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Hanford, CA 93230-5236

April 5, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR: San Joaquin Valley FCC Local Area County Governments

FROM: Steven W. Mendenhall  
Meteorologist in Charge  
WFO San Joaquin Valley – Hanford, CA

SUBJECT: Emergency Alert System (EAS) Communications Operations  
Orders (COO)

Attached you will find the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Communications Operations Orders (COO) for the San Joaquin Valley Local Area Emergency Alert System (EAS). This version is dated October 2008 and replaces the previously approved version dated March 2003. ***This update of the San Joaquin Valley EAS COO addresses the addition of the California Highway Patrol Law Enforcement Warning into the EAS activation policy as well as changes to EAS codes.***

The EAS is configured in such a way that LP radio stations, local government, or the National Weather Service (NWS) can initiate an EAS warning message for the broadcast media and cable television outlets in the San Joaquin Valley FCC Local Area. The EAS COO for the San Joaquin Valley Local Area includes a provision for the NWS to aid Local Area counties in activating an EAS warning message

If you have any questions, you may address them to Warning Coordination Meteorologist James Brotherton, NWS EAS Focal Point, at the San Joaquin Valley Office at 559-584-3752, or to EAS Co-Chairman David Whitehead at Farmworkers Network at 661-747-3110, or to EAS Co-Chairman Rusty Birchfield at 3 Degrees Communications and Consulting, LLC, at 661-428-8888.

Attachment

## ATTACHMENT

San Joaquin Valley EAS Plan Distribution (October 15, 2008)

### Committee Members:

David Whitehead, LECC Co-Chairman, Farmworkers Network  
Rusty Birchfield, LECC Co-Chairman, American General Media  
James Brotherton, LECC Vice-Chair, NWS Operations  
Joe Mauck, LECC Vice-Chair, Radio  
Ron Neil, LECC Vice-Chair, Television  
Bob Vogel, LECC Vice-Chair, Cable  
Nick Norton, LECC Vice-Chair, CHP Operations  
John Downing, LECC Vice-Chair, County Communications

### Distribution:

Dave Hudson, KFSN TV-30 (LP2 Station)  
Jim Middleton, Mariposa County  
Ed Banks, Merced County  
Janet Stanovich, Madera County  
Kenneth Austin, Fresno County  
Trudy Maletta, Kings County  
Amber Smith, Tulare County  
Paul Calkins, CA OES Region V  
Kevin Negata, CA OES Region V  
NWS Western Region Headquarters, MSD  
Jim Gabbert, Chair, California State Emergency Communications Committee

**Federal Communications Commission Plan**

**for the**

**EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM**

**COMMUNICATION OPERATIONS ORDERS**

**San Joaquin Valley, CA, FCC Local Area**

**October 15, 2008**

This is a part of the State of California and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Emergency Alert System (EAS) Plan. The following Federal Information Processing Identifier (FIPS) Codes are associated with the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) Local Emergency Communications Committee (LECC) EAS Plan.

LECC Local Area;

County of:	FIPS Code:
Madera	06039
Mariposa	06043
Merced	06047
Fresno	06019
Kings	06031
Tulare	06107

Adjoining County:	FIPS Code:
Tuolumne	06109
Stanislaus	06099
Santa Clara	06085
San Benito	06069
Monterey	06053
San Luis Obispo	06079
Kern	06029
Inyo	06027
Mono	06051



**Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No. 2:  
EVENT CODES**

In addition to the Event Codes required to be carried by the Federal Communications Commission, the following Event Codes shall be carried by all participants in the San Joaquin Valley, CA, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Local Area.

2.1 All stations shall carry:

ADR	Administrative Message
CAE	Child Abduction Emergency
CEM	Civil Emergency Message
EVI	Evacuation Immediate
TOR	Tornado Warning
FFW	Flash Flood Warning
SVR	Severe Thunderstorm Warning
LEW	Law Enforcement Warning

2.2 Stations may carry (voluntary recommendations):

HWW	High Wind Warning
TOA	Tornado Watch
FLW	Flood Warning
WSW	Winter Storm Warning.

2.3 Below are other codes not to be relayed by broadcast stations under any circumstances. Their purpose is for tests, drills, and verification of proper equipment operation with the entities that monitor such sources:

RWT	Required Weekly Test
DMO	Practice/Demonstration Warning
ADM	Administrative Message.

