

Media release

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New Public Safety Network cellular service turned-on for Emergency Management Southland and NEMA to support the emergency response

Next Generation Critical Communications (NGCC) has quickly answered the call for help from Emergency Management Southland and NEMA by granting them special temporary access to the new Public Safety Network Cellular Network Visibility Service providing real time visibility of network outages to support operational planning.

Launched by Minister Mark Mitchell in September for Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand, Hato Hone St John and Wellington Free Ambulance, the PSN Cellular Network Visibility Service is part of the \$1.4b Public Safety Network suite of [Cellular Services](#) being delivered by NGCC and vendor, Hourua. The globally-leading Service consolidates network information from Spark and One NZ into one centralised digital system view creating a single reference point for emergency communications and operational teams.

With up to 130 cell towers down across Southland at the peak of the storm, the Service has enabled the NEMA and Emergency Management Southland operational planners to assess in real time whether responders and crews would be able to use their cellular devices in any particular location - supporting their safety and operational capability.

“When the call came, we were really pleased to get together with Hourua to quickly create access to the Cellular Network Visibility service for Emergency Management Southland and NEMA who needed its live network information,” says Steve Ferguson, Director of Next Generation Critical Communications.

“We scoped their requirements and provided same day activation of the Cellular Network Visibility Service, and also trained people in emergency management centres so they could quickly start integrating the information the Service provides into their operational decision-making.”

More PSN Cellular Services are supporting Southland’s emergency services

The fire, ambulance and police frontline responders working across Southland have been using two other Public Safety Network cellular services giving them a

communications capability uplift. Thanks to a PSN SIM card in a frontline responder's mobile phone or device, they can roam across both Spark and One NZ networks. This means that if one network is down, the phone will automatically connect to the other network if coverage is available. The second service pushes emergency services' cellular traffic to 'the front of the queue' for available coverage when cells sites have been congested or degraded so responders can continue to use their cellular devices to deliver support for communities.

Mr Ferguson says NGCC is pleased to be adding unique value to the emergency services and other emergency management organisations by providing the Public Safety Network's modern cellular critical communications services.

ENDS

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About Next Generation Critical Communications Poutama Whai Tikanga Pāpāho

Next Generation Critical Communications (NGCC) is the only government entity exclusively focussed on critical communications for public safety in New Zealand. NGCC's mission is to modernise the communications capability of New Zealand's emergency services to deliver more information, to more places in real time. It is responsible for delivering the Public Safety Network and Location Information Services www.ngcc.govt.nz

About the Public Safety Network Te Kupenga Marutau

The Public Safety Network (PSN) is a significant infrastructure project, investing \$1.4 billion over 10 years to build and operate the networks and services, and roll out new devices to emergency services staff, stations and vehicles. The PSN consists of three complementary elements forming a resilient communications ecosystem: a digital Land Mobile Radio network now under construction; Cellular Roaming, Priority and Network Visibility Services (all live), and the ongoing provision of personal alerting.

The PSN is providing Hato Hone St John, Wellington Free Ambulance, Police and Fire and Emergency NZ with modern, secure and resilient critical communications enabling them to do their jobs, stay safe and support our communities. There is scope for other public safety and emergency management organisations to join in the future and further services to be added.