



Working Group 2

Wireless Emergency Alerts

Status Update

September 12, 2013

Brian M. Josef, CTIA—The Wireless Association®, Co-Chair

John W. Madden, National Emergency Management Association, Co-Chair

WEA Working Group Objectives

The Working Group will review the FCC's current Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) rules, taking into account:

- (1) experiences with WEA since its deployment on April 7, 2012 (including those of WEA industry participants, the Federal Gateway and alert originators),
- (2) technological advances since the original WEA technical recommendations were submitted by the Commercial Mobile Service Alert Advisory Committee (CMSAAC) in 2007, and
- (3) other factors, as appropriate, and develop recommendations for CSRIC's consideration for any necessary changes to ensure that WEA continues to serve as a valuable method to alert the public during an emergency.



WEA Working Group Objectives

The Working Group will examine specific issues such as:

- education,
- geographic targeting,
- testing,
- device settings for different alerts,
- message content and character limitation,
- other potential types of WEA alerts,
- accessibility of WEA alerts to people with disabilities and non-English speakers, and
- security.



WEA Working Group Members

- Hutch McClendon, Advanced Computer and Communications, LLC
- Brian Daly, AT&T
- Bill Anderson, Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute
- Bradley Blanken, Competitive Carriers Association
- Chris Fine, Goldman Sachs
- Francisco Sánchez, Jr., Harris County Ofc. of Homeland Security & Emergency Management
- Cedric Cox, Intrado
- Matt May, Johnson County Division of Emergency Management
- Kimberly Culp, Larimer Emergency Telephone Authority
- Hisham Kassab, MobiLaps, LLC
- Robert Hoever, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- Mike Gerber and Craig Hodan, National Weather Service
- Jim Kutzner, Public Broadcasting Service
- Mehran Nazari, Rural Telecommunications Group
- John Kopec, Sprint Corporation
- Keith Bhatia, TeleCommunication Systems, Inc.
- Shellie Blakeney and Tim Dunn, T-Mobile USA
- Robert Rhoads, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Emergency Communications
- Denis Gusty, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Science & Technology
- Larry Rybar, Verizon Wireless

