Paramount Global

Federal Communications Commission Compliance Manual: Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) Tones

Adopted: February 2025

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I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of the Emergency Alert System ("EAS") [1] is to provide timely and accurate alerts and warnings via broadcast television and radio stations so that members of the public may act quickly to protect themselves and their families. Similar to the EAS, the Wireless Emergency Alerts system ("WEA") [2] is a public safety system that allows customers who own compatible mobile devices to receive geographically targeted, text-like messages alerting them of imminent threats to safety in their area.

The FCC's Rules governing the EAS and the WEA (the "EAS/WEA Laws") generally prohibit the use of any portion of either the EAS tones (which alert radio and TV audiences of emergency information) or the WEA tones (which alert mobile device users of emergency information) – or simulations of any portions of those tones – outside of an actual emergency. While the FCC's enforcement most frequently addresses misuse of these tones by broadcast television and radio stations or cable channels, the rules prohibit any misuse, which could include misuse on streaming platforms, social media, and in feature films.

In addition to these basic obligations imposed by federal law, Paramount Global entered into a Consent Decree with the FCC that requires Paramount Global to take certain steps to ensure its compliance with the EAS Laws going forward, including adopting and implementing this Compliance Manual.

The FCC can impose substantial fines for violations of the EAS/WEA Laws, and the Consent Decree between Paramount Global and the FCC allows the imposition of additional penalties. EAS/WEA violations can also harm Paramount Global's reputation in the marketplace and with the FCC and can significantly disrupt the company's business. Any viewer or listener can easily file a complaint with the FCC concerning any violation of the EAS/WEA Laws. Enforcement of the EAS/WEA Laws has been a priority for the FCC in recent years. Thus, careful adherence to the EAS/WEA Laws is essential to Paramount Global's operations.

This Compliance Manual provides basic information concerning the FCC's approach to the EAS/WEA Laws and is designed to help Paramount Global personnel understand and comply with the relevant requirements.

Interpreting and applying the EAS/WEA Laws can be both challenging and difficult. If you have any questions regarding this Manual or whether any specific programming content to be distributed (or already distributed) is compliant with the EAS/WEA Laws, you should reach out to Paramount Global's EAS Consent Decree Compliance Officer – John Bagwell (the "("CD Compliance Officer"). He can be reached at 646-398-4112 / John.Bagwell@paramount.com.

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[1] 47 C.F.R. § 11.45. Section 325(a) of the Communications Act, Section 11 of the FCC's Rules, and the published and promulgated orders and decisions of the Commission regarding the misuse of EAS Tones are referred to in this Compliance Manual as the "EAS Laws."

[2] 47 C.F.R. § 10.520(d)(1). Section 325(a) of the Communications Act and Section 10 of the FCC's Rules, together with written Commission decisions interpreting these provisions that are currently in effect are referred to in this compliance manual as the "WEA Laws."

In addition, any suspected violations of the EAS/WEA Laws must be reported immediately to the CD Compliance Officer, even if the programming at issue has already been aired or otherwise distributed.

II. PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF EAS TONES

A. Communications Act

Section 325(a) of the Communications Act, 47 U.S.C. § 325(a), under the heading "False distress signals; rebroadcasting programs," states that:

> *No person within the jurisdiction of the United States shall knowingly utter or transmit, or cause to be uttered or transmitted, any false or fraudulent signal of distress, or communication relating thereto, nor shall any broadcasting station rebroadcast the program or any part thereof of another broadcasting station without the express authority of the originating station.*

The legislative history for this section explains that it "forbids the transmission of false or fraudulent communications, signals of distress, or signals of any kind."[3]

B. FCC Rules

Section 11.45 of the FCC's Rules, 47 C.F.R. § 11.45, entitled "Prohibition of false or deceptive EAS transmissions," states:

> *No person may transmit or cause to transmit the EAS codes or Attention Signal, or a recording or simulation thereof, in any circumstance other than in an actual National, State or Local Area emergency or authorized test of the EAS. Broadcast station licensees should also refer to § 73.1217 of this chapter.*

When the FCC adopted the current EAS in 1995, it determined that, notwithstanding the statutory prohibition on false distress signals, "a specific prohibition against the misuse of the EAS attention signal and codes is necessary . . . because it is more specific and directly addresses the proper use of EAS codes and tones."[4] The rule does not define the terms "person", "transmit," or "simulation thereof," and the breadth of these terms has been the subject of debate in several recent enforcement proceedings.

Section 10.520(d)(1) of the FCC's Rules, 47 C.F.R. § 10.520(d)(1), states:

> *No person may transmit or cause to transmit the WEA common audio attention signal, or a recording or simulation thereof, in any circumstance other than in an actual National, State or Local Area emergency or authorized test, except as designed and used for Public Service Announcements (PSAs) by federal, state,*

[3] H.R. Rep. No. 69-404, at 4 (1926).

