



# PUBLIC NOTICE

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**PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY BUREAU ANNOUNCES  
NATIONWIDE TEST OF THE EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2017,  
OPENS THE EAS TEST REPORTING SYSTEM FOR 2017 FILINGS, AND  
RELEASES EAS OPERATING HANDBOOK**

**PS Docket No. 15-94**

Today, the Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (Bureau) of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) provides notice to all Emergency Alert System (EAS) Participants that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in collaboration with the FCC, will conduct a nationwide test of the EAS on September 27, 2017 at 2:20 PM EDT.<sup>1</sup> The Bureau also provides notice that the EAS Test Reporting System (ETRS) is now open and accepting 2017 filings and that the EAS Operating Handbook is now available to EAS Participants.

**I. NATIONWIDE EAS TEST**

The 2017 nationwide test will assess the reliability and effectiveness of the EAS, with a particular emphasis on testing FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), the integrated gateway through which common alerting protocol-based (CAP-based) EAS alerts are disseminated to EAS Participants. The test message will clearly state that the alert is only a test of the EAS. FEMA's alert will be transmitted in English and Spanish and include both audio and the text of the test message, which can be used to populate an accessible video crawl. The primary test date is scheduled for September 27, 2017, at 2:20 PM EDT. If conditions on the day of the test require the rescheduling of the test, a secondary test date is scheduled for October 4, 2017. All EAS Participants are required to participate in this nationwide test.<sup>2</sup>

The Bureau encourages EAS Participants to take steps, in coordination with their State Emergency Communication Committees, in preparation for this test, such as:

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<sup>1</sup> See Letter from John A. Veatch, Assistant Administrator, National Continuity Programs, Federal Emergency Management Agency, to Lisa Fowlkes, Bureau Chief, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, Federal Communications Commission (July 14, 2017) (on file in PS Docket No. 15-94) (proposing dates for a 2017 nationwide EAS test). This *Public Notice* satisfies the requirement that the Commission provide notice to EAS Participants at least two months prior to the conduct of a national test. See 47 CFR § 11.61(a)(3)(iii).

<sup>2</sup> 47 CFR § 11.61(a)(3)(i). EAS Participants are those entities that are required to comply with the Commission's EAS rules, including analog radio and television stations, wired and wireless cable television systems, digital broadcast systems, digital television broadcast stations, Satellite Digital Audio Radio Service, digital cable and digital audio broadcasting systems, and wireline video systems. 47 CFR § 11.2(d).

- Ensuring that a copy of the EAS Operating Handbook (see Section III below) is located at normal duty positions or EAS equipment locations and is immediately available to operators;<sup>3</sup>
- Reviewing the EAS Operating Handbook for the actions to be taken by operators upon receipt of the test alert and tailoring any actions as necessary that are specific to the EAS Participants' facilities;
- Ensuring that EAS equipment operates in compliance with the Commission rules, such as being capable of receiving and processing the national periodic test code<sup>4</sup> and the "six zeroes" national location code;<sup>5</sup>
- Upgrading EAS equipment software and firmware to the most recent version;
- Reviewing their 2016 ETRS Form One filings to single out changes to identifying information that have occurred in the last year, and entering those changes into the ETRS;
- Manually synchronizing EAS equipment clocks to the official time provided by the National Institute of Standards and Technology,<sup>6</sup> if an EAS Participant's equipment does not automatically synchronize to an Internet time source.

Members of the public and interested stakeholder organizations that are in position to observe test results in their communities can provide useful feedback on the improvements to the EAS, any problems observed, or any other complications in the delivery of the EAS message during the nationwide test by reporting their observations to the Public Safety Support Center at <https://www.fcc.gov/general/public-safety-support-center>.

## II. EAS TEST REPORTING SYSTEM AND RELATED DEADLINES

The ETRS is now open for 2017 filings. Pursuant to Section 11.61 of the Commission's rules, EAS Participants must renew their identifying information required by ETRS Form One on a yearly basis.<sup>7</sup> The ETRS Form One for 2016 was due on August 26, 2016.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, all EAS Participants must complete the 2017 ETRS Form One on or before August 28, 2017.<sup>9</sup> Each EAS Participant should file a separate copy of Form One for each of its EAS decoders, EAS encoders, and units combining such

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<sup>3</sup> See 47 CFR § 11.15.

<sup>4</sup> See 47 CFR § 11.52(e).

<sup>5</sup> See 47 CFR § 11.31(f).

<sup>6</sup> National Institute of Standards and Technology, The Official NIST US Time, <http://www.time.gov>.

<sup>7</sup> See 47 CFR § 11.61(a)(3)(iv)(A).

