



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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FCC SOLICITS CONSULTATION ON *DRAFT TRIBAL COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY PLAN* AT NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS MID-YEAR CONFERENCE

At the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Mid-Year Session, held in Uncasville, CT, on June 20-23, the FCC announced that it was seeking consultation with Tribes, Tribal organizations and leaders on a *Draft Tribal Communications Security Plan* tribes can use to assist in protecting communications infrastructure (*Draft Plan*). The *Draft Plan* is intended to provide a framework to assist Tribal Governments in planning for the physical protection of critical communications infrastructure in their communities. The *Draft Plan* was developed in furtherance of the FCC's Indian Telecommunications Initiatives (ITI) and is part of the FCC's Homeland Security Action Plan.

In announcing the *Draft Plan*, Kris Monteith, Deputy Chief for Outreach and Intergovernmental Affairs in the FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, stated: "The FCC is pleased to have the opportunity to consult with tribes on important homeland security objectives. Through the development of, and consultation on, the *Draft Plan*, the FCC hopes to assist Tribes in planning and implementing strategies to communicate during emergencies."

At the Conference, FCC staff also participated in a panel discussion on telecommunications infrastructure development and provided an FCC report to the Telecommunications Subcommittee. In addition, the FCC hosted a booth, to share important consumer information and to demonstrate its Tower Construction Notifications System (TCNS). The TCNS is intended to increase communication in the context of the review required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). It provides Tribes and Historic Preservation Officers with early notification of proposed towers in order to facilitate compliance with the Commission's rules, and streamlines the review process for construction of towers and other Commission undertakings. Tower construction notification allows companies to voluntarily submit notifications of proposed tower constructions to the FCC. The Commission subsequently provides this information to federally-recognized Indian Tribes, the Native Hawaiian Organization (NHO), and State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs), and allows them to respond directly to the companies if they have concerns about a proposed construction.

The FCC's ITI is comprehensive program that seeks to promote understanding, cooperation and trust among Tribes and Tribal organizations; the FCC and other governmental agencies; and the telecommunications industry. The ITI program seeks to build partnerships, identify potential solutions, and bring affordable, quality telecommunications services to Indian Country. The ITI program's goals - to increase the telephone penetration rate; facilitate the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure on tribal lands; and inform Tribes about federal government programs, including Universal Service Fund programs - are undertaken in Indian Country by the FCC through targeted and effective Tribal outreach, coordination and consultation.

The FCC's Homeland Security Action Plan is part of the FCC's comprehensive homeland security initiative designed to evaluate and strengthen measures for protecting the Nation's communications infrastructure; facilitate rapid restoration of that infrastructure in the event of disruption; and, develop policies that promote access to effective communications services by public safety, public health and other emergency personnel in emergency situations. The FCC's Office of Homeland Security and the Homeland Security Policy Council provide consolidated support and strategic vision for the Commission in meeting its homeland security objectives.

For information on this and other topics of interest to tribes, visit the FCC's Tribal Initiatives Web site at www.fcc.gov/indians.

For information on this and other topics of interest to consumers, visit our Web site at www.fcc.gov/cgb

To receive information on this and other FCC consumer topics through the Commission's electronic subscriber service, click on www.fcc.gov/cgb/emailservice.html.

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