[4] *See In the Matter of Amendment of Part 73, Subpart G, of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Broadcast System*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 10 FCC Rcd. 1786 (1995).

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local, tribal and territorial entities, and non-governmental organizations in coordination with those entities, to raise public awareness about emergency alerting, provided that the entity presents the PSA in a non-misleading manner, including by explicitly stating that the emergency alerting attention signal is being used in the context of a PSA for the purpose of educating the viewing or listening public about emergency alerting.

This rule does not define the terms "person", "transmit," or "simulation thereof."

C. FCC Guidance

In 2013, the FCC's Enforcement Bureau issued an advisory "to promote widespread understanding of the laws governing the appropriate use of the Emergency Alert System codes and Attention Signal."[5] In the enforcement advisory, the Bureau noted that in response to consumer complaints, it recently "began several investigations into entities that broadcast, transmitted, or caused to be transmitted content that allegedly used the EAS codes or Attention Signal (or simulations thereof) to capture the audience's attention in connection with unauthorized uses, including advertisements and promotions."

The enforcement advisory provided an important clarification regarding what constitutes a simulation of the EAS codes or Attention Signal. First, the Bureau clarified that a simulation "includes not only recordings of actual EAS codes or Attention Signals, but also sounds that mimic or are substantially similar to them, such that an average listener could reasonably mistake the sounds for an actual EAS code or Attention Signal." The Bureau also provided examples of "general alarms or other loud noises" that are not considered "simulations" of the EAS codes and Attention Signals, including "bells, claxons, and police, fire or civil defense sirens." However, the enforcement advisory went on to say that although those sounds "standing alone would not violate Section 11.45 of the rules, Section 325(a) of the Act covers a potentially broader circumstance in which such sounds might contribute to false or fraudulent communication of distress prohibited under the statute." In recent years, the FCC has suggested that even those sounds could constitute simulations depending on the context.

III. CONTENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. EAS Compliance Policy

It is Paramount Global's policy that, as required by the EAS/WEA Laws, no use of the EAS or WEA tones (or simulations thereof) is acceptable with respect to the production, broadcast, and/or distribution of any programming or other content except in connection with an actual emergency or other limited instances permitted by the FCC (e.g., a FEMA-provided PSA).

Pursuant to this policy, Paramount Global employees should always consider whether content (including program material, commercial material, and promotional material) produced or

[5] *False, Fraudulent, or Unauthorized Use of the Emergency Alert System Attention Signal and Codes Is Strictly Prohibited*, FCC Enforcement Advisory, 28 FCC Rcd. 15438 (EB 2013) ("*EAS Enforcement Advisory*").

distributed by Paramount Global complies with the EAS/WEA Laws and is consistent with the guidance provided in the Compliance Manual and Compliance Training Program.

All Paramount Global content that is to be distributed, whether produced by Paramount Global or by any third party (including but not limited to syndicated programming, materials obtained from video news releases, the Internet, sound effects libraries, social media, and other third-party sources, and commercial advertising, whether for our own products or services or those of a third party) is subject to this policy.

This includes, but is not limited to, content intended for distribution by: (i) the CBS Television Network and its affiliated stations, (ii) CBS Media Ventures and its client stations, (iii) the broadcast television stations owned and/or operated by Paramount Global, and (iv) any other broadcast stations (whether television or radio) to which any division of Paramount Global provides such content. In addition, although not covered by the EAS Consent Decree, the policy and its obligations apply equally to content acquired by or distributed by Paramount Global and intended for distribution through cable channels, streaming services, social media, or other platforms.

For reference, impermissible uses of the EAS and WEA tones may include:

- Inclusion/simulation of the tones in commercial advertisements or program promos (e.g., the FCC has imposed fines for inclusion of the tones in commercial advertisements for sports programming and movies).

- Inclusion/simulation of the tones in news stories, whether related to actual emergencies or not.

- Inclusion/simulation of the tones in scripted programming (e.g., the FCC has imposed fines for scripted programs that used sound effects in a fictional storyline that included actual or simulated emergency information over radio or TV stations).

- Inclusion/simulation of the tones in unscripted programming (e.g., the FCC has imposed fines when the tones were heard in the background of an unscripted, non-live law-enforcement program episode).

In addition, as discussed further below, if a Paramount Global employee believes content has been distributed that may not comply with the EAS/WEA Laws, that employee must immediately report the incident to the CD Compliance Officer.

