Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) Overview

COMCAST BUSINESS

1. TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE PRIORITY (TSP) OVERVIEW

TSP is a program that authorizes National Security and Emergency Preparedness (NSEP) organizations to receive priority treatment for vital voice and data circuits or other telecommunication services. As a result of hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and other natural or man-made disasters, telecommunications service vendors frequently experience a surge in requests for new services and requirements to restore existing services. The TSP program provides service vendors a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandate to prioritize requests by identifying those services critical to NSEP. A TSP assignment ensures that it will receive priority attention by the service vendor before any non-TSP service.

TSP offers two types of priority – Provisioning and Restore:

- **Provisioning Priority** allows TSP customers to have new service installed faster than the normal process of service vendors, an organization may request a provisioning priority. This can be an immediate installation following an emergency or an installation by a specific date, also known as essential provisioning. Note that TSP provisioning is not intended to compensate for inadequate planning.
- **Restoration Priority** is for new or existing telecommunication services and requires that service vendors restore them before non-TSP services. Restoration priority helps minimize service interruptions that may have serious, adverse effect on the supported NSEP function. Organizations must request TSP restoration priority before a service outage.

  Reference **http://www.dhs.gov/about-tsp/** for more information.

  Source: Department of Homeland Security

1.1.1 TSP AUTHORIZATION OVERVIEW

TSP Authorization codes are assigned by the US Federal Government or Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Priority Levels will be managed with 1 being the highest priority and 5 is the lowest priority. Revocation of a priority level assignment is indicated if the TSP Priority Levels (both the provisioning priority field and the restoration priority field) of a TSP Authorization Code contain zeros.

1.1.1.1 Provisioning Priority Field

The provisioning priority field, E, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 0 (zero) is acceptable. A zero indicates that no provisioning priority is assigned. See the illustration below for Provisioning Priority position within the TSP authorization code.

