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State of Louisiana
Governor's Office of Homeland Security
and
Emergency Preparedness

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New FM Radio Based Emergency Notification System
Available in Louisiana

ALERT FM system will improve emergency notifications for the public from the state, parish officials and college leaders

BATON ROUGE, La. – Louisiana has completed the implementation of the ALERT FM and GSSNet systems across the state, improving the way the state delivers voice and text emergency notifications to the public, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness announced today.

GOHSEP will use the ALERT FM system to send out its emergency alerts, as will emergency managers from all 64 parishes and 42 colleges and universities across the state. ALERT FM is an FM radio-based emergency notification system that will help Louisiana better keep citizens, schools, businesses, and first responders informed of critical information during natural or man-made disasters.

"Because Louisiana experiences both natural and manmade disasters, the state needs a reliable, redundant way to provide alerts and notifications quickly to our citizens, said Kevin Davis, GOHSEP Director. "In order to make sure that we are communicating with the public during the most extreme circumstances, we acquired ALERT FM and GSSNet, which will provide the State, the parishes and colleges and universities with a redundant means of keeping our citizens informed."

"One of Louisiana's most important public safety programs is the Amber Alert System. As a law enforcement officer and a father, nothing is more important than the wellbeing

of our children," said Colonel Mike Edmonson, State Police Superintendent. "ALERT FM will provide us the ability to disseminate critical information regarding child abductions in a timely manner to assist law enforcement in making successful recoveries."

Some parishes have already started testing their connection with this site. The free ALERT FM app is currently available for download to Apple and Android devices. The public can also purchase an ALERT FM receiver.

The GSSNet CAP-EAS system will be used by GOHSEP and the Louisiana State Police to broadcast voice-based emergency information including Amber Alerts, evacuation notices, and weather warnings and instructions across TV and radio stations. These systems provide a complete end-to-end, satellite-based voice and text emergency notification system for the state.

ALERT FM is unique when compared to other notification systems because it delivers emergency messages using the data subcarrier of local FM radio transmission towers. The use of this pre-existing network of FM towers provides overlapping and redundant signal coverage for the state. Around 90 FM radio stations will participate in the ALERT FM network across the state.

These overlapping stations ensure message distribution over a large "FM footprint" which gives emergency managers the ability to reach their intended recipients. GOHSEP and LSP will also use GSS's Alert Studio (a FEMA approved alert origination software tool) to activate the state's Emergency Alert System to distribute voice-based emergency messages across the entire state or for specific regions. The messages are created in Alert Studio and then distributed across the GSSNet satellite system to EAS encoders at Local Primary 1 and 2 (LP1/LP2) FM radio stations across Louisiana.

The voice messages are then broadcast over the radio to the public. Radio and TV stations across Louisiana monitor the LP1 and LP2 stations and relay the EAS message over their frequency to their audience once it is received at the primary stations. Alert Studio can create, retrieve, and disseminate these alerts and messages in multiple formats-MP3, live text to speech, and live recorded audio- to the selected area.

FOR THE PUBLIC

The public can access ALERT FM information by purchasing an ALERT FM receiver or using a free using an app that is available for both Apple and Android devices. Using ALERT FM, citizens will be able to receive a variety of local messages that might include NOAA weather warnings, school closings, road closures, and evacuation and re-entry instructions on ALERT FM receivers and the ALERT FM smartphone App. ALERT FM receivers are small, light-weight, and easy-to-program and are available for around \$40 with no annual contracts from select retailers or www.alertfm.com.

The ALERT FM App is available for both Apple iOS (iPhone, iPad, iPod) and Android devices. The Apple iOS version is currently available for free download from Apple App Store (<http://imap.tv/2k>) and the Android version is available for free in the Google Play Store (<http://imap.tv/fmqp>).

FOR EMERGENCY MANAGERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS

GOHSEP provided equipment to each parish that allows emergency managers to send information to the public. Each parish also received a number of receivers to issue to critical emergency management staff and first responders to alert them on hazards. ALERT FM allows users to create internal private user groups, which government agencies can use to keep first responders informed quickly during an incident.

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