

Ukraine, conflict

Global ETC Teleconference #20

Date: 18/05/2023 Time: 14:00 UTC

Further information related to the ETC Ukraine operation can be found on the website:

www.etcluster.org/emergency/ukraine-conflict

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact:

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Attendance

Chair (ETC)	Komi AMEDJONEKOU
Cisco	Eric Knudson
OCHA	Predrag Milicevic
	Mimi Huang
UNHCR	Andrew Sentamu
WFP	Mohamedou N'Diath
	Omar Namaoui
	Komi Amedjonekou
	Aramais Alojants
	Lionel Marre
	Adi Dzanovic
	Leopold Happy
	Ruslan Mingoraiev
	Viktoriiia Kosytska

Agenda

1. ETC Ukraine update
2. Partner updates
3. AOB

Minutes

1. ETC Ukraine update

Security updates

- Increased nightly aerial attacks have been observed in Kyiv. Several delays of train movements have been reported. The frontline remains active in the east and south of Ukraine. WFP continues to reach people in need of humanitarian assistance.

Operational update

Security communications

- The ETC received verbal acknowledgement from the Ukrainian State Centre of Radio Frequencies (UCRF) that they finished the technical part of the frequency license approval and sent the license for approval by the General Staff of the Army.
- The ETC continues the expansion of the VHF radio network including locations closer to frontlines where the convoys aim to reach the affected population, such as Sumy and Luch (Kherson will be covered by the repeater in Luch) and locations where there is a UN presence not covered by the initial license. Following the quotations received from the Broadcasting, Radiocommunications & Television (BRT) Concern, the ETC plans to sign a contract with BRT and proceed with the procurement requests to install repeaters on BRT towers to improve the VHF radio coverage in the operational areas, as well as expand the VHF network.
- The ETC started working on the Remote Site on Vehicle (RSoV) project - a pilot mobile VHF radio solution for UN armored vehicles on mission in high-risk areas. This solution is planned to be used in convoys going to high-risk areas and to adapt to an evolving frontline. This mobile solution will reduce dependancy on the stationary repeaters. The RSoV solution has the same equipment setup as other fixed remote security communications systems (SCS) sites in Kyiv, Dnipro, or Odesa. The tests conducted in Kyiv city showed a good connection with the Security Information and Operations Centre (SIOC). The Principal Security Advisor (PSA), Head of UNDSS, and Security Management Team (SMT) agreed that this solution is good and might be used in the front-line areas. The cluster plans to send a vehicle to Dnipro to be a part of a convoy and test the equipment during the mission.
- Further, the ETC will support UNDSS with relocation of the main SIOC from Mukachevo to Kyiv. The plan, agreed with the PSA, is to use one of the offices in the current UNDSS building and to set up a temporary SIOC with the capacity of three operators to monitor the VHF radio network and satellite phone communications until the complete and effective relocation of the SIOC to Kyiv is carried out by the end of June. This temporary SIOC will operate in parallel with the current SIOC in Mukachevo, while UNDSS looks for a new office in Kyiv dedicated for the SIOC and staff from Mukachevo. The ETC has already installed all the required radio equipment and is currently working on installation of Starlink devices and cabling. The ETC coordinator agreed with the PSA to set up a back-up SIOC in Lviv in case of UN staff relocation or evacuation or Kyiv SIOC unavailability. The back-up SIOC in Lviv is planned to be mantled by the end of June.

- Jamming of the Starlink solution was discussed during the meeting and the impact this has on the reliability of Starlink in Ukraine. The ETC coordinator shared information that any technology is not reliable in the areas close to the line of contact. It is reported that the GSM network, satellite phones, and VHF network sometimes do not work in those areas. UN vehicles are equipped with satellite phones and VHF mobile radios for simplex channels. Further, the ETC added Starlink solution to support internet connectivity and the Remote Site SCS equipment. It was agreed to continue to monitor the stability and reliability of Starlink technology in Ukraine.

Data connectivity

- The ETC continues communication with its partner, Cisco, to explore options for them to support the humanitarian response with a firewall and cyber security solution.

Services for Communities

- The ETC is planning the implementation of the Common Feedback Mechanism (CFM) call centre project in six Western oblasts of Ukraine to support local authorities and provide social services to the affected population. The cluster is working closely with the WFP Cooperating Partner Committee (CPC) on this project.

The next teleconference will be held on 13 July 2023 at 13:00 UTC

13:00 UTC
15:00 Rome/Cairo
16:00 Kyiv
17:00 Dubai

Acronyms

ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
WFP	World Food Programme
UCRF	Ukrainian State Centre of Radio Frequencies
VHF	Very High Frequency
UN	United Nations
SIOC	Security Information and Operations Centre
PSA	Princial Security Advisor
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety and Security
SMT	Security Management Team
CFM	Common Feedback Mechanism
CPC	Cooperating Partner Committee
GSM	Global System for Mobile Communications

Minutes: Maryna Andrusikova, ETC Information Management Officer.