Field Notice: Recommendations for National EAS Test

Overview

Background and Purpose

The first nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) is scheduled to take place at 2:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) on Wednesday, November 9, 2011. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will conduct the test. The purpose of the test is to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the EAS in alerting the public.

The purpose of this field notice is to remind system operators of the test and to provide general guidelines that system operators should follow when conducting the test.

How Will the Test be Conducted?

At 2:00 p.m. on November 9, 2011, an EAS alert will be transmitted throughout the country and will be monitored by EAS participants. At the completion of the test, EAS participants will report back to the FCC regarding the results of the test. The test is expected to last about 3 minutes.

What Will Subscribers See and Hear During the Test

The nationwide EAS test is expected to resemble the monthly EAS test with which most subscribers are already familiar. The test will conclude with the transmission of the End of Message (EOM) code, rather than the Emergency Action Termination (EAT) code and will not require EAS participants to reconfigure their EAS encoder/decoder devices.

Provisioning of the Washington D.C. FIPS Code

The location code for the national EAS test will be the Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) code for Washington, D.C. This code is 11001. Most EAS encoder/decoder devices will automatically forward the Emergency Alert Notification (EAN) with the Washington, D.C. location code and will not require further configuration. If you are unsure whether your device will forward an EAN with the Washington, D.C., location code, please contact your device's manufacturer or FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Office at IPAWS@dhs.gov.

The EAS Test at SDV Sites

At Cisco Switched Digital Video (SDV) sites, set-tops will report channel changes to the Universal Session and Resource Manager (USRM). During the national EAS test, the force-tune of the set-tops will cause a flood of messages that will clog the upstream path.

This issue will resolve itself within 30 minutes; no action is required on the part of the headend operator. Video-on demand (VOD) and SDV services may be impacted during this time. There is no corrective action that can be taken to reduce this time period.

For More Information

For more information about the national EAS test, visit the FCC's EAS webpage: http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/emergency-alert-system-eas

Audience

This document is written for system operators of the Digital Broadband Delivery System (DBDS). Engineers who help support and maintain the DBDS will also find this document to be useful.

Document Version

This is the first formal release of this document.

Hardware and Software Requirements

EAS Encoder/Decoder

Trilithic and Monroe Electronics are the most commonly used vendors that provide the EAS encoders/decoders for the headend. If your EAS encoder/decoder is from one of these vendors, your software requirements for the EAS test are as follows:

- Trilithic — EASyPLUS firmware and software update v8.03
- Monroe Electronics — R189 OneNet software release 2.0-0

Contact Trilithic or Monroe Electronics to arrange for an upgrade if your EAS encoder/decoder does not meet these requirements.

Note: If you use another vendor for your EAS encoder/decoder, contact that vendor to inquire about their requirements for conducting the national EAS test.

Minimum DNCS Version

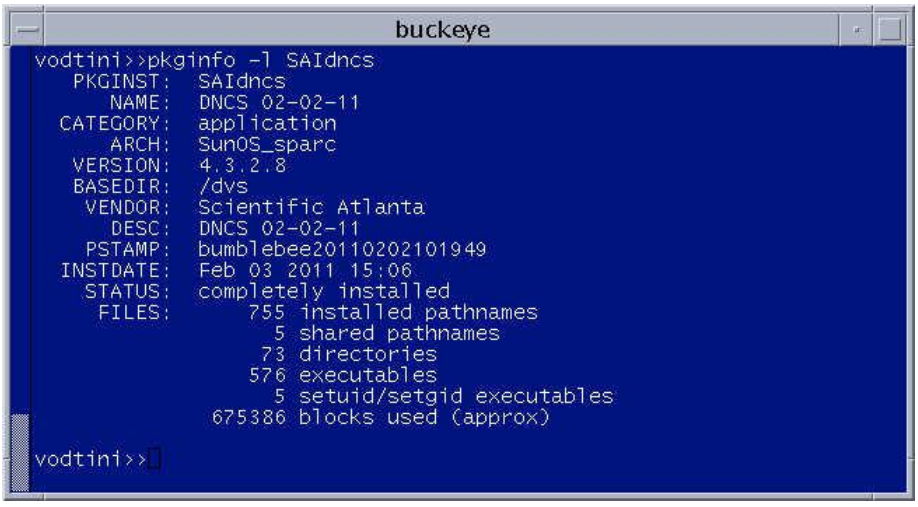
DNCS version 4.2 or later is required for successful execution of the national EAS test. To determine your DNCS version, complete these steps.

