Attachment C

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS

Unattended Station Operations "Best Practices" Synopsis

During the summer of 2007, the NAB's Radio Operations Department polled radio station executives representing four hundred and eighty plus radio stations, large and small, all of which run unattended for some period on a weekly basis. We asked them to identify what procedures they had in place for alerting the public when an emergency occurs during unattended hours. The following "Best Practices" are recommended:

I. Have designated station points of contact for local emergency officials. Update and confirm regularly.

II. Train at least three station employees (normally the engineer, general manager, program director, and/or the operations manager) in their emergency procedures for periods of unattended operation.

III. Identify specific individuals or departments in the local police and fire department, in local government, and in local schools, that can serve as a communication point in times of an emergency. Have this contact information distributed to designated responsible personnel. Post the FAA Hotline number (877-487-6867), in case a tower light goes out.

IV. Use audio failsafe systems that alert station staff (normally the engineer, general manager, program director, and/or the operations manager) if the station goes off air. Current technology allows stations to be put back on the air via an off-site computer or cell phone.

V. Use "on-call" procedures for monitoring local weather. Some stations supply staff (normally the engineer, general manager, program director, and/or the operations manager) with weather radios. When bad weather arises, the on-call staff member monitors the station to make sure emergency information is delivered to the public and/or goes to the station to keep the public informed.

VI. Include copies of severe weather/emergency procedures either in employee manuals, on program logs, or in studios.

VII. Train entire staff to help serve the public during emergencies. In these cases, the sales, promotions, and support staffs can man the phones and field concerned citizen calls in emergencies. This frees up programming personnel to focus solely on reporting all pertinent information in a timely manner to the entire listening audience and frees up engineering to ensure the station will stay on the air for the duration of the emergency.

VIII. Have back-up power generators at the studio sites as well as the transmitter sites. Typically, the generators have the ability to run for twenty-four to forty-eight hours. Stations should have backup fuel plans in place.

IX. Have comprehensive news department procedures for handling information collection and dissemination whenever inclement weather or regional emergencies occur.

X. Conduct regular staff meetings to discuss and update their emergency procedure station policies. These meetings should happen monthly or quarterly.

XI. Make sure all station personnel are familiar with the recommendations of the Media Security and Reliability Council (http://www.mediasecurity.org/).

XII. Test the Emergency Alert System on a weekly basis and use it in emergencies.

Best Practices were distributed to the Joint Board members, and have been posted on the NAB's members-only website.