-9031.

Note: *Wireless Priority Service* is a non-proprietary term used by Industry Canada to describe a feature intended for public safety and emergency preparedness personnel. The term is not related to the technology of any particular supplier or to any particular wireless solution.

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