



WebEOC[®] IPAWS Messaging

Administrator Guide

Version 3.2

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Overview

The *IPAWS Messaging* plugin is a simple, flexible tool that can be used by alerting authorities to send emergency messages to the general public through the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS). This plugin can be installed on your WebEOC® system to allow authorized personnel in your agency to distribute alerts through four different channels: COGs, EAS, NWEM, and WEA.



To gain access to IPAWS, your agency needs to sign an agreement with FEMA. The agreement enables FEMA to issue a COG (Collaborative Operating Group) ID and a digital certificate that you can use for exchanging messages with other COGs.

IPAWS Messaging Administration

This section is intended for WebEOC administrators and describes the basics of [setting the access permissions](#) to the plugin, [uploading the digital certificate](#), and [editing COG information](#).

Note: You need appropriate permissions to perform these tasks.

You can access the *Admin* window of *IPAWS Messaging* by clicking the Admin icon  in the header. In the **Plugins** tab, click **IPAWS Messaging**.

Modes

IPAWS has two system modes, or environments, that can be used to send messages for different purposes. Each mode requires a separate digital certificate. Administrators can enable a mode in the *Administration* section of the plugin by [uploading a certificate](#) for it. Administrators also have the ability to switch between modes. Note, however, that only one mode can be enabled at a given time.

IPAWS Messaging plugin works in the following modes.

- **Production** – This mode should be used to distribute actual alerts to the general public. Messages sent in this environment are routed to the [selected COGs](#). For security purposes, only authorized WebEOC users should be able to use this mode. When a user attempts to send an alert in the production mode, the system requires the user to acknowledge that the message is going to be sent to IPAWS.
- **Demonstration** – This mode is used for testing and training. Messages sent in the demonstration mode are not distributed to other COGs.


WebEOC displays your current mode in the upper right corner of the page and is visible on all pages of the plugin.

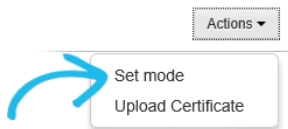


Upload a Certificate

Uploading a digital certificate allows your WebEOC system to access IPAWS. The certificate and all supporting information are provided by FEMA after your application is approved.

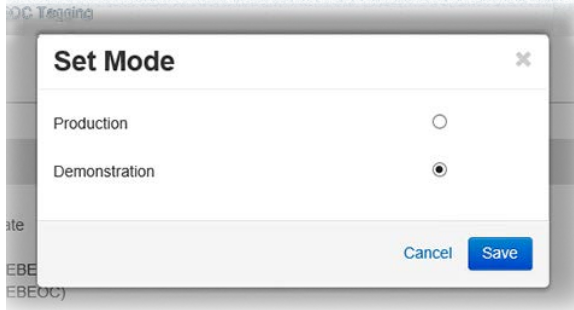
To upload a certificate

1. Click the Admin icon  in the header.
2. In the **Plugins** tab, click the **IPAWS Messaging** subtab.
3. Click the **Actions** drop-down list and select **Set mode**.



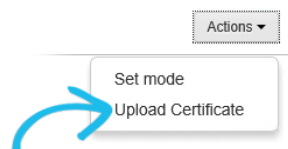
Note: You must select a [mode](#) before uploading a certificate.

4. In the *Set Mode* window, select the applicable mode and click **Save**.



Tip: Read more about [modes](#) to help you select the appropriate option.

5. Click the **Actions** drop-down list again and select **Upload Certificate**.



6. On the *Upload Certificate* page, enter information in the **COG ID**, **Keystore**, **Key**, and **Logon User** fields.

Note: All fields are required, and the information for such fields is provided by FEMA.

7. For the **JKS Certificate** field, click **Browse** and select the certificate in the **.jks** format from your computer.
8. Click **Save**.

COG Profile

After you upload the certificate, the *COG Profile* section is filled with the information about the general capabilities of your system. These capabilities are determined by the agreement between your agency and FEMA.