1 If necessary, open an xterm window on the DNCS.

2 Type the following command and press **Enter**.

```
pkginfo -l SAIdncs
```

Result: The system returns the current DNCS version.



Note: This example shows DNCS version 4.3.2.8 running on the DNCS. A minimum of DNCS version 4.2 is required for the national EAS test.

EAS Provisioning on the DNCS

The following instructions provide the steps necessary to configure your system for the national EAS test.

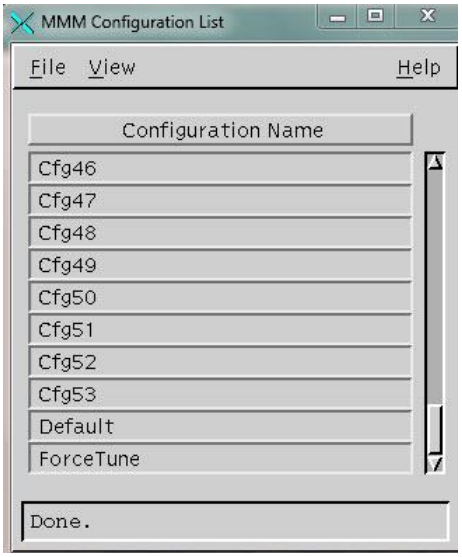
Important: During the course of this procedure, you are asked to select a default source to which your system will force-tune during the test. This default source **MUST** be able to be broadcast in the clear to all of the hubs on your headend.

Note: The screen captures used for this example are from a System Release 4.2 DNCS. Your images may vary somewhat based upon the DNCS code running on your headend.

1 From the DNCS Administrative Console, click the **System Provisioning** tab.

2 Click **MMM Config**.

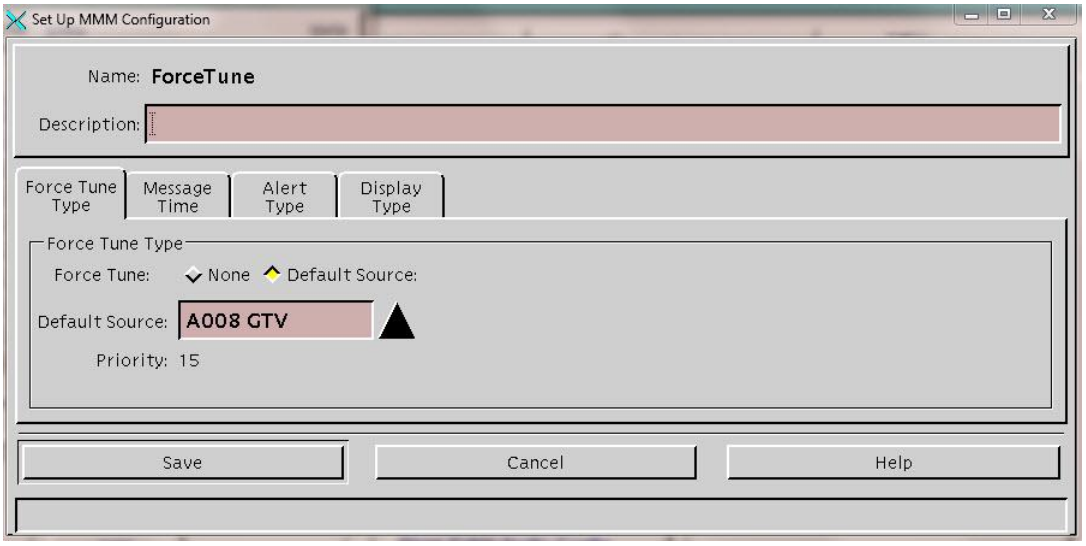
Result: The MMM Configuration List window opens.



3 Scroll to the bottom of the MMM Configuration List and select **Force Tune**.

4 Click **File** on the MMM Configuration List window and select **Open**.

Result: The Set Up MMM Configuration window opens.