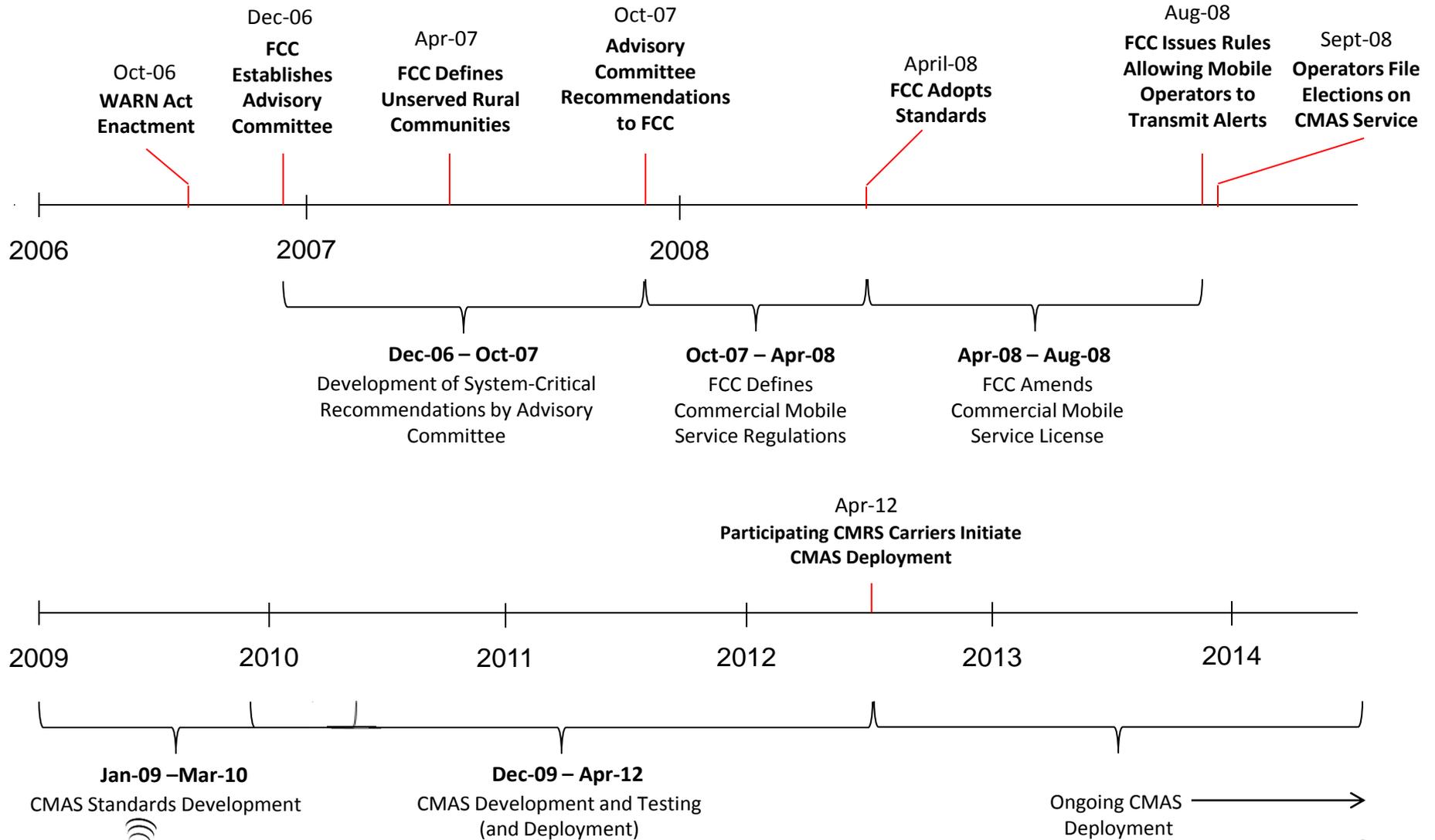


Wireless Emergency Alerts Background

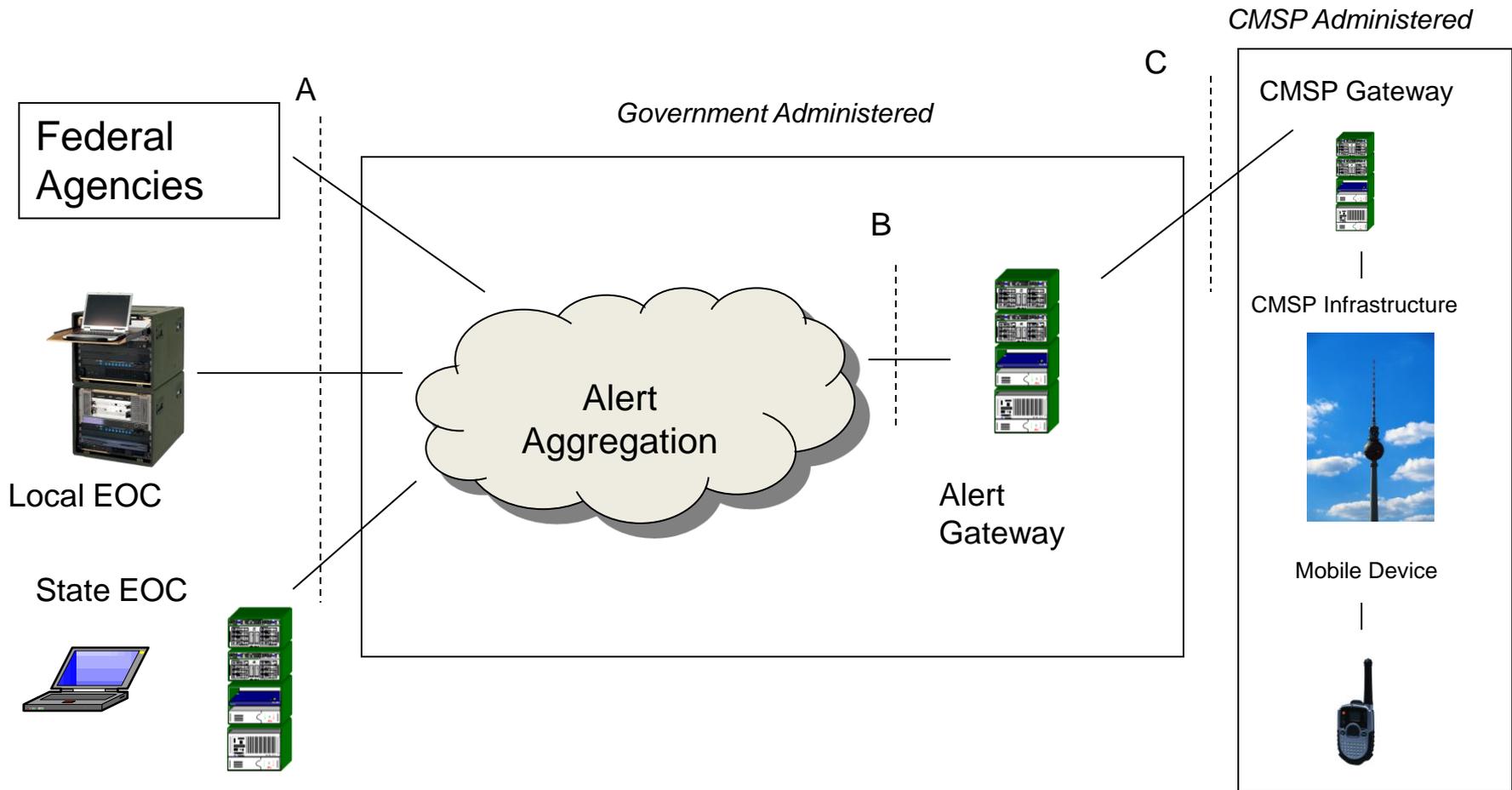
- What is WEA?
 - Voluntary.
 - Different than an emergency SMS – Not susceptible to congestion delays.
 - Alert Classes: Presidential, Imminent Threat, and AMBER.
 - Geo-targeted.
 - Audio attention signal and vibration cadence.
 - “Bellringer” Alert Technology.
 - Free to consumers.
- Why WEA?
 - National System prevents:
 - Patchwork of Standards & Processes.
 - Unmanageable Volume of Initiators.
 - Sending of Unverified, Unauthorized Alerts.
 - Avoid Alert Fatigue / “Car Alarm Syndrome”
 - A Mobile Alert is Important and Unusual When Used Judiciously.



