



TECHNICAL REPORT

Emergency Communications (EMTEL); Main terms and definitions for Emergency Communications

Reference

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Foreword

This Technical Report (TR) has been produced by ETSI Special Committee Emergency Communications (EMTEL).

Modal verbs terminology

In the present document "**should**", "**should not**", "**may**", "**need not**", "**will**", "**will not**", "**can**" and "**cannot**" are to be interpreted as described in clause 3.2 of the [ETSI Drafting Rules](#) (Verbal forms for the expression of provisions).

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Introduction

The present document, developed by the ETSI Technical Committee on Emergency Communications (EMTEL), aims to align definitions used across the European Union's legislative framework and ETSI's technical deliverables concerning emergency communications and emergency services. Prompted by the entry into force of legislation, including Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6], Directive (EU) 2019/882 [i.8] and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/444 [i.4], the present document addresses the critical need for alignment of certain terminology as highlighted in the European Commission's ICT Rolling Plan for Standardisation 2024 [i.9], specifically under Action 1 related to emergency communications and public warning systems.

The scope of the present document is focused on listing and defining terms that are within the domain of emergency communications and emergency services. While some terms are widely recognized across various technical fields, they assume specific significances or require clear definitions within an emergency communications/emergency services context to prevent any potential misunderstanding, misinterpretation or misrepresentation. To facilitate easy reference, the terms are arranged alphabetically and supplemented with a list of relevant abbreviations and acronyms that are used in both the legislative and technical narratives.

The primary purpose of the present document is not to exhaustively redefine all applicable ETSI terms but to align those where differences between legal and technical definitions could lead to misunderstanding, misinterpretation or misrepresentation. It is anticipated that as technological advancements and legislative changes continue to evolve, the present document will be periodically updated to include new or revised definitions, ensuring ongoing relevance and usefulness in aligning technical standards with EU law where necessary.

The present document serves as a reference for policymakers, standardization bodies, and stakeholders involved in the development, implementation, and management of emergency communications and the provision of emergency services.

1 Scope

The present document lists the terms used across ETSI Standards and Technical Reports that pertain to emergency communications and emergency services. It includes terms that, although defined in other technical domains, carry distinct meanings or require unequivocal definitions specific to the context of emergency communications and emergency services. For ease of reference, terms are organized in alphabetical order without adherence to any other sorting criteria. Additionally, the present document encompasses a list of abbreviations and acronyms, some of which are borrowed from other fields but are relevant and used within the scope of emergency communications and emergency services.

In cases of ambiguity between definitions in EU legislation and existing ETSI technical deliverables within the scope of emergency communications and emergency services, the present document should be referenced for clarification; for new ETSI deliverables within the scope of emergency communications and emergency services, the definitions provided herein should be used.

2 References

2.1 Normative references

Normative references are not applicable in the present document.

2.2 Informative references

References are either specific (identified by date of publication and/or edition number or version number) or non-specific. For specific references, only the cited version applies. For non-specific references, the latest version of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

NOTE: While any hyperlinks included in this clause were valid at the time of publication ETSI cannot guarantee their long term validity.

The following referenced documents are not necessary for the application of the present document but they assist the user with regard to a particular subject area.

- [i.1] Recommendation ITU-T F.703: "Multimedia conversational services".
- [i.2] [EN 15722](#): "Intelligent transport systems - ESafety - ECall minimum set of data", (produced by CEN).
- [i.3] ETSI TS 102 181: "Emergency Communications (EMTEL); Requirements for communication between authorities/organizations during emergencies".
- [i.4] [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2023/444](#) of 16 December 2022 supplementing Directive (EU) 2018/1972 of the European Parliament and of the Council with measures to ensure effective access to emergency services through emergency communications to the single European emergency number '112'.
- [i.5] [Regulation \(EU\) 2015/758](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 concerning type-approval requirements for the deployment of the eCall in-vehicle system based on the 112 service and amending Directive 2007/46/EC.
- [i.6] [Directive \(EU\) 2018/1972](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 establishing the European Electronic Communications Code.
- [i.7] [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2024/1084](#) of 6 February 2024 amending Delegated Regulation (EU) No 305/2013 supplementing Directive 2010/40/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council with regard to the harmonised provision for an interoperable EU-wide eCall.
- [i.8] [Directive \(EU\) 2019/882](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services.

- [i.9] European Commission: "[Rolling Plan for ICT Standardisation 2024](#)".
- [i.10] [Regulation \(EU\) 2022/2065](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act).
- [i.11] ETSI TR 102 445 V1.2.1 (2023-04): "Emergency Communications (EMTEL); Overview of Emergency Communications Network Resilience and Preparedness".
- [i.12] ETSI TS 103 479 V1.2.1 (2023-03): "Emergency Communications (EMTEL); Core elements for network independent access to emergency services".
- [i.13] Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1 (2008-09): "Guidelines to select Emergency Number for public telecommunications networks".
- [i.14] BEREC BoR (19) 255: "BEREC guidelines on how to assess the effectiveness of public warning systems transmitted by different means".

