



LOCAL TELEVISION STATION

MODEL VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

CHECKLIST

**Developed by the Toolkit Working Group for the
Media Security and Reliability Council**

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INTRODUCTION

In the aftermath of the tragedy of September 11, 2001, the Federal Communications Commission recognized the fundamental and essential role that local media play in providing and coordinating communications in emergency situations. The Media Security and Reliability Council (“MSRC I”) is a Federal Advisory Committee, formed by the FCC, to study, develop and report on communications and coordination designed to assure the optimal reliability, robustness and security of the broadcast and multi-channel video programming distribution industries in emergency situations.

In the course of its work, the MSRC analyzed the current status of media industries and prepared a set of comprehensive best practice recommendations. These recommendations were provided to the FCC and the Media Industry in March 2004 so that, when implemented, will assure optimal reliability, robustness and security of broadcast and MVPD facilities throughout the United States. These comprehensive best practice recommendations can be found at <http://www.fcc.gov/MSRC/>.

On May 26, 2004 the FCC announced that it would officially recharter the MSRC to create a local implementation plan designed to promote voluntary implementation of the MSRC I Best Practices by the broadcast and MVPD industries; develop “model” documents and other resources for local entities’ use; and formulate any additional best practices that may be needed.

Scope

The comprehensive best practices from MSRC I recommended that each national media facility (television network facilities, radio network facilities and cable facilities) should have a vulnerability assessment and disaster recovery plan that is periodically reviewed, updated and practiced. The scope of this document is to provide general guidelines and a generic checklist to assist local television stations in assessing vulnerabilities which may potentially affect their facilities in the event of an emergency.

Vulnerability Assessment Guidelines

When assessing potential vulnerabilities, local television stations are encouraged to review the following best practices recommendations made by MSRC I:

- Television broadcasters should have appropriate physical security, augmented by security personnel and/or video surveillance at their key facilities, including studios/newsrooms, satellite communications facilities and antenna/transmitter sites.
- Television broadcasters should employ diverse power grid sources wherever feasible.
- Television broadcasters should take appropriate measures to provide backup power capabilities for their key facilities, including studios/newsrooms, satellite communications and transmitters.
- Television broadcasters with local news origination should ensure that they have robust and redundant ways to communicate with external news services and remote news teams, such as the use of mobile radio and Internet to augment cell phones as well as some means of receiving remote feeds (*e.g.*, directly at tower site or at a cable headend) and delivering live news and information from a remote site (*e.g.*, ENG/SNG truck).
- Television broadcasters should have backup signal feeds to their primary and backup satellite transmit and receive sites.
- Television broadcasters should have redundant signal paths to their primary and backup transmission facilities.
- Television broadcasters with local news origination should plan to have emergency origination capability at a separate location from their primary studio (*e.g.*, backup studio, transmitter site, ENG remote, another station, cable headend, etc).
- Television broadcasters with local news origination should have an ENG or SNG truck, or some means of delivering live news and information from a remote site.
- Television broadcasters should have the capability of receiving a remote feed at an additional site from their primary studio (*e.g.*, directly at their tower site, at a backup studio, etc).
- Television broadcasters should have a backup satellite transmitter and receiver, or an alternate means (*e.g.*, a DBS receiver, or a streaming video over a broadband Internet connection) to send and receive signals from and to national news services in emergency situations. (We recognize that there may be copyright issues involved but recommend that operators negotiate a reasonable solution).

- Television broadcasters should have a backup satellite transmitter and receiver, or an alternate means (*e.g.*, a Satellite Radio receiver, a dedicated phone line or a streaming audio Internet connection) to send and receive signals from and to national news services in emergency situations.
- Television broadcasters should examine the possibility of their DTV facilities providing emergency backup capabilities to their analog facilities.
- Television broadcasters should provide the same prevention approaches to their DTV facilities, to the extent economically feasible.
- With the cooperation of federal and local policy makers, all television broadcasters in a market should collaborate to increase their collective site diversity and redundancy, including their collective news studios, operations, satellite transmit and receive facilities and transmitter and antenna sites.

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

The following vulnerability assessment checklist is provided as a tool for use by local television stations to help facilitate the assessment of vulnerabilities which potentially may exist in their facilities. This checklist is not intended to be comprehensive, and local television stations are encouraged to adapt its use to accommodate any unique requirements which may exist in their facilities.

Disaster Recovery Plan		
Does a Disaster Recovery Plan exist which details how to effectively assess impact to the facilities and recovery operations in the event of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan identify essential personnel necessary to carry out restoration efforts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan address timely activation of the backup origination facility in the event of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan include other ways for network or other programming to be received?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan include agreements to gain assistance from other broadcast, cable and production operations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan include reciprocal agreements with other local broadcasters to allow multi-channel rebroadcast of signals on DTV in the event of a loss of transmission capability?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan identify essential equipment and service suppliers, including contract engineers, construction and installation companies, fuel, and external telecommunications providers, to ensure availability of critical resources?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan include alternative methods to communicate with key field personnel in the event that radio, cell systems or other primary methods are inoperable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the Disaster Recovery Plan include data restoration and offsite backup of program and playback software (restoration of data includes servers, remote control systems, telephones, and routers)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the Disaster Recovery Plan periodically reviewed and updated?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the Disaster Recovery Plan periodically tested and rehearsed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Local News Origination			
Backup Origination Facilities	Are there alternative sites from which to originate local live programming?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Backup Power	Is there backup power at the studio/news facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Can the backup power system operate long enough to implement the recovery plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Is the backup power automatically activated?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Are the backup power capabilities routinely tested under load?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	At least once a year is the backup power tested while the facility is disconnected from the power grid?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Security	Are security protocols sufficient to prevent unauthorized access to the facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Emergency News & Information	If national network news agreements do not exist, is there an agreement to carry emergency news from other services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Are there backup signal feeds from the primary satellite downlink or uplink?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Can Emergency Alert System (“EAS”) alerts be received and rebroadcast from backup facilities, if such facilities exist?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Does the plan include backing up the newsroom computer system?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Do you have a plan to stream audio/video to the internet in an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Terrestrial Transmission			
Backup Transmission Facilities	Is there a backup transmitter and antenna available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If there is a backup transmitter and antenna site, is it geographically diverse from the primary location?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Does the geographically diverse backup or backup transmitter and antenna service the city grade contour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Backup Power	Does the primary transmission facility have backup power?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Does the backup transmission facility have backup power?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Can backup power operate long enough to implement the recovery plan?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Where backup power is available is it automatically activated?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Are the backup power systems routinely tested under load?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	At least once a year is the backup power tested while the facility is disconnected from the power grid?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Security	Are the security protocols sufficient to prevent unauthorized access to the transmission facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Redundant Signal Routes	Is there a backup path to the primary transmitter facility?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Do these redundant paths include diverse technologies, i.e., wired and wireless?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Is there a backup signal path to the backup transmitter facility?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Do these redundant paths include diverse technologies, i.e., wired and wireless?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Are there auxiliary TV or radio tuners at the transmitter site that can be used as an alternate source of news and information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Can the ENG/SNG received signal be directly connected remotely to the transmitter?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Is there a primary and a backup path to directly feed local cable systems?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Is there a primary and a backup path to feed local-into-local DBS systems?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Is the station on air with DTV, which could be used as an alternate path to cable headends and DBS?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Digital Television			
Backup Transmission Facilities	Is the DTV transmitter site geographically diverse from the analog site?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Could the DTV transmitter site serve as a backup for the analog transmitter?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Does the DTV encoding system allow for multi channel operation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Is there capability to receive and route the signals from the other local stations into the DTV multi channel encoder?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No