

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Warning, Alert, and Response Network Act
Commercial Mobile Service Alert Advisory Committee

Working Group Mission Statements

Program Management Group (PMG)

The Program Management Group (PMG) is the overall management entity of the Commercial Mobile Service Alert Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee). The PMG will manage and oversee the work of the Advisory Committee's informal working groups (Working Groups), and will act as principal liaison between those groups and the Committee. The PMG will be tasked with overall responsibility for ensuring that the Working Groups operate in a manner consistent with the statutory objectives of the WARN Act.

Specific obligations and responsibilities of the PMG will include:

- Establish a master schedule with major timelines and deliverables for each Working Group.
- Report to the Advisory Committee Chair on a monthly basis regarding the progress of the Working Groups.
- Assemble the work product of the Working Groups into the draft recommendations called for by the WARN Act and deliver these draft recommendations to the Advisory Committee Chair in sufficient time to allow the Chair to present the recommendations to the full Committee for review, vote, and submission to the FCC by October 12, 2007, one year of enactment of the WARN Act.

Alert Interface Group (AIG)

The primary mission of the Alert Interface Group (AIG) is to recommend specific public alert and warning systems for inclusion into a commercial mobile service (CMS) alerting capability for CMS providers that voluntarily elect to transmit emergency alerts, and to recommend the technical fashion by which electing CMS providers can accept these alerts for distribution within their respective networks. The AIG will also implement, with the support of the Alert Gateway Group and the Communications Technology Group, section 603(c)(2) of the WARN Act, which requires the Advisory Committee to establish “technical standards for priority transmission of alerts by electing CMS providers to subscribers.”

Among its specific obligations as determined by the Advisory Committee Chair and the PMG, the AIG shall:

Inventory and review all current and planned national, state and local alerting systems, giving particular attention to the intent of each alert (*e.g.*, national warning, weather alert, and Amber alerts), its scope (*e.g.*, nationwide, local, or by subscription), and the manner of the alerts transmission (*e.g.*, broadcast, Internet, satellite). In its review, the AIG will identify each alert’s message formats, protocols, subscription requirements, as well as verification & authentication mechanisms.

- Recommend a particular subset of alerts to the Advisory Committee Chair.
- Develop technical standards for priority transmission of diverse emergency alerts from recommended alerting systems. Deliver these requirements to Alerting Gateway Group and Communications Technology Group and ensure implementation in subsequent recommendations from these groups.
- Identify access requirements to the recommended alerting systems.
- Recommend alerting protocol standards and mechanisms that optimize the efficiency of the Alerting Gateway function by, for example, minimizing the need for multiple supported interfaces between alert initiators and electing wireless service providers.
- Provide recommendations to other working groups on architectures, methods and processes to deliver wireless alerts to customers.
- Interact as required with managers of recommended external alerting systems to define special message formats, mechanisms or processes required to support the unique needs of wireless platforms, devices or the user groups served by such systems

The AIG will take into consideration the manner in which wireless alerts fit into an overall national and state alerting structure. Accordingly, the AIG will consult with FEMA regarding FEMA’s plans to implement Executive Order 13407, and with NIST on standards and technologies for an overall national and state alerting structure.

Alerting Gateway Group (AGG)

The primary mission of the Alerting Gateway Group (AGG) is to develop and submit recommendations for protocols, technical capabilities, and technical procedures through which commercial mobile service (CMS) providers receive, verify and transmit alerts to subscribers (see WARN Act §603(c)(1)). Furthermore, the AGG will support development of technical standards for priority transmission of alerts by CMS providers to subscribers (see WARN Act §603(c)(2)). Finally, the AGG will support the development of recommendations under which CMS providers may offer subscribers the capability of preventing the subscriber's device from receiving emergency alerts, or classes of alerts, (other than an alert issued by the President), consistent with section 602(b)(2)(E) of the Warn Act. (WARN Act §603(c)(5)).