<sup>8</sup> *Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Launches EAS Test Reporting System (ETRS) and Seeks Comment on EAS Operating Handbook Recommendations*, Public Notice, 31 FCC Rcd 7100, 7101 (PSHSB 2016).

<sup>9</sup> EAS Participants that pre-populate Form One using a Facility ID number or a Physical System ID number are urged to review their pre-populated data to ensure accuracy. Outdated or inaccurate data fields that cannot be edited in ETRS are populated from the EAS Participant's filings in the Commission's Online Public Inspection File (OPIF). Accordingly, EAS Participants must ensure that their OPIF information is correct for it to appear accurately in ETRS. EAS Participants are urged to review Form One as soon as possible to allow sufficient time for possible OPIF corrections.

decoder and encoder functions.<sup>10</sup> On or before 11:59 p.m., September 27, 2017, EAS Participants must submit any updates or corrections to their 2017 Form One filings and must file the “day of test” information sought by ETRS Form Two.<sup>11</sup> On or before November 13, 2017, EAS Participants must file the detailed post-test data sought by ETRS Form Three.<sup>12</sup> ETRS Forms Two and Three will become available in the ETRS at the time of initiation of the 2017 nationwide test.

To access the ETRS, filers must first create an FCC Username (Username) within the User Registration System at <https://apps2.fcc.gov/fccUserReg/pages/createAccount.htm>, then associate their FCC Registration Numbers (FRNs) to that Username. Filers that have already created a Username for use with another FCC system can use that same Username to access ETRS. Filers can access ETRS by visiting the ETRS page of the Commission’s website at <https://www.fcc.gov/general/eas-test-reporting-system>. Additional instructions regarding FCC Username creation and ETRS access can be found in the Bureau’s June 26 *Public Notice*.<sup>13</sup>

### III. 2017 EAS OPERATING HANDBOOK

The Bureau also announces the release of a revised EAS Operating Handbook. A copy of the Handbook must be located at normal duty positions or EAS equipment locations when an operator is required to be on duty and be immediately available to staff responsible for administering EAS tests.<sup>14</sup> The Handbook will supersede all other EAS Handbooks, and must be in place in time for the 2017 nationwide EAS test. The Handbook’s format allows each EAS Participant to enter data specific to their own configuration, tailoring the operational steps outlined in the manual for local relevance. A writable PDF version of the Handbook can be found on the Bureau’s web site at <https://www.fcc.gov/general/eas-test-reporting-system>.

### IV. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information regarding the nationwide EAS test, contact Austin Randazzo, Attorney Advisor, Policy and Licensing Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, at (202) 418-1462 or [austin.randazzo@fcc.gov](mailto:austin.randazzo@fcc.gov), or Gregory Cooke, Deputy Chief, Policy and Licensing Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, at (202) 418-2351 or [gregory.cooke@fcc.gov](mailto:gregory.cooke@fcc.gov).

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<sup>10</sup> If an individual is filing for a broadcast facility (or cable headend) that uses two units that combine decoder and encoder functions, that individual should file two copies of Form One. EAS Participants that are silent pursuant to a grant of Special Temporary Authority are required to file ETRS Form One.

<sup>11</sup> See 47 CFR § 11.61(a)(3)(iv)(B) (EAS Participants are required to file “day of test” data within 24 hours of any nationwide EAS test or as otherwise required by the Bureau). See also *Review of the Emergency Alert System et al.*, EB Docket No. 04-296, Sixth Report and Order, 30 FCC Rcd 6520, 6532, 6533, para. 27 (2015) (*Sixth Report and Order*) (EAS Participants are allowed thirty days after submission of all ETRS forms to review their filings and to correct errors).

<sup>12</sup> EAS Participants are required to file detailed post-test data within 45 days following a nationwide EAS test. 47 CFR § 11.61(a)(3)(iv)(C).

<sup>13</sup> *Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau Provides Instructions on How to Register for the 2017 EAS Test Reporting System (ETRS) Using the FCC’s Commission Registration System (CORES)*, PS Docket No. 15-94, Public Notice, DA 17-620 (PSHSB June 26, 2017), [https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DA-17-620A1.pdf](https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-17-620A1.pdf) (explaining steps for creating a Username in the Commission Registration System (CORES)).

<sup>14</sup> See 47 CFR § 11.15.

Filers may contact the CORES Help Desk for assistance with creating a Username at [CORESHelpDesk@fcc.gov](mailto:CORESHelpDesk@fcc.gov) or (202) 418-4120. Filers may contact Bureau staff for assistance in completing ETRS Form One at [ETRS@fcc.gov](mailto:ETRS@fcc.gov).

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