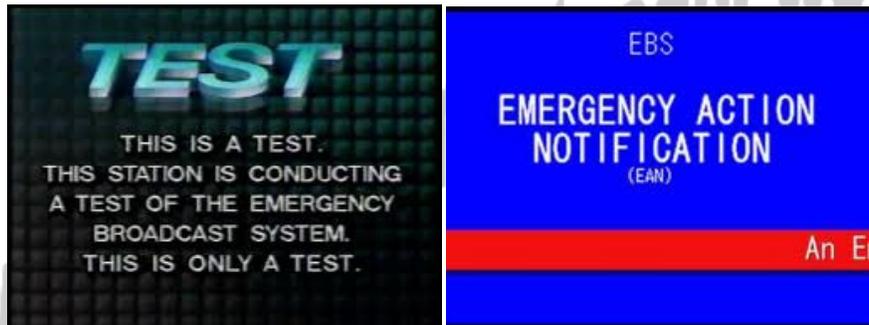


Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) & Emergency Alert System (EAS)

Anyone who knows me accepts that I do not trust ANY government, yet alone my own, any farther than I can spit. Yet these people also know that I despise sensationalism and lying by omission. So even when I don't like someone or something, I want the whole truth and nothing but the truth out there. With that said, please read on and arm yourselves with the power of knowledge.

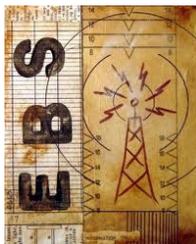


Growing up in the sixties and seventies, I remember radio and TV airplay being interrupted by "tests" run by the Emergency Broadcast System: "This is a test..." After reading the article "**Did You Know Feds Will Temporarily Cut Off All TV and Radio Broadcasts on Nov. 9, 2011?**" (<http://www.theblaze.com/stories/did-you-know-feds-will-temporarily-cut-off-all-tv-and-radio-broadcasts-on-nov-9/>), it made me realize that I haven't heard these tests for quite some time and that there was a lot of information missing in this article which got me thinking and researching what was missing and WHY hadn't I heard these broadcasts in awhile?



The Emergency Broadcast System was initiated in 1963 during the Kennedy Administration, to allow the president to address the entire nation in an emergency. The EBS was later further expanded through an interagency effort with the FCC, FEMA and the National Weather Service (NWS), to permit the system to be used for state and local emergencies.

The tests of the system lasted 35 or 40 seconds, with TV stations usually displaying a test pattern and announcing that was test is under way. A loud high-pitched obnoxious tone followed, followed by the familiar phrase "*This is a test of the Emergency Broadcast System. If this had been an actual emergency... .*" In an actual emergency the public would be given Civil Defense instructions.



Although the EBS system was established for national messages, many broadcasters and local officials recognized that the system could be used to notify listeners about local emergency situations too. Between 1976 and the beginning of 1996 the FCC had received 20,341 reported activations of EBS. Approximately 85% of these activations were for weather related emergencies. The number of activations was most assuredly higher as stations were *not* required to report their usage of the system.

The system was never used for a nuclear emergency, though it was activated more than 20,000 times between 1976 and 1996 to broadcast civil emergency messages and warnings of severe weather hazards.

Under the EBS program, equipment that allowed the President to reach the public through their local broadcasters was required at broadcast stations licensed by the FCC. This equipment produced what was commonly called a two-tone signal (the frequencies 853Hz and 960Hz played simultaneously) that was broadcast by stations on the main audio channel and served the dual purpose of getting the listeners attention and activating other EBS equipment in the listening area. Upon activation of the EBS equipment, a station would listen and record the accompanying audio message and could then retransmit this message for their audience. In general, EBS equipment could do little more than reproduce the dual tone signal and record the messages it receives upon activation. *EBS equipment can only monitor one source for alerts.* Once a station received an EBS message it must broadcast the EBS message and two-tone signal in order for the next station to receive the information. If a station failed to activate their EBS equipment, the chain will be broken and a segment of the population will not receive the emergency information through EBS.