2.4 The NWS shall be the initiator of the EAS weather-related event codes except in those cases where the NWS requests back-up EAS activation or is otherwise out-of-contact with emergency management for an unspecified reason. FCC Local Area governments or LP stations may call the following neighboring NWS offices for further information in regard to weather events if they need further information (NOTE: These are Restricted telephone numbers):

- a. NWS San Francisco Bay Area at Monterey, CA, at 831-656-1717;
- b. NWS Los Angeles at Oxnard, CA, at 805-988-6618; or,
- c. NWS Sacramento at 916-979-3049.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No. 3:  
DOC/NOAA/NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**

- 3.1 All National Weather Service WARNING messages and EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED messages shall be transmitted over NWR KIH-62, transmitting at 162.40 MHz.
- 3.2 LP1 and LP2 stations are required to monitor 162.40 MHz (NWR KIH-62) serving the San Joaquin Valley area of responsibility. All LP stations and CATV control points are urged to also monitor the local NWR and CLERS transmitter channels.
- 3.3 The NWR transmitter format for Alert Requests is:
  - a. The digital header repeated three (3) times;
  - b. The NWR receiver alert tone;
  - c. The EAS attention signal;
  - d. The audio message; and,
  - e. The digital End-Of-Message (EOM) repeated three times.
- 3.4 No verbal message can ever exceed 120 seconds due to the recording limitation of EAS decoders. The NWS is aware that broadcast stations will be more likely to respond to Alert requests if messages are kept as short as possible. The LECC recommends that all audio messages for EAS activation requests should ideally run no longer than 45 seconds, and will hopefully be closer to 30 seconds.
- 3.5 If the NWR transmitter is off the air, NWS San Joaquin Valley, Hanford, CA:
  - a. The NWS will telephone the LP1 station, KMJ-AM Radio, at:  
(559) 490-6036, or  
(559) 490-6010.
  - b. If connection with the LP1 station cannot be made, the LP2 station, KFSN-TV shall be called at:  
(559) 486-0510.
- 3.6 NWS Emergency Procedure:
  1. The NWS meteorologist or Hydro-Meteorological Technician (HMT) will identify as **"This is (position)\_\_\_\_\_ with the National Weather Service in Hanford"**. He/She will state the reason the Emergency Alert System is being activated and will be prepared to authenticate in accordance with COO No. 6 if so asked.
  2. The broadcast station shall be prepared to immediately record the message. The NWS meteorologist/HMT may be asked for a recording level. To accomplish this, say, "**Level level level level level**" at the same tone and volume to be used in recording the message.

- c. Upon receiving the go-ahead, the NWS employee shall say:

**"5, 4, 3, 2, 1. This is the National Weather Service Office in Hanford requesting activation of the Emergency Alert System by all broadcasters for a (NATURE OF THE WARNING).**

**MESSAGE TEXT (Target 30-45 Seconds ... 120 maximum)**

***This concludes this Emergency Alert System message from the National Weather Service.***"

- d. Note: The meteorologist or HMT should remain silent at the end of the message until the person doing the recording comes back on the line. If there is a problem with the recording process, or the meteorologist deems its necessary, repeat the recording process.

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**Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No.4:  
LP1/LP2 Stations Only: How to Activate and Transmit a Local Broadcast**

- 4.1 Message relay from codes decoded from EAS decoders:
- 4.1.1 If the event code coincides with mandatory codes shown on COO #2, Section 2.1, the LP1 station shall relay the alert as soon as possible using the posted instructions for their respective EAS encoder.
  - 4.1.2 Any event code listed in COO #2, Section 2.2, may be broadcast at the discretion of the station with the understanding that emergency alert information declines rapidly in value to the public as seconds pass by.
- 4.2 From calls received via telephone to the station hot line number:  
NOTE: Radio or teleprinter transmissions received from the National Weather Service, another EAS station, local, state, or Federal government do not require authentication
- #1) The telephone call will come from the National Weather Service, a county sheriff's office or emergency manager, California Highway Patrol, or from a government or NWS official from this or an adjacent FCC Local Area who is authorized to initiate a request.
  - #2) Transfer the call to the recording station for EAS. Start the recorder. Ask the caller to recite their authorization code (See COO #7). Set the level on the recorder based on the level determined during the validation procedure, or from a subsequent level check.
  - #3) Tell the caller to count down and go. Supervise the recording process. Listen for quality assurance and for mistakes. Stop recording when the caller's outcue says, "***This concludes this Emergency Alert System activation request from (name of the agency) in (location).***"
  - #4) Inform the caller if a retake is needed or, if all is OK.
  - #5) Program the EAS terminal with the appropriate FIPS delivery and event codes per the station's posted instructions to activate from a phone call.
  - #6) Cue up the recorded message (if on external recorder) for broadcast.
  - #7) Fade out the program in progress. Play or live announce:  
***"We interrupt this program to activate the Emergency Alert System for the San Joaquin Valley area."***

