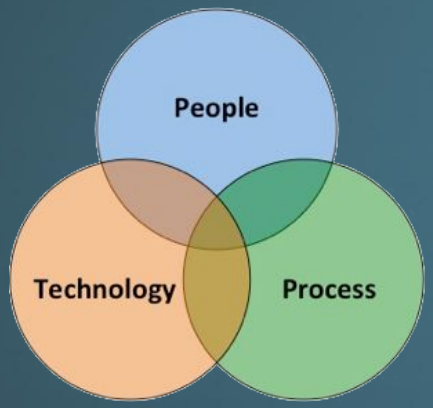
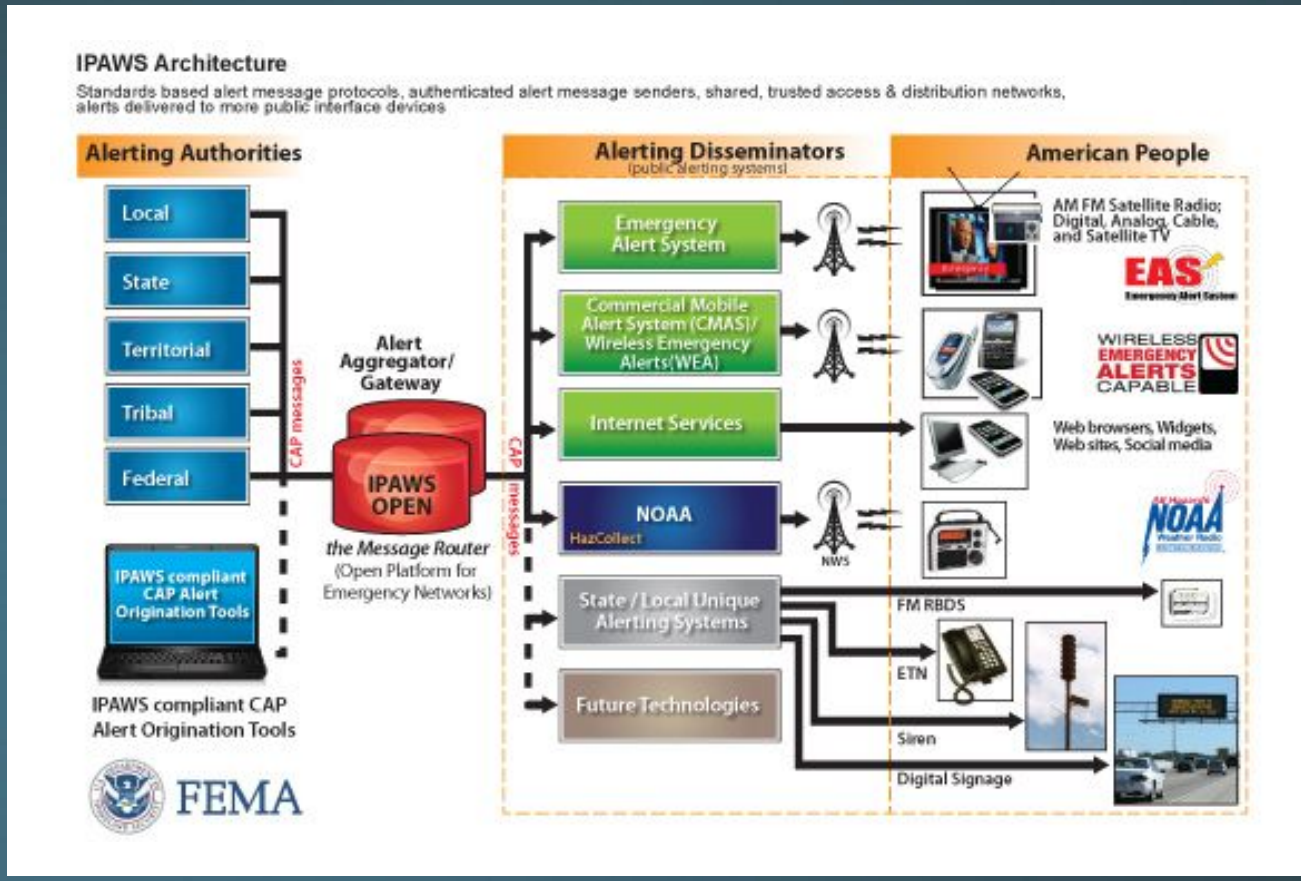
AlertSense

