

# The Evolution of Public Emergency Alerting



Originally called the “Key Station System,” the **CONTROL** of **EL**ectromagnetic **RADI**ation (CONELRAD) was established in August 1951.

Participating stations tuned to 640 & 1240 kHz AM and initiated a special sequence and procedure designed to warn citizens.

EBS was initiated to address the nation through audible alerts. It did not allow for targeted messaging.

System upgraded in 1976 to provide for better and more accurate handling of alert receptions.

Originally designed to provide the President with an expeditious method of communicating with the American Public, it was expanded for use during peacetime at state and local levels.

EAS jointly coordinated by the FCC, FEMA and NWS.

Designed for President to speak to American people within 10 minutes.

EAS messages composed of 4 parts:

- Digitally encoded header
- Attention Signal
- Audio Announcement
- Digitally encoded end-of-message marker

Provided for better integration with NOAA weather and local alert distribution to broadcasters

IPAWS modernizes and integrates the nation’s alert and warning infrastructure.

Integrates new and existing public alert and warning systems and technologies thru adoption of new alert information exchange format - the Common Alerting Protocol or CAP

Provides authorities a broader range of message options and multiple communications pathways



original timeline info borrowed from:  
The Broadcast Archive by Barry Mishkind,  
The Eclectic Engineer