



Issue Background

The National Coordinating Center (NCC) is an industry-Government body whose mission is to assist in the initiation, coordination, restoration, and reconstitution of industry and Government national security and emergency preparedness (NS/EP) telecommunications services or facilities during natural disasters, armed conflicts, and terrorist attacks. As of February 2008, 44 companies and 24 Government agencies rely on the NCC's unique organization to support NS/EP communications. Thirteen NCC participant companies have executives on the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee (NSTAC), and the committee periodically revisits the NCC's performance by evaluating its mission, information sharing procedures, and effectiveness as changes occur in the threat, policy, and technological environments.

History of NSTAC Actions

In 1982, industry and Government collectively developed the concept of a National Coordinating Mechanism (NCM) in recognition of the need to jointly organize public and private sector NS/EP telecommunications restoration and provisioning. Based partially on an NSTAC review of the concept, President Reagan established the NCC as the operational arm of the NCM in 1984. In the ensuing years, the NSTAC considered how changes in the NS/EP and technological environments affected the NCC's mission, organization, and capabilities and assisted in updating the *NCC Operating Guidelines* and chartered functions.

Since 2000, the NCC has also functioned as the Communications Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ISAC) under the framework of Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 63, *Protecting America's Critical Infrastructure*. PDD 63 established the concept of an ISAC as a private sector entity responsible for gathering, analyzing, and disseminating vulnerabilities in and threats to the communications infrastructure. In 1996, advances in cyber technology led the NSTAC to endorse the integration of a voluntary electronic intrusion incident information process for the NCC, which met the requirements for an ISAC under PDD 63. The NSTAC reported in 1999 that the NCC was already performing most of the other functions of an ISAC for the communications sector and recommended its official designation as such. In 2000, the National Security Council concurred with the NSTAC assessment and established the NCC as the communications ISAC.

Recent NSTAC Activities

From 2005 to 2006, the NSTAC evaluated the long-term direction of the NCC and avenues for cooperation between industry and the Federal Government through the National Response Plan and National Infrastructure Protection Plan mechanisms. In May 2006, the NSTAC released a *Report to the President on the NCC*, which included recommendations for addressing a number of issues that resulted from the response to Hurricane Katrina as well as ways the organization could evolve in the changing technological environment. The report included a one- to five-year roadmap of potential actions to evolve the organization and focus of the NCC.