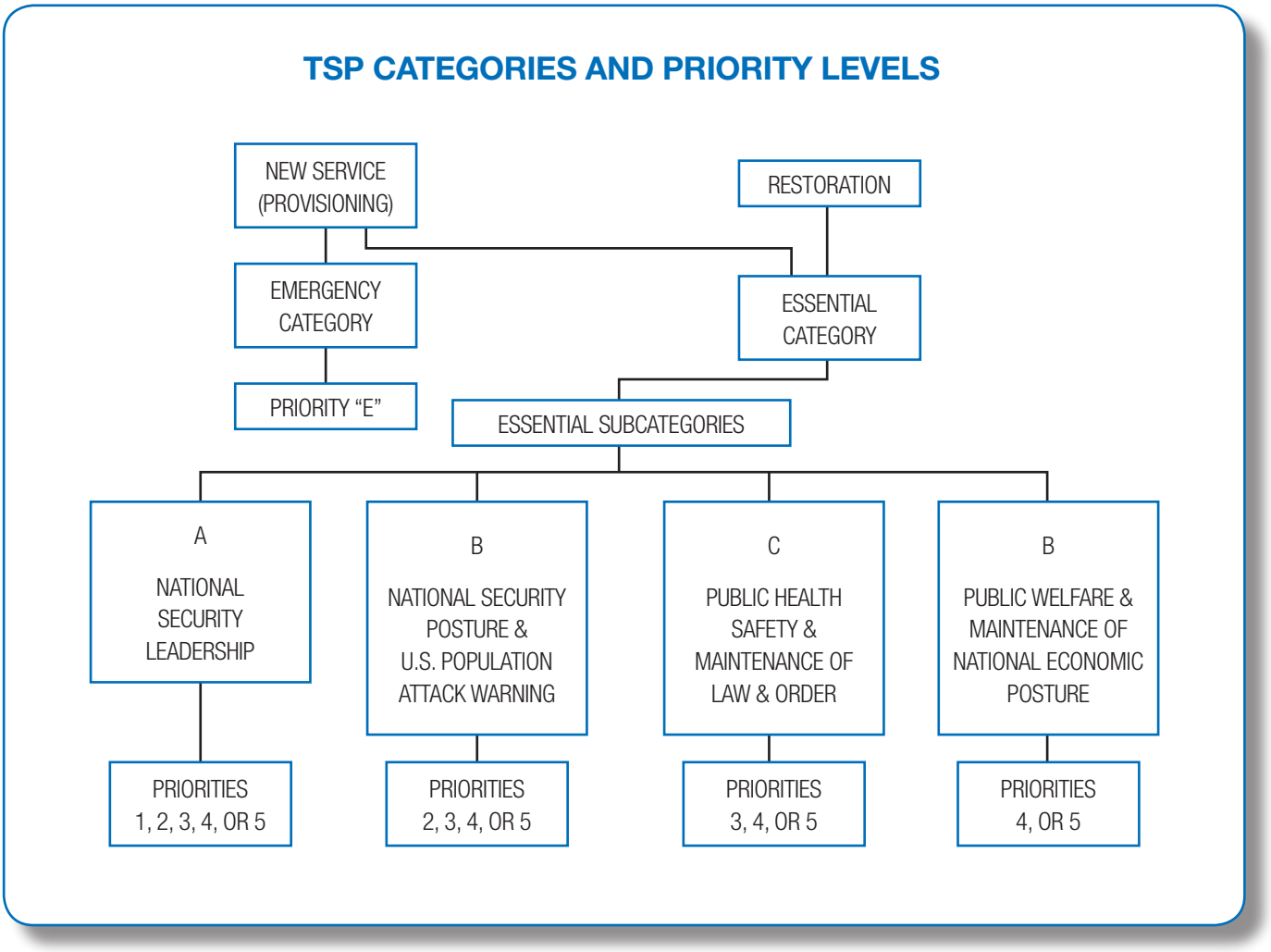
1.1.1.2 Restore Priority Field

The restore priority field, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 0 (zero) is acceptable. A zero indicates that no restoration priority is assigned. See the illustration below for Restore Priority position within the TSP authorization code.

- Service vendors will dispatch personnel outside normal business hours if necessary to restore TSP services assigned a restoration priority of 1, 2, or 3. Service vendors must dispatch personnel outside normal business hours to restore TSP services assigned 4 or 5 only when the next business day is more than 24 hours away.
- Vendors will restore TSP services in order of restoration priority level: that is, TSP services assigned a restoration priority of 1 will be restored first; then TSP services assigned a restoration priority of 2 will be restored, etc.

1.1.2 SERVICE CATEGORIES AND ASSOCIATED PRIORITY LEVELS

The Department of Homeland Security and Federal Communications Commission establish Service Categories and Priority Levels. The following illustration depicts the categorical hierarchy for TSP eligible entities and the Priority Levels supported under each category.



- **Vendor responsibility** – Installation, Restoration and Reporting commitments
- **Customer responsibility** – TSP acquisition, process for submission and regulations

1.2 COMCAST BUSINESS SERVICES TSP ELIGIBLE SERVICES

Comcast supports TSP within SMB, Enterprise and Wholesale channels for the following Ethernet transport services:

- Ethernet Virtual Private Line (EVPL)
- Ethernet Private Line (EVP)
- Ethernet Network Service (ENS)
- Cell Backhaul (CBH)

1.3 ESSENTIAL SERVICE CRITERIA FOR TSP

There are four broad categories that serve as guidelines for determining whether a circuit or telecommunications service is eligible for provisioning or restoration priority. TSP service user organizations may be in Federal, state, local, or tribal governments; critical infrastructure sectors in industry; non-profit organizations that perform critical NS/EP functions; or foreign governments. Typical TSP users are responsible for the command and control functions critical to management and response to NS/EP situations, particularly during the first 24 to 72 hours following an event.

Eligible service must meet one of the following:

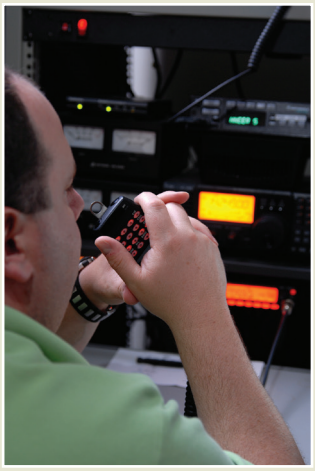
- Serves our national security leadership;
- Supports our national security posture and US population attack warning systems;
- Supports public health, safety and maintenance of law and order activities;
- Maintains the public welfare and the national economic system; or
- Is critical to the protection of life and property or to NS/EP activities during an emergency

Additional details on each criteria are available in TSP Documents.

