

3.0 BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

It has long been recognized that an efficient and reliable communications system is vital for any disaster response operation. Therefore, installing and maintaining a proper telecommunications system is an essential part of a disaster preparedness program.

In recent years there has been rapid progress in the telecommunications field, with several technologies being introduced while the accessibility and capability of existing ones have been significantly improved. Some of the most notable developments are the increased use of wireless communications equipment such as cellular phones and mobile satellite communications terminals, and the widespread use of computer-based communications. There have also been improvements in broadcasting technology.

Given the importance of telecommunications to development in general and to disaster management in particular, it is desirable that efforts be made to increase the use of modern technology for this purpose in the Caribbean. While progress is being made in this area, the region would benefit significantly from this study to document the current situation and project future developments.