- #8) Activate the EAS encoder. Play the recorded message. Play or read the following after the message outcue and EOM digital bursts:  
***"This concludes the Emergency Alert System programming. All broadcast stations and cable systems can now resume normal programming."***
  - #9) Resume normal broadcasting. Repeat the highlights of the warning every 5 to 10 minutes, if possible, during the period of the warning. Do not editorialize or comment on the incident as it may be construed as an official announcement.
  - #10) Log the alert per your station's posted instructions. All EAS alert broadcasts must be reported to the FCC in Washington so that you may receive credit.
- 4.3 Any broadcast station may activate the EAS and read the requested message upon receipt of any EAS message through their EAS decoders marked "ACTIVATION REQUESTED" bulletin from the National Weather Service or county official without delay or additional notification, authorization, or permission.
  - 4.4 All news and program personnel shall be trained both as to the means and need to place EAS alert requests on the air without delay.
  - 4.5 On-air personnel shall not ad-lib, interpret, abbreviate, or alter any EAS test or EAS alert requests message.
  - 4.6 Tests or alert requests shall NOT be set to music, sung, include music, or receive enhancement or alteration by means of echo, delay, or other types of signal processing or production aids that could drastically alter the meaning or immediacy of the message.

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## Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No.5:

### Local Government Officials: How to Activate and Transmit a Local Broadcast

#### 5.1 IF YOU DO NOT HAVE AN FCC TYPE-ACCEPTED EAS TERMINAL AND MUST USE THE TELEPHONE:

5.1.1 Write the WARNING message as you wish it specifically to be broadcast by all AM and FM Radio stations, television and Cable TV broadcasters in the San Joaquin Valley FCC Local Area Emergency Alert System plan. If relaying to either the LP1 or LP2 broadcast stations, read the bulletin as if you are the announcer.

5.1.1.1 Telephone the LP1 station, KMJ-AM Radio, at:  
559-490-6036; or,  
559-490-6010.

5.1.1.2 If the LP1 station cannot be contacted, contact the LP2 station, KFSN-TV at:  
559-486-0510.

5.1.2 Designated county officials use the following format to activate the EAS:

***"This is (name/title) of (organization). I request that the Emergency Alert System be activated because of a (description of the emergency)."***

5.1.3 Be prepared to authenticate at this point. See COO #7.

5.1.4 The station, preparing to record the message immediately, will give the authorized county employee notice that they are ready to begin recording. The station should ask for an audio level check prior to recording. The words, "**Level, level, level, level, level,**" should be spoken by the authorized county employee at the same level to be used when the message is read. The EAS message text should be preceded with a countdown.

***"5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1. This is (name/title) of (organization). We are requesting that the Emergency Alert System be activated for a (nature of the request)."***

***MESSAGE TEXT (30 to 45 Seconds ... 120 maximum)***

***This concludes this Emergency Alert System from the (named county/official department)."***

5.1.5 Note: The authorized county employee should remain silent at the end of the message until the person doing the recording comes back on the phone line. If there is a problem with the recording process, the caller, or the recording technician deems it necessary, repeat the recording process.

5.1.5 Emergency Digital Information System (EDIS): The message text shall be loaded as soon as possible onto EDIS. Text via EDIS is required by television stations and other agencies to assist in the warning and emergency public information (EPI) process.

5.2 IF YOU HAVE AN FCC TYPE-ACCEPTED EAS TERMINAL CONNECTED TO CLERS (California Law Enforcement Radio System):

Agencies and/or officials, specified in COO #6 are authorized to activate the Emergency Alert System in this manner. All county personnel likely to activate the EAS shall be trained both as to the means and need to place EAS alert requests on the air without delay. The CLERS method of activating the EAST is preferred over the telephone method because it can reach many EAST receiver-decoders at the same time.

5.2.1 Designated county officials use the following format to activate the EAS:

***"This is (name/title) of (organization). The Emergency Alert System is being activated because of a (description of the emergency and any further text desired)."***

5.2.2 Remember that no verbal message can ever exceed 120 seconds due to the recording limitation of EAS decoders. The LECC recommends that all audio messages for EAS activation requests should ideally run **no longer than 45 seconds**, and will hopefully be closer to 30 seconds.

