The Bahamas, Hurricane Dorian

Global ETS Teleconference

Date: 20/09/19   TIME: 1300 UTC

Attendance

Chair	Jalal Shah	(Global ETC), Italy
CISCO TacOps	Sue-Lynn Hinson	USA
Emergency.lu	Philippe Hein	Bahamas
Ericsson Response	Lars Ruediger	Germany
ITU	Marita Delgado	Switzerland
NetHope	Rami Shakra	Bahamas
	Duncan Drury	UK
UNHCR	Massoumeh Farman Farmaian	Denmark
US Department of State	Joe Burton	USA
WFP	Caroline Teyssier	Bahamas
	Angel Buitrago	Bahamas
	Omar Namaoui	Italy
	Emma Gilson	Italy
	Tom Mallah	Canada
	Elizabeth Millership	UAE

Teleconference started at 13:04 UTC

Agenda

1. **Situation overview**
2. **Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) update**
3. **ETS partner updates**
4. **AOB**

The ETC is a global network of organizations that work together to provide shared communications services in humanitarian emergencies.

Minutes

1. Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) Update

- The ETS response in the Bahamas will be phased out by the end of the week. Caroline Teyssier will continue to coordinate the emergency telecommunications response from Nassau as ETS Coordinator alongside the WFP IT EPR Officer, Angel Buitrago, until 22 September when both coordinators will depart the Bahamas. The ETS has been supporting the government response under its National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). WFP has been the appointed international co-lead to coordinate with humanitarian organizations operating in Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 on Communications which is led by the Police Force of the Bahamas with the support of the two Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), BTC and Aliv. ESF 2 is one of 14 ESFs under the leadership of NEMA.

- The main priority of the government of the Bahamas remains to finalize the full recovery of Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) BTC and Aliv. Both MNOs are making rapid progress on fully restoring their services. Both operators continue to run a roaming system in Abaco and Grand Bahama to ensure users can utilize either network until recovered.

- ETS and partners have primarily supported with connectivity services in Grand Bahama and in Abaco, the worst affected area. Local ETS partners on the ground in Abaco provided shared connectivity services for responders and the affected population in five priority locations in Marsh Harbour:
    o Marsh Harbour port;
    o Marsh Harbour international airport;
    o Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at the Government building;
    o Maxwell Supermarket, used as the military EOC;
    o Marsh Harbour hospital.

- In addition, the team extended the network to Abaco Beach Resort where many humanitarians have been accommodated.

- As the national response moves to the recovery phase, WFP/ETS is engaging with the government of the Bahamas through ESF 2 to implement the transition plan to handover services to NEMA. As part of the transition plan, several members of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force have been trained in maintenance and relocation of the connectivity equipment installed by the ETS team in Marsh Harbour, which will remain in place throughout the ongoing hurricane season. Connectivity equipment installed on the ground will be donated to the government response including two Eutelsat VSATs, Ericsson Response wireless equipment as well as equipment from NetHope partner CISCO TacOps.

- WFP IT EPR Officer, Angel Buitrago is travelling from Abaco to Nassau on 20 September to finalize closing documents with the ETS Coordinator, Caroline Teyssier.

- Some partners are planning to continue supporting the Bahamas with ICT services and equipment to NGOs for another 2–3 months as part of the recovery phase of the response.

2. ETS PARTNER UPDATES

NetHope

- NetHope will remain on the ground to work with its members and provide connectivity services to shelters and affected communities across the worst affected islands of the Bahamas as the recovery phase is implemented.

- NetHope is currently providing connectivity at 28 sites including the common sites in Abaco and sites set up jointly with emergency.lu and partner Information Technology Disaster Resource Centre (ITDRC).

- An additional 20 requests have been received, bringing the total to 102 requests. These new requests will be verified. Most new requests have come from clinics and responding NGOs who are looking to establish operational bases for the recovery phase.

- NetHope has 11 personnel on the ground including partners from CISCO TacOps, Google and Amazon Web Services (AWS). The teams are focussing mainly on the eastern side of Grand Bahama where connectivity services are still not recovered, including several of the Cays off the coast of Grand Bahama where affected communities still have no access to connectivity. Additional personnel will arrive from NetHope partner Facebook next week and more equipment will be deployed to meet the rising number of requests for connectivity services.

- A CISCO TacOps team travelled to the Cays by boat on 19 September to carry out an assessment and immediate installation of equipment to provide connectivity to the isolated communities living there. The team are travelling to the same sites on 20 September to finalize the installations.

- Another area of focus is Man O War, a small island off the coast of Abaco where access to power is presenting a big challenge. NetHope is exploring solar power options to reduce reliance on generators and as part of preparedness measures.

Government of Luxembourg

- emergency.lu personnel will leave the Bahamas on 23 September. Equipment at High Rock clinic on the east side of Grand Bahama will remain in place until MNO networks are fully restored. The equipment will then be decommissioned and shipped back to Luxembourg once connectivity is re-established.

Contacts

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Teleconference / Meeting ended at 13:31 UTC

This is the final Global ETS Teleconference on the Bahamas.

Acronyms

AWS	Amazon Web Services
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ESF	Emergency Support Functions
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMC	International Medical Corps
IT	Information Technology
ITDRC	Information Technology Disaster Resource Centre
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
UN	United Nations
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WFP	World Food Programme

All information related to the ETS operation in the Bahamas can be found on the website:
https://www.etcluster.org/emergency/bahamas-natural-disaster

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact:
Bahamas.ETS@wfp.org

Minutes: Elizabeth Millership, WFP