



FEMA

US&R GENERAL MEMORANDUM – 2017-008

January 17, 2017

FOR: National Urban Search & Rescue Response System
Task Force Representatives

FROM: Dean Scott, Chief
Operations Section
Urban Search and Rescue Branch

SUBJECT: US&R General Memorandum 2017-008 – BGAN 710 Potential Issue

The National Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Response System's (the System) FEMA US&R Branch has been notified by Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) that there is a potential issue with the Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN) 710 phone system. During recent testing by MERS, it was identified that there is an issue with the 710 when dialing out using the 3.1 kHz line. The units would repeatedly connect to the modem nest and then drop due to signal quality. In contrast, a BGAN 700 was tested and showed no signal quality issues.

MERS advises that System task forces should be cognizant of potential reliability issues when using a BGAN 710 to dial into the National Response Network (NRN), and to consider the system to be unreliable until further notice. This does not mean that the connection is completely useless, but rather to expect latency, lost audio packets, and Over the Air Radio (OTAR) problems while using it.

MERS is currently in contact with the manufacture and is arranging for additional testing and troubleshooting in hopes that a software patch can be developed to fix this issue. The US&R Branch will provide further updates as additional information becomes available.

cc:

US&R Strategic Group
US&R Advisory Group
US&R Branch Staff
FEMA Regional/Federal/International ESF #9 Representatives