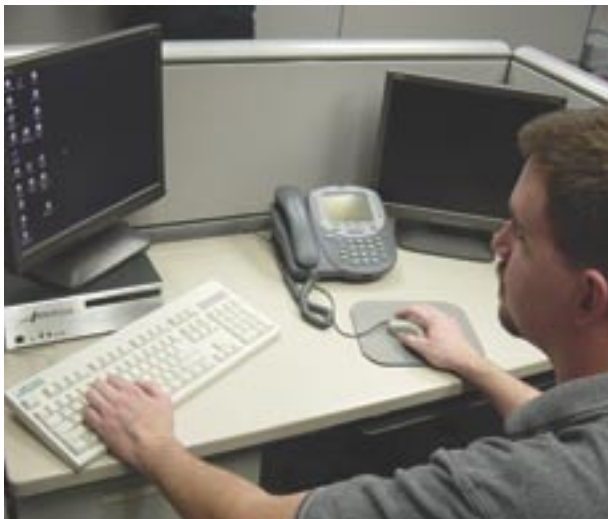


ACN

Alerting and Coordination Network

The ACN is a private telecommunications network independent of the Public Switched Network (PSN), providing communications connectivity between critical Government and telecommunications industry operations centers. The ACN also provides cross-infrastructure coordination in the event of outages in other infrastructures that affect telecommunications.

Established more than twenty years ago by the phone companies, the National Communications System assumed operational responsibility for the network in 2000. Since then, the network has been transformed from analog to an Internet-Protocol (IP) network, connecting major communications carriers and the Federal Government using dedicated digital lines.



ACN Operations

Operational responsibility for the ACN belongs to the Department of Homeland Security's National Communications System (NCS), within the National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications-Information Sharing and Analysis Center (NCC-Telecom ISAC). The NCC-Telecom ISAC coordinates the initiation, restoration and reconstitution of U.S. Government national security and emergency preparedness telecommunications services both nationally and internationally.

ACN Architecture

The ACN architecture includes geographically diverse hub sites, a lab facility and an IP-enabled network backbone. The backbone is highly reliable, easily scalable and dynamically re-routable.

Each hub site includes call servers, voice mail, switches and conference bridges. The network includes dedicated connections between the users and the hub sites. The network operator provides classes of service that give priority to voice over data in real-time, enhancing and ensuring ACN's availability during times of network congestion.

Internet Protocol (IP) Network

VoIP technology enables the transmission of voice signals digitally in discrete packets, avoiding the need for dedicated circuits required by traditional analog telephony. VoIP networks utilize bandwidth more efficiently and offer more operational flexibility than traditional analog networks. The ACN VoIP network is not susceptible to the traditional telephone network control blockages that result



from high traffic volume during a crisis or Signaling System Seven (SS7) interruptions.

ACN IP Phone Features

The ACN IP phones offer the same kind of voice quality available from traditional phones but provide additional networking capability for distributed applications at lower costs. In addition, ACN phones provide 128-bit point-to-point encryption to further enhance the security of the ACN. The software encrypts the packets before they enter the ACN, and users cannot perceive any difference in voice quality with the encryption capability.

Who is Eligible?

Eligible users include key Federal Government and critical communications carriers that operate emergency operations centers or network operations centers and communications equipment manufacturers.

How to Apply?

If you are interested in joining ACN, please contact NCS by e-mail at acn@ncs.gov or by phone at 1-866-NCS-CALL.

The Mission of ACN

“Provide a stable emergency communications network connecting the telecommunications service providers’ network operations centers (NOCs) and/or emergency operation centers (EOCs) in order to support network restoration coordination, transmission of telecommunications requirements and priorities, and incident reporting when the Public Switched Network (PSN) is inoperable, stressed, or congested.”



Department of Homeland Security National Communications System

Attention: ACN Program Manager
701 South Courthouse Road
Arlington, VA 22204-2198

Tel: 1-866-NCS-CALL (1-866-627-2255)

E-mail: acn@ncs.gov

Web: <http://www.ncs.gov/>

ACN

Alerting and Coordination Network



**National
Communications
System**