IPAWS Messaging Actions ▾

COG Profile


Test Connection

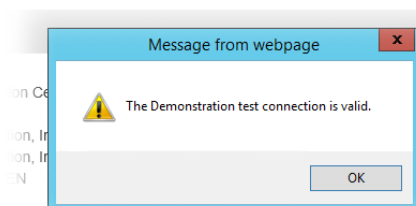
Active Certificate:	Demonstration Certificate
COG ID:	120040
COG Name:	ESI Acquisition, Inc (WEBEOC)
COG Description:	ESI Acquisition, Inc (WEBEOC)
COG Category:	IPAWS-OPEN
Organization Name:	CIV
Enabled:	True
CAE Authorized:	True
CAE Authorized WEA:	False
EAN Authorized:	False
All Event Codes Auth...	False
All Geocodes Authori...	False
EAS Authorized:	True

Test Certificate Connection

After you [upload a certificate](#), you can test the connection to verify that it is working properly.

To test the connection

1. Click the Admin icon  in the header.
2. In the **Plugins** tab, click the **IPAWS Messaging** subtab.
3. Click **Test Connection** in the upper right area of the page. If the connection is successful, a success message appears.



Note: If you receive a message that the connection has not been established, contact your administrator or Intermedix Support.

Connection Availability


Occasionally, the connection to the IPAWS demonstration environment is temporarily unavailable due to maintenance or other reasons internal to FEMA. During this time, WebEOC is not able to send and receive messages or update and cancel sent messages. No action is required on your part, and the system resumes normal operation when the downtime is over.

If the connection is unavailable, WebEOC displays a message to notify you. Administrators can see this warning when they open the *Administration* section of *IPAWS Messaging*. For users, the warning appears in the upper right corner of every page. When the connection becomes available, the warning changes to the [mode](#) indicator.

Manage User Access

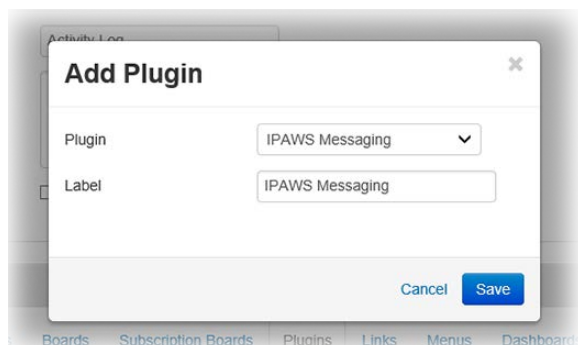
To make *IPAWS Messaging* appear on the control panel, you must assign this plugin to a WebEOC group and set appropriate access permissions. For information on managing groups, see the "Groups" section of the *WebEOC Administrator Manual*.

To assign IPAWS Messaging to a group

1. Click the Admin icon  in the header.
2. In the **Users** tab, click the **Groups** subtab.
3. Select the group you want to assign *IPAWS Messaging* to.

***Tip:** If the list of groups spans multiple pages, use the **Filter** field to find the appropriate group.*

4. On the *Groups: Edit Group* page, go to the *Settings* section and click the **Plugins** tab.
5. Click **Add Plugin**.
6. In the *Add Plugin* window, select **IPAWS Messaging** from the **Plugin** drop-down list. The **Label** field automatically populates with **IPAWS Messaging**.



Note: This label appears in the control panel menu.


Important: Any users assigned to the plugin have the ability to send public IPAWS messages. Thus, pay careful attention when assigning users so that only appropriate users are granted such access.

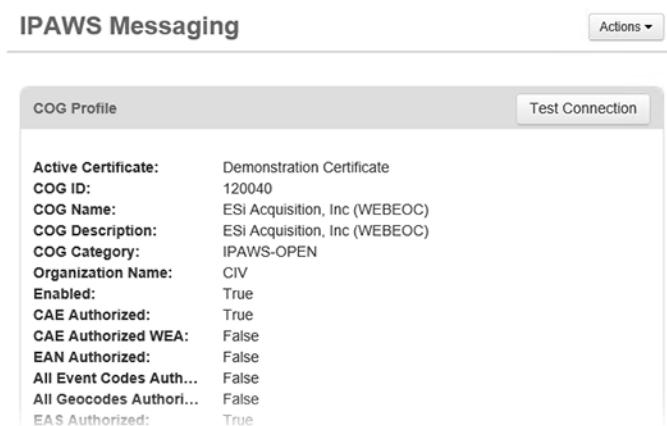
7. Click **Save**.
8. On the *Groups: Edit Group* page, click **Save**.

