May 21, 2012

Radio TechCheck

NAB NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS

The Weekly NAB Newsletter for Radio Broadcast Engineers

New Updates for Emergency Radios

It's well known that, in an emergency, a portable battery-powered radio is your best friend. You can continue to get needed emergency information even if the power goes out. However, in an extended emergency, if you don't have an extended supply of batteries, your portable radio, or your radio in your mobile phone, will eventually become useless. That is, unless there is another source of power available that you can harness. There is a long history of hand-crank radios on the market that meet this practical need. Eton Corporation (www.etoncorp.com) just announced several new updated models, all with AM/FM and NOAA radio capability, with some interesting and convenient features.

The FRX1, 6" H x 4.5" W x 3" D, is compact, includes an LED flashlight and has an retail price (MSRP) of $25.00. According to the manual, five minutes of cranking will give about ten minutes of radio playing time.

The FRX2, with an MSRP of $40.00, is similar to the FRX1 but also includes solar cell charging and a USB output so you can charge your smartphone from your radio.

The FRX3 is larger at 7.875" H x 7" W x 3.5" D and has an MSRP of $60.00. It includes a digital clock and alarm, and can be powered from 3 AAA batteries, in addition to the cranking, solar panel, DC power input and rechargeable battery options.

In a long-standing partnership with the American Red Cross, the products in the FRX Series are also available in an exclusive Red Cross co-branded line. The co-branded version of the FRX Series reflects the American Red Cross logo and a portion of each sale goes towards the organization. The Etón and American Red Cross by Etón FRX Series are available at retail outlets including Best Buy, REI, Fry's Electronics, Amazon.com, Eddie Bauer, Eastern Mountain Sports, Cabela's and Bass Pro Shops. See www.etoncorp.com for more information.

Reminder: June 30 EAS CAP Deadline

No later than June 30, 2012, all broadcast stations must have CAP capable EAS equipment installed and operating in their facilities. FCC rule 11.56 requires all broadcasters to have equipment installed and operating that can receive and decode National Level (federal) Emergency messages (EANs) encoded in the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) format.

The original CAP compliance deadline was March 31, 2011. In response to a petition filed by NAB and others, the FCC extended that dead line to September 30 2011. On Friday September 16, 2011, the FCC released an order further extending the deadline to June 30, 2012.

This requirement was reaffirmed in the most recent FCC EAS Report and Order released January 10, 2012 (Fifth Report and Order in EB Docket No. 04-296 – "5th R&O"). The rules adopted in the 5th R&O also require broadcasters to interface with and monitor FEMA's Integrated public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) server for those federal CAP-formatted

EAS messages. However, because IPAWS monitoring will be largely conducted via an Internet connection, the FCC will consider, on a case by case basis, applications for waivers from this monitoring requirement based on the physical lack of availability of broadband.

The 5th R&O is available here (http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-12-7A1.pdf.). The order extending the Cap compliance deadline is here (http://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-11-136A1.pdf).

IEEE Broadcast Technology Society Issues Call for Papers

A Call for Papers has been issued for the 2012 IEEE Broadcast Symposium, to be held October 17-19, 2012, in Alexandria, Va. The Symposium Committee seeks timely and relevant technical papers relating to all aspects of broadcast technology, in particular on the following topics:

- Digital radio and television systems: terrestrial, cable, satellite, Internet, wireless
- Mobile DTV systems (all aspects, both transmission and reception)
- Technical issues associated with the termination of analog television broadcasting
- Transmission, propagation, reception, re-distribution of broadcast signals
- AM, FM, and TV transmitter and antenna systems
- Tests and measurements
- Cable and satellite interconnection with terrestrial broadcasters
- Transport stream issues – ancillary services
- Unlicensed device operation in TV white spaces
- Advanced technologies and systems for emerging broadcasting applications
- DTV and IBOC reception issues and new technologies
- ATSC and other broadcast standards developments
- Broadcast spectrum issues – re-packing, sharing

The submission deadline for abstracts has been extended to May 31, 2012. Visit the symposium website for additional information. This Symposium is produced by the IEEE Broadcast Technology Society.