



# Virginia Association of Broadcasters Legal Review



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## Nationwide EAS Test Reminder

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*In this issue, link to information about*

*Deadlines:*      [New EAS Handbook Must Be in Use by September 27](#)  
[EAS Form Two Report Due By 11:59 p.m. ET September 27](#)  
[EAS Form One Updates/Revisions Due September 27](#)

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### Here Are a Few Final Reminders About the September 27 Nationwide EAS Test Scheduled to Occur at 2:20 p.m. Eastern Time

Tomorrow, September 27, 2017, at 2:20 p.m. Eastern Time (“ET”), FEMA and the FCC will conduct a nationwide test of the EAS. **All broadcast stations are required to participate.** Multicasting stations must air the nationwide test on all of their programming streams. (Silent stations and stations that think they have a waiver from the FCC should contact their communications counsel immediately to discuss their situation.) If FEMA and the FCC decide to delay the test (for example, in the case of a regional or national emergency), an announcement will be made, and the back-up date will be October 4. Below are a few reminders about important nationwide test-related deadlines and requirements.

**A. Stations Must Print, Review, and “Fill in the Blanks” of the New EAS Operating Handbook in Time for the Nationwide Test**

In late July, the FCC released a [Public Notice](#) announcing the issuance of a [new EAS Operating Handbook](#) for all broadcast stations. Here is a link to the new EAS Operating Handbook: <https://www.fcc.gov/file/12715/download>. Until now, stations should have been using the 2016 edition of the EAS Operating Handbook. Stations must implement the use of the 2017

EAS Operating Handbook in time for the September 27, 2017, nationwide EAS test. (The September 27 nationwide EAS test is scheduled to occur at 2:20 p.m. ET.)

All broadcast stations should print the [new EAS Operating Handbook](#) and post it at the location of the station's EAS equipment. All prior versions of the EAS Handbook (including the 2016 version, the special 2011 nationwide EAS test version, and all other versions) are now outdated, superseded, and ripe for recycling. In addition, all stations should carefully review the 2017 EAS Handbook and take the opportunity to “fill in the blanks” where the Handbook gives stations the opportunity to do so—the FCC has made the 2017 EAS Handbook available as a “writable” PDF in an effort to facilitate each station's customization of the document.

All station personnel involved in any aspect of EAS compliance—weekly and monthly tests; nationwide tests; state and local alerts; EAS logging; equipment procurement; etc.—should review the new EAS Handbook, contribute to the “filling in the blanks” process, and ensure that it is posted at the appropriate location(s). (Please Note: stations are not permitted to alter the existing content of the EAS Handbook, other than to complete the portions that are designed for station input.)

#### **B. Form Two EAS Reports Must Be Filed By 11:59 p.m. ET September 27**

The EAS Form Two report requires stations to report whether they received and retransmitted the nationwide EAS test message. Form Two must be completed and filed via the FCC's ETRS (EAS Test Reporting System) by 11:59 p.m. ET on September 27. (Here is a link to the ETRS login page: <http://bit.ly/2wJcIrD>) Most of Form Two's fields will auto-populate using the data each station provided in Form One. (If your station has not yet filed Form One, you should file it immediately.) Form Two will ask broadcasters whether they received the nationwide EAS test message and whether they retransmitted the nationwide EAS test message. Form Two is intended to provide the FCC and FEMA only with a quick snapshot of the nationwide test. Form Three—which is due by November 13, 2017—is the report in which stations will describe in detail any issues with receipt or retransmission of the nationwide test.

It is critically important that broadcasters provide truthful information in these EAS reports. Please consult with your FCC counsel if you have any concerns about your EAS compliance and/or nationwide testing issues.

#### **C. Deadline to Revise Form One EAS Reports Is September 27**

In connection with the nationwide test, all broadcasters were required to file the Form One EAS report through the FCC's ETRS (EAS Test Reporting System) by August 28. **Stations have until 11:59 p.m. ET on September 27 to make any corrections to, and re-file, their Form One reports.** Instructions for registering with the ETRS and submitting Form One have been previously distributed. Please contact your FCC counsel immediately if your station has not yet filed its Form One EAS report or if your station needs assistance in revising its filed Form One report.

If you have any questions concerning the information discussed in this memorandum, please contact your communications counsel or any of the undersigned.

*Stephen Hartzell, Editor*

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