



# STATE OF NEVADA EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM PLAN



## ANNEX B EAS FOR PARTICIPANTS FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Emergency Alert System (EAS), is a public warning system regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) which requires broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, satellite digital audio radio service (SDARS) providers, and direct broadcast satellite (DBS) providers to provide a communications capability at the national, state and local level. This capability will allow public safety, law enforcement and emergency management officials to provide information to the public during a disaster or emergency on actions they can take to protect themselves and their property. EAS also provides a nationwide platform for the President to address the county during a national emergency. The system is also used to deliver important emergency information, such as AMBER Alerts and weather information at the state and local level. EAS is available 24/7/365 at no cost to authorized federal, state, and local public safety, law enforcement and emergency management agencies.

The FCC requires all radio and television broadcasters, cable television operators and Internet Protocol television (IPTV) providers in the Nevada Operational Area to participate in EAS at the national level. Participation at the state and local level is voluntary. These entities are referred to in this Plan as “Participants”. This Annex describes how Participants can provide local and state government officials with access to their audiences to provide information, instructions, assistance, and reassurance to the public in a time of crisis. It also describes the procedures Participants must follow when issuing EAS activations and provides information about EAS equipment requirements, proper programming, monitoring assignments, testing and activation requirements. The Nevada EAS Plan also includes the Nevada State AMBER Alert.

This Annex provides information for issuing EAS tests and activations through the Legacy platform as well as through the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) platform. Guidelines are presented for Participants to comply with FCC requirements for mandatory National EAS tests and activations, as well as state and local tests and activations.

The Nevada EAS Plan is an FCC-mandated document written by the Nevada State Emergency Communications Committee (SECC). Copies of this Plan are available through the Nevada Broadcasters Association (NVBA) at [www.nevadabroadcasters.org](http://www.nevadabroadcasters.org)

While referencing the FCC rules on EAS, this Plan is an adjunct to the Part 11 rules and is not meant to be a summary or a substitute for those rules. Please consult the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 47, Chapter 1, Part 11 for specific information on complying with the rules.



## 2 EAS PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

### 2.1 National Level EAS

All radio and television stations, cable television operators and IPTV providers are required to install and maintain CAP-compliant EAS equipment which meets the FCC requirements in FCC Title 47 Part 11, 11.31 to 11.35. Participants are required to take part in EAS at the national level, according to FCC Title 47 Part 11, 11.54. This means that:

- During a national-level Alert (EAN), and National Periodic Tests (NPT), Participants (all radio and television stations and all cable operators, satellite providers and IPTV providers) will cease regular programming and carry the national or presidential messages and tests. Specific instructions for national-level activations are presented in the FCC EAS Handbook. All EAS participants are required to have a copy of the FCC EAS Handbook. The FCC EAS Handbook is available on the FCC's website at <https://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/emergency-alert-system-eas>.
- Participants must transmit a Required Weekly Test (RWT) once a week, according to their own random schedule.
- Participants must transmit a Required Monthly Test (RMT) once a month, within 60 minutes of receiving the RMT test from either the CAP aggregator or the Local Primary station or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio.
- Participants are responsible for keeping proper documentation (logs) of these tests and activations. The records must be reviewed weekly, retained for a two-year period and available for review by an FCC inspector.
- It is the responsibility of each participant to familiarize and train their personnel to follow the proper procedures in the event of a National EAS test or activation, as well as procedures for state and local tests and activations.

### 2.2 State/Local Level EAS

While EAS participation is mandatory at the national level, participation is voluntary at the state and local levels. Participants must follow the procedures in this plan for state and local EAS activations.

### 2.3 Program Control

- Participation in this Plan does not mean a participant has totally relinquished their program control and participants still have the ability and responsibility to exercise independent discretion and responsibility in any given situation.
- EAS participants may exercise discretion regarding the broadcast of emergency information and instructions to the general public as provided by FCC Rules and Regulations. EAS Participants and their staff should be aware of the means available to discontinue EAS broadcasts which appear to be false, counterfeit, or hacked, or those with audio messages which are of such poor quality as to be incomprehensible and confusing to the public.



## 2.4 Rebroadcast Authority

- Broadcast stations, cable systems and IPTV providers transmitting EAS emergency messages shall be deemed to have conferred rebroadcast authority on receiving stations.
- EAS messages may be rebroadcast without the EAS tones as part of news and information programming.

