



PUBLIC NOTICE

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PUBLIC SAFETY AND HOMELAND SECURITY BUREAU RELEASES ITS INITIAL FINDINGS REGARDING THE 2017 NATIONWIDE EAS TEST

PS Docket No. 15-94

This Public Notice provides an initial overview of the 2017 nationwide EAS test results. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) and the National Weather Service (NWS), conducted a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) at 2:20 PM EDT on September 27, 2017. The nationwide test was designed to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the EAS, with an emphasis on testing FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), the integrated gateway through which common alerting protocol-based (CAP-based) EAS alerts are disseminated to EAS Participants. The test also provided the Commission with an opportunity to evaluate improvements implemented by EAS Participants since the 2016 nationwide EAS test, and for the Commission to monitor the performance of EAS Participants in transmitting EAS messages.

EAS Participants nationwide were required to submit identifying information in Form One of the EAS Test Reporting System (ETRS) on or prior to August 28, 2017. EAS Participants were required to submit Form Two "day of test" results that indicated whether they successfully received and retransmitted the test alert by midnight, September 27, 2017.¹ EAS Participants were required to file ETRS Form Three, which specified how they received the alert and identified any complications they experienced during the test, on or before November 13, 2017. Individual filings in the ETRS are presumptively confidential, so the following observations are based on aggregated, anonymized data derived from these filings.²

¹ For those EAS Participants affected by the 2017 hurricanes, we extended the deadline for filing corrections to Form One and for filing Form Two to November 13, 2017. See *ETRS Filing Dates for EAS Participants Affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, or Maria Extended to Monday, November 13, 2017*, Public Notice, 32 FCC Rcd 7015 (PSSB 2017).

² The observations presented in this *Public Notice* are preliminary and are subject to change as the Bureau collaborates with FEMA to further analyze the results of the 2017 nationwide EAS test.

Key Observations from Initial Test Results

Initial test data indicate that the majority of EAS Participants successfully received and retransmitted the National Periodic Test (NPT) code used for the test. Overall, performance appears to have improved over what we observed in the 2016 nationwide EAS test:³

- 19,069 radio and television broadcasters, cable systems, Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) providers, wireline video systems, and other EAS Participants in all 50 states and the U.S. territories filed their receipt and retransmission results in the ETRS after the nationwide EAS test (20,389 did so in 2016).⁴
- 95.8% of test participants successfully received the test alert (95.4% successfully received in 2016).⁵ Table 1 breaks down these results by participant type.

Table 1. Alert Receipt by Participant Type

EAS Participant Type	2017 Test Participants	Successfully Received Alert in 2017		2016 Test Participants	Successfully Received Alert in 2016	
		#	%		#	%
Radio Broadcasters	13,243	12,882	97.3%	14,521	13,872	95.5%
Television Broadcasters	2,734	2,421	88.6%	2,601	2,532	97.3%
Cable Systems	2,808	2,688	95.7%	2,968	2,758	92.9%
IPTV Provider	227	221	97.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wireline Video System	48	47	97.9%	89	79	88.8%
Other ⁶	9	9	100.0%	210	206	98.1%
All Total	19,069	18,268	95.8%	20,389	19,447	95.4%

³ FCC, Report: September 28, 2016 Nationwide EAS Test (April 2017), https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-344518A1.pdf (2016 Nationwide EAS Test Report).

⁴ *Id.* at 7.

⁵ *Id.* at 10-11. A “test participant,” as defined in the 2016 Nationwide EAS Test Report, is a unique EAS Participant that completed, at a minimum, ETRS Forms One and Two. *See id.* at 9, n.16 (defining test participant).

⁶ “Other” includes “non-cable multichannel video programming distributors,” “cable resellers,” and other entities reported in the ETRS but not defined as EAS Participants in the EAS rules. We observe that the number of filings in the “Other” category is lower in 2017 than in 2016. In 2016, “Other” included IPTV providers. In 2017, as recommended in the 2016 Nationwide EAS Test Report (*id.* at 13), IPTV Provider became a separate category, which likely accounts for the lower numbers in both the “Other” and “Wireline Video System” System categories.

- 91.9% of test participants successfully retransmitted the test alert (85.8% successfully retransmitted in 2016).⁷ Table 2 breaks down these results by participant type.

Table 2. Alert Retransmission by Participant Type

EAS Participant Type	2017 Test Participants	Successfully Retransmitted Alert in 2017		2016 Test Participants	Successfully Retransmitted Alert in 2016	
		#	%		#	%
Radio Broadcasters	13,243	12,451	94.0%	14,521	12,771	88.0%
Television Broadcasters	2,734	2,283	83.5%	2,601	2,218	85.3%
Cable Systems	2,808	2,535	90.3%	2,968	2,263	76.2%
IPTV Provider	227	196	86.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wireline Video System	48	45	93.8%	89	44	49.4%
Other	9	9	100.0%	210	198	94.3%
All Total	19,069	17,519	91.9%	20,389	17,494	85.8%

- 89.0% of test participants that filed Form Three reported no complications in receiving the test alert (81.5% reported no complications receiving the alert in 2016).⁸
- 88.3% of test participants that filed Form Three reported no complications in retransmitting the test alert (80.2% reported no complications retransmitting the alert in 2016).⁹
- 207 test participants reported to have retransmitted the IPAWS-generated Spanish language version of the alert (75 retransmitted in Spanish in 2016).¹⁰
- 40.7% of test participants that filed Form Three and received the alert reported to have first received it over-the-air (56.5% in 2016), while 59.3% of such test participants reported to have first received the alert from IPAWS (43.5% in 2016).¹¹

Together with FEMA, the Bureau will continue to analyze the results of the 2017 nationwide EAS test and release more detailed findings when available. For further information, please contact Maureen McCarthy, Attorney Advisor, Policy and Licensing Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, at (202) 418-0011 or maureen.mccarthy@fcc.gov.

⁷ *Id.* at 10-11.

⁸ *Id.* at 12-13.

⁹ *Id.* at 12-13.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 12.

¹¹ *Id.* at 11-12.

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