



# GETS & WPS NewsNotes

Latest updates on the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) & Wireless Priority Service (WPS)

Department of Homeland Security (DHS),  
Office of the Manager, National Communications System (NCS)

MARCH 2009

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## NCS & partners support Inaugural communications

With over a million observers cramming into the National Mall in Washington DC, Barack H. Obama took the oath of office on January 20, 2009 to become the 44th President of the United States.



The 56th Inauguration provided visitors –using their cell phones – an opportunity to capture a bit of history by communicating their observations to family and friends by text message and calls, as well as capturing and transmitting images from their cell phone cameras.

With the high volume of wireless communications expected, the National Communications System – along with its government and industry partners – coordinated communications efforts to handle the large surge of wireless communications in the District of Columbia. The NCS supported national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) communications services to Federal, State and local leaders; first responders and

critical infrastructure personnel through the five-day inaugural weekend.

NCS Director James Madon said much of credit goes to the telecommunications industry for their preparation with the NCS to handle the wireless demands. “Bottom line, at least from all the reports that I’ve seen, was that the cellular coverage and the landline coverage performed admirably,” said Madon. He added that the NCS planned and worked with carriers for two and half months and cited the effort as a true partnership effort. “We understood what they were doing and they understood what we needed for emergency preparedness.”

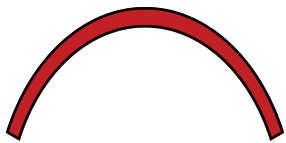
The NCS implemented its continuity of operations plan for this historic event and conducted a variety of communications checks, including GETS and WPS testing, while operating at its second highest level. In addition, NS/EP callers using the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) completed 99 percent of the over 700 priority service calls during the inaugural weekend.

Specific call data from the Inauguration can be found in the March 20 User Council slides, which will be posted on the G-WIDS (GETS-WPS Information Delivery Service) website.

## Success Story

*Do you have a GETS or WPS success story? Have these services helped you in an emergency? Let us know!*

*Send your story to [gwids@saic.com](mailto:gwids@saic.com)*



**GETS/WPS  
Service Center  
1-866-NCS-CALL**

**GWIDS@SAIC.COM**



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## **GETS/WPS for political appointees**

Points of Contact for the Federal Government and independent agencies and government corporations need to make sure their organization's political appointees have GETS cards and WPS activations, as necessary. We rely on

agency POCs to identify the new appointees within their organization and determine those that may have a role that qualifies for GETS and/or WPS.

POCs should submit new GETS/WPS request for these individuals via G-WIDS (GETS-WPS

Information Delivery Service) as soon as possible. Also, any previous appointees who are no longer with the agency and no longer require GETS and WPS should be removed from the account. GETS cards can also be deleted by submitting a deletion request using G-WIDS.

## **Changing the POC? We need to know!**

We understand that many GETS/WPS Points of Contact (POCs) often change positions or responsibilities within their organization and may need to transfer their role as POC to a new individual.

We suggest that the existing POC review the current account information with the new POC and let our office know of the change as soon as possible. We also have an online presentation that can acquaint new POCs with G-WIDS, as well as, an in-depth explanation of POC responsibilities. This presentation can be found on the GETS website at

<http://gets.ncs.gov> in the 'Documents' section.

Each organization can have one primary POC and one alternate POC. If your organization does not currently have an alternate POC, it is a good idea to appoint one so that you will have a backup.

The most important thing to remember before transferring POC duties to a new individual or appointing an alternate POC is that all POCs MUST have a GETS card assigned to them. We set up online log-ins for POCs based off of their GETS card number. Should the

incoming POC not have a GETS card, then the existing POC must submit a new GETS request online for that individual. Please let us know in the bottom of the form stating that this subscriber will be the new POC and if we should delete the existing POC card or make them a regular user.

It normally takes about 7 – 10 business days to set up a new POC and create an account login. The new POC will receive an e-mail once the account has been created. If you have a question about POC responsibilities or how to assign a POC, please contact us.



## What to do with a deleted GETS card

POCs often ask what they should do after deleting a GETS card for an individual subscriber who no longer needs the card. We do not require



that you return the card to our office. If a GETS card is found and has been deleted, no one will be able to

place a GETS call using it. However, for further protection, it is recommended that the POC collect the card and ensure it is cut or shredded and thrown away.

## WPS requests and retry status

Sometimes, after submitting a WPS request, the POC may receive an e-mail indicating there was a problem while trying to activate WPS and that the transaction needs to be retried.

There are several reasons why we may have trouble activating WPS: the cellular phone number or account number is incorrect, WPS is not available in the cellular service area, etc. When this happens, the request goes into a 'retry' status giving the POC a chance to correct the information.

If the request needs to be updated or corrected, the POC has a few options in submit-

ting those changes. One option is to log into their Established POC account at <http://gets.ncs.gov> and go to 'Acct Admin' and then 'Review Transactions'.

Other options are to call or e-mail the GETS/WPS Service Center and provide the updated cellular information.

Once the new information is submitted, we will then 'retry' to activate WPS. If there continues to be a problem and we are unable to activate WPS, we will notify the POC. If a POC has questions as to why the transaction failed, he/she should contact our office.

If the WPS request processes correctly, then the POC and WPS

subscriber will receive an e-mail informing them that the WPS request was successfully activated. At that time, we recommend the subscriber make a test WPS call using \*272 + 10-digit destination number to ensure WPS is working properly. Report any problems by opening a trouble ticket by calling 800-818-4387.



### GETS/WPS numbers at a glance

**Total active GETS cards**  
**225,170**

**Total active WPS phones**  
**94,843**

**Total organizations registered**  
**7,108**

**Data as of**  
**16 Mar 09**



## Reporting GETS/WPS calling trouble

If any GETS/WPS subscriber is having trouble making a GETS or WPS call, we ask that the POC or subscriber report the problem to us and open a trouble ticket as soon as possible. If you are able to call the help desk from the location where you made the problem call, it will be

easier for us to assist you in resolving the problem.

Trouble tickets help us identify problems in the network or with phone equipment, and we work to resolve any problem areas so GETS and WPS work properly. This is why it is important to

test GETS/WPS regularly and report calling trouble before an emergency situation arises when you rely on GETS/WPS to work. We will also get back to you when the problem has been corrected. To report calling trouble, please dial 1-800-818-GETS (4387).

### TELL US HOW WE ARE DOING!

Your comments and suggestions regarding the content of this newsletter are greatly appreciated.

Send comments to [gwids@saic.com](mailto:gwids@saic.com) with the subject: NewsNotes

### When opening a trouble ticket, the caller should be prepared to provide the following information:

- Type of call (GETS only, WPS only, WPS + GETS)
- Date/time of the call
- Origin number/location of the failed call
- Calling to/from a landline or cell phone?
- Destination location (phone number, city, state)
- The service provider
- What did you hear when call failed (e.g., fast busy signal, dead air, message)?
- How many times did you try to make the call?

## Contact Us!

GETS/WPS Service Center

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

DC Metro Area  
E-mail

703-760-2255  
[gwids@saic.com](mailto:gwids@saic.com)

Trouble Ticket Help-Desk

1-800-818-GETS  
(4387)

NCS Website  
GETS Website  
WPS Website

<http://ncs.gov>  
<http://gets.ncs.gov>  
<http://wps.ncs.gov>

