



The

# Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

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... edited by Barry Mishkind – the Eclectic Engineer

## EAS Q&A

### Understanding the "New EAS"

*[September 2010] As we approach the anticipated date of the release by FEMA of the final standards that will drive the CAP version of EAS, a number of questions have arisen over what will be required and when. Jim Gorman of Gorman-Redlich offers some answers.*

**Barry:** Jim, perhaps it would be good to start by covering a few definitions, and then answer some of the questions that many folks are asking. First of all, what is the "New EAS?"

**Jim Gorman:** The New EAS is just the old EAS with the CAP tacked on.

**Barry:** And that leads us to defining what is the CAP?

**Jim Gorman:** CAP means "Common Alerting Protocol." This CAP is a method of sending text messages, using .xml, that goes beyond the existing watch or warning codes in the EAS receivers.

**Barry:** When will the 180-day Clock start?

**Jim Gorman:** The FCC will start the clock when FEMA and DHS announce that they have finished all the standing setting and coordination for CAP with the EAS.

#### THE NEW EAS RECEIVERS

**Barry:** OK – here is the key question for many stations: Several companies have been showing what they call the next generation of EAS receivers. Will stations have to buy one of these new EAS boxes?

**Jim Gorman:** No, that will not be necessary for many stations. There already are CAP boxes like the Gorman-Redlich CAP-DEC1 which will receive and decode the CAP messages, transforming them into a format which may be used by existing EAS equipment from any manufacturer, including Gorman-Redlich.



A front and back view of the CAP-DEC1

A CAP converter like this one is all that a radio or TV station will need to add to their current EAS equipment to be in compliance with the FCC/FEMA mandate for EAS participants to use the CAP.

**Barry:** Are you saying the existing receivers can still be used, and that a CAP converter is all we need?

**Jim Gorman:** That is correct. The alert codes "pass through" the CAP converter and will then trigger the existing receiver just as normal alerts do now.

**Barry:** What are the capabilities of the new CAP stuff? What do they add to what we have now?

**Jim Gorman:** The CAP converter converts the received .xml data into text messages, video streaming, or computer audio, whichever a station needs to bring the information to its listeners/viewers. It will also print alerts to one of the eight USB ports, to a network printer, or send out an email report on alerts if connected to the Internet (it will also update and synchronize the clock via the Internet).

**Barry:** Doesn't implementing the CAP require additional relays and/or outputs?

**Jim Gorman:** This will depend upon each station's needs, but normally the same triggers from the existing receiver will be used to trigger the data stream for text, voice, etc.

## COUNTING THE COSTS

**Barry:** What can you tell us about the cost of these new CAP converters?

**Jim Gorman:** For example, our converter, the CAP-DEC1, is \$1,350 (MSRP) and, as noted, will work with any receiver.

**Barry:** But what if someone is building a new station now, and needs a complete EAS receiver? If they buy a new receiver, will they have to buy a new one in 180 days?

**Jim Gorman:** No, if they buy now from most any manufacturer, the newer receivers have CAP built in. Furthermore, if there are any changes from what is now built in, a firmware download should bring the unit up to the latest version.

**Barry:** What will the new units cost?

**Jim Gorman:** According to the current information at hand, the range for new EAS (CAP included) receivers is currently in the \$2,300 to \$6,500 range (MSRP).

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*For more information, you are invited to contact Gorman-Redlich ([www.gorman-redlich.com](http://www.gorman-redlich.com)) or your favorite equipment representative (contact information is at: [www.theBDR.net/hotlinks/alpha.html](http://www.theBDR.net/hotlinks/alpha.html)). More information on EAS and CAP can be found at [www.theBDR.net/articles/fcc/eas](http://www.theBDR.net/articles/fcc/eas).*

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