GLOSSARY

Definitions of Selected Emergency Alert System Terms

**Activation**

The initiation of the Emergency Alert System by transmission of the Emergency Alert System codes

**ASCII**

A standard set of text characters with numerical equivalents

**Attention Signal**

Eight seconds of two tones (853 and 960 Hz) used as an audio alert

**Audio Frequency Shift Keying (AFSK)**

A digital modulation technique that uses two shifting audio frequencies to transmit binary data

**Authenticator Word Lists**

A list of words that federal officials send prior to official Emergency Alert System national activation; used to substantiate the information being sent

**Authorization Letter**

The official authorization letter, given by the FCC, for a broadcast station to go off the air during a national level activation of the Emergency Alert System

**Automatic Interruption**

The automatic encoding and transmission of Emergency Alert System codes for preselected events

**Baud Rate**

The speed of data transmitted, equal to number of elements sent per second (equal to bits per second if a bit is the element)

**Bit Rate**

The speed of binary data transmitted, equal to the number of digital bits sent per second

**Certification**

An equipment authorization issued by the FCC based on representations and test data submitted by the applicant for equipment designated to be operated without individual license under Parts 15 and 18 of the rules
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<tr>
<th><strong>Term</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Class D FM station</strong></td>
<td>A station whose output power is 10 Watts or less</td>
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<td><strong>Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS)</strong></td>
<td>A service intended to deliver satellite signals directly to consumers using small, relatively inexpensive receive stations</td>
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<td><strong>Decoder (Emergency Alert System)</strong></td>
<td>An electronic device used by Emergency Alert System participants to receive alerts and to translate the Emergency Alert System codes into a visual message</td>
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<td><strong>Decoder (Two-Tone)</strong></td>
<td>An electronic device that alerts operators to the reception of the two-tone signal</td>
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<td><strong>Emergency Action Notification (EAN)</strong></td>
<td>The message for national Emergency Alert System activation</td>
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<td><strong>Emergency Action Termination (EAT)</strong></td>
<td>The message for national Emergency Alert System termination</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Encoder (Emergency Alert System)</strong></td>
<td>A electronic device used by Emergency Alert System participants to originate Emergency Alert System alerts by creating the Emergency Alert System codes for transmission to other participants and the public</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Encoder (Two-Tone)</strong></td>
<td>A electronic device that produces the two-tone signal</td>
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<td><strong>EOM (end-of-message) Code</strong></td>
<td>In ASCII form 'NNNN', this burst of data, sent three times, signifies the end of an Emergency Alert System message and Emergency Alert System activation</td>
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<td><strong>Event Codes</strong></td>
<td>A three character ASCII code in the Emergency Alert System headers that denotes the type or cause of emergency event</td>
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<td><strong>Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</strong></td>
<td>One of the three federal agencies that administer the Emergency Alert System</td>
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<td><strong>FIPS(Federal Information Processing System) Number</strong></td>
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A five character ASCII code in the Emergency Alert System headers that represent those counties affected by an Emergency Alert System activation, as defined by the Federal Information Processing System that assigns each state and territory with their respective counties a five digit number

**Header Code**

A single string of intelligent digital Emergency Alert System ASCII data that includes the originator, event, location, time period, and other basic information concerning an emergency; three header codes precede the voice warning message

**Julian Calendar**

A method of specifying the date by the number of days which have passed since the first day of January in a year

**Key Source**

A source which is central to the dissemination of emergency alerts and information, such as National Primary, State Primary, State Relay or Local Primary broadcast stations or cable systems

**Local Primary (LP)**

A key source within an Emergency Alert System Local Area that is the primary source of Emergency Alert System programming for that area

**Location Code**

An ASCII code in an Emergency Alert System header that specifies the location of an emergency utilizing the five character Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) code of a state and county, and a sixth character to designate nine divisions of a county

**Low Power Television (LPTV)**

A low-power power television transmitting station which may originate original programming from a local source

**Mapbook**

A list of broadcast stations and cable systems and their designation delineated by state and local area for use by other stations to determine the best source of Emergency Alert System monitoring; an FCC generated attachment to every state plan

**Mark Frequency**
The audio frequency of audio frequency shift keying (AFSK) modulation that corresponds to a digital bit of one (1); the mark frequency of Emergency Alert System codes is 6250/3 Hz, or approximately 2083.33 Hz