## 2.5 Visual Transmission

The FCC requires Participants to present the specifics of any EAS message, national, state or local, in both aural and visual form.

- The CAP EAS equipment will produce a written display of the audio message, or “crawl” for visual display during and after the EAS activation.
- “Legacy” EAS equipment will not produce a verbatim display of the audio message. This can lead to confusion for viewers. Stations receiving Legacy EAS activations are encouraged to seek additional information from the activating agency to supplement the instructions presented in the original activation.
- Television stations may rerun the text of the message as a "crawl" without the EAS tones during the duration (time) period of the activation. The text message may be run over current programming or with a graphic display of the EAS logo.

## 2.6 Participation Guidelines

EAS Participants must comply with the following guidelines:

- All EAS Participants in the Nevada Operational Area must keep a copy of this plan at their Master Control Point, main studio or EAS control point.
- Each broadcaster is responsible for training their personnel in the use of EAS, and the Nevada EAS Operational Area Plan. Assistance is available from the Nevada Broadcasters Association, [www.nevadabroadcasters.org](http://www.nevadabroadcasters.org)
- It is a violation of FCC rules to use the EAS tones for anything other than an EAS Activation. Participants are also advised against using any messages which appear to duplicate EAS tests or activations, with or without the EAS tones.
- Each EAS participant is responsible for maintaining additional EAS material mandated by the FCC.
- Each EAS participant is responsible for documenting EAS tests and activations according to 47 CFR 11 rules. Such records must be kept for a period of two years and available for review by an FCC Inspector.
- Monitoring Assignments for EAS Participants are listed in the Nevada Operational Area Mapbook. If an EAS participant cannot reliably receive an EAS Monitoring Assignment they should contact the EAS SECC Chair for more information.
- An EAS activation takes priority over any other Participant activity in progress.



- All EAS activations must be retransmitted within fifteen (15) minutes of receiving the activation.
- Participants must consult their EAS equipment manual for specific programming and activation instructions. Participants are responsible for maintaining their EAS equipment at current software and hardware configurations.
- On-Air personnel shall NOT ad-lib, interpret, abbreviate or alter any EAS message or test. ***DO NOT EDITORIALIZE OR COMMENT ON THE TEST OR ACTIVATION OR THE INFORMATION IN THE AUDIO MESSAGE. THESE COMMENTS COULD BE CONSTRUED AS AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.***
- EAS tests shall NOT be sung, set to music, include music, echo and/or any electronic alteration or production enhancement.
- EAS alert dual tones, digital tones and data bursts shall not be used except for EAS tests and activations.
- Only FCC-approved EAS equipment shall be used for EAS tests and activations. A recording of the tones or data bursts not acceptable.
- Foreign language stations should carry the EAS message in their broadcast language.
- The FCC Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau has responsibility for enforcing EAS rules and regulations per Title 47, CFR Chapter I, Subchapter A, Part 11.3 EAS EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each EAS participant is required to install, operate, and maintain their own CAP-compliant, FCC type-approved EAS equipment. That equipment must be programmed to monitor designated broadcast stations and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) aggregator at all times.

The specific EAS equipment requirements for EAS Participants are covered in 47 CFR 11.11. Class "D" non-commercial, educational FM stations as defined in FCC 73.506, and Low Power FM stations, as defined in FCC 73.811, and low-power television (LPTV) stations as defined in FCC 74.701(f) are not required to have a full EAS Encoder/Decoder.

- These stations may install and maintain an EAS Decoder-only unit.
- These stations are exempt from running the digital RWT.
- However, these stations must retransmit the RMT, without the EAS Header Codes and Attention Signal that would be generated by an Encoder and read the test script within 60 minutes of receiving the RMT. This requirement demands that these stations be staffed during all broadcast hours so station operators may choose instead to install and maintain the full EAS Encoder/Decoder unit. In addition, low-power TV stations must present all EAS information visually.

Requirements for small cable system operators are listed in FCC 11.51(g). FM Translator and TV Translator stations are not required to have EAS equipment. Translator operators may choose to add EAS equipment to enhance their service to communities outside their license





areas. In that case, the translator operators must follow the EAS test requirements for the Operational Area where the translator is located.