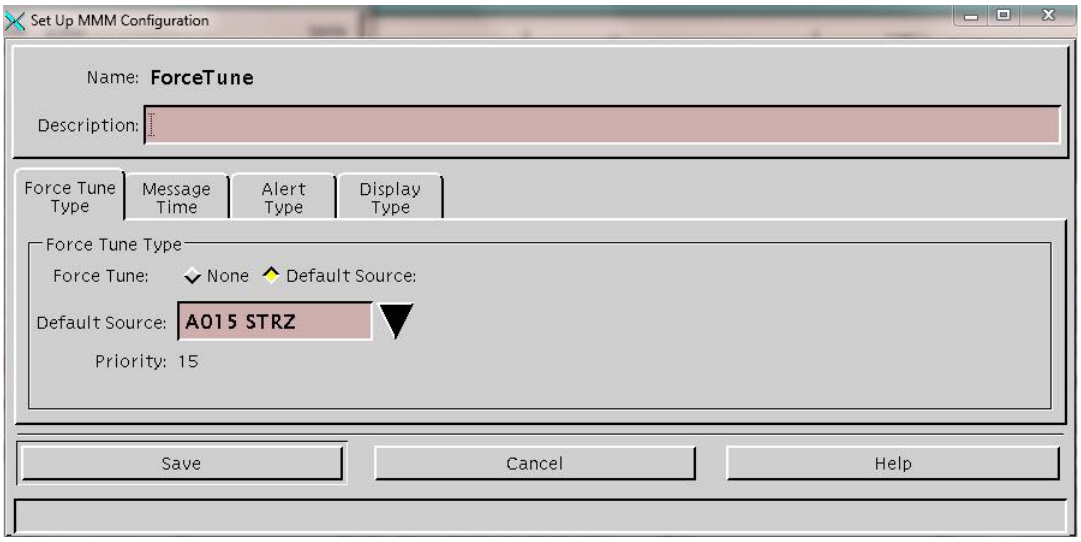
5 Under the tab **Force Tune Type**, in the **Force Tune** field, be sure **Default Source** is selected.

6 Click the arrow next to **Default Source**, and select the appropriate default source for your EAS test.

CAUTION:

Your choice of a default source MUST be in the clear (not encrypted), and must be streamed to all the hubs within your headend.

Note: For this example, **A015 STRZ** is selected as the default source.

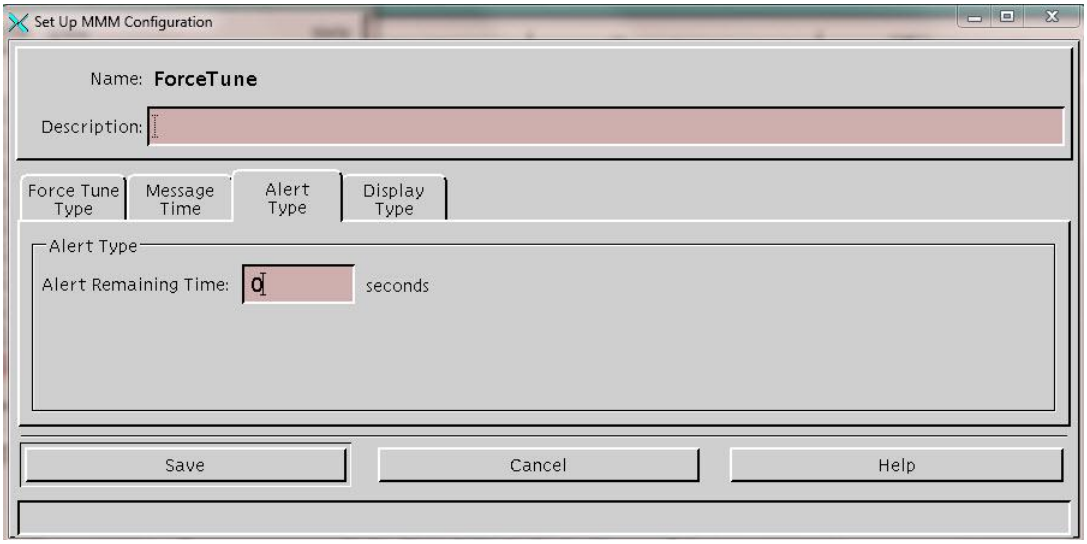


7 Click the **Alert Type** tab.

8 Set the **Alert Remaining Time** to 0 (zero) seconds.

Note: The 0 in the Alert Remaining Time field signifies that the EAS alert is open-ended and will not end until an EOM code is transmitted.