B. Operating Procedures

Paramount Global has adopted a set of Operating Procedures regarding compliance with the EAS/WEA Laws that must be followed by all relevant Paramount Global employees and agents. A copy of the Operating Procedures adopted in January 2025 is attached as Exhibit I.

C. Disciplinary Action

Paramount Global staff members who take actions that result in noncompliance with the Compliance Plan, the EAS/WEA Laws, the Communications Act, or the Commission's rules and orders (or who fail to take an action to prevent such noncompliance when feasible), may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible suspension and/or termination of employment.

IV. COOPERATION AND REPORTING

All Paramount Global employees, officers, directors, and agents are required to respond promptly to any requests by the CD Compliance Officer for information, and to provide any assistance requested by the CD Compliance Officer. Any Paramount Global employee, officer, director, or agent who believes that a violation of the Compliance Manual, these Operating Procedures, the Compliance Checklist, or the EAS/WEA Laws has occurred should immediately contact the CD Compliance Officer:

Name: John Bagwell
Telephone: 646-398-4112
Email: John.Bagwell@paramount.com

If the CD Compliance Officer determines that a violation of the EAS/WEA Laws has occurred, then the CD Compliance Officer will report such noncompliance to the FCC within fifteen (15) calendar days after his or her determination of such noncompliance as required by the EAS Consent Decree. Such reports will include a detailed explanation of: (i) each instance of noncompliance; (ii) the steps that Paramount Global has taken or will take to remedy such noncompliance; (iii) the schedule on which such remedial actions will be taken; and (iv) the steps that Paramount Global has taken or will take to prevent the recurrence of any such noncompliance.

Note that this more detailed reporting obligation is in addition to, and does not replace, the obligation to notify the FCC of any EAS/WEA Laws violation within twenty-four (24) hours of its transmission.

The CD Compliance Officer, on behalf of Paramount Global, will also file Compliance Reports with the FCC once per year.

This Manual is designed to provide basic information concerning the EAS/WEA Laws and to serve as a guide for Paramount Global personnel as they seek to comply with the relevant requirements. Paramount Global personnel should seek guidance whenever any questions about the EAS/WEA Laws or the contents of this Manual arise.

As noted above, questions regarding the EAS/WEA Laws or information about suspected violations should be directed to Paramount Global's CD Compliance Officer, John Bagwell, who can be reached at 646-398-4112 / John.Bagwell@paramount.com.

Exhibit I

Operating Procedures: Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) Tones

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Paramount Global

Federal Communications Commission
Operating Procedures: Emergency Alert System (EAS) and
Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) Tones
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I. INTRODUCTION

This document sets forth the Operating Procedures of Paramount Global, including for its division employees and agents whose function is to produce or distribute programming for broadcast over television or radio who perform, supervise, oversee, or manage the performance of, duties that relate to Paramount Global's responsibilities under the Communications Laws[1], including but not limited to the Emergency Alert System (EAS) Laws ("Covered Employees"), to help ensure Paramount Global's compliance with the EAS Laws.[2] The Operating Procedures include internal company procedures and policies specifically designed to ensure that Paramount Global complies with the EAS Laws.

The obligations and procedures set forth herein regarding the EAS Laws apply equally to the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) Laws.[3] The EAS Laws and WEA Laws are collectively referred to as the "EAS/WEA Laws" herein.

The EAS/WEA Laws generally prohibit the use of any portion of either the EAS tones (which alert radio and TV audiences of emergency information) or the WEA tones (which alert mobile device users of emergency information) – or simulations of any portions of those tones outside of an actual emergency. While the FCC's enforcement most frequently addresses misuse of these tones by broadcast television and radio stations or cable channels, the rules prohibit any misuse, which could include misuse on streaming platforms, social media, and in feature films.

II. APPOINTMENT OF EAS CONSENT DECREE COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Paramount Global has appointed John Bagwell to serve as the company's EAS Consent Decree Compliance Officer (the "CD Compliance Officer").

Any Paramount Global employee, officer, director, or agent with questions or concerns regarding compliance with, or who wishes to report a potential violation of, these Operating Procedures, the

[1] As used herein, the term "Communications Laws" refers to, collectively, the Communications Act of 1934, the Federal Communications Commission ("Commission") regulations found in Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the published and promulgated orders and decisions of the Commission to which Paramount is subject to by virtue of its business activities, including, but not limited to the EAS Laws.

[2] As used herein, the term "EAS Laws" refers to Section 325(a) of the Communications Act and Section 11 of the FCC's rules, together with written Commission decisions interpreting these provisions that are currently in effect.

[3] As used herein, the term "WEA Laws" refers to Section 325(a) of the Communications Act and Section 10 of the FCC's rules, together with written Commission decisions interpreting these provisions that are currently in effect.

