



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
National Weather Service  
Analyze, Forecast and Support Office  
1325 East West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283

14 December 2015

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Office of the Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
TW-A325  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Concerning Proceeding Number 15-94

Dear Ms. Dortch,

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) wishes to provide additional comments concerning the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Regarding the Emergency Alert System (EAS) in PS Docket No. 15-94.

Concerning the NWS request to amend the titles (or Area descriptions) of two offshore (marine) areas as defined in the current Part 11 rules: The NWS request seeks to have the rules be consistent with current operations of the NWS marine and tropical cyclone forecast and warning programs. To eliminate confusion for the EAS and all EAS Participants, if this request is approved by the Commission, the NWS requests implementing the change on 1 June 2017, which marks the beginning of the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season.

Concerning the NWS request for "Storm Surge Watch" and "Storm Surge Warning" event codes, with recommended event codes of /SSA/ and /SSW/, respectively: The issuance of NWS Storm Surge Watches and Warnings will not commence until the 2017 hurricane season (i.e. 1 June 2017). If the Commission amends the Part 11 rules for the Storm Surge Watch and Warning event codes, the NWS marine and tropical cyclone programs, to include the National Hurricane Center, will conduct comprehensive public education and information campaigns, prior to and after the implementation and as required by NWS policy. Such a campaign will include, but not be limited to, public service announcements over NWR; NWS News Releases; official NWS Service Change Notifications; advertising on NWS web sites; updates to official preparedness brochures and pamphlets; briefings to emergency managers; presentations at federal, state and local hurricane conferences; concurrent outreach and partnering efforts with FEMA; and extensive community outreach



efforts by the NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist in every Weather Forecast Office impacted by tropical cyclones.

Concerning the NWS request for an “Extreme Wind Warning” Event Code: At this time, if the NWS issues an Extreme Wind Warning, NOAA Weather Radio Special Area Message Encoding (NWR SAME) transmitted data is conveyed using the /TOR/ event code. There is a one-to-one relationship between an NWS warning and the NWR SAME transmitted data message. It is not possible for the NWS to issue a warning using two event codes concurrently.

The Extreme Wind Warning is very rarely issued and it is only issued in association with major hurricanes. If the new /EWW/ event code is in place for the 2017 hurricane season (i.e. beginning 1 June 2017), EAS Participants should be able to make a “clean break” – with the /TOR/ event code used in the 2016 hurricane season and the /EWW/ event code used in 2017. As with the Storm Surge Watch and Warning event codes, if the Commission amends the Part 11 rules for the Extreme Wind Warning, the NWS will conduct comprehensive public education and information campaigns.

In summary, the requested changes from the NWS, if approved, would become effective on 1 June 2017 for the 2017 hurricane season. The NWS has found implementation of multiple changes on the same day provides a consistent framework for a public education and information campaign and affords improved understanding by the public; similarly, NWS seeks to minimize any confusion for EAS Participants by implementing these changes on the same day.

As the lead NWS staff member for each of the requested changes, please feel free to reach me at [timothy.schott@noaa.gov](mailto:timothy.schott@noaa.gov) or 301-427-9336. Thank you for this opportunity to provide additional input on behalf of NOAA/NWS.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Schott  
Meteorologist  
NWS Analyze, Forecast and Support Office