3 Definition of terms, symbols and abbreviations

3.1 Terms

For the purposes of the present document, the following terms apply:

app: online interface in the form of software designed to operate on mobile devices, including smartphones and tablets

NOTE: Apps (or mobile applications) encompass both standalone and web browser-based applications that enable users to perform a variety of functions, ranging from general activities to specific tasks such as initiating emergency communications to request help or to receive public warning alerts. This definition aligns with the broader scope of applications outlined in Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 [i.10] while emphasizing the utility in emergency contexts as defined by ETSI TR 102 445 [i.11].

contextual information: information conveyed through an emergency communication by the end-user or derived and transmitted automatically from the device of the end-user or the relevant network in order to enable the timely identification of the intervention resources of the emergency services and the fast arrival of the emergency services at the intervention scene

NOTE: As defined in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/444 [i.4].

eCall: in-vehicle emergency call to 112, made either automatically by means of the activation of in-vehicle sensors or manually, which carries a minimum set of data and establishes an audio channel between the vehicle and the eCall PSAP via public mobile wireless communications networks

NOTE: As defined in Regulation (EU) 2015/758 [i.5].

effective emergency communication: emergency communication as defined in Article 2, point (38) of Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6] that ensures:

- a) timely communication between the end-user and the most appropriate PSAP; and
- b) the making available in a timely manner of contextual information including caller location information

NOTE: As defined in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/444 [i.4].

emergency call: any type of emergency communications and associated media initiated by an individual and received by a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP)

NOTE: As defined in ETSI TS 103 479 [i.12].

emergency communication: communication by means of interpersonal communications services between an end-user and the PSAP with the goal to request and receive emergency relief from emergency services

NOTE: As defined in Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6]. 'emergency communication' encompasses what is termed 'emergency call' as defined in ETSI TS 103 479 [i.12].

emergency control centre: facility used by one or more emergency services to handle rescue actions in answer to an emergency communication and associated contextual information derived from emergency communications or MSD

NOTE: As defined in ETSI TS 102 181 [i.3] and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1084 [i.7], the functions set out are combined in this more general definition. For the avoidance of any confusion, it is important to recognize that, depending on the organization of emergency services and emergency communications handling within a given jurisdiction, the functions of PSAPs and Emergency Control Centres may overlap. In some cases, a single facility may perform the roles of both a PSAP and an Emergency Control Centre, handling both the immediate response to emergency communications and the broader coordination and management of emergency services.

emergency number: non-E.164 number allocated in the national numbering plan to enable emergency calls

NOTE: As defined in Recommendation ITU-T E.161.1 [i.13]. The term "emergency number" in the present document is an inclusive term that encompasses both pan-European '112' and any emergency numbers designated at a regional or country level.

Emergency Response Organization (ERO): organization (e.g. the police, fire, ambulance and coastguard), that provides an emergency service

emergency service: service, recognized as such by the Member State, that provides immediate and rapid assistance in situations where there is, in particular, a direct risk to life or limb, to individual or public health or safety, to private or public property, or to the environment, in accordance with national law

NOTE: As defined in Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6].

location information: in a public mobile network, data derived and processed from network infrastructure or handsets, indicating the geographic position of an end-user's mobile terminal equipment or of an IoT device, and, in a public fixed network, the data about the physical address of the network termination point

NOTE: This definition is derived from the definition for the term 'location information' in ETSI TS 102 181 [i.3] and aligns with the definition for the term 'caller location information' in Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6] while retaining a reference to IoT devices alongside mobile terminal equipment as it reflects the broader range of connected devices that can initiate emergency communications. The definition in Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6] is as follows: "'caller location information' means, in a public mobile network, the data processed, derived from network infrastructure or handsets, indicating the geographic position of an end-user's mobile terminal equipment, and, in a public fixed network, the data about the physical address of the network termination point".

Minimum Set of Data (MSD): contextual information defined by EN 15722 [i.2] which is sent to the eCall PSAP

NOTE: As defined in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1084 [i.7].

most appropriate PSAP: PSAP established by responsible authorities to cover emergency communications from a certain area or for emergency communications of a certain type

NOTE: As defined in Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6].

persons with disabilities: persons who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others

NOTE: As defined in Directive (EU) 2019/882 [i.8].

public authority: entity within the public services that is fully or partly responsible for the preparedness and management of emergency situations, including the handling of incidents and coordination of response efforts specifically in the context of emergency communications and emergency services

NOTE: This encompasses overseeing Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), managing communication systems, and ensuring the integration of these services to facilitate effective emergency interventions. This definition is derived from the definition for the term 'authority' in ETSI TS 102 181 [i.3] and is adapted to the specific context of emergency communications and emergency services. Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6] does not define the term 'authority' but the term 'public authority' is referred to in the definition of the term 'PSAP' so it is appropriate to define it in the present document as such.

Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP): physical location where an emergency communication is first received under the responsibility of a public authority or a private organization recognized by the Member State

NOTE: As defined in Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6]. A PSAP may be an independent organization or an integrated part of the emergency services as noted in ETSI TS 103 479 [i.12].

public warning system: communication system employed by governmental authorities to alert the public about various emergencies, including natural disasters, severe weather, terrorist activities, and other imminent threats

NOTE: These systems may use digital platforms and services such as SMS, cell broadcasts, mobile apps, and internet services, alongside traditional channels like sirens, television, and radio broadcasts, to ensure comprehensive and rapid dissemination to the affected population. The definition is defined in BEREC BoR (19) 255 [i.14].

real time text: form of text conversation in point to point situations or in multipoint conferencing where the text being entered is sent in such a way that the communication is perceived by the user as being continuous on a character-by-character basis

NOTE: As defined in Directive (EU) 2019/882 [i.8].

total conversation: bidirectional symmetric real-time transfer of motion video, Real-Time Text and voice between users in two or more locations

total conversation service: multimedia real time conversation service that provides bidirectional symmetric real time transfer of motion video, real time text and voice between users in two or more locations

NOTE: As defined in Directive (EU) 2018/1972 [i.6] and ITU-T Recommendation F.703 [i.1].

3.2 Symbols

Void.

3.3 Abbreviations

For the purposes of the present document, the following abbreviations apply:

ERO	Emergency Response Organization
EU	European Union
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IoT	Internet of Things
MSD	Minimum Set of Data
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point
SMS	Short Message Service

History

Document history		
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