

Federal Communications Commission

§ 11.11

SOURCE: 59 FR 67092, Dec. 28, 1994, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 11.1 Purpose.

This part contains rules and regulations providing for an Emergency Alert System (EAS). The EAS provides the President with the capability to provide immediate communications and information to the general public at the National, State and Local Area levels during periods of national emergency. The rules in this part describe the required technical standards and operational procedures of the EAS for AM, FM and TV broadcast stations, cable systems and other participating entities. The EAS may be used to provide the heads of State and local government, or their designated representatives, with a means of emergency communication with the public in their State or Local Area.

§ 11.11 The Emergency Alert System (EAS).

(a) The EAS is composed of broadcast networks; cable networks and program suppliers; AM, FM Low Power FM (LPFM) and TV broadcast stations; Class A television (CA) stations; Low Power TV (LPTV) stations; cable systems; wireless cable systems which may consist of Multipoint Distribution Service (MDS), Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Service (MMDS), or Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS) stations; and other entities and industries operating on an organized basis during emergencies at the National, State and local levels. It requires that at a minimum all participants use a common EAS protocol, as defined in §11.31, to send and receive emergency alerts in accordance with the effective dates in the following tables:

TIMETABLE BROADCAST STATIONS

Requirement	AM and FM	TV	FM Class D	LPTV ¹	Class A TV
Two-tone encoder ^{2,3}	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Two-tone decoder ^{4,5}	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
EAS decoder	Y 1/1/97	Y 1/1/97	Y 1/1/97	Y 1/1/97	Y
EAS encoder	Y 1/1/97	Y 1/1/97	N	N	Y
Audio message	Y 1/1/97	Y 1/1/97	Y 1/1/97	Y 1/1/97	Y
Video message	N/A	Y 1/1/97	N/A	Y 1/1/97	Y

¹ LPTV stations that operate as television broadcast translator stations are exempt from the requirement to have EAS equipment.

² Effective July 1, 1995, the two-tone signal must be 8–25 seconds.

³ Effective January 1, 1998, the two-tone signal may only be used to provide audio alerts to audiences before EAS emergency messages and the required monthly tests.

⁴ Effective July 1, 1995, the two-tone decoder must respond to two-tone signals of 3–4 seconds duration.

⁵ Effective January 1, 1998, the two-tone decoder will no longer be used.

EAS REQUIREMENTS

CABLE SYSTEMS

A. Cable systems serving fewer than 5,000 subscribers from a headend must either provide the national level EAS message on all programmed channels—including the required testing—by October 1, 2002, or comply with the following EAS requirements. All other cable systems must comply with B.

B. EAS Equipment Requirement	System size and effective dates		
	≥10,000 subscribers	≥5,000 but <10,000 subscribers	<5,000 subscribers
Two-tone signal from storage device ¹	Y 12/31/98	Y 10/1/02	Y 10/1/02
Two-tone decoder	N	N	N
EAS decoder	Y 12/31/98	Y 10/1/02	Y 10/1/02
EAS encoder	Y 12/31/98	Y 10/1/02	Y 10/1/02
Audio and Video EAS Message on all channels.	Y 12/31/98	Y 10/1/02	N
Video interrupt and audio alert message on all channels; ² Audio and Video EAS message on at least one channel.	N	N	Y 10/1/02

¹ Two-tone signal is only used to provide an audio alert to audience before EAS emergency messages and required monthly test. The two-tone signal must be 8–25 seconds in duration.

² The Video interrupt must cause all channels that carry programming to flash for the duration of the EAS emergency message. The audio alert must give the channel where the EAS messages are carried and be repeated for the duration of the EAS message.

Note: Programmed channels do not include channels used for the transmission of data such as interactive games.