

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanders, Major Subordinate Commands

Subject: Interim Guidance for the Acquisition of Government
Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)

1. Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) is a relatively new service offered by the office of the Manager, National Communications System (OMNCS), to meet National Security and Emergency Preparedness requirements for the use of public, defense, or Federal telephone networks. GETS provides a cost effective means to overcome network congestion and outages in local and long-distance telephone networks.
2. This memorandum provides guidance on the participation in and the administration of GETS. The enclosure outlines procedures for requesting GETS calling cards which contain a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for gaining access to the GETS service and defines responsibilities within user organizations.
3. There are three Phases of GETS implementation: Limited Capability (EC); Initial Operational Capability (IOC); and Full Operational Capability (FOC). Each phase will offer additional features and enhancements to the service. Presently, the service has achieved and is operating in the LC phase. Full operational capability is not expected until October 1997.
4. The present policy of paying for the GETS service is that users will pay only for usage. Currently, during the LC phase, all costs including usage will be absorbed by the Office of the Manager, National Communications System (OMNCS). The policy is expected to continue through at least the IOC phase (1 OCT 95-1 OCT 96) in which a billing mechanism, among other items, are still being finalized. All U.S. Army Corps of Engineers organizations, however, should be aware that this service will cost users eventually and, therefore, budgeting considerations must be made prior to ordering the service. Cost estimates can tentatively be done based on the cost of similar telecommunications voice services when used under emergency conditions. GETS is an emergency telecommunications service that should only be used when a user is unable to complete emergency calls through normal or alternate telecommunications means. The service is not intended for routine administrative use.

CECW-OE-EOC/CEIM-P (500-5a)

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5. HQUSACE has imposed a restriction of no more than five GETS authorizations for each USACE element. If additional GETS cards/PINs are required, Commands may forward a memo to the Chief, HQUSACE Emergency Operations Center (CECW-OE-EOC), ATTN: Mr. Larry Broun. The HQUSACE GETS Coordinator is Major Jack Jones, (Tel. 202- 761-0786).

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GETS INTERIM GUIDANCE

I. GETS Concept. The GETS concept developed as a result of increased recognition by the White House of the vulnerabilities of the Public Switched Network (PSN) and the practical realization that National Security/Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) users required priority service over normal users of the PSN during a national emergency or crisis. Recent events of the past few years have shown that fires, floods, power failures, fiber cable cuts, and software problems can cripple the telephone services of entire regions. Congestion in the PSN caused by excessive demand can prevent circuits from being accessed, e.g. Loma Prieta and Northridge earthquakes in California and Hurricane Andrew in Florida. Due to such conditions, carriers may be forced to block traffic to a network because of increased congestion, which can result from increased usage, a loss of system robustness, or both. GETS addresses these vulnerabilities by making maximum use of all available telephone resources, should outages occur during an emergency or crises.

II. Applicability. The provisions of this guideline apply to all USACE elements, (Major Subordinate Commands and their Districts, Laboratories, and Field Operating Activities) who have requirements for emergency telephone services and who request to become a GETS subscriber. The guide also applies to USACE sponsored organizations from state and local governments, contractors, and industry (who can become GETS users due to their critical responsibilities in support of NS/EP functions) when the Corps user organization determines that such measures are necessary to establish and maintain telecommunications during an emergency situation.

III. Interim Guidance. This information/guidance has been developed to aid in the implementation and use of GETS.

A. There are three requirements to use GETS:

(1) A telephone connected to the public telephone network.

(2) The UNIVERSAL ACCESS NUMBER for GETS (1-710-NCS-

GETS).

(3) A Personal Identification Number (PIN) as provided on the GETS Calling Card.

B. Major Subordinate Commands must appoint a GETS Coordinator to serve as the POC at their respective headquarters. The name of the individual selected will be sent to HQUSACE, ATTN: **CEIM-P**. Major Jones, who serves as the GETS Coordinator for the command. The principal duties of the GETS Coordinators will be to gather the requirements of their NS/EP users and submit GETS User Request Forms requesting the number of GETS calling cards needed for their headquarters and their subordinate activities.