An order to activate the EBS at the national level would have originated with the *President* and been relayed via the *White House Communications Agency* duty officer to one of two origination points: either the **Aerospace Defense Command** or the **Federal Preparedness Agency**—as the system stood in 1978. Participating telecommunications common carriers, radio and television networks, the Associated Press and United Press International would receive and authenticate (by means of code words) an Emergency Action Notification via an EAN teletypewriter network designed specifically for this purpose. These recipients would relay the EAN to their subscribers and affiliates.

The release of the EAN by the ADC or FPA would initiate a process by which the common carriers would link otherwise independent networks such as ABC, CBS and NBC into a single national network that even independent stations could receive programming from. "**Broadcast stations would have used the two-tone Attention Signal on their assigned broadcast frequency to alert other broadcast stations to stand by for a message from the President.**" Note that the transmission of programming on a broadcast station's assigned frequency and the fact that television networks/stations could participate, distinguished EBS from CONELRAD. EBS radio stations would not transmit on 640 or 1240 AM and television stations would carry the same audio program as AM radio stations.



An EBS slide from the late 1980s

In 1996 a law was passed to replace the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) with the new fangled digital Emergency Alert System and EBS was officially retired in January 1998 (isn't there always an upgrade?). This resulted in a temporary suspension of the mandatory tests. This 'temporary suspension ended up lasting much longer, as many stations balked at having to go digital. A compromise was reached in 2008 to allow media stations at a non-national level to remain analog if they choose to do so and took advantage of the

elaborate analog/digital messaging systems operated by the National Weather Service. After many delays the final deadline to convert to digital was 2010 and the first test of the new digital EAS system took place on November 9, 2012 (which failed miserably).



This new system provides access to broadcast stations, cable systems and participating satellite programmers for the transmission of emergency messages (and less obtrusive weekly tests). The EAS uses *digital codes* developed by the National Weather Service (NWS). NWS offices can originate coded messages that are area specific and will only activate EAS decoders and send emergency warnings to people in the affected geographic area.



What is EAS?

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is a national warning system in the United States put into place in 1996-98, superseding the *Emergency Broadcast System (EBS)* and the *CONELRAD System*.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) designed the Emergency Alert System (EAS) so officials can (supposedly) quickly send out important emergency information targeted to a specific area.

The *official* EAS is designed to enable the President of the United States to speak to the United States within 10 minutes (this official federal EAS has *never* been activated). The EAS regulations and standards are governed by the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau of the FCC. Each state and several territories have their own EAS plan.

The EAS covers AM, FM and Land Mobile Radio Service, as well as VHF, UHF and cable television including low-power stations. Digital television and cable providers, along with Sirius XM satellite radio, IBOC, DAB and digital radio broadcasters have been required to participate in the EAS since December 31, 2006. DirecTV, Dish Network and all other DBS providers have been required to participate since May 31, 2007.

After conducting extensive tests of competing technologies, **the FCC ruled that the EAS would be a *digital-based automated system*** and use coding protocols similar to NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME).



EAS sends out alerts not just to broadcast media but also to cable television, satellites, pagers, Direct Broadcast Satellite, High Definition Television and Video Dial Tone. EAS also accounts for the needs of special populations such as the deaf and those with special language requirements.

While NWR SAME is the National Weather Service's (NWS) primary entry into EAS, you can receive EAS messages via radio and TV stations and many other media. **FCC rules also requires broadcasters to monitor at least two independent sources for emergency information**, ensuring that emergency information is received and delivered to viewers and listeners.

Under the EAS guidelines, *each state has formed a State Emergency Communications Committee (SECC)*. The SECC is chaired by a broadcast and cable representative who was nominated by the SECC membership and appointed by the FCC. Duties of the SECC include:

- Presiding over training and workshop sessions
- Acting as liaison with the National Advisory Committee and Local Emergency Communications Committees (LECCs)
- Performing studies to improve emergency communications.
- Developing the state EAS plan for broadcast and cable media.