- Link for TSP documents: **https://www.dhs.gov/publication/tsp-documents**

Source: ***http://www.dhs.gov/tsp-eligibility***

1.4 REQUEST TSP PROVISIONING



When circumstances require installation of new telecommunication services faster than a service vendor's normal processes allow, an organization may request a provisioning priority. This can be an immediate installation following an emergency or an installation by a specific date, also known as essential provisioning. These simplified steps show the basic process for requesting provisioning priority:

1. Review participant responsibilities.
2. Certify that the telecommunications service supports NS/EP functions listed under one of five TSP categories.
3. Call the DHS Priority Telecommunications Service Center toll free at 866-627-2255 (Washington D.C. metro area, please use 703-760-2255) for instruction on how to submit your request. The TSP Program Office may direct you to fax in a TSP Request for Service User (SF315).
4. OEC will provide a TSP Authorization Code for each service or circuit you need to install.
5. Give the TSP Authorization code to your service vendor. The vendor confirms receipt of the TSP Authorization Code(s) with the TSP Program Office.

1.5 REQUESTING TSP RESTORATION

Restoration Priority is for new or existing telecommunications and requires that service vendors restore them before non-TSP services. Restoration priority helps minimize service interruptions that may have a serious or adverse effect on the supported NS/EP functions. Organizations must request TSP restoration priority before a service outage. To request restoration priority designations on your circuits:

1. Review participant responsibilities.
2. Certify that the telecommunications service supports NS/EP functions listed under one of five TSP categories.
3. Register for TSP and receive an online account. This process takes approximately 1-2 weeks.
4. Provide information (usually done online) about the service or circuits needing restoration. The TSP Program Office has up to 30 days to assign TSP Authorization Codes, but usually processes them within about two weeks.
5. Receive a TSP Authorization Code for each service or circuit for which you need priority.
6. Give the TSP Authorization Code to your service vendor.
7. The vendor confirms receipt of the TSP Authorization Code(s) with the TSP Program Office.

To register for TSP click **here**.

1.6 DETAILED SUBSCRIPTION PROCEDURES

- Upon receiving the TSP Authorization Code for Provisioning or Restoration Priority, submit the TSP code with the following information to your Comcast Sales representative.
  - TSP Code Expiration (3 years from date of issue)
  - Associate TSP Circuit ID (if known)
  - TSP Circuit Type (EPL, EVPL, ENS, etc.)
  - Customer corporate address
  - Customer contact information (Name, title, phone number)

1.7 TSP CHANGE ORDERS

- In the event a change is required on a circuit's TSP status, please contact your Comcast Sales representative.

1.8 COMCAST RESTORE AND PROVISION ESCALATION REQUESTS

- If a TSP circuit encounters an outage, Comcast Technical Enterprise Support (800-741-4141) will prioritize the Restoration and if necessary Provisioning of service based upon the practices outlined by the Department of Homeland Security.

1.9 CONTACT INFORMATION

- Office of Emergency Communications Priority
  - DHS Priority Telecommunications Service Center
    - 866-627-2255 (Washington D.C. metro area, please use 703-760-2255)
    - Email: gwids@saic.com
- Comcast Communications
  - Enterprise Technical Support
    - Ethernet & Enterprise Customers: 800-741-4141

2. TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE PRIORITY (TSP) FAQS

Is there a charge for TSP?

The Federal Government does not charge for TSP, however, your vendor will/may have a tariff charge for TSP. For TSP restoration, typically there is a one-time setup fee and a monthly service charge to have the service available to you. However, these fees are separate from any charges related to actually installing or repairing your circuits following an emergency. Similarly, when using TSP to provision a new circuit, there is no cost from the Federal Government. However, the service provider's charges still apply, and depending on the circumstances may be higher than normal. In any case, contact your service provider to learn more about charges.

What are telecommunication services?

Telecommunication services are defined as the transmission, emission, or reception of intelligence of any nature, by wire, cable, satellite, fiber optics, laser, radio, visual, or other electronic, electric, electromagnetic, or acoustically coupled means, or any combination thereof.

What are National Security/Emergency Preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunication services?

NS/EP telecommunication services are services used to maintain a state of readiness or to respond to and manage any event or crisis that causes or could cause injury or harm to the population or damage to or loss of property or that degrades or threatens the NS/EP posture of the United States.

How do I request TSP?

Use the TSP Request for Service Users Form (SF 315) to request TSP provisioning (or combined provisioning and restoration). Where possible, Register/Log In to request restoration, otherwise use the SF 315 for restoration requests, to report changes to an existing TSP service, and to delete/revoke a restoration and/or provisioning priority.