Important: If this value is not set to 0, the EAS alert may terminate prematurely.



9 Click **Save** to complete your configuration for the EAS test.

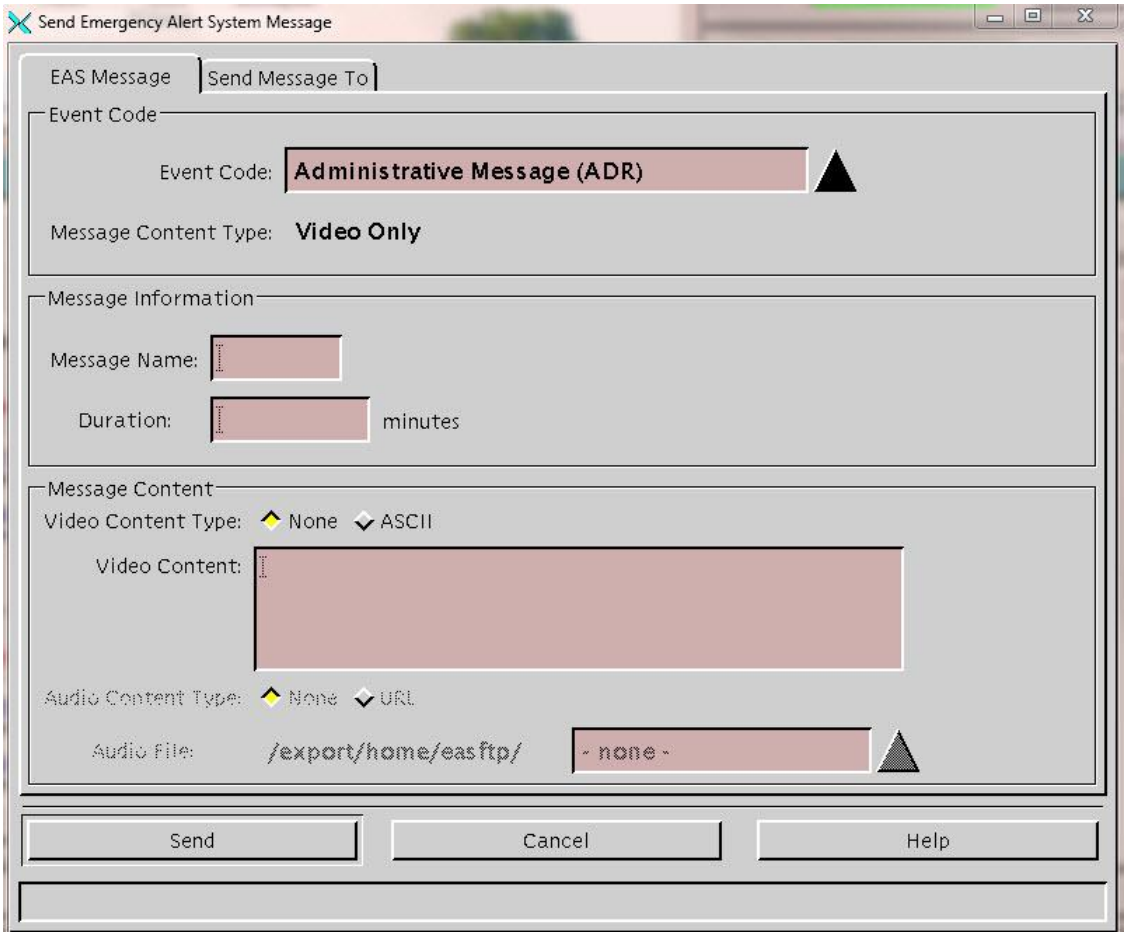
Manual Termination of the EAS Message

In the unlikely event that the end-of-message (EOM) instruction, transmitted at the end of the EAS test, is not processed by your encoder/decoder or is lost in the network, you will need to manually terminate the EAS test yourself. The following steps guide you through this process.