5.2.3 End the warning message with the following script:

***"This concludes this Emergency Alert System activation request from (name of the agency) in (location)."***

5.2.4 Program the EAS terminal with the appropriate FIPS delivery and event codes per the county's posted instructions to activate the EAS.

5.2.5 Log the EAS activation time and event.

### 5.3 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- If the requested message to be broadcasted is **not** law enforcement related and if the LP1 broadcast station or if the LP1 broadcast station is not available for relaying an EAS message, the NWS office in Hanford, CA, can be used to activate the EAS on behalf of local governments in the San Joaquin Valley FCC Local Area.
- If the requested message to be relayed **is** law enforcement related, e.g. AMBER product, then call the CHP Emergency Notification and Tactical Alert Center (ENTAC) to activate the EAS on behalf of the local governments in the San Joaquin Valley FCC Local Area (See COO #6).

5.3.1 Write the WARNING message to be relayed to the broadcast and cable TV media in the San Joaquin Valley FCC Local Area. Unlike the capabilities of the LP stations, the message will need to be dictated to the NWS or CHP for their broadcasts.

5.3.1.1 Call the NWS San Joaquin Valley Office at Hanford, CA, at the following Administratively Restricted numbers:  
559-584-9051.

5.3.1.2 Call the CHP ENTAC at Sacramento, CA, at the following Administratively Restricted number:  
916-657-8287.

5.3.2 Designated officials use the following or similar format to aid identification and activation of the EAS through the NWS:

***"This is (name/title) of (organization). I request that the National Weather Service use NOAA Weather Radio to activate the Emergency Alert System because of a (description of the emergency)."***

5.3.2.1 Specify to the NWS the appropriate FIPS delivery and event codes, and area to be warned, for the programming of the NWS Specific Area Message Encoder.

5.3.3 Designated officials use a similar format to that listed in 5.3.2 in requesting activation and dissemination of EAS product information through the CHP ENTAC.

5.3.3.1 Specify to the CHP the wording and areal coverage desired for any activation of the EAS.

5.3.4 Be prepared to authenticate if so requested. (See COO #7).

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**Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No. 6:  
California Highway Patrol**

- 6.1 The California Highway Patrol (CHP) participates in the FCC San Joaquin Valley Local Area in one of two ways:
- #1) As an authorizing entity of any state-originated EAS bulletin; or,
  - #2) As a disseminator of any locally authorized EAS bulletin.
- 6.2 Through state mandate, the CHP shall activate as an authorizing entity of the EAS when directed by the California State Governor's Office in accordance with the rules and requirements established by the state of California in regard to the EAS.
- 6.3 As authorized by any county Emergency Manager (or their designated officials) request, the CHP Emergency Notification and Tactical Alert Center (ENTAC) shall activate the EAS. CHP ENTAC, in this case, is not the authorizing entity but acts in the role of disseminator only. In order to activate the EAS, the CHP:
- 6.3.1 Shall distribute the information under the appropriate EAS header; and,
  - 6.3.2 Assist the county in determining what area coverage is desired for the EAS bulletin, i.e., local, regional, and/or state.
  - 6.3.3 The CHP has authority as an authorizing entity to activate the SJV EAS through a Law Enforcement Warning (LEW).
    - A) CHP LEW issuance is based on a combination of both of the following:
      - 1. Severely Reduced Visibility (below 200 feet), occurring along a major freeway, such as Interstate 5 or State Route 99; and,
      - 2. At the discretion of on-duty officer, an LEW may be issued when conditions are conducive to severe traffic situations such as major pileups and are an immediate threat to human life.
    - B) The CHP may authorize dissemination through either the CHP ENTAC as listed below, or the NWS office in Hanford. Information should be included in the LEW for motorists to avoid certain roadways that are an immediate danger.
- 6.4 The CHP ENTAC can be contacted in Sacramento, CA, at the following Administratively Restricted phone number: 916-657-8287.

