

### Summary

As part of the background research on regional partnerships, the Center for Technology in Government conducted a brief review of several U.S. and Canadian models of regional collaboration and crisis management. Overall, we found that many types of organizations are currently striving to form stronger intergovernmental and cross-sector collaborations as part of their strategies for more robust incident response, both in telecommunications and in other areas of critical infrastructure. The summaries below offer some initial observations about these organizations with a focus on regional collaboration. As recommended by the workshop participants, a more in-depth review of current practices is necessary as part of any effort launched to further explore the feasibility and advisability of regional coordination of telecommunications incident response.

### National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications (NCC)

Since 1984, the National Coordinating Center for Telecommunications has been responsible for ensuring the reliability and continuity of the national telecommunications infrastructure. As of 2000, the NCC also serves as the Information Sharing Analysis Center (ISAC) for the Federal Government.

In order to effectively develop national security/emergency preparedness (NS/EP) capabilities, the NCC relies upon a formalized membership structure. Under the supervision of the NCS, the NCC is run by both the Manager and the Deputy Manager who oversee all NCC operations. With the support of a dedicated staff, the Manager works with both resident representatives, who are co-located at the NCC Watch Center, and nonresident representatives, who act as liaisons between their organization and the NCC. Industry and government participation are vital to the NCC and their representation is decided by established criteria, which includes the organization's degree of involvement in NS/EP activities, its status as a communications asset, and its Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designation.

During a national crisis, the NCC takes the lead in the restoration of telecommunications, with a focus on previously identified personnel who are integral to the recovery effort. Industry representatives are responsible for providing incident reports to the Manager, who then supervises the dissemination of that information to relevant government agencies. However, the NCC is more than a crisis response center. Normal daily activities include developing response plans and sharing information about potential threats and vulnerabilities to the national assets within the telecommunications infrastructure.

To support this goal, the NCC offers additional federal recovery response programs designed to assist both the private and public sector organizations involved in telecommunications, including the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS), an emergency communication service used when normal lines of communication are severed; Shared Resources (SHARES), which provides voluntary transmission of emergency messages; and the Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP), which prioritizes agencies that need rapid restoration of services in the event of a telecommunications incident.

[www.ncs.gov/ncc](http://www.ncs.gov/ncc)

### ChicagoFIRST

ChicagoFIRST is a non-profit organization that represents Chicago's financial institutions and collaborates with city, state, and federal agencies to ensure continuity of operations and the safety of their employees in the event of a crisis. When the majority of major cities across the U.S. began strengthening their disaster plans after the World Trade Center attacks, Chicago's financial institutions became concerned about their own ability to respond to a disaster. This concern led to the formation of ChicagoFIRST, which works to secure the city's financial resources and to maintain financial services even during a crisis. Although ChicagoFIRST grew from private sector interests, they quickly began working with strategic partners from the public sector, including the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, the U.S. Treasury Department and the Department of Homeland Security.

ChicagoFIRST has seen many successes in crossing the divide between private sector business continuity plans and public sector disaster management. Membership from the financial sector has grown from 14 to 25 institutions, and there are now 26 strategic partners from the public sector and nonprofit organizations.

ChicagoFIRST has gained respect for its success in coordinating private sector efforts in business continuity with public sector and non-profit organizations' disaster planning. In December of 2004, the Treasury Department released a case study and handbook based upon the ChicagoFIRST model, titled ***Improving Business Continuity in the Financial Services Sector: A Model for Starting Regional Coalitions***(3). As an organization, ChicagoFIRST has also taken on an active role in encouraging financial partnerships throughout the country. To support new regional partnerships, ChicagoFIRST has been instrumental in establishing **RPCfirst**, a

collective of financial business networks based upon the ChicagoFIRST model. RPC**first** brings together the leaders from both emerging and established financial services partnerships to share knowledge about disaster planning, as well as providing a direct line of communication to the federal government through the Financial Services Sector Coordinating Council for Critical Infrastructure Protection and Homeland Security (FSSCC).

[www.chicagofirst.org](http://www.chicagofirst.org)

### **King County Regional Public Information Network**

The Regional Public Information Network (RPIN) is a Web-based alert system hosted by King County in Washington State. With support from the American Red Cross, RPIN was established in 2000 to provide the public with a one-stop resource for information about health, transportation, and emergency response. Membership in RPIN is free and voluntary, although agencies are asked to commit to security, content accuracy, and outreach on behalf of the network.

Although network agencies are encouraged to collaborate, there are no formal governance structures to guide cross-sector collaboration. During normal operations, member agencies provide information as they deem necessary; during a crisis, agencies continue to control their own information, but they work through a regional joint information center (RJIC) to provide more coordinated announcements to the public.

RPIN is mainly a one-way communication resource for the public. Although anyone can access the RPIN announcements through the Web site, citizens can also create free membership profiles. With a subscription to RPIN, they will receive emails with relevant safety alerts, which they can then tailor to their specific needs or interests. Announcements can be filtered by county (King, Pierce, or Snohomish County) and by the alert category (Emergency Alerts, or widespread emergencies; Transportation Alerts, including road closures and transit service disruptions; and Other News, which covers all other bulletins and disruptions).

[www.rpin.org](http://www.rpin.org)

### **Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER)**

PNWER is a public-private partnership committed to promoting economic growth in the Northwest while sustaining the region's natural resources and environment. Established in 1991 through coordinated legislation in the member states and provinces, PNWER has representatives from Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Alberta, and the Yukon Territory.

PNWER relies upon a well-established governance structure to manage the elected representatives and private sector partners who form its membership; the organizational chart below outlines the main councils and committees. The Delegate Council is the founding body of PNWER, and therefore takes on the role of aligning the organizations' current activities with its original mission and goals.

### **Figure 1. PNWER Organizational Chart(4)**

In order to reach its goal of sustainable economic development, PNWER has nine working groups to focus on specific areas of interest: Agriculture, Environmental Technology, Forest Products, Government Procurement, Recycling, Telecommunications, Tourism, Trade & Finance, and Transportation. Each of the working groups regularly reports their activities to the Executive Committee. PNWER's Annual Summit provides a forum for all of the Working Groups to hold their meetings and enables face-to-face information sharing and collaboration among the various PNWER members.

[www.pnwer.org](http://www.pnwer.org)

### **New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC)**

With a new facility at the State Police headquarters, New Jersey's Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC) is already improving law enforcement in the state. Described as a "fusion center," the ROIC provides a single reporting site for three information sets: law enforcement intelligence, public safety, and private sector reporting. The Center also has three main goals as it moves forward: inclusiveness, regionalization, and transparency.

The ROIC is still in its early stages of development as a regional center for law enforcement data. However, it has already developed strong partnerships with a variety of public safety agencies. Run by the New Jersey Department of Homeland Security and Preparedness, the Center also houses the Office of Emergency Management and the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The ROIC also receives regular input from the

### Appendix 3. Current Practice Review

---

FBI, the US Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, the NYPD, bordering State Police, a range of New Jersey state agencies, local county and municipal governments, and many non-government partners.

---

(3) [http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/reports/chicagofirst\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/reports/chicagofirst_handbook.pdf)

(4) Source: <http://www.pnwer.org/AboutUs/Background/Organization/tabid/65/Default.aspx>