

Field Communications: EPA's primary field communication method is commercial cellular, and providers vary by region, where most devices and service are provided via Working Capital Fund (WCF). Some regions do still maintain their own contracts outside of the WCF for non-smartphone devices. Receipt of new WCF devices can take a few days. Removal Managers and Logistics Section Chiefs should work with their Regions to retain "old" smartphones for emergency reactivation.

National Broadband Satellite Contract: EPA's satellite contract is administered and managed by NARFCOM, and includes 56 portable/mobile satellite systems. These systems fall under a shared national service plan with dedicated/unlimited airtime, and have approximately 3G data speeds.

Portable Satellite Unit (PSU) movement between regions is generally managed and coordinated by NARFCOM.

Long Range Radio: The Agency maintains high frequency (HF) radios, generally used for Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) purposes, which provide radio communications among and between Headquarters (HQ), regional offices, and COOP sites. A rare resource outside of the Department of Defense (DOD), some Regions and HQ have mobile units, which can overcome "urban canyon" effects. The HF radios are non-encrypted and unsecure, with open, public broadcast that can be nationwide or comprise a larger broadcast area.

EPA Repeaters and Handheld Radios: EPA maintains both Very High Frequency (VHF) and Ultra High Frequency (UHF) repeaters and handheld radios. The VHF systems are intended for rural and mountainous environments, or for very short-range urban environments (~1/2 mile). All EPA VHF radios have the same base programming, which includes inter-region compatibility and federal interoperability as required per the FEMA National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG). There are regional differences that add regionally specific interoperability frequencies beyond that national base programming.

UHF radios are utilized in urban environments. EPA Environmental Response Team (ERT) has a small cache of approximately 50 radios and two or three repeaters. Some regions have UHF radios, which also have consistent base programming and federal interoperability per the FEMA NIFOG. There are regional differences that add regionally specific interoperability frequencies beyond that national base programming.

Each Region's NARFCOM representative can provide the regional frequency plan for VHF and/or UHF radio use.

NARFCOM is available to deploy to establish communications and to provide training; workgroup members are also available to provide consultations and advise via conference call. However, NARFCOM members are not trained or certified as Communications Unit Leaders (COMLs). Regional Removal Managers can provide names of regional and special team NARFCOM representatives.

NARFCOM resources and references are available via the following link: www.response.epa.gov/narfcom