Note: before using the TSP provisioning process to install new services, users should first contact their telecommunications vendors to inquire whether the need for an expedited provisioning can be met through a service level agreement.

What is the difference between TSP Restoration and TSP Provisioning?

TSP restoration is like an insurance policy for your existing circuits (both voice and data), while TSP provisioning is for new circuits. For TSP restoration, after determining which circuits are critical to your organization, you request TSP Authorization Codes for each one. Upon receipt of these codes, you give them to your service provider so that they have everything in place should an emergency require the restoration/repair of your circuits. TSP provisioning is for when you need a new circuit installed sooner than your service provider would be able to do using normal business procedures. When this happens, contact the TSP Program Office to make your request. Note that TSP provisioning is not intended to compensate for inadequate planning.

What should I do with my TSP Authorization Code after I receive it?

When you receive your TSP Authorization Code, give it to your service provider to enter into their records. Like an insurance policy, all TSP Authorization Codes must be in your provider's network before an emergency happens.

Can I request TSP restoration services after a disaster has occurred?

Users should be aware that TSP restoration priorities must be requested and assigned before a service outage occurs.

How long does it take for a provisioning request to be fulfilled by the telecommunications vendor?

TSP users should have realistic expectations regarding when a request for provisioned services can be filled. Users should be aware that the "provisioning due date" data field which they complete on the TSP Request for Service Users Form (SF 315) is not necessarily the date on which service will be guaranteed. The service vendor is required to make its best effort to provide essential and emergency TSP services by the requested due date. A number of factors, including volume of provisioning and restoration requests and work site accessibility, may cause unexpected provisioning delays.

Note: When requesting an emergency provisioning, the user point of contact should be ready to accept installation of the service immediately after making the request. The point of contact must also be ready to accept the service on weekends or after business hours. Generally, vendor technicians will not return to sites that refuse them access because no user point of contact is available to ensure the vendor personnel can enter the facility and begin work.

Who or what is an Invocation Official?

An Invocation Official is a designated individual with the authority and responsibility to approve the cost and criticality of a provisioning request for telecommunications service, certifying that the NS/EP service is so vital that it must be expeditiously provisioned. Invocation Officials include the head or director of a Federal agency, commander of a unified or specified military command, chief of a military service, commander of a major military command and State Governors responding to a State or local disaster and emergencies for which no Federal funding is expected to be requested. Invocation authority may be delegated to appropriate individuals within their agencies/commands/senior State officials in writing to the TSP Program Office.

How long are TSP Authorization Codes valid?

TSP Authorization Codes are valid for three years. The Federal Communications Commission requires that all users revalidate their requirement for TSP every three years before expiration of the user's TSP Authorization Code(s).

What happens if I change phone companies?

If a TSP service user changes their telephone service provider, the user must revoke the TSP Authorization codes with the TSP Program Office and request new codes to pass on to the new phone company. The new vendor must submit a TSP Confirmation for Service Vendors Form (SF 318) to the TSP Program Office, indicating the circuit ID numbers for the user's TSP assignments. Also, the previous vendor must submit a SF 318 indicating they are no longer the service provider.

What should I do if my circuit registered with TSP Restoration Priority goes out of service?

In some instances, your vendor may automatically detect the problem and will restore the service as soon as possible. However, you should also report your service problem to your service provider following your customary trouble reporting procedures. When you report the trouble, be sure to verify with your provider that the service is identified with TSP in the provider's records. If the provider's records do not reflect TSP, you may contact the DHS Priority Telecommunications Service Center to verify your TSP assignment and ask for the contact information for the service provider's TSP escalation point of contact (POC). In the unlikely event that the vendor POC cannot help you, you may contact the DHS Priority Telecommunications Service Center for assistance.

What is the TSP Confirmation Process?

The TSP Confirmation process is the mechanism the TSP Program Office uses to ensure that the priority level it assigns a given circuit and the priority level the prime service vendor assigns that circuit are the same. The FCC's TSP program rules require vendors to submit reports to the TSP Program Office confirming the completion of all TSP service orders for which they are the prime service vendor. They must do this within 45 calendar days of completing a TSP service order.

Who do I call if I need assistance?

For assistance, please contact the DHS Priority Telecommunications Service Center toll free at 866-627-2255 (Washington D.C. metro area, please use 703-760-2255).

Source: ***http://www.dhs.gov/tsp-faqs***