



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

News Media Information 202-418-0500
Internet: www.fcc.gov
TTY: 888-835-5322

DA 24-527

Released: June 4, 2024

PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY BUREAU ANNOUNCES PROCEDURES FOR STATE REQUESTS TO ACTIVATE THE MANDATORY DISASTER RESPONSE INITIATIVE (MDRI)

PS Docket Nos. 21-346 and 15-80; ET Docket No. 04-35

By this Public Notice, the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (Bureau) announces procedures for states to request that the Bureau activate the Mandatory Disaster Response Initiative (MDRI).

Background: Facilities-based mobile wireless providers were required to comply with the Commission’s MDRI rules by May 1, 2024.¹ “The rules will help reduce wireless phone outages for the public and support faster service restoration after hurricanes, wildfires, and other disasters.”² To this end, the rules require facilities-based mobile wireless providers to: (1) provide roaming to one another when a provider’s network is down, where technically feasible;³ (2) establish mutual aid arrangements to share physical assets and to consult with one another during and after emergencies;⁴ (3) take reasonable measures to enhance municipal preparedness and restoration; (4) take reasonable measures to increase consumer readiness and preparation; and (5) take reasonable measures to improve public awareness and stakeholder communications on service and restoration status.⁵ Facilities-based mobile wireless providers operating in a certain geographic area in the aftermath of a disaster must submit reports to the

¹ *Resilient Networks; Amendments to Part 4 of the Commission’s Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications; New Part 4 of the Commission’s Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications*, PS Docket Nos. 21-346 and 15-80 and ET Docket No. 04-35, Order on Reconsideration, FCC 23-71, at 1, para. 1 (Sept. 15, 2023) (*Order on Reconsideration*); *Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Announces Compliance Date and PRA Approval for Resilient Networks Mandatory Disaster Response Initiative (MDRI)*, PS Docket Nos. 21-346 and 15-80 and ET Docket No. 04-35, Public Notice, DA 24-339, at 1 (PSHSB Apr. 8, 2024).

² Federal Communications Commission, *Wireless Network Resiliency During Disasters* (Apr. 8, 2024), <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless-network-resiliency-during-disasters>.

³ See 47 CFR § 4.17(a)(3)(i). Under the MDRI, these roaming under disaster agreements (RuDs) may be invoked where: “[a] requesting provider’s network has become inoperable and the requesting provider has taken all appropriate steps to attempt to restore its own network;” and “[t]he provider receiving the request (home provider) has determined that roaming is technically feasible and will not adversely affect service to the home provider’s own subscribers, provided that existing roaming arrangements and call processing methods do not already achieve these objectives and that any new arrangements are limited in duration and contingent on the requesting provider taking all possible steps to restore service on its own network as quickly as possible.” 47 CFR § 4.17(a)(3)(i)(A), (B). Facilities-based mobile wireless providers must have performed a complete first round of testing of their roaming capabilities by May 1, 2024. See *id.* § 4.17(b).

⁴ See 47 CFR § 4.17(a)(3)(ii). Mutual aid arrangements entail providing aid upon request to those facilities-based mobile wireless providers during emergencies, “where such agreements address the sharing of physical assets and commit to engaging in necessary consultation where feasible during and after disasters, provided that the provider supplying the aid has reasonably first managed its own network needs.” 47 CFR § 4.17(a)(3)(ii).

⁵ 47 CFR § 4.17(a)(3)(i)-(v); see also Federal Communications Commission, *Wireless Network Resiliency During Disasters* (Apr. 8, 2024), <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless-network-resiliency-during-disasters>.

Commission detailing the timing, duration, and effectiveness of their implementation of the MDRI's provisions within 60 days of the Bureau's issuance of a Public Notice announcing that such reports must be filed.⁶

MDRI Activation Criteria: The MDRI may be activated when any one of the following three conditions applies: (1) any entity authorized to declare Emergency Support Function 2 (ESF-2) activates ESF-2 for a particular emergency or disaster;⁷ (2) the Commission activates the Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS); or (3) the Chief of the Commission's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau issues a Public Notice activating the MDRI in response to a state request to do so, where the state has also either activated its State Emergency Operations Center (EOC), activated mutual aid, or proclaimed a local state of emergency.⁸ The *2022 Resilient Networks Report and Order* delegated authority to the Bureau to issue a Public Notice effectuating the MDRI under these circumstances and to prescribe any mechanisms for receiving such a request.⁹

State Requests to Activate the MDRI: We establish the following procedures for state requests to be submitted to the Bureau to activate the MDRI. We have created an MDRI e-mail box at MDRI@fcc.gov to receive and review state requests to activate the MDRI pursuant to section 4.17(a)(3). State requests to invoke the MDRI in response to an emergency or disaster must be submitted via email to this MDRI@fcc.gov mailbox. In their requests, states will need to demonstrate that they have activated their State Emergency Operations Center, activated mutual aid, or proclaimed a local state of emergency. State requests should also include a description of the event triggering the state emergency, a description of the specific geographic area(s) for which the MDRI activation is requested including, if possible, the specific counties, and a point of contact with email and cell phone information. The Bureau will announce grant of a state request to activate the MDRI by releasing a Public Notice stating the counties of interest for which the MDRI activation applies.¹⁰

For further information, please contact Jeanne Stockman, Attorney Advisor, Cybersecurity and Communications Reliability Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau at (202) 418-7830 or via email at Jeanne.Stockman@fcc.gov.

– FCC –

⁶ See 47 CFR § 4.17(c).

⁷ We note that an entity that is authorized to do so may activate ESF-2 for a particular incident, emergency, or disaster.

⁸ 47 CFR § 4.17(a)(1)-(3).

⁹ *Resilient Networks; Amendments to Part 4 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications; New Part 4 of the Commission's Rules Concerning Disruptions to Communications*, PS Docket Nos. 21-346 and 15-80 and ET Docket No. 04-35, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 37 FCC Rcd 8059, 8071, para. 36 (2022) (*Order*).

¹⁰ See, e.g., *Federal Communications Commission Announces the Activation of the Disaster Information Reporting System for Communications Impacted by Hurricane Lee*, Public Notice, DA 23-855, at 1 (PSHSB Sept. 15, 2023).