Select Recipient COGs

In the *Admin* window, the *Assigned COGs* section of the *IPAWS Messaging* landing page contains a list of COGs capable of receiving messages through IPAWS. As an administrator, you can select the COGs to which your agency sends messages most often. When the users compose a message, they only see the COGs you selected as available choices in the **Address To** field.

To select recipient COGs

1. Click the Admin icon  in the header.
2. In the **Plugins** tab, click the **IPAWS Messaging** subtab. The *IPAWS Messaging* landing page opens.

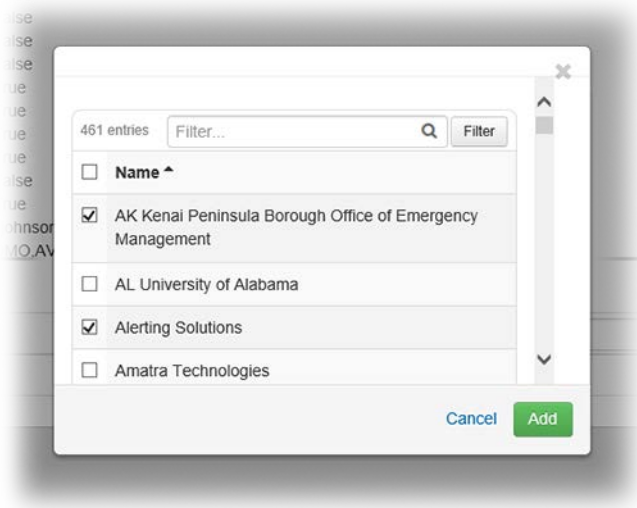


The screenshot shows the 'IPAWS Messaging' interface. At the top, there's a header with 'IPAWS Messaging' and an 'Actions' dropdown menu. Below this is a 'COG Profile' section with a 'Test Connection' button. The profile details are as follows:

Active Certificate:	Demonstration Certificate
COG ID:	120040
COG Name:	ESI Acquisition, Inc (WEBEOC)
COG Description:	ESI Acquisition, Inc (WEBEOC)
COG Category:	IPAWS-OPEN
Organization Name:	CIV
Enabled:	True
CAE Authorized:	True
CAE Authorized WEA:	False
EAN Authorized:	False
All Event Codes Auth...	False
All Geocodes Authori...	False
EAS Authorized:	True

3. Scroll down to the *Assigned COGs* section and click **Add COGs**.

4. In the window that opens, select all COGs you want users to be able to send messages to.



Note: Selecting the check box to the left of the **Name** heading ☐ Name ^ selects all check boxes in the list, allowing users to select all COGs simultaneously.

Tip: If desired, use the **Filter** field to quickly find the appropriate COGs.

5. Click **Add**.

Tip: If a COG was added by mistake, you can select the check box next to the appropriate COG name in the Assigned COGs list and click **Remove**.

6. Click **Save**.

Glossary

C

Cancel Message: An ability to mark a previously sent emergency message as no longer valid.

CAP: FEMA defines Common Alerting Protocol as a digital format for exchanging emergency alerts that allows a consistent alert message to be disseminated simultaneously over many different communications systems.

CMAS: Commercial Mobile Alert System; refer to WAE.

COG: Collaborative Operating Group. COGs are virtual organizations that hold membership in IPAWS and manage system access within that membership.

COG ID: Identification FEMA issues for a COG. This ID allows a COG to access IPAWS.

D

Digital Certificate: A certificate FEMA issues for a COG. This certificate allows a COG to access IPAWS.

Distribution Area: A geographical area where an emergency message should be distributed. IPAWS Messaging allows you to draw a shape on the map to define the distribution area.

E

EAS: Emergency Alert System that sends warnings via broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline services when all other communication pathways are unavailable.

Environment: See Mode

I

IPAWS: Integrated Public Alert and Warning System. IPAWS is used by alerting authorities to communicate emergency alerts and warnings to the public.

M

Mode: In IPAWS Messaging, a mode represents a system setup that controls how the messages are sent. IPAWS Messaging has two modes: production and demonstration.

N

NWEM: Non-weather Emergency Messages are a specialized form of a CAP alerts that can be used to distribute public warnings that are not weather-related.

U

Update Message: An ability to modify or add new information to the previously sent emergency message.

W

WEA: Wireless Emergency Alerts, formerly known as Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS). A nationally adopted broadcast technology that sends location-based targeted alerts to cell phones and other commercial mobile network devices.