



May 26, 2015 Deadline to Make Emergency Crawls Audible



In April 2013, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted a *Report and Order and Further NPRM* (FCC 13-45) that included new rules regarding the accessibility of televised emergency information. The new rules require all Television stations (and other entities covered under the existing emergency information requirements in Section 79.2 of the rules) to use a secondary audio stream to convey televised emergency information aurally, when that information is conveyed visually (*i.e.*, in an on-screen

crawl) during video programming other than newscasts and Emergency Alert System (EAS) activations beginning **May 26, 2015**. Audio accessibility applies to all digital channels.

Thus, when a station runs an on-screen crawl that contains emergency information (as defined in Section 79.2(a)(2) of the rules), it must also transmit an audio transcription of the information contained in that crawl on the station's second audio service (sometimes referred to as "SAP" channel). The new rules do not require a verbatim aural translation of textual emergency information. However, it is required that the information presented aurally accurately and effectively communicate to consumers who are blind or visually impaired the critical details about a current emergency and how to respond to it to the same extent that this information is conveyed in the crawl. Also, if the crawl includes visual but non-textual information such as a graphic of a map showing affected counties for a weather alert, an aural description this information must also be included on the SAP channel.

Section 79.2 of the commission's Rules define emergency information as:

"Emergency information. Information, about a current emergency, that is intended to further the protection of life, health, safety, and property, i.e., critical details regarding the emergency and how to respond to the emergency. Examples of the types of emergencies covered include tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, tidal waves, earthquakes, icing conditions, heavy snows, widespread fires, discharge of toxic gases, widespread power failures, industrial explosions, civil disorders, school closings and changes in school bus schedules resulting from such conditions, and warnings and watches of impending changes in weather.

Note to paragraph (a)(2): Critical details include, but are not limited to, specific details regarding the areas that will be affected by the emergency, evacuation orders, detailed descriptions of areas to be evacuated, specific evacuation routes, approved shelters or the way to take shelter in one's home, instructions on how to secure personal property, road closures, and how to obtain relief assistance."

These requirements can be found in section [79.2\(b\)\(2\)](#) of the FCC Rules and apply to TV stations that provide emergency crawls in **all markets**. The rules also:

- Continue to require the use of an aural tone to precede emergency information on the main program audio, and now also require use of the aural tones to precede emergency information on the secondary audio stream;
- Permit, but do not require, the use of text-to-speech technologies as a method for providing an aural rendition of emergency information;
- Require that if TTS is used, it must be intelligible and must use the correct pronunciation of relevant information to allow consumers to learn about and respond to the emergency, including, but not limited to, the names of shelters, school districts, streets, districts, and proper names noted in the visual information;
- Require that emergency information provided aurally on the secondary audio stream be conveyed at least twice in full;
- Require that emergency information supersede all other programming on the secondary audio stream;
- Require video programming distributors to be responsible for ensuring that the aural representation of the emergency information (including the accompanying aural tone) is properly passed through to consumers;
- Require mobile DTV to make secondary audio streams available to consumers, because such streams are the existing mechanism for providing video description and the new mechanism for making emergency information accessible.

The Report and Order is available on the FCC's web page [here](#).

The Amateur Radio Operators Reception – Call for Prizes:

The Amateur Radio Operators Reception, sponsored by Broadcast Supply Worldwide, Turner Engineering and DX Engineering, is one of the most anticipated events at the NAB Show. We are currently seeking door prizes to be awarded at the Reception. All prize donors will be recognized in a scrolling video display at the event, and in the NAB Radio and TV TechCheck newsletters. Prizes can be of any size and value, but should be selected to appeal to technically inclined individuals who have a passion for their craft.

If you wish to donate a prize, please email Rich Johnson at rjohnson@nab.org. Thank you in advance for helping us make the 2015 Amateur Radio Operators Reception another outstanding success.



NAB Seeking 2015 Technology Innovation Award Nominees



NAB is currently accepting nominations for the 2015 NAB Technology Innovation Awards. First presented at the 2009 NAB Show, NAB presents the award to organizations that bring advanced technology exhibits and demonstrations of significant merit to the NAB Show. The nominated exhibit should present advanced research and development projects in communications technologies that have not yet been commercialized.

Candidates for the Technology Innovation Awards must be organizations that are currently exhibiting at the NAB Show. The size of the organization is not a determining factor. Nominated projects may not be commercial products that have been offered for sale prior to or at the NAB Show. The merit of the technology exhibit is the sole factor to be taken into account. The entry deadline is February 20, 2015. The awards will be presented at the NAB Technology Luncheon on April 15, 2015 at the NAB Show in Las Vegas.

Additional information and a nomination form are available on NAB's [website](#). The deadline for nominations is February 20, 2015.

Important Dates and Upcoming Events

[Hollywood Post Alliance \(HPA\) Tech Retreat](#)

February 9 - 13, 2015

Indian Wells, Calif.

[Audio Engineering Society \(AES\) 57th Conference: The Future of Audio Entertainment Technology](#)

March 6 - 8, 2015

Hollywood, Calif.

[2015 NAB Show](#)

April 11 - 16, 2015

Las Vegas, Nev.