

BellSouth, Qwest, SBC, and Verizon recently formed the Telecommunications Carrier Group (TCG) to publish their NEBS requirements. Their efforts have resulted in a jointly released checklist which details each of their requirements for NEBS, which, unfortunately, differ, and in some aspects differ substantially.

NEBS is the acronym for "Network Equipment - Building Systems," a group of standards originally developed privately within the AT&T/Bell System. Since the breakup of AT&T into multiple operating companies, the ownership of the NEBS standards has changed. For a number of years, Bellcore was operated as a common research arm of the RBOCs and maintained the NEBS standards. More recently, Bellcore was privatized and sold to SAIC (Science Applications International Corporation), where it operates under the name Telcordia. Telcordia maintains the GR-CORE standards. Some of the better known standards in the NEBS group are GR-1089, which concerns electromagnetic compatibility, GR-63, covering environmental issues such as earthquake, fire spread, and corrosion resistance, and GR-78, which addresses manufacturing practices, and a number of ANSI standards.

The NEBS standards are used by the telecommunications carriers as part of their equipment purchasing specification. Because these companies are separate, their requirements can and have diverged somewhat over the years. This makes it quite a task for manufacturers and test laboratories to keep track of exactly what tests and variations in requirements are required in order to satisfy multiple potential customers. The creation of the TCG eases that problem by creating a common location where BellSouth, Qwest, SBC, and Verizon will publish their NEBS requirements, a common checklist, and a common report template. The report template is required by Verizon, and accepted by SBC and Qwest.

The NEBS report templates and Checklists are available on the web. Two sources are the Verizon and SBC NEBS websites:

Verizon: <http://www.verizonnebs.com>

SBC: <https://ebiznet.sbc.com/sbcnebs>

In addition to the templates and checklists, there are company specific "clarification" documents which provide additional information and interpretation on each company's requirements. Verizon's and SBC's clarification documents can be found at the above URLs. You can find additional information from Qwest <http://www.qwest.com/techpub/>