

# **Development of the Telecommunications Emergency Preparedness and Response Policy (TEPRP) and Emergency Preparedness Agreement (EPA) in the Turks & Caicos Islands**

“CANTO Conversation”

March 2022

# Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Reasons for the development of the TEPRP and EPA
3. Methodological approach
4. Key features of the TEPRP and EPA
5. Associated work
6. Status report
7. Wrap up, discussion, Q&A

# 1. Introduction

The Commission has developed the Telecoms Emergency Preparation and Response Policy (TEPRP) to mitigate risks to communications networks and services in disasters and emergencies

The TEPRP establishes a policy framework and requirements for the telecoms sector to manage disasters and emergencies

The TEPRP framework also envisages an Emergency Preparedness Agreement (EPA)

The EPA is an agreement between Digicel and Flow to share infrastructure and resources to protect the resilience of emergency and other priority calls in emergencies

## 2. Why? Reasons for development of the TEPRP

The Government of TCI and the Commission want to mitigate risk of disruption to communications networks and services in disasters and emergencies

To some extent, this policy is driven by experience in 2017 when Hurricanes Irma and Maria destroyed telecommunications infrastructure resulting in complete service outages



Of course, the TEPRP cannot prevent services being affected or even taken down by hurricanes or other events in future, but it puts in place and documents arrangements to mitigate and reduce the risks of this

# 3. Methodological approach

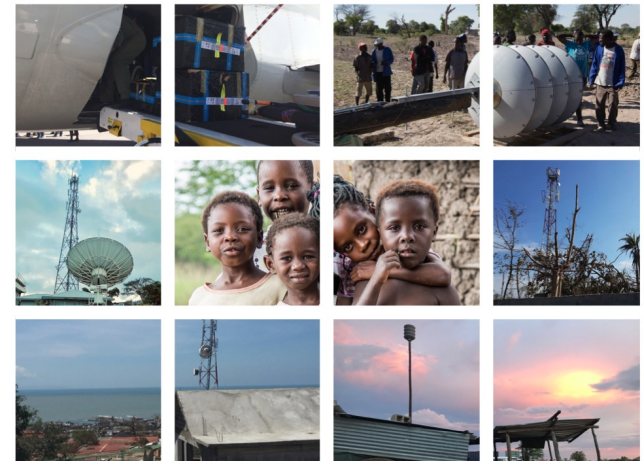
## The TEPRP was developed

- following best practice set out in ITU Guidelines, adapted to the TCI
- to complement the cross-sectoral disaster and emergency management framework overseen by the Department of Disaster Management and Emergencies (DDME)
- also taking account of equivalent documents in other jurisdictions

Thematic reports

ITU Publications

## ITU Guidelines for national emergency telecommunication plans



### 3. Methodological approach (cont ...)

The Commission engaged consultants Cenerva to support development of the TEPRP and EPA, and convened a Working Group comprising:

- The Commission and our consultants
- Digicel
- Flow
- The Department for Disaster Management and Emergencies (DDME)

We discussed the TEPRP with the Working Group at each stage of drafting, including a six week consultation period

We provided a skeleton framework document for the EPA and asked Digicel and Flow to produce a draft

## 4. Key features of the TEPRP

The TEPRP establishes a bespoke emergency management framework for the telecoms sector in TCI, including 20 specific requirements. Key features are:

- Reporting on preparedness to the Commission by Digicel and Flow, and auditing of this by the Commission each year before the start of hurricane season
- Creation and maintenance of asset inventories
- Systems for early warnings and alerts
- Support to consumers and citizens with specific needs
- Coordinated restoration of facilities and services

## 4. Key features of the TEPRP (cont ...)

- Provision and dissemination of information
- Training and practice drills
- Digicel and Flow must enter into an EPA for sharing of infrastructure and resources to protect resilience
- TEPRP requirements to be enshrined in Digicel and Flow licences
- Arrangements map onto the four phases of disaster management identified by the ITU





# Comparison with ITU recommendations, before and after TEPRP

Summary of ITU Guidelines recommended approach	Pre TEPRP comparison between ITU Guidelines and TCI status (RAG)	Post TEPRP comparison between ITU Guidelines and TCI status (RAG)
<b>ITU Recommendation 1</b> covering current capabilities, geographic mapping	Hazard mapping was not documented clearly for the telecoms sector	The TEPRP provides comprehensive and accurate hazard mapping
<b>ITU Recommendation 2</b> covering the phases of disaster management	There was no focussed plan for the telecoms sector	The TEPRP contains a description of the phases of disaster management and activities to be undertaken by sector stakeholders in each phase
<b>ITU Recommendation 3</b> covering arrangements for administration and communication	Communications arrangements for the sector were not clearly set out	The TEPRP includes arrangements for resilience of communications
<b>ITU Recommendation 4</b> covering legislation and regulation	Telecoms licences did not address emergency and disaster risks.	Licences to be strengthened with specific obligations on disaster management
<b>ITU Recommendation 5</b> covering information on existing networks and contingency plans	There was no centralised inventory of telecoms network facilities for use in emergency and disaster scenarios	The TEPRP includes arrangements for provision of network information for an inventory
<b>ITU Recommendation 6</b> covering early warning systems	Operators had warning protocols and arrangements in place.	Early warning systems are also envisaged in the TEPRP
<b>ITU Recommendation 7</b> covering international cooperation and coordination	A comprehensive listing of international agreements was not currently in place	The Commission made recommendations to the Government regarding international cooperation
<b>ITU Recommendation 8</b> covering training and capacity building	Operators had arrangements in place for emergency and disaster training	The TEPRP also includes requirements for training
<b>ITU Recommendation 9:</b> covering arrangements for people with specific needs	Arrangements to support some customers were not clear	The TEPRP requires operators to aim to identify vulnerable customers and to use multiple modes of communication to reach them
<b>ITU Recommendation 10</b> covering cybersecurity	Cyber-security arrangements in place	Cyber-security arrangements in place
<b>ITU Recommendation 11</b> covering practice exercises and drills	Each licensed operator undertook emergency and disaster drills	The TEPRP added requirements for drills in relation to Standard Operating Procedures and Contingency Plans

## 6. Associated work

Following completion of the TEPRP, the Commission is working with the Government of the TCI on some associated points:

1. Review of arrangements for import of essential telecoms equipment in emergencies
2. Engagement with regional stakeholders, including CDEMA, on our approach to the TEPRP
3. Review of other emergency protocols and documentation in the TCI (led by DDME)

## 6. Status report

The TEPRP is completed and was promulgated by the Commission in November 2021 ([https://telecommission.tc/tctc\\_consultations/telecommunications-emergency-preparedness-and-response-policy/](https://telecommission.tc/tctc_consultations/telecommunications-emergency-preparedness-and-response-policy/))

Digicel and Flow are progressing the EPA

The Commission thanks all stakeholders, particularly Digicel, Flow and the DDME for their collaborative approach in this work

# Thank you ....

## Discussion and Q&A

Kenva Williams  
**Director General**  
*TCI Telecommunications Commission*  
[www.telecommission.tc](http://www.telecommission.tc)  
[kenvawilliams@tcitelecommission.tc](mailto:kenvawilliams@tcitelecommission.tc)  
649-946-1900

Chris Taylor  
**Partner**  
*Cenerva*  
[www.cenerva.com](http://www.cenerva.com)  
[chris.taylor@cenerva.com](mailto:chris.taylor@cenerva.com)  
+44 7957 809 667