



Priority Access for Dialing

A disaster scenario

You work for a municipality that has been hit by a disaster. You have a key role to play in the response plan.

You need to reach people who can help you with rescue, evacuation, shelter, supplies and more. But so many people are trying to call family, friends and public officials that phone lines are overloaded. Every phone you try has no dial tone.

You try again, staying on the line just a little bit longer. You breathe a sigh of relief at the sound of the tone...thanks to Priority Access for Dialing (PAD).

What is Priority Access for Dialing?

- Identifies telephone lines deemed essential during emergencies when the telephone system is temporarily degraded or overloaded;
- Provides essential phone lines with priority dial tone access;
- Features Essential Service Protection (ESP), which gives priority service for dial tone and call set-up to designated essential users, while maintaining service to all customers. This feature or similar variants are available on most modern switches;
- Features Line Load Control, which protects telephone switching equipment during extreme overload conditions and maintains essential services only. This feature is rarely activated;
- Compatible with regular landline telephones but not with most mobile phone services;
- Assists with outbound call set-up but does not provide inbound or point-to-point priority through a voice network for completing a call. Problems with the long distance network or the telephone service of the persons you are calling may still prevent you from reaching them.

Who should have Priority Access for Dialing?

- All essential personnel designated in an official contingency plan to perform vital functions before, during or after emergency situations;
- Vital functions directly related to the provision of essential goods and/or services for maintaining law, order and the health and security of Canadians;
- Appropriate users would include firefighters, police, medical staff and certain government officials.

Telecommunications
services in times of
crisis



Requests for Priority Access for Dialing

- Applications must be channelled to telephone service providers through emergency management organizations at the municipal or provincial level;
- Each such organization should have an Emergency Telecommunications Data System (ETDS) group manager, who can process the request;
- If you cannot identify a group manager in your local area, consult Industry Canada using the contact information below;
- Government of Canada employees should contact their organization's business continuity planners or their ETDS group manager for access to PAD;
- Telephone service providers download PAD numbers from the system for installation on central office phone switches at no cost to users.

Priority Access for Dialing was developed by Industry Canada in cooperation with federal agencies, provincial and territorial emergency management organizations, and telephone companies.

For more information, visit our website at:

<http://spectrum.ic.gc.ca/urgent>

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

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