

SECC Meeting November 18, 2010

Nebraska State Emergency Communications Committee (SECC)

Responsible for the Emergency Alert System (EAS) Plan in Nebraska and implementation plans of the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) required by the FCC

Committee Members present: Bob Richwine, Rod Zeigler, Larry Lavelle, Bob Huber, Brian Smith and Jim Skinner (Bob Eastwood, excused)

Guests present: Cathy Zapotocny and Jim Meyer both with NWS

Location: National Weather Service office, Valley Nebraska

Time of meeting: 10:05 AM to 12:15 PM

Jim Skinner chaired meeting. Jim reported on a conversation with Sue Krogman from Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The SECC is invited to meet at their facility in Lincoln for our February meeting. Sue promised various people in the NEMA Communications staff will help with EAS updates as well as Bob Eastwood. Tentative date for next SECC meeting is Thursday February 17, 2011

Brian Smith described how the Hazcollect system works. He showed us some slides from the NWS website. NWS is sending CAP messages experimentally on Hazcollect presently. Everyone agreed we need to continue to study how Hazcollect will be used in the CAP EAS system in Nebraska. Brian Smith will contact Herb White at national NWS for more details. Here is a link to a valuable block diagram of how All Hazard Emergency Messages are distributed.

<http://www.weather.gov/os/hazcollect/resources/HazCollectOvrvw&Start2009-0702.pdf>

There was substantial discussion about how important it is to make sure that any alert sent is legitimate. As the EAS system expands to local and regional alerts, authentication security is crucial. NEMA will need to specify any local/regional agency which is qualified and properly trained to issue alerts. NWS radio, broadcasters and cable systems need to have confidence that alerts will not be issued without real confirmed need.

There was discussion about using the new state fiber optics or one of the proposed satellite proposals to distribute CAP/EAS alerts and tests to stations and cable head ends. Satellite has a real advantage for rural services that will not have easy access even to the state terrestrial system. A state owned terrestrial system would be less

expensive to maintain for any stations near already planned nodes. Cost needs to be determined for the last mile.

There are three competing satellite plans which have been proposed to the SECC in a preliminary manner. We briefly discussed the pros and cons of the three proposals. Grant funds will be needed to proceed with any of them. Everyone agrees that using traditional internet as the only means of distributing CAP data will not be reliable in many emergencies. NWS radio and broadcasters cannot transmit CAP data under current Federal plans. Therefore traditional daisy chain distribution is outdated and is only a last resort offering NON CAP EAS messages.

It was discussed that the state Department of Administrative Services (DAS) may have some responsibilities over CAP/EAS distribution. DAS is responsible for frequency coordination in Nebraska. DAS could have cost effective ways to distribute CAP data.

The Nebraska State Patrol (NSP) needs to be involved in CAP/EAS planning. The NSP issues Amber Alerts which is a key component of EAS. Perhaps they could also be responsible for issuing non-weather related CAP highway road hazard alerts to the public. There was discussion whether Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) could coordinate any alerts they have with the NSP.

Larry reported that FEMA Region 7 will have their annual regional planning conference in LaVista Nebraska July 28-30, 2011. Does the SECC need to have some involvement?

Minutes Submitted to committee by Jim Skinner Nov 29, 2011