The LECC support the SECC mission on a local level. The number of LECCs varies widely from state to state. Each LECC is responsible for an area about the size of a typical county. LECC members include broadcasters, cable operators, emergency management officials, other technological personnel, and amateur radio operators, utility companies in the service area, and others who have a responsibility or interest in local emergency communications.

EAS has become part of **IPAWS - the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System**, a program of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). EAS is jointly coordinated by FEMA, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the National Weather Service (NWS).

Messages in the EAS are composed of four parts: a *digitally encoded SAME header*, an attention signal, an audio announcement, and a digitally encoded end-of-message marker.



In a The New York Times article (correction printed January 3, 2002) the lack of news coverage by station WNYC FM, New York, was explained by the destruction of its broadcast transmitters with the collapse of the World Trade Center north tower on 9/11. *"No president has ever used the current [EAS] system or its technical predecessors in the last 50 years,*

despite the Soviet missile crisis, a presidential assassination, the Oklahoma City bombing, major earthquakes and three recent high-alert terrorist warnings... " said Michael K. Powell, the then chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, which oversees the Emergency Alert System, pointed to *"the ubiquitous media environment,' arguing that the system was, in effect, scooped by CNN, MSNBC, Fox News Channel and other channels. FEMA activates the alert system nationally at the behest of the White House on 34 50,000-watt stations that reach 98 percent of Americans... Beyond that, the current Emergency Alert System signal is an audio message only—which pre-empts all programming—so that viewers who were watching color images of the trade center on Sept. 11 would have been able to see only a screen with a generic text message along with a presidential voice-over, if an emergency message had been activated."*

Other than the on-screen scrolling message accompanying the initial activation, the *Federal Communications System EAS TV Handbook - 2007* does not include any sort of visual element. Under the SAME protocol, precise emergency information would be delivered aurally.

The FCC requires all broadcast stations and multichannel video programming distributors (MVPD) to install and maintain EAS decoders and encoders at their control points or headends. (Hence the push for the nation to go "digital" in November of 2010.) These decoders continuously monitor the signals from other nearby broadcast stations for EAS messages. For reliability, at least two other source stations must be monitored, one of which must be a designated local primary. Stations are to retain the latest version of the EAS handbook.

Stations are required by law to keep full logs of all received and transmitted EAS messages. Logs may be kept by hand but are usually kept automatically by a small receipt printer in the encoder/decoder unit. Logs may also be kept electronically inside the unit as long as there is access to an external printer or method to transfer them to a personal computer.

In addition to the audio messages transmitted by radio stations, television stations must also transmit a visual message. A text "crawl" is displayed at the top of the screen that contains all of the information encoded in the initial SAME header. A color coded "crawl" system is often used where the color signifies the priority of the message. Some television stations transmit only the visual message which is outside of the requirements. A television station may be used for monitoring by another station and thus the audio is necessary.

A cable system's visual message displayed during a required test. In actual emergencies, this screen would display the FCC-mandated visual message accompanying the alert.

Upon reception of an alert, a station must relay EAN (*Emergency Action Notification*) and EAT (*Emergency Action Termination*) messages immediately (US FCC 7). Stations traditionally have been allowed to opt out of relaying other alerts such as severe weather and child abduction emergencies (AMBER Alerts) if they so choose. *Under new rules published on July 12, 2007, the FCC requires* all stations to relay state and local alerts that are approved by their states' governors (as per the approval of the CAP standard).

Some stations may be *non-participating*, and do not relay messages. Instead they transmit a message instructing listeners/viewers to tune to another station for the information and they must then suspend their operation. ***EAS equipment must be FCC certified for use.***

The number of event types in the national system has grown to eighty. At first, almost all but three of the events (civil emergency message, immediate evacuation, and emergency action notification (national emergency)) were weather-related (such as a tornado warning). Since then, several classes of non-weather emergencies have been added, including, in most states, the *AMBER Alert System* for child abduction emergencies.

In 2004, the FCC issued a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* seeking comment on whether EAS in its present form is the most effective mechanism for warning the American public of an emergency and *if not*, how EAS can be improved, such as mandatory text messages to cell phones, regardless of subscription. **As noted above, rules implemented by the FCC on July 12, 2007 provisionally endorse replacing the SAME protocol with CAP** and allow governors to compel universal activation of the system within their own states.



