



NEWS
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Mobile Emergency Alert System Reaches Key Milestones with Test Streams for Device Makers, Standardization Progress

*International CES Demonstration Shows How Mobile DTV Broadcasting Will
Deliver Video, Audio, Photos, Maps, and Other Vital Information to Millions at Once*

LAS VEGAS, Jan. 4, 2013 – When disaster strikes, public safety officials need an instantaneous way to reach millions of people at once. Superstorm Sandy's aftermath in the Northeast demonstrated both the fragile limits of cell phone networks during times of emergency and the life-saving ability of TV broadcasting.

A flexible new system being demonstrated next week at the International CES® combines the reach and reliability of broadcasting with the mobile communications that Americans depend on to stay informed, especially during a crisis. At the "CES Mobile TV TechZone" (Central Hall 14340), the Mobile Emergency Alert System (Mobile EAS) will demonstrate how a single broadcast can deliver reliable, rich-media alerts to mobile devices anywhere, anytime.

"Mobile Digital TV is growing with more broadcasters on the air and more devices available to viewers. Our efforts to deploy the new Mobile Emergency Alert System are also expanding, with the availability of test streams for device manufacturers to incorporate M-EAS as they develop new consumer products. Those streams are available now on www.MobileEAS.org. We're also working closely with the ATSC (Advanced Television Systems Committee), which is expected to finish standardization of Mobile EAS by March," said Convergence Services CEO John Lawson, a long-time expert in emergency alerting and key player behind M-EAS.

Equipment Manufacturers, Chipmakers Developing M-EAS Products

Utilizing the newly available test streams, Mobile DTV solution provider Siano and mobile device accessory manufacturer Elgato already are working on future products designed to support Mobile EAS for mobile viewers, in anticipation of the final ATSC standard. Mobile phone manufacturers, including Mobile DTV leader LG Electronics, also are working on incorporating M-EAS capability into their devices.

Prototype LG smartphones used in the CES demonstrations will offer not only audio and visual indications of emergency alerts, but also a vibrating mode to notify all users (including those with vision or hearing loss) about an emergency. The demonstrations in the Mobile TV

TechZone will show how easy it will be for local TV stations to transmit Mobile DTV signals with rich-media alert content. The simulations will be based on national and local emergency scenarios, including a hurricane threat in North Carolina, a “tornado in the Northeast and “an impending tsunami on the West Coast.

The 2013 CES Mobile EAS demonstrations are being conducted with the support of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), LG Electronics (which developed Mobile EAS receivers) and its Zenith subsidiary (which provided technical support and funding), and Harris Broadcast (which equips TV stations with the necessary equipment.) Mobile EAS requires no additional radiofrequency spectrum and is a “dual-use” of existing TV transmitters and towers. Standards-based equipment to upgrade stations for Mobile DTV transmission is already available commercially.

Avoiding Cellular Congestion in Emergencies

Using conventional TV broadcasts that are enhanced with data and Mobile DTV transmissions, the Mobile EAS demonstration shows the system’s capabilities. The system will deliver multimedia alerts (utilizing video, audio, text, and graphics) to Mobile DTV-equipped cellphones, tablets, laptops, and in-car navigation systems. Utilizing the inherent one-to-many architecture of broadcasting, M-EAS alerts to mobile devices avoid the roadblocks and chronic congestion of cellular systems during emergencies.

The Mobile EAS system would complement the recently activated cellular-based system that transmits up to 90-character text messages to mobile phones.

“Mobile DTV will be a significant enhancement for local public safety communications because millions of devices will receive alerts simultaneously – just as easily as reception by a single device. Video, photos, graphics of evacuation routes, text and audio can all be transmitted through the system to reach anyone with a mobile device, including those with disabilities,” said Wayne Luplow, vice president for LG’s Zenith R&D subsidiary, which together with PBS developed the core technology enabling M-EAS.

The new alerting application developed for Mobile EAS utilizes existing standards for implementation. The U.S. broadcast standard for mobile television, the ATSC A/153 Mobile DTV Standard, uses Internet Protocol (IP) at its core. The use of IP allows the new application to be flexible and extensible. Data delivery, non-real-time delivery, and electronic service guides are all included. Mobile EAS is compliant with the international Common Alerting Protocol and designed for full incorporation into the U.S. Integrated Public Alert and Warning System.

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