C. The GETS calling card(s) which contain a personal ID number (PIN) will be requested through the HQUSACE GETS Coordinator. The request will be processed and once the order is received, it will be forwarded to the organization's GETS Coordinator for distribution to the user, along with a GETS User Handbook. The back of the GETS calling cards contains the basic GETS calling procedures, i.e. everything a user needs to know to make a GETS call.

D. The distribution, use, and control of PINs ensure that only authorized users can access GETS. The GETS user receives a unique PIN that must be entered to use the service. After the user has dialed the universal access number, GETS will prompt the user to enter a PIN and a destination number. If the PIN is valid, GETS will process the call. If the PIN is not (e.g., if the user entered it incorrectly), GETS prompts the user to reenter the PIN. The service will disconnect the call after three unsuccessful PIN entries. PINs will be deactivated in cases of confirmed fraud or abuse.

E. Once GETS calling cards are in the hands of users, answers to their questions and assistance with trouble resolution can be sought through the GETS User Assistance Service Center on a 24-hour, 7-day a week basis, (Tel # 1-800-818-GETS or 1-710818-GETS)

F. In addition to the PIN, which is imprinted on the GETS calling card, a password will be required for certain interactions with the GETS User Assistance Service Center. This password provides the capability to rapidly and verbally verify that the caller is the user he claims to be. The password will be composed of four to nine alphanumeric characters (e.g. EAGLE3, AUNTMARY, 17SEP63) chosen by the user himself so that it is unique and can be readily remembered.

G. There is a DOD Directive, currently in draft, which addresses GETS policy and procedures. It will provide more definitive

guidance on use of GETS, testing, billing, and administration of the service. HQUSACE will provide its interpretation of this guidance as soon as it becomes available.

IV. Responsibilities.

A. The National Communications System (NCS) shall:

- (1) Serve as overall manager of the GETS program
- (2) Provide operational support to coordinate GETS activities
- (3) Oversee the operations of the GETS Service Center
- (4) Develop a funding mechanism for the service and a billing mechanism for all users of the service

B. DOD GETS Principal Administrator, the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) shall:

- (1) Establish processes and define procedures for administration of GETS
- (2) Develop plans and implementation procedures to provide for the use of GETS during conditions of an emergency
- (3) Receive and process GETS User Request Forms
- (4) Monitor and report to the Office of the Manager, NCS the status of DOD compliance and readiness

C. HQUSACE shall:

- (1) Provide a single POC for the administration of GETS within USACE
- (2) Receive, review and forward GETS User Request Forms
- (3) Receive, monitor and distribute GETS cards to USACE Major Subordinate Commands
- (4) Ensure that GETS user organizations perform an annual review of GETS calling cards and verify continuation of need by users
- (5) Publish guidance and information for the use and administration of GETS within USACE

D. GETS User Organization shall:

- (1) Appoint GETS POCs
- (2) Develop requirements and submit GETS User Request Forms to next higher HQs
- (3) Develop local policies and implement procedures to ensure PIN cards are provided adequate protection
- (4) Report lost, missing or compromised PINs and PIN cards to the GETS Service Center via the GETS user assistance number
- (5) Ensure that the organization is prepared to pay for GETS service by NLT Full Operational Capability or earlier as directed

E. GETS Users shall:

- (1) Complete a GETS User Form and submit It to their organization POC
- (2) Become proficient in the use of GETS
- (3) Report troubles/problems to the number identified on the reverse side of the GETS calling card
- (4) Protect calling cards and PIN number
- (5) Follow the proper procedures for use of GETS cards; use only for valid emergencies purposes

V. **References:**

1. Department of Defense Guidance on Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) Use {Sample Directive}, 04 April 1995.
2. Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) Planning Guide, 14 February 1994 (Revised).
3. Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) User Guide, (undated).