Some of the issues the AGG should address include:

- Draft requirements for interfacing to alerting systems recommended by the AIG.
- Recommend methods by which alerts received from target systems are processed and formatted for distribution over CMS systems. Processing of alerts will depend upon attributes such as:
 - User specific data (e.g. whether a user has chosen to opt out of an alerting class);
 - Statutory requirements associated with user groups;
 - Methods by which alerts may be targeted to regional or local areas;
 - Procedures required for the maintenance of critical data on an ongoing basis; and
 - Handling of alert priorities as indicated by the AIG.
- Draft recommendations to address possible unique interfaces associated with different CMS technologies and service providers.
- Identify and make recommendations on any other requirements concerning communications or transactions between CMS alerting platforms and external alerting systems and agencies or specific data required for fulfillment of the group's primary mission.

Communications Technology Group (CTG)

The primary mission of the Communications Technology Group (CTG) is to develop and submit recommendations for relevant technical standards for devices and equipment and technologies used by electing commercial mobile service (CMS) providers to transmit emergency alerts to subscribers (see WARN Act §603(c)(3)). Furthermore, per WARN Act §603(c)(6), the CTG will develop recommendations for a process under which CMS providers can elect to transmit emergency alerts if:

- A) not all of the devices or equipment used by such provider are capable of receiving such alerts or;
- B) the provider cannot offer such alerts throughout the entirety of its service area.

Furthermore, the CTG will support development of technical standards for priority transmission of alerts by electing CMS providers to subscribers (WARN Act §603(c)(2)). Finally, the CTG will support the development of recommendations for the technical capability to transmit emergency alerts by electing CMS providers to subscribers in languages in addition to English, to the extent feasible and practicable. See WARN Act §603(c)(4).

CTG will need to address issues such as:

- Recommendations for technologies and methods permitting the efficient transmission of messages to potentially the entire subscriber base they serve.
- Permit the distribution of alerts with the appropriate priorities as indicated by the AIG.
- Recommendations on methods permitting the targeting of alerts to specific geographic regions or locales, thereby enabling use of this important emergency service by other alerting authorities, including state and local governments.
- Recommendations on handset and device technologies appropriate for alerting services.
- The needs of non-English subscribers as well as people with special needs, including people with disabilities and the elderly.
- To ensure that this critical emergency service continues to evolve with technology supporting it, the CTG should also consider recommendations permitting the incorporation of planned service improvements, such as expected multimedia and broadband services, into their CMS alerting capability.
- The CTG will develop recommendations to facilitate eventual alignment of the Advisory Committee's recommendations with relevant standards organizations focused on the development of mobile communication standards to support its continued evolution and adaptation.

Finally, in accordance with the statute, CTG should coordinate its proposed recommendations with NIST where appropriate.

User Needs Group (UNG)

The primary mission of the User Needs Group (UNG) is to address the needs of the customers of commercial mobile service (CMS) providers that voluntarily elect to transmit emergency alerts, particularly non-English speaking customers (see WARN Act §603(c)(4)). UNG should also consider the needs of customers with other special needs such as people with disabilities and the elderly. The UNG will also develop recommendations under which electing CMS providers may offer subscribers the capability of preventing the subscriber's device from receiving emergency alerts, or classes of alerts, (other than an alert issued by the President), consistent with section 602(b)(2)(E) of the Warn Act. (WARN Act §603(c)(5)).

Issues to be addressed by this informal working group include:

- Determining user categories for which recommendations will be made
- Defining emergency message formats for special needs users (*e.g.*, text video, audio), basing its recommendations on the service profiles defined by the Communication Technology Group.
- Making recommendations for a common 'look and feel' for alerts, alerting controls, and provisioning mechanisms across electing service providers' diverse technology platforms.
- Making recommendations regarding subscription, control, notification, and presentation formats/mechanisms appropriate to the needs of various special needs users.
- Drafting the Consumer Notifications that will be issued by non-electing service providers, electing service provider, and partially electing service providers.

In its work, the UNG will review proposals by other work groups as it relates to the needs of end users, particularly addressing both network and CPE issues. The UNG also will work with NIST on standards and technologies issues related to the delivery of alerts to people with special needs.