**Monitoring Assignment**

The off-air broadcast or cable sources of Emergency Alert System activations and programming as given in the FCC Mapbook and the state plan

**National Control Point Procedures**

Those national Emergency Alert System procedures used only by national networks and program suppliers

**National Information Center (NIC)**

A source of official federal government information

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**

One of the three federal agencies that participate in Emergency Alert System

**National Periodic Test (NPT)**

A test of National Primary Emergency Alert System sources

**National Primary (NP)**

A primary source of Presidential or other national Emergency Alert System activations and programming, including broadcast stations involved with the PEP system and EAN Networks

**National Weather Service (NWS)**

An operation of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that is directly responsible for issuing local weather-related emergency alerts and warnings in addition to day-to-day forecasts and other weather activities

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio (NWR)**

A service of the National Weather Service that provides to a local area continuous broadcasts of the latest weather information and any weather-related emergency warnings using one of seven VHF radio channels

**Non-participating National (NN)**

An Emergency Alert System source (usually a broadcast station) that has elected not to participate in the National-level Emergency Alert System and removes its carrier from the air if a national-level activation occurs

**Operating Handbook**
A document issued by the FCC that instructs broadcast station and cable personnel of the actions they must take during an activation of Emergency Alert System

**Operator Interruption**

The transmission of an Emergency Alert System activation which has been manually initiated by broadcast station or cable system personnel

**Originator Code**

A three character ASCII code in an Emergency Alert System header which denotes the source of an activation

**Participating National (PN)**

Broadcast stations, cable systems, or MDS stations which monitor primary sources of Emergency Alert System programming and directly feed emergency alerts to the public

**Preselected Code**

An Emergency Alert System event which the operator of Emergency Alert System equipment has chosen to be automatically encoded and retransmitted upon reception

**Primary Entry Point (PEP)**

Key broadcast stations throughout the U.S. which together can provide national emergency information

**Protocol**

A standard set of guidelines by which digital information encoded and decoded, including the common code structure, character set used, the sequence and timing of codes, and modulation technique used for radio transmission

**Program Priorities**

The precedence of the information that must be transmitted during an Emergency Alert System activation, namely national, local, and state activations in that order

**Radio Broadcast Data System (RBDS)**

A defined protocol for data that is transmitted on the 57 kHz subcarrier of FM radio broadcast stations utilized mainly by consumer devices equipped to receive it

**Required Monthly Test (RMT)**
A coordinated monthly test of Emergency Alert System operations involving the full receiving and transmission of Emergency Alert System codes, Attention Signal, Emergency Alert System test programming, and Emergency Alert System end-of-message (EOM) codes

**Required Weekly Test (RWT)**

An independent weekly test of Emergency Alert System equipment only involving the decoding and encoding of Emergency Alert System header codes and end-of-message (EOM) codes

**RS232**

A common interface standard which specifies the mechanical connection, electrical signals, and the function of the signals carried across the interface

**Space Frequency**

The audio frequency of AFSK modulation that corresponds to a digital bit of zero (0); the space frequency of Emergency Alert System codes is 6250/4 Hz, or 1562.5 Hz

**State/Local Plan**

A document that details monitoring assignments, actions to be taken in emergency activations, and other guidance for broadcasters and cable personnel in use of the Emergency Alert System

**State Primary (SP)**

A primary source of Emergency Alert System state programming which can originate with a Governor or designated representative, such as a state’s emergency operations officer

**State Relay (SR)**

An entity which receives and retransmits Emergency Alert System activations in a State Relay Network to assist in bringing a state activation to all Emergency Alert System Local Area of a state

**State Relay Network**

A system of facilities used to distribute State Emergency Alert System activations and programming across a state

**Subcarrier**

An inaudible portion of the broadcast signal that is added to the program signal of the FM or TV sound and these can include the FM 57 kHz, 67 kHz, 69 kHz, and 92 kHz and the TV Subsidiary Communications Services
**Subsidiary Communications Services**

A subcarrier of television and FM stations providing a second audio programming source

**UTC**

Coordinated Universal Time, the world-wide common time standard that is used in Emergency Alert System headers for time stamp

**Valid Code**

An Emergency Alert System header which has been matched bit-for-bit with one of two other received headers thereby checked for validity

**WRSAME**

Weather Radio Specific Area Message Encoder, a device used by National Weather Service to broadcast WRSAME data on the National Weather Radio for day-to-day forecasts and weather related emergency announcements