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IPAWS Modernizes Public Emergency Notification

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During an emergency, State and local public safety officials need the capability to provide the public with potentially life-saving information as soon as possible. The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is an integration of the nation's alert and warning infrastructure that provides public safety officials with an effective way to alert and warn the public about serious emergencies. IPAWS is available to Federal, State, territorial, tribal and local alerting authorities and can be integrated with local systems that use Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) standards.

IPAWS instantly sends one message to multiple dissemination services including radio, television, cell phones, emergency telephone notification systems, sirens, internet services, social media, and other local alerting systems. To communicate over such a variety of channels, IPAWS supplements existing public alerting methods with the advantages of digital technology. Technologies that use CAP and have access to the internet can be programmed to receive and

distribute IPAWS alerts. Many unique systems can be upgraded or may already be CAP compliant, allowing public safety officials to use IPAWS to streamline alerts through these systems, increasing the resilience of local alerting capabilities. IPAWS has the capability to send the following types of alerts:

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs)

The product of a partnership between the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission, and wireless carriers, WEAs are alerts broadcasted by authorized Public Alerting Authorities to any WEA-enabled mobile device in the geographically targeted area. Many cell phone models are currently designed to be WEA-enabled, and will receive the alerts as long as the phones are serviced by a wireless carrier that participates in distributing WEAs. Some phone models may require an update to become WEA-enabled, while other models may not have the capability to receive WEAs. IPAWS relays Presidential, America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response (AMBER),

and Imminent Threat alerts to WEA-enabled mobile phones using cell broadcast technology that does not get backlogged during times of emergency when wireless voice and data services are highly congested.

Emergency Alert System (EAS) Public Alerts

EAS is used by public safety officials to send detailed warnings via broadcast, cable, satellite, radio and television channels. EAS participants work closely with public safety officials at all levels of government to provide these alerts.

National Weather Service All-Hazards Emergency Message Collection System (HazCollect)

Through a partnership between FEMA and the National Weather Service (NWS), authorized Public Alerting Authorities can send public alerts and warnings through the All-Hazards Emergency Message Collection System (HazCollect), which automatically relays Non-Weather Emergency Messages (NWEMs) to NWS dissemination systems including the NOAA Weather Radio.

How to Become an IPAWS Alerting Authority

A Federal, State, territorial, tribal or local alerting authority can become a Collaborative Operating Group by completing the 4-step process outlined at <http://www.fema.gov/alerting-authorities>. For more information or questions about the process contact the IPAWS Program Management Office at IPAWS@dhs.gov.

For more information about IPAWS, please visit: www.fema.gov/integrated-public-alert-warning-system

Emergency Preparedness for ISFSIs

Emergency preparedness includes planning for more than just nuclear reactor accidents. Spent nuclear fuel (SNF), fuel that has been used in a reactor and can no longer support a constant nuclear chain reaction, is also a potential hazard that must be addressed. Since the storage of SNF could potentially lead to a radiological release in an emergency situation, the NRC requires plants to prepare emergency plans for SNF stored at their sites.

The process of controlling radioactive waste begins once the spent fuel assembly is removed from the reactor vessel. The assembly is immediately placed in a spent fuel pool to cool in water for a period of time before it is able to be transferred to an independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI). Although the NRC requires that the fuel must remain in the pool for at least three years prior to transfer to an ISFSI, the fuel is often cooled for at least five years.

An ISFSI generally utilizes a cask to store SNF and dry radioactive waste in an inert gas, which surrounds the radioactive materials with a nonreactive environment. The inner cylinders are typically welded shut and surrounded by an outer cylinder that is usually made of concrete or steel. Information on different types of ISFSI designs can be found at the following link: <http://www.nrc.gov/waste/spent-fuel-storage/designs.html>. ISFSIs are designed to be interim storage units of radioactive waste. Under Title 10 of the

Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) Part 72.42, an ISFSI can be licensed for a maximum of forty years and any subsequent license renewals are also for the same time period.

ISFSI applications are only required to maintain a separate emergency plan if the ISFSI will not be co-located within the exclusion area of an operating nuclear power reactor site that already has an approved emergency plan as part of its license. The exclusion area is defined in 10 CFR Part 100.3 as the "area surrounding the reactor, in which the reactor licensee has the authority to determine all activities including exclusion or removal of personnel and property from the area." The emergency plan for a nuclear power reactor exceeds the requirements for an ISFSI not located on an operating power reactor site; therefore, the NRC determined that an existing operating reactor emergency plan would adequately address any emergency situation at an ISFSI.

For ISFSI locations that require a separate emergency plan, 10 CFR Part 72.32 lists the components that the plan is required to address: facility description, types of accidents, classification of accidents, detection of accidents, mitigation of consequences, assessment of releases, responsibilities, notification and coordination, information to be communicated, training, safe condition (the process by which an ISFSI would be restored to a safe condition after an accident), exercises, hazardous chemicals, offsite assistance, and arrangements made for providing information to the public.

Update on NUREG-0654/FEMA-REP-1 Revision Project

Stakeholder engagement sessions are planned for October 29-31, 2013, at the NRC Offices in Rockville, MD, and will offer stakeholders the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes to NUREG-0654/FEMA-REP-1, "Criteria for Preparation and Evaluation of Radiological Emergency Response Plans and Preparedness in Support of Nuclear Power Plants," with NRC and FEMA writing team members. Stakeholder input from these engagement sessions will be considered in the subsequent draft revision to NUREG-0654/FEMA-REP-1, which will be published for formal public comment. Preliminary draft sections of the document will be posted on www.regulations.gov in advance of the meetings. Remote access to these sessions will be available for stakeholders unable to attend in person. Additional meeting details will be made available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/public-meetings/index.cfm>

Upcoming Events of Interest to the EP Community

- ◆ **NEI Hostile Action Based Exercise Workshop** September 10-11, 2013 in Alexandria, Virginia
www.nei.org/Conferences/Hostile-Action-Based-Exercise-Workshop
- ◆ **NUREG-0654/FEMA-REP-1 Stakeholder Engagement Sessions** October 29-31, 2013 at NRC headquarters in Rockville, MD