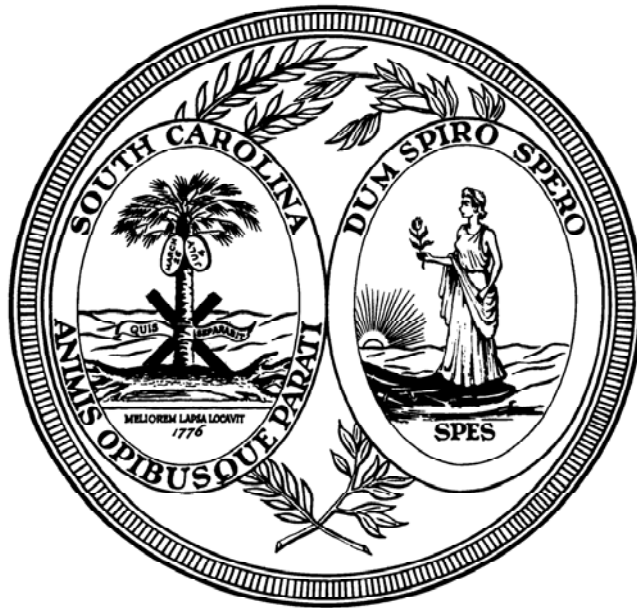


# **SOUTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM**



Provisionally updated with interim changes, 1 May, 2009

## **STATE PLAN**

## **FOREWORD**

**This plan was developed under Part 11 - Emergency Alert System of the Federal Communications Commission rules and regulations in coordination with the South Carolina Emergency Communications Committee.**

**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM PLAN**

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## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this document is to provide and explain the procedures agreed upon by South Carolina's broadcast, cable and telecommunications industry and by federal, state, and local government officials to ensure that warnings, emergency information and instructions are available to South Carolina residents during emergencies and disasters.

## **II. AUTHORITY**

Part 11, FCC Rules and Regulations.

## **III. INTRODUCTION**

This plan provides procedures for use by government officials, the broadcast media, and cable television media to disseminate emergency information and warnings to the general public in South Carolina, or any portion thereof, at the request of designated federal, state and local officials.

Acceptance of this plan or participation in it shall not be deemed as a relinquishment of program control and shall not be deemed to prohibit a broadcast licensee or cable operator from exercising independent discretion and responsibility in any situation. Stations and cable systems originating or relaying Emergency Alert System (EAS) emergency communications shall be deemed to have conferred rebroadcast authority. The concept of the management of each broadcast station and cable system exercising discretion regarding the transmission of EAS emergency information and instructions to the general public is provided by Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules and regulations.

The full, statewide South Carolina EAS is activated by a request from any authorized federal or state official to the EAS State Primary-1 (SP-1) source.

The SP-1 for the State of South Carolina is WCOS-FM (97.5) in Columbia. The Back-up State Primary (SP-2) is WLTR-FM (91.3) in Columbia.

Nothing in this plan prohibits any station from initiating its own EAS announcement originating from observations of its own personnel. (FCC 11.55).

FCC rules stipulate that all broadcast station licensees and cable systems monitor the Local Primary (LP) sources for their EAS local areas. (FCC 11.52)

Radio and television stations in South Carolina should monitor two EAS sources in the local EAS area for full participation in the state plan. Cable

operators in South Carolina should monitor two EAS sources in the cable system's local EAS area for full participation.

In addition to the required monitoring assignments, stations may optionally monitor National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio.

#### **IV. EAS ACTIVATION PROCEDURES**

The procedure for relaying emergency information throughout the statewide EAS is through "over-the-air" FM relay and satellite.

The EAS State Relay sources are the SR's in each of the local areas. WCOS-FM in Columbia is the EAS State Primary (SP-1). WLTR-FM in Columbia is the EAS State Primary-2 or SP-2.

When WCOS-FM (SP-1) originates a statewide EAS message:

WCOS-FM, Columbia .... notifies	WJMX-FM, Florence WSSL-FM, Greenville WBBQ-FM, Augusta, GA WIWF-FM, Charleston, SC WRHI/WRHM-FM, Rock Hill
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WSSL-FM, Greenville .... notifies	WFBC-FM, Greenville
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or, when WLTR-FM (SP-2) originates a statewide EAS message:

WLTR-FM, Columbia .... notifies	WEPR-FM, Greenville WLJK-FM, Aiken WSCI-FM, Charleston WRJA-FM, Sumter
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WRJA-FM, Sumter .... notifies	WHMC-FM, Conway
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WEPR-FM, Greenville .... notifies	WNSC-FM, Rock Hill
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The digital header of the EAS message will define the locations or addresses of the message.