IPAWS Emergency Alerting System

An effective system is made from people, processes and technology. This overview shows the technology component, and specifically the user interface provided by the AlertSense IPAWS alerting tool. This tool allows emergency teams to send alerts to the FEMA/IPAWS system.





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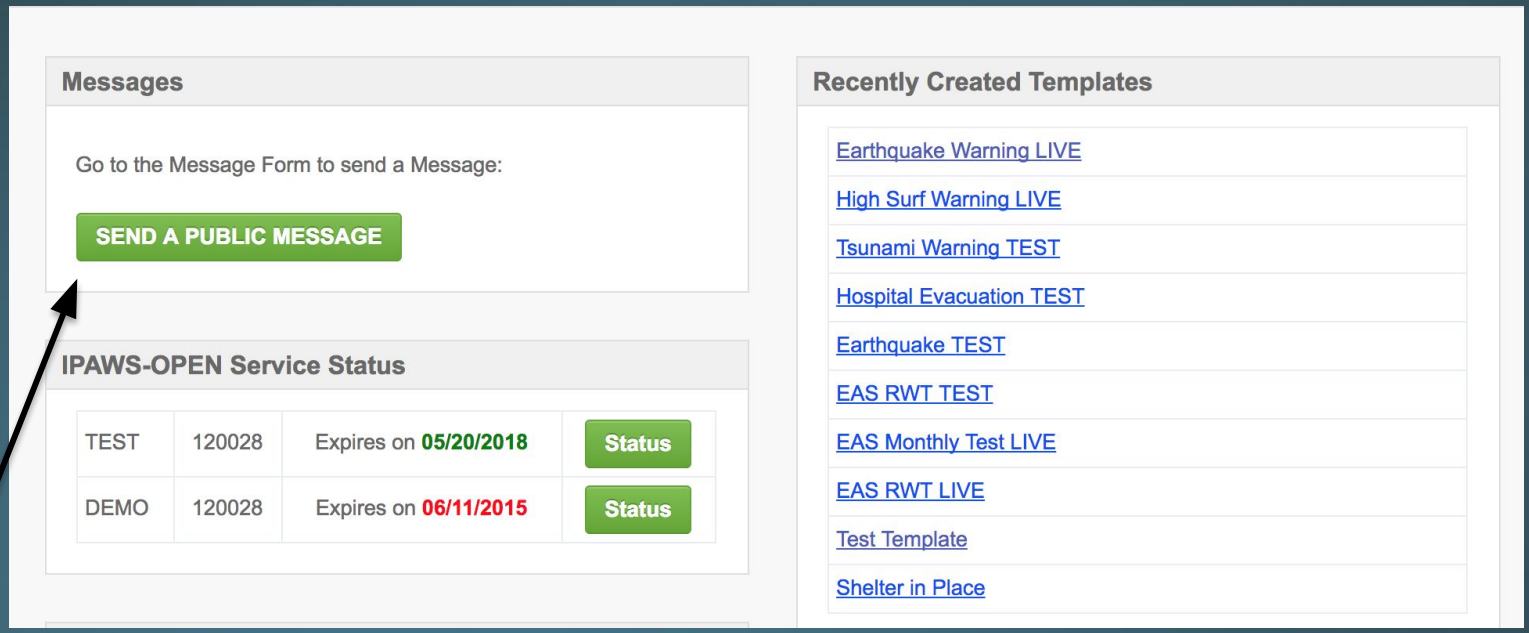
IPAWS Experience

Once logged into the system, this Dashboard is shown.