All operations of EAS in the Nevada Operational Area will be conducted in accordance with this plan and:

- Title 47 U.S.C. 151, 154 (l) and (o), 303 (r), 524 (g) & 606
- Title 47 CFR, Part 11, FCC Rules and Regulations, Emergency Alert System
- Presidential Executive Order 13407, National Strategy for Integrated Public Warning Policy and Capability

The FCC EAS Handbook and the Nevada EAS Plan require Participants to monitor multiple sources of EAS activations, more than the minimum required by the FCC Part 11 rules, to receive emergency messages. The extra back-up is necessary in Nevada where widespread power outages, phone outages, and weather problems can affect broadcast providers for several hours or longer. Even back-up power sources, such as generators, have been known to fail from weather-related or maintenance problems. The redundancy of monitoring sources maintains broadcasters' pledge to "serve in the public interest". EAS Monitoring Assignments are listed in the Nevada Operational Area Mapbook. EAS participants are required to have copies of the appropriate FCC EAS Handbook at EAS Control points, Master Control or the Main Studio. The Handbook describes procedures for national tests and activations. The Handbook is available on the FCC website at <https://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/emergency-alert-system-eas>. These handbooks describe the procedures that EAS participants should follow during a national or Presidential-level activation or EAN, or a national test, NPT.



## 4 EAS OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

### 4.1 EAS Message Priorities

FCC rules in 47 CFR 11 set the following priorities for EAS messages:

1. Presidential warning messages (EAN Event Code)
2. National Weather Service severe weather warnings (as determined by the station operator)
3. Nevada Operational Area statewide or regional EAS messages
4. Local Operational Area EAS messages
5. California/Arizona state/local EAS messages
6. Other national emergency alert messages

### 4.2 EAS Equipment Programming

Management of each broadcast station and cable system may exercise discretion regarding the broadcast of emergency information and instructions to the general public. This authority is provided by 47 CFR 11 §11.55(a) and FCC Report and Order 02-64.

#### 4.2.1 Monitoring Assignments

Participants must program their equipment to monitor the Local Primary stations in their Operational Area, the National Weather Service NOAA Weather Radio in their area, if available, and the FEMA Aggregator and CAP Aggregator for AlertSense, the most-used CAP program in Nevada. These assignments will provide redundancy for Participants. Specific Monitoring Assignments for EAS Participants are listed in the Nevada Operational Area Mapbook.

If an EAS Participant cannot monitor their assigned stations they should immediately contact the SECC Chair in writing at [nevadaeas@charter.net](mailto:nevadaeas@charter.net).

#### 4.2.2 EAS Codes

Participants should consult the instruction manual for their EAS equipment to program the equipment according to the FCC requirements in Part 11. Properly programmed equipment will appropriately respond to National Activations, National Tests, Required Weekly Tests and Required Monthly Tests, as well as the state and local event codes selected by managers or according to company policy.

EAS Originator Codes, Event Codes and Locator Codes are listed in Attachment 3.

### 4.3 EAS Activation and Relay Procedures

EAS participants have 15 minutes from the time an EAS activation is received to rebroadcast the activation. The activation should be made according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer of the participant's EAS equipment. EAS Participants have 60 minutes to rebroadcast a Required Monthly Test or RMT.



The FCC Part 11 rules require Participants to set their EAS equipment to automatically rebroadcast RMTs and EAS activations within the allotted time during the hours when the Participant's facility is unstaffed. (47 CFR 11.52(e)).

EAS Participants receiving EAS activations from the FEMA IPAWS CAP Aggregator or from an LP station may assume that the messages are authentic and the messages should be rebroadcast as soon as possible, within the 15-minute time requirement.

The information in the EAS audio message and/or the audio message itself may be rebroadcast without the EAS tones as necessary to keep the public informed. EAS participants are encouraged to contact the activating agency for more information, details, and updates.

#### 4.4 EAS Restrictions

- It is a violation of 47 CFR 11.45 and 73.1217 to use the EAS tones for anything other than an EAS activation or authorized test.
- Participants are also advised against using any commercial messages, program “drops” or “bumps” or other programming material which appear to duplicate EAS tests or activations, with or without the EAS tones.
- Do not use EAS tones in news stories or programming. The audio message may be repeated without the tones as many times as needed.
- EAS messages should be rebroadcast as sent. Do not use background music, sound effects, or jingles with EAS messages.
- Broadcast participants are urged to run a station identification immediately after broadcasting the EAS activation.
- Do not comment, speculate or editorialize on EAS activations. The audience could misconstrue these statements as official information.
- Contact the Authorized Originator issuing the EAS activation for further information about the incident.

