



National Coordinating Center

Issue Background

The National Coordinating Center (NCC) for Communications is a joint industry-Government operation whose mission is to assist in the initiation, coordination, restoration, and reconstitution of industry and Government national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications services or facilities during natural disasters, armed conflicts, and terrorist attacks. As of March 2010, 53 companies and 24 Government agencies rely on the NCC's unique organization to support NS/EP communications. Fourteen NCC participant companies sit on the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC) and the Committee periodically revisits the NCC's performance by evaluating its mission, information sharing procedures, and effectiveness as changes occur in the threat, policy, and technological environments.

History of NSTAC Actions

In 1982, industry and Government collectively developed the concept of a National Coordinating Mechanism (NCM) in recognition of the need to jointly organize public and private sector NS/EP telecommunications restoration and provisioning. Based partially on an NSTAC review of the concept, President Reagan established the NCC as the operational arm of the NCM in 1984. In the ensuing years, the NSTAC considered how changes in the NS/EP communications and technological environments affected the NCC's mission, organization, and capabilities and assisted in updating the *NCC Operating Guidelines* and chartered functions.

Since 2000, the NCC has also functioned as the operational arm of Communications Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ISAC) under the framework of Presidential Decision Directive 63, which established the concept of an ISAC as a private sector entity responsible for gathering, analyzing, and disseminating vulnerabilities in and threats to the communications infrastructure. In 1999, the NSTAC reported that the NCC was already performing most of the functions of a communications sector ISAC and in 2000, the National Security Council concurred and established the NCC as the communications ISAC.

From 2005 to 2006, the NSTAC evaluated the long-term direction of the NCC and avenues for cooperation between industry and the Federal Government through the *National Response Plan* (now the *National Response Framework*) and *National Infrastructure Protection Plan* mechanisms. In 2006, the NSTAC released the *NSTAC Report to the President on the NCC*, which recommended ways the NCC could evolve in the changing technological environment. The report included a one- to five-year roadmap of potential actions to evolve the NCC's organization and focus. In 2007, the NSTAC reviewed the recommendations from its 2006 report and developed a status report to update the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the implementation of the NCC roadmap and offer next steps.

Recent NSTAC Activities

From 2008 to 2009, the NSTAC explored the need for and the feasibility of creating a joint 24/7 public-private operational capability focused on improving the Nation's ability to detect, prevent, mitigate, and respond to significant cybersecurity incidents. In October 2009, DHS activated the National Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Center (NCCIC), which included the collocation of the NCC Watch and U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team.