

**Meeting Notice**

**Thursday, October 10, Don Chilito's Restaurant**

7017 Johnson Drive, Mission, KS, (913) 432-4615  
 Gather at 11:30 am, Lunch and Meeting at 12:00 noon.



*AMBER Alerts and EAS.* Based on the concepts presented by Clay Freinwald at the 2002 KAB/MBA convention, SBE59 would like to establish a unified EAS communications plan for the Kansas City operational area. At our October meeting we hope to explore several concepts. These can include but are not limited to having a single metro frequency, such as MERS at 158.82MHz, to be used as the central point of EAS communications and alert relays; establish one department, possibly the Kansas City 911 center, to serve as the hub for distributing emergency messages and initiating all locally originated events; tie in the Kansas Information Network and MONET frequencies through this central EAS center; and work out a redundant path plan through the NWS.

Chapter chairman Kirk Chestnut has discussed some of these ideas with Gary Brown, the emergency services manager for the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), a non profit organization representing the 114 unique municipalities in the Greater Kansas City metropolitan area.

We need your help to bring EAS beyond the basic requirements outlined in Part 11 of the FCC Rules. Without your input, broadcasters will not have any choice or input in determining how EAS and AMBER will work together in the future. In addition to brainstorming, we also need to establish the foundation for future EAS efforts with volunteers for the EAS committee and it leadership.

We will meet in the banquet room. When you arrive at the restaurant, order your lunch and bring it to the banquet room. The meeting will begin promptly at 12:00 noon. □

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| Certification Dates |                |               |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Exam Date           | Location       | App. Deadline |
| November 8-18       | Local Chapter  | Closed        |
| February 7-17       | Local Chapter  | December 31   |
| April 8             | NAB, Las Vegas | March 1       |
| June 6-16           | Local Chapter  | April 25      |
| August 15-25        | Local Chapter  | June 13       |
| November 7-17       | Local Chapter  | September 26  |

**Last Month's Meeting**

We met at Don Chilito's to present and gather ideas for upcoming meetings and chapter projects. The results of this meeting will be shown in future presentations.

**Chairman's Chat**

*By Kirk Chestnut, CSRE*

The long-range forecasts have been calling for its arrival. Some have been waiting for it like rain on parched land while others viewed it with apprehension like a dark looming cloud on the horizon. Aside from the beautiful autumn weather, the AMBER Alert has arrived in Kansas City with a fury. Amidst swirls of excitement and misconception, the mechanism for distributing ab-

ducted child information is operational.

Let's first look at the history of the Amber program, courtesy of the KAB and KBI. In 1996, Arlington, TX, implemented the first emergency missing child alert in the United States. It is now called the *AMBER Alert* (America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response). The abduction and brutal murder of nine-year-old Amber Hagerman was the catalyst for the program. Since then, more than 30 other modified alert plans have been adopted on the local, regional, and state levels across the U.S. Recently, plans have been unveiled in Missouri and Nebraska.

The following criteria must be met for an alert to be initiated:

- There must be a confirmed child abduction
- The child is 17 years of age or younger or an individual with a mental or physical disability.
- There is reason to believe the victim is in imminent danger or serious bodily injury or death.
- There is sufficient information to disseminate to the general public, which could assist the public in identifying the child, suspect or car.

Final authority for the initiation of an alert rests with the head of the initiating law enforcement department or his designee. Care must be given to not over-use this program in order to keep its effectiveness and credibility. The

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Kansas AMBER Plan is *not* to be utilized in most runaway incidents or for most family/domestic abductions.

How will this impact area broadcasters? An alert follows a predetermined chain of events. A law enforcement official in the state of Kansas issues a request for an alert to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation in Topeka. Within 15 minutes an alert is written and professionally voiced. This message is forwarded to WIBW in Topeka for distribution over the Kansas Information Network (KIN).

Radio Stations monitoring WIBW, KIN or a KIN-affiliate will receive the alert via their EAS decoder. (By the way, WDAF-AM monitors KIN for stations licensed to Missouri.) Right now, it is completely up to the broadcast to decide what will be done with the information. The KAB requests that a participating station Program its EAS equipment to automatically relay the *Administrative Message* (ADR) code and announce alert information every 15 minutes for the following hour followed by 30-minute announcement intervals for three hours. The station may continue airing announcements at its discretion or until an alert cancellation has been received.

So where is the State of Missouri in all of this? I've heard through the grape vine that AMBER Alerts will soon be disseminated across the Show Me state. Stay tuned for details to come. In the mean time, we in Kansas City need to sit down with local government and hammer out a plan that works best for the metro area. Plans are in the works for a joint SBE/Mid America Regional Counsel (MARC) discussion on local EAS traffic handling. One governmental frequency can funnel Kansas, Missouri and local messages to every agency and broadcaster in the region with area specific information.

**EAS Required Monthly Test  
October 29**

The EAS RMT is sent on the  
last Tuesday of the month.

Until a Federal mandate is handed down, participation in AMBER is totally voluntary. You do not need to log these alerts, but it doesn't hurt to pass along this information.

Let's face it. If it were your son or daughter in harm's way, wouldn't you want all the help you could get? As trustees of the public airwaves, we owe the community just a little time to relay life saving information. The broadcasters and government officials who created this plan want the system to work for everyone. Let's be proactive in making AMBER and the EAS system at large work for us.

More information on the Kansas AMBER plan is available

through these resources:

[www.ksamber.org](http://www.ksamber.org)

[www.kcjis.state.ks.us](http://www.kcjis.state.ks.us)

Mary Tritsch, Attorney General, (785) 296-2215

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Bill Nolan, (316) 990-8285, [bnolan@bnolan.com](mailto:bnolan@bnolan.com) (EAS technical questions)

### SBE National Election Results

The results of the national elections have been reported by the SBE National Office. Elected to serve as officers of the society are:

#### President

Troy Pennington, CSRE Cox Radio; Birmingham, AL

#### Vice President

Ray Benedict, CPBE Viacom; Washington, DC

#### Secretary

Sam Garfield, CPBE TBC; Raleigh, NC

#### Treasurer

John Batson, CPBE Sinclair; Birmingham, AL

Also elected were six directors for the board of directors:

Ted Hand, CPBE

WTKR-TV; Norfolk, VA

Mark Humphrey, CPBE

WPLY-FM/Radio One; Media, PA

Keith Kintner, CPBE

WILL-AM/FM/TV; Urbana, IL

Vincent Lopez, CEV CBNT

WSYT/WNYS-TV; Syracuse, NY

Thomas Ray, CSRE

Buckley Broadcasting; New York

Barry Thomas, CPBE CBNT

Thomas Media Systems & Design; Hollywood, CA

Officers serve one-year terms. Directors serve two-year terms. The new directors join six other individuals in the middle of their terms.

The new officers and directors will take office at the National Meeting on October 17.

### Iowa DTV Symposium Slated for November

The annual event will be held November 5 through 7 at the University Park Holiday Inn in Des Moines. The conference looks at content and technical issues that must be addressed for DTV implementation. Attendance is free, but a reservation is required.

More information is available on the symposium's website at [www.iptv.org/dtv/2002](http://www.iptv.org/dtv/2002). □



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**Upcoming Meetings**

Mark the following dates on  
 your calendar so you don't  
 miss an upcoming meeting:

October 10  
 Don Chilito's - AMBER

November 14  
 Program TBA

December 10  
 Program TBA