**V. PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO ACTIVATE THE SYSTEM.** Requests for nationwide activation originate from the national level. Statewide activations can originate at the national or state levels. Requests for activations of one or more EAS operational areas can originate at the state or local levels.

- A. NATIONAL LEVEL:** Activation of the national-level EAS for Presidential messages is given highest priority under federal regulation. Such an activation, which would in turn activate the full, statewide South Carolina EAS, is authorized by the President of the United States, and the process is specified by procedures. (See the National Procedures section of the EAS Operating Handbook issued by the FCC.)
- B. LOCAL LEVEL:** Local-level activation is second in priority to national-level Presidential messages under federal regulation. Activations of any of the seven EAS local areas in South Carolina in their entirety should be used only for emergencies of greatest time-sensitivity. In situations of greatest urgency, the local emergency manager is authorized to request activation of one or more entire EAS operational areas by contacting the SCEMD operations/duty officer through the SCEMD Warning Point. Many situations requiring public notification are best handled using normal means to disseminate information through local media outlets. Nothing in this plan precludes agreements or arrangements between municipal- or county-level governments and media outlets for the dissemination of emergency information.
- C. STATE LEVEL:** Under federal regulation, state activations are third in priority after Presidential and local activations. When any state-level emergency exists, activation of the South Carolina EAS will be accomplished through the EAS State Primary source, WCOS-FM in Columbia.
1. Any request for statewide activation of the EAS will be routed through SCEMD.
  2. The following individuals may request a state-level activation of EAS:
    - a. The Governor or the Governor's designated representative.
    - b. The director of the S. C. Emergency Management Division or the director's designated representative.
- D. THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE:** This government agency will request activation of EAS as follows:
1. For Hurricane Warnings: The EAS digital header originator and event codes are WXR and HUW.

2. **For Flash Flood Warnings:** The EAS digital header originator and event codes are WXR and FFW.
3. **For Tornado Warnings:** The EAS digital header originator and event codes are WXR and TOR.
4. **For Tornado Watches:** The EAS digital header originator and event codes are WXR and TOA. Normally, only one EAS activation will be requested for each EAS local area.

The National Weather Service is authorized to request an EAS activation at the regional, state or local level.

- E. **OTHERS:** In addition, the following digital event codes are required activations.
1. **CAE for Amber Alert,** the system activated by the State Law Enforcement Division to rescue abducted children.
  2. **CEM for Civil Emergency Messages,** including emergencies involving nuclear facilities.
  3. **EVI for Evacuation Immediately.**
  4. **DMO for Practice/Demonstrate.**

## VI. **FORMAT FOR REQUESTING ACTIVATION OF EAS**

The person authorized to request activation will contact the control point. The national-level activation control point in South Carolina is the NP-1 station, WCOS-FM in Columbia. WCOS-FM in Columbia also is the SP-1 control point station for statewide activation by SCEMD. Each of the seven EAS local area LP-1 stations is the area control point station for SCEMD. The control point for activation of one or more of the seven EAS local areas by local emergency managers is the SCEMD 24-hour Warning Point. All emergency notification messages must be no longer than two minutes in duration.

- A. **NATIONAL LEVEL:**  
See FCC EAS Operating Handbook, National Procedures Section. Checklist, pages 1, 2, and 3.
- B. **STATEWIDE OR EAS OPERATIONAL AREA ACTIVATION:**  
Requests for statewide activations can originate at the national or state levels. Requests for activations of one or more EAS operational areas can originate at the state or local levels.

1. **State-level Activations.** At the direction of the Governor, the director of SCEMD, or their designees, activation of one or more EAS local areas can originate at the state level. In an incident necessitating such activation, the appropriate EAS message will be developed by the SCEMD operations or duty officer and/or the state EAS coordinator. The message will be formatted into the EAS encoder/decoder and will be distributed. A statewide activation would involve all seven EAS local areas.
2. **Local-level Activations.** When a county emergency manager or that person's designee requests activation of EAS, the SCEMD operations or duty officer will format the emergency information provided by the county emergency manager or designee into a message for the EAS encoder/decoder and will distribute it.

**C. NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE:**

To ensure the quickest and most timely dissemination of weather warnings, EAS SR-1 and LP-1 sources must receive EAS weather messages from either their area NOAA Weather Radio station, the NWS Weather Wire (GTE), or from the cooperative news services such as the Associated Press, Reuters or United Press International. The news service messages will be printed to hard copy. The GTE Weather Wire equipment can be programmed to alert operators upon receipt of an EAS request.

Voice-audio warning messages from NOAA Weather Radio will be preceded by a 1050 Hz alert tone, or if digital encoding equipment is available, preceded by a digital protocol (identical to EAS protocol) and by a 1050 Hz alert tone.

