

**Before the  
Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

Reply Comments in the matter of	)	
	)	
Review of the Emergency Alert System	)	EB Docket No. 04-296
	)	
Independent Spanish Broadcasters Association, the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, Inc., and the Minority Media And Telecommunications Council, Petition for Immediate Relief	)	August 3, 2011
	)	
	)	
Randy Gehman Petition for Rulemaking	)	

Reply Comments on Behalf of  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Integrated Public Alert and Warning System  
Program Management Office

**Re: THIRD FURTHER NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is the nation’s next-generation infrastructure of alert and warning networks expanding upon the traditional audio-only radio and television Emergency Alert System (EAS) by providing one message over more media to more people before, during, and after a disaster.

Since 2004, FEMA has served as the Federal Executive Branch lead agency for developing IPAWS. In June 2006, the President signed the Public Alert and Warning System Executive Order to drive the creation of a more “effective, reliable, integrated, flexible, and comprehensive system that enables the American people to receive alert and warning information through as many means as possible.” In response, FEMA established the IPAWS Program Management Office (PMO) in April 2007.

The vision of IPAWS builds and maintains an effective, reliable, integrated, flexible and comprehensive system that enables the American people to receive alert and warning information through as many means as possible. IPAWS ensures the President can alert and warn the American people under all conditions. IPAWS will provide Federal, State, Territorial, Tribal, and local warning authorities the capabilities to alert and warn their respective communities of all hazards impacting public safety and well-being via multiple communications pathways.

The IPAWS PMO has, and continues to, work closely with the FCC Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB), the National Weather Service (NWS), other government agencies and organizations and representatives of private industry on matters concerning the EAS and other methods and systems capable of delivering alert and warning information to the American people. FEMA and the IPAWS PMO fully support the FCC in their effort to strengthen the national level EAS through development of a defined national test program.

## **II. REPLY COMMENTS**

The FEMA Integrated Public Alert and Warning (IPAWS) Division offers the following reply comments in response to comments filed by several respondents including Donald Walker, the Broadcast Warning Working Group and others regarding a readiness of supporting systems, possible extension of the currently established date for EAS participants to be capable of receiving CAP messages and system test methodologies.

- FEMA expects to have IPAWS Open Platform for Emergency Networks (OPEN) version 3.0 in operation in a production environment and available to serve CAP messages to EAS participants prior to the end of September.
- FEMA and the National Weather Service do not expect that the majority of weather alerts will be processed through and available via IPAWS OPEN until mid to late November.
- FEMA suggests that there be an allowance for a Period of Configuration of CAP-EAS device to commence on the established date for EAS participants to be able to receive CAP messages and extend for a period of 120 days.
  - During the first 90 days of the proposed Period of Configuration FEMA proposes to generate, process and serve four (4) CAP messages per day per US time zone.
  - These four CAP messages would consist of a Required Weekly Test (RWT) message directed to all states within each time zone issued at 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, 12:00 Noon, and 1:00 PM local time within each time zone.

- When an EAS participant receives an RWT message the message is normally treated as a log-only event therefore CAP transmission of messages using the RWT code should not interrupt EAS participant's programming and the public will not be affected.
- These log-only RWT messages will serve as non-disruptive internal test messages to exercise the message delivery capabilities of the IPAWS OPEN CAP EAS and provide EAS participants with the opportunity to configure their CAP EAS devices and CAP message connections.
- All actual alerts received by IPAWS OPEN during the configuration period will be processed and immediately made available to EAS participants for distribution to the public.