

September 9, 2018

The National Weather Service (NWS) is pleased to provide the following comments in response to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC's) Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM), published in the Federal Register on August 10, 2018.

- 1) The Commission proposes, "to revise Section 11.21 to require State EAS Plans to include procedures to help prevent false alerts, or to swiftly mitigate their consequences should a false alert occur. Such information could be supplied by state and local emergency management authorities, at their discretion, to SECCs for inclusion in the State EAS Plans they administer, and would then be available to other emergency management authorities within the state for quick reference."

The NWS is not an EAS Participant; however, and in accordance with State and Local EAS Plans, weather messages issued by NWS (e.g., Tornado Warnings, Tsunami Warnings) may be disseminated with a request for EAS activation by broadcasters.

The NWS is in the process of developing a more detailed policy on the specific steps our Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) will follow after any inadvertent weather message is disseminated by the NWS via any NWS dissemination system.

Additionally and in accordance with State and Local EAS Plans, non-weather messages issued by authorized alerting authorities may be further relayed by the NWS and disseminated via NWS systems and, if requested, to the EAS.

Similarly, the NWS is also in the process of developing a more detailed policy on the specific steps our WFOs will follow after any inadvertent, non-weather message is disseminated, across any NWS systems.

The NWS supports the proposal to add dedicated procedures for reporting false alerts and responding to false alerts by alert originators to State EAS Plans. Following an inadvertent non-weather message dissemination, WFOs will stand by to assist alerting authorities as part of existing procedures established with the state or local emergency communications committees and as documented in State EAS Plans.

- 2) The Commission asks, "Will the manner of delivering a WEA message to a mobile device within a geo-targeted area change after the Commission's new geolocation rules go into effect in November of 2019, and if so, how?" Under current rules, cell phones connected to a cell antenna broadcasting a WEA will render the WEA on the device. Under the new rules, the National Weather Service believes an under-alerting issue may arise that requires the Commission's attention.

We are concerned that a device that receives a WEA broadcast, but which is initially outside the alerting authority's defined alert area, will not render the WEA even if the device later moves inside the threat area while the alert is still valid. We believe devices should be able to periodically check whether they have entered a threat area while an alert is still valid and, if so,

render the alert. One solution would be to have a device check upon receipt of the periodic WEA rebroadcast to determine if the device is inside the alert area, and then render the alert if appropriate. Nevertheless, we greatly look forward to the new geolocation rules which go into effect in November 2019, and urge the Commission to maintain current deadlines for compliance.