#### 4.5 Authenticator Codes

There are no authenticator codes or passwords in use at this time for issuing EAS activations in Nevada. Passwords may be instituted in the future if there is a need for increased security. Passwords will be determined by the SECC working with the Nevada Division of Emergency Management and the Nevada Broadcasters Association.

Passwords are required for AMBER Alert activations. See the Nevada AMBER Alert Plan for details.

#### 4.6 Monitoring Assignments

The Nevada Operational Area Mapbook will be reviewed periodically to assure all information is correct and accurate. It is the responsibility of each broadcaster, cable operator and IPTV provider to advise the SECC of any changes in station or company ownership, call letters, studio or transmitter locations, ability to receive monitoring assignments, addresses, email addresses, personnel contact information or telephone numbers.



## 5 VISUAL DISPLAY OF EMERGENCY INFORMATION

This information is presented to assist television and cable operators who need to comply with the FCC's Visual Display Rules. For further clarification, consult a qualified FCC legal counsel or communications attorney.

### §79.2 Accessibility of programming providing emergency information.

(a) *Definitions.* (1) For purposes of this section, the definitions in §§79.1 and 79.3 apply.

(2) *Emergency information.* Information, about a current emergency, that is intended to further the protection of life, health, safety, and property, *i.e.*, critical details regarding the emergency and how to respond to the emergency. Examples of the types of emergencies covered include tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, tidal waves, earthquakes, icing conditions, heavy snows, widespread fires, discharge of toxic gases, widespread power failures, industrial explosions, civil disorders, school closings and changes in school bus schedules resulting from such conditions, and warnings and watches of impending changes in weather.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a)(2): Critical details include, but are not limited to, specific details regarding the areas that will be affected by the emergency, evacuation orders, detailed descriptions of areas to be evacuated, specific evacuation routes, approved shelters or the way to take shelter in one's home, instructions on how to secure personal property, road closures, and how to obtain relief assistance.

(b) Requirements for accessibility of programming providing emergency information.

(1) Video programming distributors must make emergency information, as defined in paragraph (a) of this section, that is provided in the audio portion of the programming accessible to persons with hearing disabilities by using a method of closed captioning or by using a method of visual presentation, as described in §79.1.

(2) Video programming distributors and video programming providers must make emergency information, as defined in paragraph (a) of this section, accessible as follows:

(i) Emergency information that is provided visually during a regularly scheduled newscast, or newscast that interrupts regular programming, must be made accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired; and

(ii) Emergency information that is provided visually during programming that is neither a regularly scheduled newscast, nor a newscast that interrupts regular programming, must be accompanied with an aural tone, and beginning May 26, 2015, must be made accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired through the use of a secondary audio stream to provide the emergency information aurally. Emergency information provided aurally on the secondary audio stream must be preceded by an aural tone and must be conveyed in full at least twice. Emergency information provided through use of text-to-speech ("TTS") technologies must be intelligible and must use the correct pronunciation of relevant information to allow



consumers to learn about and respond to the emergency, including, but not limited to, the names of shelters, school districts, streets, districts, and proper names noted in the visual information. The video programming distributor or video programming provider that creates the visual emergency information content and adds it to the programming stream is responsible for providing an aural representation of the information on a secondary audio stream, accompanied by an aural tone. Video programming distributors are responsible for ensuring that the aural representation of the emergency information (including the accompanying aural tone) gets passed through to consumers.

(3) This rule applies to emergency information primarily intended for distribution to an audience in the geographic area in which the emergency is occurring.

(4) Video programming distributors must ensure that emergency information does not block any closed captioning and any closed captioning does not block any emergency information provided by means other than closed captioning.

(5) Video programming distributors and video programming providers must ensure that aural emergency information provided in accordance with paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section supersedes all other programming on the secondary audio stream, including video description, foreign language translation, or duplication of the main audio stream, with each entity responsible only for its own actions or omissions in this regard.

[65 FR 26762, May 9, 2000, as amended at 65 FR 54811, Sept. 11, 2000; 78 FR 31797, May 24, 2013]



## 6 LOCAL PRIMARY STATION PROCEDURES

Local Primary stations have particular responsibilities in EAS procedures. They are the backbone of the EAS architecture. They demonstrate a high level of dedication to serving their communities through Public warning and emergency messaging by providing dedicated equipment, training and manpower and extra attention to EAS functions.