What is IPAWS? Integrated Public Alert and Warning System

Executive Order 13407 of June 26, 2006 Public Alert and Warning System “By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) and the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as amended (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.)” (http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Executive_Order_13407) and established, as policy, the requirement for the United States to have an effective, reliable, integrated, flexible, and comprehensive system to alert and warn the American people.

FEMA is designated, within the Department of Homeland Security, to implement the policy of the United States for a public alert and warning system as outlined in Executive Order 13407 and has established a program office to implement IPAWS. *FEMA and its federal partners, the Federal Communications Commission, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service and the DHS Science and Technology Directorate are working together to transform the national alert and warning system to enable rapid dissemination of authenticated alert information over as many communications channels as possible.*

Vision: Timely Alert and Warning to American People in the preservation of life and property.

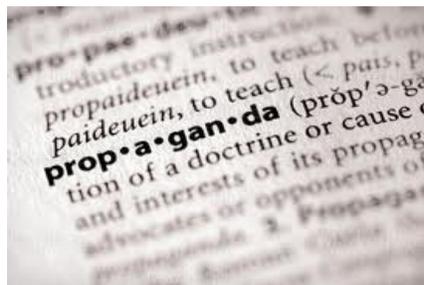
Mission: Provide integrated services and capabilities to local, state, and federal authorities that enable them to alert and warn their respective communities via multiple communications methods.

Strategic Goals:

Goal 1 – Create and maintain an integrated interoperable environment for alert and warning

Goal 2 – Make alert and warning more effective

Goal 3 – Strengthen the Resilience of IPAWS Infrastructure



Once the nations radio and cable broadcasts went digital (satellite was already digital) in November of 2010, **the FCC officially announced plans and procedures for national EAS tests On February 3, 2011**, which would involve all television and radio stations connected to the EAS system, as well as all cable and satellite services in the United States. The national test is supposed to transmit and relay an EAS test message from the White House. **The actual date for the first national EAS test was November 9, 2011.**

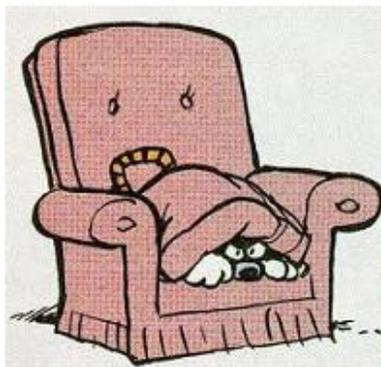
- Round up civilians and put them camps? – *Yes* and for many decades. Has any past or current administration taken advantage of these loopholes to do so – *NO*.
- Take control of the U.S. internet – *Yes*, for the past several decades. Any past or current administration attempt to do so – *NO*.
- Take control of U.S. broadcasting services – *Yes*, since 1971. Any past or current administration attempt to do so – *NO*.
- Take our property, homes and land – *Yes*, for many decades. Any past or current administration attempt to do so – *YES* and they have, just *NOT* on a large scale.
- Use multi-national cooperative militaries to “secure” the U.S. – *Yes*, since the War of Independence. Any past or current administration actually do so – *Not* unless you count NATO and other similar alliances and treaties.
- Practice any of these “activities” – *Yes* and just about every past administration has done so, including the current.

So B.S. aside: **No** administration has, to date, taken wrongful advantage of the loopholes in our laws, executive orders or bills to actually do this and despite how much I detest our current government, there is **no** strong indication that it is planning to do wrong now. Personally I don't think anyone populating our government (at any level) today, is stupid enough nor has the guts to start another American Revolution. They are not strong enough **YET** and they know it, so they won't risk losing what power and control they already have.

**Bottom line: We can run stupid and scared
or we can arm ourselves with knowledge
to run prepared.**

**We can sit on our butts and chew our nails, or we can take on the
responsibility to monitor our government's actions.**

TNT



**DON'T BE SCARED
BE PREPARED**