1 On the DNCS Administrative Console, select the **System Provisioning** tab.

2 Click **EAS Message**.

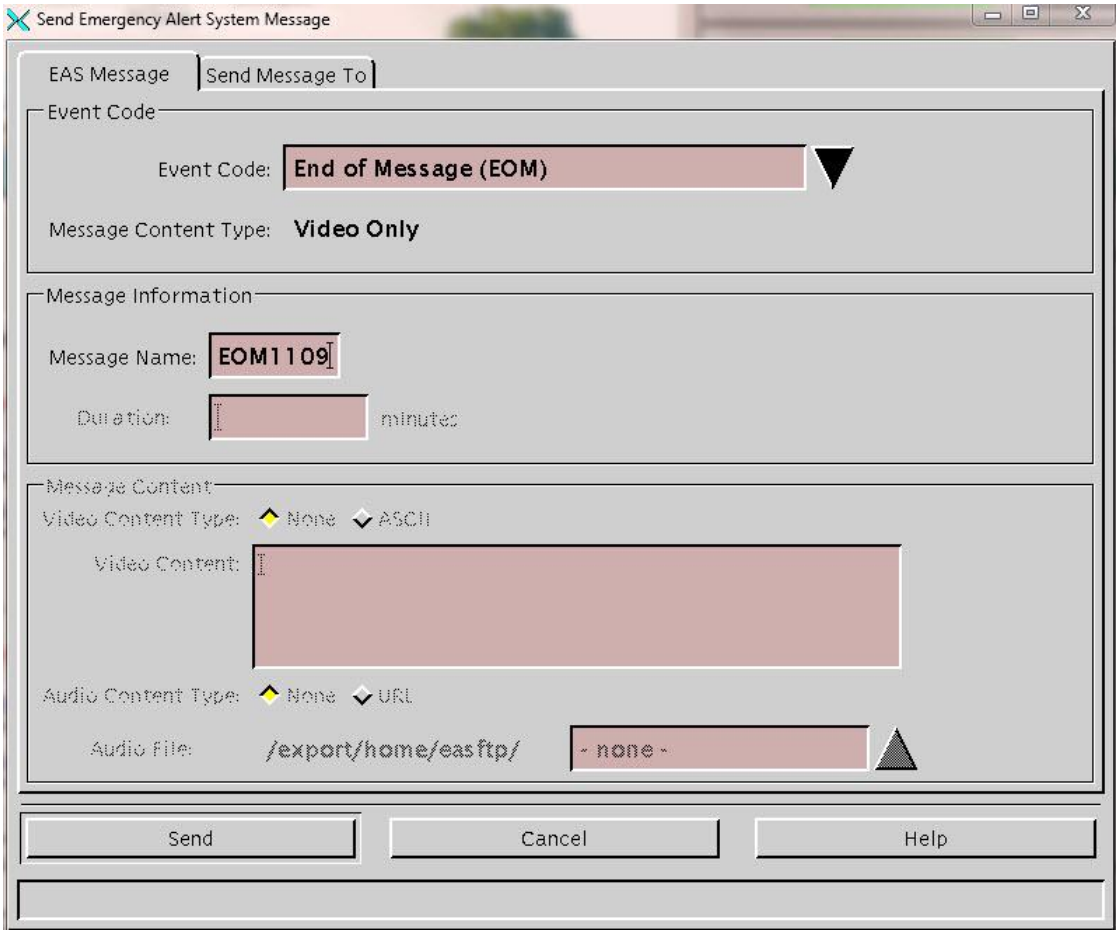
Result: The Send Emergency Alert System Message window opens.