**VII. BROADCAST STATION AND CABLE SYSTEM PROCEDURES**

- A. **NATIONAL LEVEL:** See FCC EAS Operating Handbook (National Procedures Section).
- B. **STATE LEVEL:** Monitor and/or carry programming from Local Area State Relay (SR-1) or Local Primary (LP-1).
- C. **LOCAL LEVEL:** Monitor and/or carry programming from Local Area State Relay (SR-1) or Local Primary (LP-1).
- D. **NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE:** The National Weather Service would not be involved in national activations.

## **VIII. AUTHENTICATION**

- A. NATIONAL.** Authentication lists for national activations are furnished annually by the FCC (EAS red envelope).
- B. STATE.** One authentication list will be used for activations of entire local areas and for statewide activations. SCEMD will furnish the list to the SP-1 station, all SR-1 and SR-2 stations, LP-1 and LP-2 stations; the Governor's Office; all 46 county emergency management offices; and NWS offices in Columbia, Charleston, Greer and Wilmington.

## **IX. TESTS**

- A.** All broadcast stations and cable systems are required to carry out weekly tests as provided by FCC Rules and Regulations (Section 11.61). In addition, all broadcast stations and cable systems are required to enter a minimum of one weekly test in their logs.
- B.** The monthly test will be at the discretion of the State Relay (SR-1) / Local Primary (LP-1) station in coordination with the S.C. SECC and the local area emergency communications committee.
- C.** One scheduled statewide test will be held annually. That test will normally occur during the observance of Severe Weather Awareness Week, usually in February.

## **X. PROCEDURES FOR TELEVISION STATIONS**

- A. NATIONAL LEVEL:** See National Procedures section of the EAS Operating Handbook issued by the FCC. Note: EAS Presidential messages must be carried live or immediately upon receipt.
- B. STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS AND NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE:**
  - 1. MONITORING ASSIGNMENTS.** Each television station (since January 1, 1997) and each cable system (since July 1, 1997) is required to monitor two sources within its EAS Local Primary area: the LP-1 station and the LP-2 station. Additionally, television and cable systems in South Carolina are strongly encouraged to monitor a third source in their EAS local areas, and are not precluded from monitoring additional LP stations in their areas of dominant influence. Control room installation of visual and audible alerting devices activated by the EAS two-tone and/or digital signals transmitted by the LP is strongly recommended.

## **2. TELECASTING AN EAS ALERT**

**EAS messages are most valuable to the viewing public when they are carried live.**

**Television stations shall fulfill the video portion of an EAS activation by transmitting a visual message containing the originator, event, location and the valid time period as contained in the EAS digital header signal of an EAS message.**

**If the message is a video crawl, it shall be displayed at the top of the television screen or where it will not interfere with other visual messages. FCC 11.51 (D).**

**Cable systems must fulfill the video portion of an EAS activation by transmitting a visual interruption on all channels and a visual EAS message on at least one channel. The visual message shall contain the Originator, Event, Location and the valid time period as contained in the EAS digital header signal of an EAS message. If the message is a video crawl, it shall be displayed at the top of the subscriber's television screen or where it will not interfere with other visual messages. (FCC 11.51, G-3)**

**Cable systems may elect not to interrupt EAS messages from broadcast stations if a written agreement between the systems and stations is in effect.**

## **3. CABLE TELEVISION FRANCHISE AUTHORITIES**

**This plan in no way prohibits agreements between local cable television franchise authorities and local cable television companies to provide audio over-rides or similar emergency alerting capabilities in addition to those required by the FCC.**

**However, local franchise authorities are encouraged to utilize EAS to disseminate emergency notifications by contacting their local emergency management offices to request activation of EAS. Such action facilitates the communication of emergency information to the maximum number of people in the shortest possible time through both cable and non-cable media outlets.**

## **XI. MONITORING ASSIGNMENTS BY LOCAL AREA**

All primary stations are required to monitor the Local Primary (LP-1) and “Alternate” Primary (LP-2) and are requested to monitor NOAA in their respective operational area.

### **MIDLANDS**

**WCOS-FM (NP-1, SP-1, LP-1) monitors: WLTR-FM, WTCB-FM, NOAA and Washington, DC.**

**WLTR-FM (SP-2) monitors: WCOS-FM, WTCB-FM and NOAA.**

**WRJA-FM (SR-2) monitors: WLTR-FM, WTCB-FM, and NOAA.**

**WTCB-FM (LP-2) monitors: WCOS-FM, WLTR-FM, and NOAA.**

All radio and television stations with city of license and cable operators with their franchise agreements in the counties of Bamberg, Calhoun, Clarendon, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, Richland, Saluda and Sumter, which compose the Midlands Local Area, will monitor WCOS-FM, WTCB-FM and NOAA.