**C O N F I D E N T I A L**

**Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No.7:  
Authentication Procedure and Codes**

- 7.1 Upon receipt of a request for activation of the EAS for the San Joaquin Valley, the NWS, LP stations, and authorized county officials may call back the party requesting activation for additional verification or for more details before such an EAS activation is carried out.
- 7.2 Any parties receiving a request to activate the Emergency Alert System shall use the following verification system of QUERY/RESPONSE for backup purposes among FCC San Joaquin Valley Local Area county officials, NWS, and media:

**CONFIDENTIAL / EYES ONLY --- EAS OFFICIALS**

When one party says:	The other party responds with:
<b>RED</b>	<b>WAGON</b>
<b>BLUE</b>	<b>BICYCLE</b>
<b>YELLOW</b>	<b>AIRPLANE</b>
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>TRUCK</b>

- 7.3 Designated Officials Authorized to Activate the San Joaquin Valley Emergency Alert System:

National Weather Service Forecaster-In-Charge  
Fresno County Sheriff's Watch Commander or designated official  
Kings County Sheriff's Watch Commander or designated official  
Madera County Sheriff's Watch Commander or designated official  
Mariposa County Sheriff's Watch Commander or designated official  
Merced County Sheriff's Watch Commander or designated official  
Tulare County Sheriff's Watch Commander or designated official

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**Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No.8:  
Required Weekly Test (RWT)**

- 8.1 The Required Weekly Test, Event Code RWT, is to be conducted by all entities having access into the SJV FCC Local Area EAS as a means of proficiency and system checks.
- 8.2 The Required Weekly Test in this FCC Local Area shall be conducted as follows:
- 8.2.1 National Weather Service:  
Every Wednesday between the hours of 11:00 AM and Noon LT.  
This EAS RWT message also concurrently activates the Warning Tone Alarm feature of the NOAA Weather Radio system.
- 8.2.2 Radio / Television / and Cable Media:  
A Required Weekly Test will be done in accordance with and per FCC requirements and rules in regard to the EAS RWT product.
- 8.2.3 County Emergency Management:  
[By means of Sheriff Watch Commander/Dispatch for those counties possessing EAS encoding equipment] An RWT will be done every Tuesday between 9 AM and 10 AM LT.
- 8.2.4 California Highway Patrol:  
**\*\*\*Initiating Office and Time to be determined and placed here.\*\*\***
- 8.3 The Routine Weekly Test is a log only event code. It should take less than 30 Seconds to perform and is distributed to the media EAS entry points.

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**Communications Operations Order CA-SJV No.9:  
Required Monthly Test (RMT) and Coordination Meetings**

9.1 The Coordinated Monthly Test, Event Code RMT, is required to be carried by all broadcast stations and CATV firms. It may not be delayed more than 60 minutes following receipt. [Reference: FCC Part 11.61(a)(1)].

9.2 The Required Monthly Test in this FCC Local Area is conducted:

9.2.1 DAY TIME:

The LAST TUESDAY of the odd-numbered months at 10:45 AM Local Time (LT) and initiated by the NWS through NWR KIH-62 at 162.40 MHz.

9.2.2 NIGHT TIME:

The LAST TUESDAY of even-numbered months at 1:50 AM LT and initiated by the LP2 station, KFSN-TV Channel 30.

9.3 The Required Monthly Test will take less than 45 seconds. The text is:

***"This is the coordinated monthly test of the broadcast stations and cable television companies serving Mariposa, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, and Tulare Counties. Equipment that can warn you of a life-threatening emergency is being tested. If this had been an actual emergency such as severe weather, a 9-1-1 system failure, or other life threatening condition, an official message would have followed the alert tone. This concludes this test of the Emergency Alert System."***

Television stations and CATV firms shall display this message in clear text in addition to the audio message.

9.4 The State Emergency Operations Center or an alternate transmits a monthly test that may be carried by any station in addition to any station's weekly test (Event Code, RWT) or in lieu of it's weekly test, but never in place of a FCC Local Area's Required Monthly Test (Event Code, RMT). The State test is transmitted on the first Tuesday of every month at about 10:15 AM LT for rebroadcast by any station within a one (1) hour window.

9.5 The Local Emergency Communications Committee shall meet at least twice per year (around January and July) for the purpose of discussing any needed revisions in the San Joaquin Valley FCC Local Area EAS Communications Operations Orders, including any changes in authentication procedures.

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**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY (CA) FCC OPERATIONAL AREA EAS PLAN  
SIGNATURES OF CONCURRENCE AND APPROVAL**

**Required Local Approvals**

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Signature & Date

David Whitehead, Co-Chairman  
Local Emergency Communications Committee  
San Joaquin Valley (CA) FCC Local Area

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Signature & Date

Rusty Burchfield, Co-Chairman  
Local Emergency Communications Committee  
San Joaquin Valley (CA) FCC Local Area

**Required State and Federal Approval**

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Signature & Date

Jim Gabbert  
Chair, California State Emergency Communications Committee

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Signature & Date

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554