3 Click the arrow to the right of the **Event Code** field and select **End of Message (EOM)**.

4 In the **Message Name** field, type **EOM1109**.

Example: Your window should look similar to the following example:

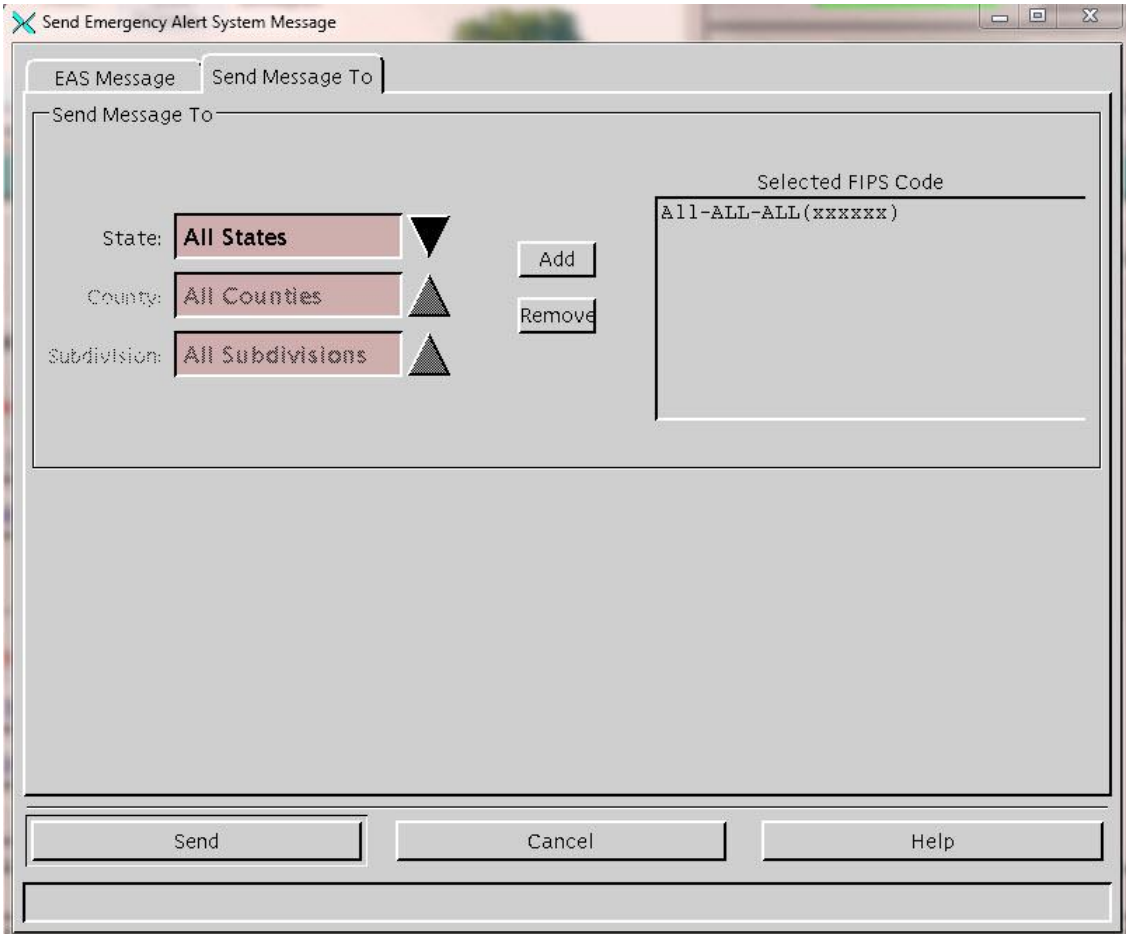


5 Click the **Send Message To** tab.

6 Click the arrow to the right of the **State** field and select **All States**.

7 Click **Add**.

Result: The Selected FIPS Code column updates with your selection.



8 Click **Send**. The window updates by displaying **Message sent**.

9 Click back to the **EAS Message** tab.

10 Click the arrow to the right of the **Event Code** field and this time select **Emergency Action Termination (EAT)**.

11 In the **Message Name** field, change the message name to **EAT1109**.

12 Click **Send**.

13 Is your DNCS a Distributed DNCS?

- If **yes**, repeat this procedure for each of your remote sites.

  Important: Be sure to use a unique **Message Name** each time by appending "2", "3", etc. to the Message Name each time you configure the message for another remote site. Your Message Names must be unique.
- If **no**, you have completed this procedure.

For More Information

If you have additional technical questions, call Cisco Services at 770 236-2200 or 866 787-3866 for assistance. Follow the menu options to speak with a service engineer.

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