

FCC Consumer Advisory Committee
Recommendation Regarding The National EAS Test

On November 9, 2011, at approximately 2:00 PM (Eastern Standard Time), the first nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) will take place. The national EAS test will be conducted jointly by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through its Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service, the three federal agencies that have EAS management responsibilities. EAS Participants currently participate in state-level monthly tests and local-level weekly tests, but no top-down review of the entire system has ever been undertaken. The FCC, along with the FEMA, will use the results of this nationwide test to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the EAS as a public alert mechanism.

Prior to the test, FEMA and the FCC are conducting targeted public outreach to organizations, including organizations that represent people with hearing disabilities to prepare that community for the national EAS test. Outreach will include specific information tailored to the needs of those with hearing disabilities.

The Consumer Advisory Committee specifically recommends, that in addition assessing the reliability and effectiveness of the public alerting mechanisms of EAS, the FCC and FEMA specifically examine (1) the effectiveness of its outreach efforts to the public (including outreach targeted to persons with hearing, vision, and dual sensory loss disabilities); and (2) the accessibility of information available to consumers (including persons with hearing disabilities) during the National EAS test.

The Consumer Advisory Committee further recommends that FEMA, the FCC, and other EAS partners specifically conduct targeted outreach to, and design future EAS tests and information, to meet the needs of consumers with hearing, vision, and dual sensory loss disabilities.

Adopted: November 4, 2011
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Respectfully submitted:

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FCC Consumer Advisory Committee