Compliance Manual, the Compliance Checklist, or the EAS/WEA Laws should immediately contact the CD Compliance Officer:

Name: John Bagwell
Telephone: 646-398-4112
Email: John.Bagwell@paramount.com

III. EDUCATION OF COVERED EMPLOYEES

A. Compliance Checklist and Manual

Paramount Global will create and implement a Compliance Checklist and a Compliance Manual by March 20, 2025. All Covered Employees will receive a copy of, or electronic access to, the company's Compliance Checklist and Compliance Manual and be given Compliance Training as discussed below.

The Compliance Manual sets forth and explains the EAS/WEA Laws. Paramount Global will periodically review and revise the Compliance Manual as necessary to reflect material changes and will promptly make available any revisions to Covered Employees. The Compliance Checklist describes the steps for Covered Employees to take to help ensure Paramount Global's compliance with the EAS/WEA Laws. Questions regarding the Compliance Manual, these Operating Procedures, or the Compliance Checklist should be addressed to the CD Compliance Officer.

B. Compliance Training Program

By March 20, 2025, and annually thereafter, each Covered Employee will take part in a Compliance Training Program provided or arranged by Paramount Global, which may be conducted in person, or via webcast or other electronic means. Any Covered Employee who is on leave during the applicable training period must take the training within (30) calendar days after the date such person returns from leave.

Paramount Global's Compliance Training Program will help guide Covered Employees regarding the production and broadcast and/or distribution of content that complies with the EAS/WEA Laws. It will also instruct Covered Employees on how to report any suspected instances of noncompliance to the CD Compliance Officer. Following the initial training, Covered Employees must attend refresher courses on an annual basis, or more frequently if deemed appropriate or if required by the CD Compliance Officer.

Any person who becomes a Covered Employee after the conclusion of the initial Training Program must receive a copy of the Compliance Manual and complete Compliance Training within thirty (30) calendar days after the date such person becomes a Covered Employee.

IV. PROGRAMMING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. EAS Compliance Policy

It is Paramount Global's policy that, as required by the EAS/WEA Laws, no use of the EAS or WEA tones (or simulations thereof) is acceptable with respect to the production, broadcast, and/or distribution of any programming or other content except in connection with an actual emergency or other limited instances permitted by the FCC (e.g., a FEMA-provided PSA).

Pursuant to this policy, Paramount Global employees should always consider whether content (including program material, commercial material, and promotional material) produced or distributed by Paramount Global complies with the EAS/WEA Laws and is consistent with the guidance provided in the Compliance Manual and Compliance Training Program.

All Paramount Global content that is to be distributed, whether produced by Paramount Global or by any third party (including but not limited to syndicated programming, materials obtained from video news releases, the Internet, sound effects libraries, social media, and other third party sources, and commercial advertising, whether for our own products or services or those of a third party) is subject to this policy.

This includes, but is not limited to, content intended for distribution by: (i) the CBS Television Network and its affiliated stations, (ii) CBS Media Ventures and its client stations, (iii) the broadcast television stations owned and/or operated by Paramount Global, and (iv) any other broadcast stations (whether television or radio) to which any division of Paramount Global provides such content. In addition, although not covered by the EAS Consent Decree, the policy and its obligations apply equally to content acquired by or distributed by Paramount Global and intended for distribution through cable channels, streaming services, social media, or other platforms.

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- Inclusion/simulation of the tones in unscripted programming (e.g., the FCC has imposed fines when the tones were heard in the background of an unscripted, non-live law-enforcement program episode).

Any suspected noncompliance with the EAS/WEA Rules must be reported immediately to the CD Compliance Officer, even if the material at issue has already been aired or otherwise distributed.

Note that review requirements in this document are in addition to, and do not replace, any other Paramount Global policies (e.g., regarding Standards & Practices or News review).

B. Disciplinary Action

Covered Employees, or other Paramount Global staff members, who take actions that result in noncompliance with the Compliance Plan, the EAS/WEA Laws, the Communications Act, or the Commission's rules and orders (or who fail to take an action to prevent such noncompliance when feasible), may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including possible suspension and/or termination of employment.

V. COOPERATION AND REPORTING

All Paramount Global employees, officers, directors, and agents are required to respond promptly to any requests by the CD Compliance Officer for information, and to provide any assistance requested by the CD Compliance Officer. Any Paramount Global employee, officer, director, or agent who believes that a violation of the Compliance Manual, these Operating Procedures, the Compliance Checklist, or the EAS/WEA Laws has occurred should immediately contact the CD Compliance Officer:

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The CD Compliance Officer, on behalf of Paramount Global, will also file Compliance Reports with the FCC once per year.