

**Nebraska SECC Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2014**

1:00 to 4:00 PM CST
National Weather Service
6707 County Road 104
Valley, Nebraska 68064

Minutes

I. Introduction and quorum

Attendees:

Member Name	Organization	Representing
Jim Skinner, Chair	KPTM/KXVO	Broadcast Television
Rod Zeigler	KRVN, NRRRA, PEPAC	Broadcast Radio
Marty Riemenschneider	Nebraska Broadcast Association	Broadcast Association
Lt. Carla Schreiber	Nebraska State Patrol	Nebraska State Patrol
Paul Johnson	Douglas County Emergency Management	Emergency Mgmt
Alisia LaMay	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency	NEMA
Brian Smith	National Weather Services	NOAA/NWA
James Duchesneau	Nebraska Educational Telecommunications	State Relay

Other Attendees: Hayley Sutter, Public Policy Center; Terry Miller, Saunders County Emergency Management

Committee Members Absent: LeeAnn Quist, Mark Stottler

Common Acronyms	
CAP	Common Alerting Protocol
CMAS*	Commercial Mobile Alert System (* Now called WEA)
EAN	Emergency Alert Notification
EAS	Emergency Alert System
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIPS	Federal Information Processing Standard
IPAWS	Integrated Public Alert & Warning System
NEMA	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Association
NWS	National Weather Service
SECC	State Emergency Communications Committee

II. SECC Members

James Duchesneau attended on behalf of Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, representing the State Relay. A motion was made to make James Duchesneau the official back up to Al Krause to represent the State Relay on the SECC. The motion was passed by consensus.

III. Minutes from last SECC meeting

Rod Zeigler made a motion to approve the December meeting minutes pending the correction of Ron Zeigler’s last name; the minutes incorrectly spelled it ‘Ziegler.’ This motion was passed by consensus.

IV. Update on work to generate new EAS State Plan

The Sub-Committee selected a new format for the EAS State Plan and includes a purpose and assumptions, a consensus has been reached on the glossary items, purpose statement, authority, and assumptions and planning factors. The Sub-Committee is now working on the organization responsibilities; this is expected to take an extended period of time to complete. The current plan is an improvement upon the 2007 plan and is being formatted to increase its understandability and comprehension. Currently, Nebraska EAS State Plan is unlike any other state plan, the new EAS State Plan will be more consistent with the national standard.

An issue that recently arose is Low Power FM (LPFM) stations were not aware they needed to buy EAS equipment and be able to receive messages. Previously, a 50/50 grant through NEMA was available for the purchase of EAS equipment; this funding is likely no longer available, however, Alisia will contact Nikki Weber to determine the status of the grant.

V. Status of Paraclete tests and availability

Five counties, the Nebraska State Patrol, and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency have IPAWS capability. A recent required monthly test (RMT) was successful with good audio quality. During the test, a few errors occurred, including 10/11 in Lincoln, Nebraska who pushed through an AMBER Alert instead of the RMT. Alisia is working with Jeremy McCoy from Nebraska State Patrol to set up their Paraclete boxes. Locals and the State Patrol would likely not send a Required Weekly Tests (RWT). RWTs are logged by broadcasters and are not broadcast on air; when an RWT is not received, the local broadcasters cannot determine if their boxes are or are not connected.

In the future, a regional or county test may occur; a statewide test is not likely as most disasters are local. In addition, NET Nebraska may not be the best originator of the RMT; this conversation will be tabled until the appropriate individual is hired by NEMA. The SECC could provide capabilities education, provide tools and permission, and empower locals; however, the SECC should ensure they are not writing local rules and responsibilities into the state plan.

Alisia LaMay is now serving on the multi-state board for the WEA testing; the board is working to ensure every state is in agreement before submitting any materials to FEMA.

VI. Review of effectiveness of the real code Tornado alert and discuss plans for next year

Cheyenne sent out the text for the tornado warning; however, it was never broadcast on the weather radio; test messages are more difficult to send on the present NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) system than actual alerts. NWS offices in Hastings, North Platte, Sioux Falls, Goodland and Omaha successfully sent test messages. Audio output levels from the Omaha NWS message on the State Relay system (NET) were almost inaudibly low in level. Brian Smith agreed that there may very well be some variation in audio levels during a drill. Audio processing was discussed and everyone agreed that lack of automatic level adjustment can and does cause problems in EAS alerting and testing.

Following the test, some people in the public indicated they were unaware of tornado drill ahead of time. Brian and many present agreed that the promotion this year seemed better and more thorough than sometimes, but we should always push to expand awareness. Paul Johnson received half a dozen phone calls; most of them were about the sirens. Future tornado alerts and tests should be more successful due to this exercise. The SECC

agreed that Chair Jim Skinner should write a letter requesting a TOR waiver for March 25, 2015 and send it now rather than waiting until January as is customary.

VII. Report of the meeting in Washington, DC with FCC, FEMA, and NWS officials

Jim and Marty attended the Emergency Alert System Form meeting in Washington, DC on February 24, 2014. Thirty-seven states were represented at the meeting. The meeting began with a discussion of WEA; 56 wireless carriers, covering 98% of the US population, are participating in WEA. Besides the National Weather Service, 42 states and 300 counties nationwide have IPAWS capabilities. Tom Beers is working on code waiver requests, including Nebraska's. Tim Schott is concerned with the NWS ability to consistently send out CAP messages that don't duplicate what is already being broadcast on the radio; in accordance, EAS CAP from NWS will not be activated until a resolution can be found.

The Communications Security, Reliability, and Interoperability Council (CSRCIC) is an advisory committee system used by FEMA, FCC, and NWS to gain perspective from broadcasters, wireless carriers, and others with direct knowledge and influence for public emergency alerting (<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/communications-security-reliability-and-interoperability-council-iii>). The CSRCIC is divided into ten sub-committees; one sub-committee (CSRCIC 4) is expected to develop a template for State EAS Plans. The date for the next national test is unknown; however, it is expected to be held before the presidential election. Radio Broadcast Data System (RBDS) procedures have been updated by FEMA; in the future, RBDS may be used by emergency management for life saving messages more than it has been.

VIII. Report on Douglas County Emergency Alert Plan

Douglas County Emergency Alert Plan has been finalized and signed by all local mayors. Motivations for creating the plan including becoming an FCC Cog, have a means to alert the public from a local level, and ensure all jurisdictions in the County are able to work together and operate under the State Plan. The Douglas County Emergency Alert Plan consists of 17 elements. The first element is the identification of primary and secondary stakeholder; primary stakeholders include those who send out or originate an alert; secondary stakeholders are those who support the plan including broadcasters and 911. The LEOP establishes a Local Emergency Communications Committee that could be open to anyone; however, the County emergency manager must serve as the chair. The plan also dictates that the Local Emergency Alert Plan must be consistent with that state plan. The LEOP lists trainings, gives examples of when emergency alerts should be sent, and lists and defines seven event/CAP codes. The local LECC will be responsible for review and updates of LEOP and sent messages. The Douglas County Emergency Management Agency will assist each jurisdiction in meeting the requirement to write a notification procedure. KGOR is recognized as the LP-1 Broadcast Station. The signed copy of the LEOP will be made public in the next 30 (thirty) days and will be linked on the State website.

IX. Set next meeting date and place

The next SECC meeting will be held on May 29, 2014 at 1:00 PM at NET Radio in Lincoln.

Carla made a motion to adjourn the meeting; this motion passed by consensus. The meeting adjourned at 3:14 PM CST.