

# SECC Minutes

May 13, 2014

Present:

Terry Spring-KWPX

Marlin Jackson-KXLY & Inland LECC

Roy Benevente-WEMD

Sandi Duffy-Grant County DEM

Jaye Compton-WEMD

Clay Freinwald-Temp Chair

Ted Buehner-NWS Seattle

Tim Schall-Townsquare Media Yakima

Kyle Powers-Townsquare Media Yakima

Dennis Hull-NOAA Pendleton

Jim Dalke-DBS, INC.

Charlie Osgood-Columbia River Media Group

Bob Johnson-Kitcom 911

Carri Gordon-WSP

Phone:

Luke Meyers-City of Bellevue

Mark Allen-WSAB

Andy Linaweaver-WEMD

Jamie Acuff-Comcast

Diana Bell-WSU

Don White-Tribune

Ron Main-Washington Cable TV Association

Lowell Kiesow-KPLU

Introductions were made and the minutes for the previous meeting were approved.

The FCC inspection of a station in Oregon was discussed. The station did not have a copy of the state plan. It is required by the FCC rules. You need it to verify that you are monitoring the correct EAS sources. The Washington State plan is current on the WSAB web site (<http://www.wsab.org/eas/eas.html>), but will be moving soon to a state web site. The information will be in the remailer.

CSRIC (<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/communications-security-reliability-and-interoperability-council-iii>) was discussed. It is a group of FCC Advisory Committees. Clay chaired the EAS plans committee. The Washington State plan was used as a model for parts of it. There should be a NRPM from the Commission soon. The FCC invented the SECC's, but did not provide much direction on how they should operate. The EAS plan committee tried to remedy that.

WEA, Wireless Emergency Alerts, were discussed briefly. Wireless customers can opt out of AMBER and Imminent Threat Alerts, but not Presidential messages.

MyStates is now AlertSense. There has been some change in management. See <http://alertsense.com/>.

For official answers for EAS questions, it is best that Greg Cook at the FCC be asked rather than someone in the local office. Staff opinions are not binding. Clay has contact info for him.

Ted Buehner of NWS Seattle discussed their initial response and support for the Oso slide using EAS. NWS became aware of the event within a few hours after it happened, particularly when the river gage just below the slide showed a sharp drop in the river flow indicating the river was blocked. The NWS issued a flood warning for the part of the river just above the debris dam as water pooled. A flash flood watch was also issued for the stretch of the river downstream to just outside Arlington in case the debris dam were to give way. EAS was activated for both of these flood messages via NOAA Weather Radio. In addition, Snohomish county followed by activating EAS for first a Civil Emergency (CEM) and then an Evacuation Immediate (EVI) to accompany the flash flood watch for a voluntary evacuation near the river. NWS Seattle relayed these EAS messages on NOAA Weather Radio.

In Old Business, the various local plans are starting to show up on line. Many are still missing however. They used to be stored in a box under Don Miller's desk. Now they are supposed to be stored on a local server in each local area with the links in Tab 12 of the state plan. The state EMD will be encouraging the local areas that are missing to get this taken care of.

Tab 21 for Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) is still a work in progress. The Washington Cable TV Association is now involved.

Leadership is still needed for the local areas in Yakima and the Tri Cities.

Jim Dalke has designed a very nice EAS log for use by stations that don't have one. See the attached. He has also been working on a text to speech tab. After putting it on the remailer, he received lots of feedback. It is still a work in progress.

The text for EAS alerts should be designed for reading, not for text to speech. If possible, an audio file should also be sent. Even a non-professional reader will usually be better than using the text to speech engine. Text to speech is not quite there yet, especially in the pronunciation of local place names. Also, each manufacturer does TTS a little differently. The audio copy may sound great but not look so good on a TV crawl.

In new business, the revised Washington State Plan was approved.

Clay will be doing a EAS workshop in Helena, Montana, on June 18.

EAS has long been a function of broadcast engineering. Broadcast engineers are not necessarily willing to take a leadership position in the administrative side of EAS. How can we get non-technical people involved to encourage participation in the system? Luke Meyers was volunteered to disseminate information to emergency managers and explore ways to encourage participation. How do we reach people that are not on the remailer? Subscribe info will be put on the WSAB and SBE web sites.

There was a discussion on having more meetings away from the Seattle/Tacoma area. It was decided that we would meet again in Ellensburg on May 12, 2015.

There was a discussion on having EAS message broadcast on Travelers Radio Service (TRS) stations. These are operated by the Washington State Department of Transportation. This is being explored.

The 911 outage on April 10 was discussed. It was caused by a software glitch that caused some calls to not be routed to the local 911 centers. It took 6 or 7 hours for the Century Link contractor to fix the problem. Century Link did not realize it was happening so notifications were not made. The state offers the service to the counties. Each county had it's own work around. There was no way for the state to disseminate all the regular 10 digit numbers for each 911 center, so that was left to the individual counties. The use of EAS was a local decision based on local conditions. Grant County issued a EAS alert for the outage. Some counties were not effected by the outage. The organizations involved are working on this, but it is a complex problem.

There were some problems with WEA during the recent AMBER alert. Due to a software glitch, some people received the alerts late and/or multiple alerts. The cell towers were not getting verification from the individual phones that the alert had been received. AMBER alerts sent via WEA must have a description and license plate number to be sent.

At WSEMD they are working on implementing some new features from Alert Sense, formerly Mystates.

The NWS is working on quicker access to Rattlesnake to avoid long outages in the future. At Octopus they now have full access to the site and have targeted July for replacement of the transmitter there.

There has been some discussion lately on the EAS remailer about the number of required EAS tests. Many people think they are excessive. Feel free to weigh in with your opinion. Tom McGinley has been leading the discussion.

Ron Main of the Washington Cable TV Association will be participating in the SECC for the cable industry. He is currently circulating a draft of the rewrite for Tab 19 to the various cable systems in the state.

The Inland Northwest local area is working on their local plan update. They have been able to simplify and thin it down quite a bit.

Kittitas County has just received their CAP EAS box.

In Wenatchee, it was reported that they are receiving, and relaying, multiple RMT's from the weather service. It turns out that this has also been happening in other areas in Eastern Washington. The Spokane weather office cannot send EAS tests to all their weather radio transmitters at once. This is going to be investigated.

The state plan tabs are updated on the remailer. The last update was on May 9.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday July 9 at 9:30 AM at the EMD at Camp Murray.