5 Glossary

5.2 Definitions common to burglar and fire alarm systems

5.2.46A REGIONAL/NATIONAL BUSINESS DISRUPTION -- A national, state, or regional declaration, which creates a business disruption event that inhibits the operation of a Central Station.

51. Operation During a Regional/National Disruption

51.1 When the following conditions are met, a distributed, off-site central-station monitoring operation shall be permitted during a regional/national disruption event:

a. The declaration of situation that creates a regional/national disruption event must be issued publicly by a national, state or regional official in which the central station operates.
b. The declaration precludes the operation of a Redundant Site as described in Section 17.6.4 or Temporary Operating Center as defined by Section 49.
c. The Central Station must document its intent to enact this provision in writing stating the facts as to why the operation cannot be maintained at the existing site(s).
d. The Central Station shall resume normal operations within 14 days after any such declaration and/or any associated health and/or safety guidelines expires.

51.2 Operation within the central-station

51.2.1 Efforts shall be made and documented to maintain an operationally minimum/safe number of employees within the Central Station.

51.2.2 Unless otherwise prohibited by governmental health or safety directives, the Central Station shall not be unstaffed at any time.

51.2.2.1 Staffing shall be by Central Station employees trained to perform on-premises tasks in the manner and timeframes required by this Standard.

51.3 Operators Working Remotely (From Home)

51.3.1 Bandwidth and Connectivity

51.3.1.1 The data and voice communication technology connections required for remote operators to perform their job functions shall be made to the central station network through a secure, remote access technology (such as virtual private network (VPN) and the like) that uses a minimum of 256 bit AES encryption to connect directly from the remote workstation to the network at the monitoring station or automation system host.
51.3.1.2 The remote access technology (VPN) shall be deployed in a manner such that the remote employee is required to use some form of multi-factor authentication (MFA) in order to gain access to the Central Station’s network and or automation systems.

51.3.1.3 Communication between a remote operator workstation and the central-station shall comply with 50.3.1.3.1 or 50.3.1.3.2.

51.3.1.3.1 There shall be primary and backup communication connections between the remote operator workstation and the central-station.

51.3.1.3.2 A central-station shall employ an automation system, and have sufficient operators on-duty and logged into the automation system, so that loss of communication between a remote operator workstation and the central station will not result in the loss of any signals or failure to process signals in the manner and timeframes required by this Standard.

51.3.2 Remote Operator Workstation

51.3.2.1 Remote operator workstation equipment shall be owned, configured, and controlled by the Central Station and shall comply with the requirements of the Standard applicable to the type of equipment.

51.3.2.2 Remote operator workstations shall not be utilized for personal use.

51.3.2.2.1 Remote operators shall not use privately owned equipment (bring your own device - BYOD) to connect to or operate within the Central Station’s Automation Software.

51.3.2.3 If the automation system operation stores data on the remote operator workstation, then the workstation shall be protected with whole disk encryption, with provision for a system administrator level master password to minimize risk of complete lockout.

51.3.3 Workplace Environment

51.3.3.1 Remote operators shall maintain a work area that:

a. Prevents unauthorized viewing of monitoring screen;

b. Prevents unauthorized eavesdropping of voice communications; and,

c. Provides a distraction-free environment.

51.3.3.2 Remote operators shall perform job duties from a location approved and documented by central-station management.
51.3.3.3 The Central Station shall employ a means by which the Central Station managers have continuous communication with and supervision (audio, visual or otherwise) of the remote employee.

51.3.3.4 The Central Station shall document the security architecture of the implemented remote operator solution.

51.3.3.4.1 The security architecture documentation shall be made part of the central-station’s business continuity plans described in Table 17.6 item v, Sections 19.2, 28.2 and/or 43.2.