### **PEE DEE**

**WCOS-FM (SR-1) State Relay**

**WRJA-FM (SR-2) Alternate State Relay**

**WJMX-FM (LP-1) monitors: WCOS-FM, WRJA-FM, WYNN-FM, and NOAA.**

**WYNN-FM (LP-2) monitors: WCOS-FM, WRJA-FM, WJMX-FM, and NOAA.**

All radio and television stations with city of license and cable operators with their franchise agreements in the counties of Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Lee, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg, which compose the Pee Dee Local Area, will monitor WJMX-FM, WYNN-FM and NOAA.

### **GRAND STRAND**

**WHMC-FM (SR-2) Alternate State Relay**

**WYAV-FM (LP-1) monitors: WHMC-FM, WLFF-FM, and NOAA.**

**WHMC-FM (SR-2) monitors: WLTR-FM, WYAV-FM, WLFF-FM, and NOAA.**

**WLFF-FM (LP-2) monitors: WHMC-FM, WYAV-FM, and NOAA.**

All radio and television stations with city of license and cable operators with their franchise agreements in the counties of Georgetown and Horry, which compose the Grand Strand Local Area, will monitor WYAV-FM, WLFF-FM and NOAA.

### **LOW COUNTRY**

**WIWF-FM (SR-1, LP-1) monitors: WSCI-FM, WEZL-FM, and NOAA.**

**WSCI-FM (SR-2) monitors: WLTR-FM, WIWF-FM, WEZL-FM, and NOAA.**

**WEZL-FM (LP-2) monitors: WSCI-FM, WIWF-FM, and NOAA.**



## EAS EVENT CODES

Nature of Activation	Event Code
Avalanche Warning	AVW
Closed Circuit Test	CCT
Earthquake Warning	EQW
Fire Warning	FRW
Fog Warning	FOW
Gas Leak Emergency	GLE
Icy Road Warning	IRW
Industrial Plant Emergency	IPE
Law Enforcement Emergency	LEE
Local Area Advisory	LAA
Local Area Emergency	LAE
Marine Warning	MRW
Military Emergency	MLE
Nuclear Power Plant Emergency	NPE
Nuclear Power Plant Test	NPT
Radiological Emergency	RDE
Railroad Emergency	RRE
School Closing Emergency	SCE
Shelter in Place Advisory	SIP
State Advisory	STA
State Emergency	STE
Toxic Spill Emergency	TSE
911 Telephone Outage Emergency	TOE

### FCC-Mandated Event Codes

<b>Weather Notification:</b>	
Blizzard Warning	BZW
Flash Flood Statement	FFS
Flash Flood Warning	FFW
Flash Flood Watch	FFA
Flood Statement	FLS
Flood Warning	FLW
Flood Watch	FLA
High Wind Warning	HWW
High Wind Watch	HWA
Severe Thunderstorm Warning	SVR
Severe Thunderstorm Watch	SVA
Severe Weather Statement	SVS
Special Weather Statement	SPS
Tornado Warning	TOR
Tornado Watch	TOA
Winter Storm Warning	WSW
Winter Storm Watch	WSA

## EAS EVENT CODES

Nature of Activation	Event Code
Hurricane Watch	HUA
Hurricane Warning	HUW
Hurricane Statement	HLS
<b>National Notifications:</b>	
Emergency Action Notification	EAN
Emergency Action Termination	EAT
National Information Center	NIC
<b>Emergency Management:</b>	
Administrative Message	ADR
Evacuation Immediate	EVI
Civil Emergency Message	CEM
Practice/Demo Warning	DMO
<b>Testing:</b>	
National Periodic Test	NPT
Required Monthly Test	RMT
Required Weekly Test	RWT



## FEDERAL INFORMATION PROCESSING STANDARDS (FIPS) CODES

State Name: South Carolina      State Code: 45      Alphabetic Code: SC

<u>Code</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Name</u>
001	Abbeville		
003	Aiken	051	Horry
005	Allendale	053	Jasper
007	Anderson	055	Kershaw
009	Bamberg	057	Lancaster
		059	Laurens
011	Barnwell		
013	Beaufort	061	Lee
015	Berkeley	063	Lexington
017	Calhoun	065	McCormick
019	Charleston	067	Marion
		069	Marlboro
021	Cherokee		
023	Chester	071	Newberry
025	Chesterfield	073	Oconee
027	Clarendon	075	Orangeburg
029	Colleton	077	Pickens
		079	Richland
031	Darlington		
033	Dillon	081	Saluda
035	Dorchester	083	Spartanburg
037	Edgefield	085	Sumter
039	Fairfield	087	Union
		089	Williamsburg
041	Florence		
043	Georgetown	091	York
045	Greenville		
047	Greenwood		
049	Hampton		



# South Carolina National Weather Service Areas

