

**Media Contact:**

Rochelle Cohen, (202) 418-1162  
rochelle.cohen@fcc.gov

**For Immediate Release****FCC PROPOSES STRENGTHENING THE EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM**

WASHINGTON, January 28, 2016 – The Federal Communications Commission today proposed rules to strengthen the Emergency Alert System (EAS), the national public warning system through which broadcasters, cable television providers, and other participants deliver emergency information, such as weather alerts, to Americans. The proposals are intended to improve EAS by facilitating involvement on the state and local levels, supporting greater testing and awareness of the system, leveraging technological advances, and enhancing EAS security.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) adopted today by the Commission, aimed at promoting community preparedness and ensuring that the public receives the most effective alerts during emergencies, includes proposals to:

- Encourage more strategic engagement in EAS at the state and local levels by streamlining, automating, and improving the utility of state EAS plans filed with the FCC;
- Authorize state and local alert originators and EAS participants to conduct periodic “live” EAS tests, provided that steps are taken to prevent public confusion; and
- Allow federal, state, and local governments to issue public service announcements using the EAS Attention Signal (*i.e.*, sound), provided that they are presented in a non-misleading and technically harmless manner.

The NPRM also seeks comment on issues including:

- Measures to enhance EAS security, such as whether EAS participants should be required to submit an annual certification that they are following EAS security best practices;
- Whether technological advancements have improved the ability of cable providers to offer more specific and informative alert content and, if so, whether the Commission should retain certain related rule provisions;
- Assessing and meeting public expectations for receiving alerts as content is viewed across different technology platforms; and
- How community-based alerting exercises can best meet the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency and those with disabilities.

Further information about EAS is available at <https://www.fcc.gov/general/emergency-alert-system-eas>.

Action by the Commission January 28, 2016 by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 16-005). Chairman Wheeler and Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel, and Pai approving and issuing

separate statements. Commissioner O'Rielly approving in part and dissenting in part and issuing separate statement.

PS Docket No. 15-94; PS Docket No. 15-91

###

**Office of Media Relations: (202) 418-0500**

**TTY: (888) 835-5322**

**Twitter: @FCC**

**[www.fcc.gov/office-media-relations](http://www.fcc.gov/office-media-relations)**

*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*