Wireless Emergency Alerts Milestones



WEA Architecture



Wireless Alerts Are Saving Lives and Protecting the Public

“Wireless Amber Alert leads to safe return of child”

6:35 PM, Feb 21, 2013, KARE-11

“ST. PAUL, Minn. - The Amber Alert issued Wednesday for a missing Minneapolis child **marked the first time the alerts were sent to Minnesota cell phones, and the first time in the nation the cell phone alert led to the safe return of a child.**”



“CMAS/WEA Used Extensively for Hurricane Sandy”

October 31, 2012, EmergencyManagement.com

“**It appears as if CMAS/WEA alerts were widely and successfully used throughout Hurricane Sandy’s assault on the northeast.** Our sources at FEMA IPAWS and the National Weather Service (NWS) confirmed alerts were issued all along the eastern seaboard in Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine.”

“The alerts included blizzard warnings, flash flood warnings, mandatory evacuations, and shelter-in-place messages depending on the location.”



Wireless Alerts Are Saving Lives and Protecting the Public (cont'd)

“In East Windsor (CT), Tornado Tears Down Sports Dome”

July 2, 2013 , FOXCT.COM

“[The] camp director at Sports World, said 29 campers and five counselors were inside the **dome when she received a message on her phone that a tornado warning had been issued**. She quickly gathered the children into an adjacent building and told them to get under tables.”

“As soon as we got them under the tables, I heard the noise behind us,” she said. “I looked out, and the dome was gone. It was just a horrendous noise. I can’t even articulate what it sounded like.”



“Eagle eyes: Amber Alert leads to capture”

July 4, 2013, Medinapost.com

In Cleveland, OH, an 8-year-old boy went missing when his non-custodial father did not bring him home as planned. Because of the abductor’s history, law enforcement was concerned for the safety of the child and an AMBER Alert was activated. **A group of citizens became aware of the AMBER Alert when they all received Wireless Emergency Alerts on their cell phones**. A few hours later, the same group was at a diner when one of the citizens spotted the vehicle. He and one of the other individuals followed the vehicle and called 911. Law enforcement located the vehicle and the abductor was arrested and the child was safely rescued.

WEA Working Group Approach

- Many of the objectives of the WEA Working Group will address issues raised by the CMSAAC for further study post-WEA rollout.
- The Working Group plans to address *more than the underlying technology issues alone*. We will examine alert originator participation and function regarding the sending of alerts to prevent overuse or abuse of imminent threat alerts.
- The Working Group will study lessons learned since the April 2012 public launch of WEA.

WEA Working Group Status

- To date, the WEA WG consists of **22** members, representing diverse interests, including alert originators, federal government WEA partners, technology vendors, wireless industry participants, and consumer groups with subject matter expertise to accomplish the objectives set forth above.
- The WEA WG will hold a kickoff conference call in the coming days with its working group members to scope out the objectives and discuss detailed timelines for deliverables.



WEA Working Group Schedule

- The WEA Working Group anticipates holding bi-weekly conference calls with members, and quarterly face-to-face meetings for those able to attend.
- The WEA Working Group is currently planning workable deadlines for deliverables and will announce them shortly.



Next Steps

- Develop a work plan to accomplish the CSRIC IV charge taking advantage of WEA Working Group members' subject matter expertise.
- Seek Working Group volunteers to lead specific objectives as identified above.
- Schedule first face-to-face meeting.
- Continue bi-weekly conference calls.
- Provide periodic status updates to Steering Committee and full CSRIC.

