

SECC Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 18, 2011

Attendees:

Member Name	Organization	Representing
Jim Skinner, Chair	KPTM/KXVO	Broadcast Television
Bob Huber	NET	State Relay
Bob Eastwood	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency	NEMA
Rod Ziegler	KRUN, NRRRA, PEPAC	Radio
Bob Richwine	Cox Communications	Cable Television
LeaAnn Quist	Great Plains	Cable Association
Brian Smith	National Weather Services	National Weather Service

Larry Lavell and Marty Riemenschneider were not present.

Other Attendees: Mark DeKraai, Public Policy Center; Janell Walther, Public Policy Center; Al Krause, NET

Grant Update

Payments have already been made to round 1 stations. There will be a Round 2 and a Round 3. There has been much participation.

Marty Riemenschneider from NBA has suggest that the SECC should request a grant for generators to LP-1 stations. Generators require Environmental Studies, so it may take 2 years to go through the process.

Updating the Nebraska EAS Operational Plan

An electronic copy of the state-wide EAS plan will be emailed to all stations and cable systems in Nebraska. A post card will also be sent directing them to a web link for download. Hard copies will be available by request not automatically as in the past.

Appendices will be added to include a web link and listing of LP-1 stations, and weather radio information after the Amber section. A Map of the state regions, will be included in the appendices.

Local Primary Area:

Each broadcast station's Local EAS area shall include the county of license and the county where the transmitter is located (if different). The transmitter county has not been part of the state plan previously. Also each adjoining county that receives a "strong signal" should be part of a stations Local Area. Station discretion is allowed and encouraged to determine adjoining counties with a "strong signal".

The Local EAS Area may include neighboring state counties. Therefore, it is important to communicate with other states regarding the state plan.

Cable systems shall include all counties where service is provided.

Problems connecting to EAS:

In the event of difficulty connecting to any required Emergency Alert System source, a Local Broadcast or Cable Station (LB/C), must log a description of the problem. They have 14 days to resolve it. Meanwhile, the station should connect to any reliable source of EAS data possible, such as an LP-1. The LB/C must notify the FCC and the SECC if after 14 days the problem cannot be repaired. EAS logs must show the failure and steps being taken to remedy the problem. Date of any contact with the FCC and/or the SECC should be noted in the EAS log.

Required Monthly Tests:

NOAA Weather Radio is being asked to send daytime RMTs. Bob Eastwood will speak to Al Berndt about setting up manual Monthly tests to represent an actual emergency being transmitted by the EOC at NEMA.

Emergency Alerts:

SECC recommends the inclusion of WSW (Winter Storm Warning) to the EAS codes suggested to be forwarded. The new State Plan will have a list of recommended Alerts for LB/C to forward while in automatic mode. Previously that has been left entirely to each EAS participant.

It was reported by Jim Skinner that some stations have removed TOR from automatic forwarding in their EAS equipment. Brian Smith of NWS is concerned that the two TOR tests in the spring are counter productive. Serious Consideration will be given to NOT use TOR for test messages in Nebraska any more.

The SECC will encourage cable systems to not cover local TV channels with EAS messages. The station itself should include EAS alerting and often local coverage of an emergency better than EAS is able to do. Conversely if the cable system is carrying a station that does NOT include the cable community served and/or does not typically have local emergency news, it may be preferable for the cable system insert EAS alerts for the local area. Ideally this should be coordinated between the cable company and the station.

Local Primary One Stations

LP-1 Stations are currently required to monitor another LP-1 Station. However, as the new State Plan is proposed, they may not be able to monitor other LP-1s. LP-1 Stations currently monitor CAP, the State Relay, the National Weather Service., and they should also monitor another LP-1 Station if able. The committee will not designate any LP-2 Stations in the state.

All LP-1 Stations will be verified prior to publishing the State Plan. The SECC decided to limit LP-1s, to FM-only. Much work is needed to contact each of the present and proposed LP-1 stations.

Local Emergency Operations Committees

Paul Johnson, Douglas County Emergency Manager, will present to the metro Emergency Management Board to reestablish the Local Emergency Communications Committee for the Omaha Metro Area. Dave Klein has been actively working with Mr. Johnson. The Omaha Metro LECC region established may not fit the 3 county NCOR region, but it is important to use the area that makes the most sense.

The State Plan will be finalized via email.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 15 at 1:00 PM, Great Plains Communications, Blair, NE. Members will meet for lunch before the meeting.

SECC Minutes were prepared by Janell Walther and Jim Skinner 9/2/2011