All other EAS Participants set their equipment to monitor or listen to the Local Primary stations for their Operating Area. The Required Weekly Tests sent by the Local Primary stations must be received and documented by other Participants to demonstrate that they are ready to receive and relay National as well as state and local EAS tests and activations.

Local Primary stations are the backup gateway or entry point to EAS for Authorized Originators who can't access the Internet and their CAP programs and depend on the Local Primary stations for Legacy EAS activations.

Local Primary stations originate Required Monthly Tests or provide backup service for the Authorized Originator responsible for a Required Monthly Test.

### 6.1 Activation Requests

- Local Primary stations should be aware that even with CAP technology, they may receive a request for a Legacy EAS activation at any time. Disasters or emergencies can disrupt normal communications including internet. Authorized Originators may contact the station over the phone if landline service is still available or they may contact the station in person.
- The EAS equipment used by Local Primary stations cannot be used to issue a CAP EAS activation. The Local Primary station operator may inquire if the Authorized Originator can use the preferred CAP program. The Authorized Originator may be referred to the State Division of Public Safety, Nevada Highway Patrol or Department of Emergency Management for assistance with a CAP activation.
- Authorized Originators will request Legacy EAS activations through the dedicated EAS Hotline. Requests on public or published phone lines should be considered as suspect. Requests for EAS activations made on the EAS Hotline may be considered authentic unless there are suspicious indications. In that case, the Local Primary station operator should immediately contact the requesting agency or the SECC Chair.
- Currently, no passwords are required for EAS activations other than AMBER Alerts. AMBER Alert activation procedures are presented in the Nevada AMBER Alert plan.

### 6.2 Activation Process

- When the Local Primary station receives a request for an EAS activation, the operator should prepare to record the audio message from the Authorized Originator, assist the Authorized Originator as needed to record the message and ensure that the message is less than two minutes in length.
- The Local Primary station operator should also obtain information from the Authorized Originator to properly program the EAS equipment to issue the activation. This includes the Event Code, the Locator Code or Codes and the Duration Code. Approved Event Codes



and Locator Codes are listed in Attachment 3, EAS Codes. Locator Codes for the Nevada Operational Areas are shown in Attachment 2, Nevada EAS Operational Areas.

- The Authorized Originator should also provide the Local Primary station operator with a contact phone number for authentication purposes and if any additional information is needed.
- The Local Primary station operator should launch the EAS activation as quickly as possible following the instructions for the EAS Encoder-Decoder. The activation should be noted in the station's EAS documentation as required by the FCC Part 11 rules.
- The Local Primary station operator should notify the SECC Chair immediately after the activation.
- The EAS activation takes priority over any other station activity.
- On-Air personnel shall NOT ad-lib, interpret, abbreviate or alter any EAS message or test.
- EAS activations and tests shall NOT be sung, set to music, include music, echo and/or any electronic alteration or production enhancement.
- EAS alert dual tones, digital tones and data bursts shall not be used except for EAS tests and activations.
- Only FCC approved EAS equipment shall be used, never a recording of the tones or data bursts.

***NOTE: DO NOT EDITORIALIZE OR COMMENT ON THE ACTIVATION OR THE INFORMATION. THESE COMMENTS COULD BE CONSTRUED AS AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.***

### 6.3 Test Procedures

- Local Primary stations may be assigned the responsibility to originate Required Monthly Tests in the annual Operational Area RMT Schedule.
- Local Primary stations may be assigned to backup an Authorized Originator who is responsible for launching a Required Monthly Test.
- The designated Local Primary station should coordinate the RMT procedure with the SECC Chair and the Authorized Originator.
- The SECC will produce the annual Required Monthly Test schedule according to the requirements of the FCC Part 11 rules and accommodating high value broadcast programming as well as the training needs of Authorized Originators and Local Primary station staff.
- The Local Primary station staff should consult with the SECC on the appropriate script for the Required Monthly Test. The script should not exceed 40 seconds and should not identify the Local Primary station in any way.



- Local Primary station staff should consult their EAS equipment instructions for issuing Required Monthly Tests.
  - The Required Monthly Test will use the Event Code RMT
  - The Required Monthly Test will use the Locator Codes for all counties in the Operational Area.
  - The Required Monthly Test will use the Duration Code of 60 minutes.

More information about EAS Tests can be found in Attachment 5. Questions about Local Primary station operations should be referred to the SECC Chair at [nevadaeas@charter.net](mailto:nevadaeas@charter.net)