The user can review recently created templates, history, verify connection to IPAWS and initiate a public message.

Since this system is permission based, some users may see more information than others.



Step 1:
Select Send A Public Message

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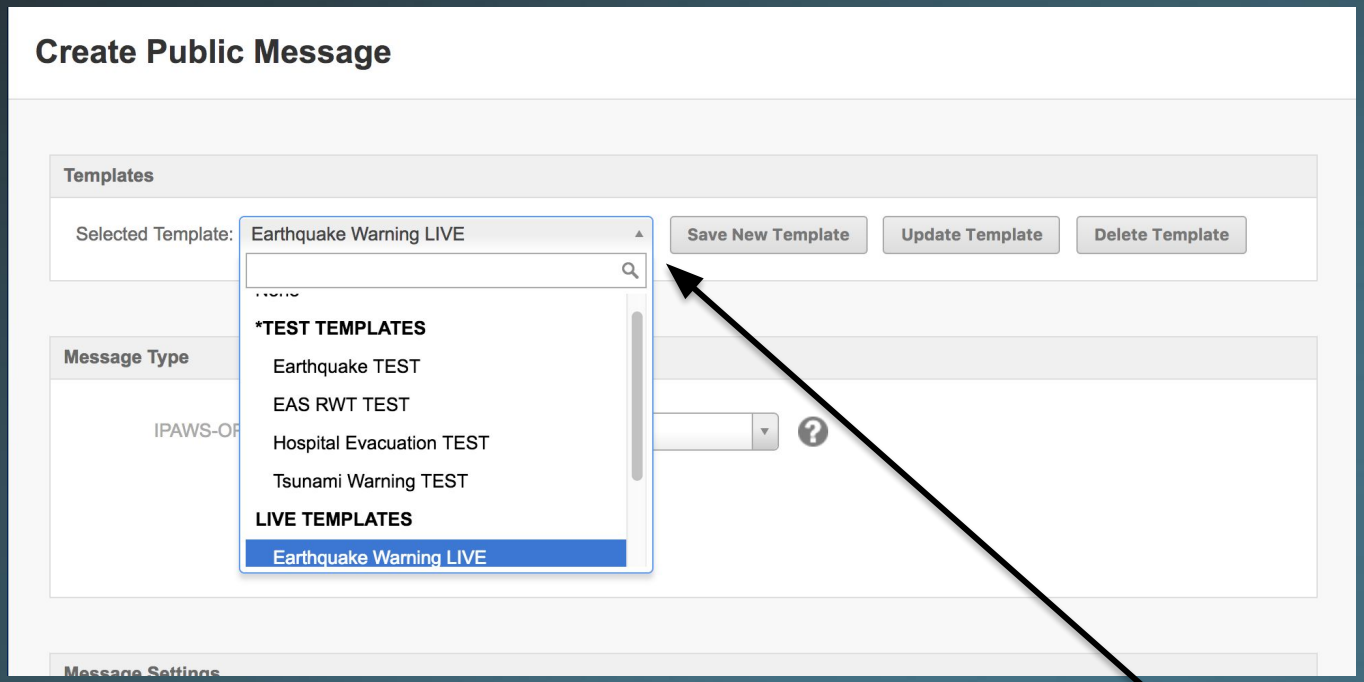

Regardless of the previous selection, the user is brought to a 2nd page in the system, which provides the alerting form necessary to complete the message.

Templates provide a convenient starting point for alerts and they can be organized into different groups. The emergency alerting team names and organizes templates in accordance with their specific needs, use-cases and processes.

If a template is selected, the form is pre-populated with everything that was saved in that template, including endpoint (demo or live), communication channels and other message options.

Step 2:
Select or Verify Template

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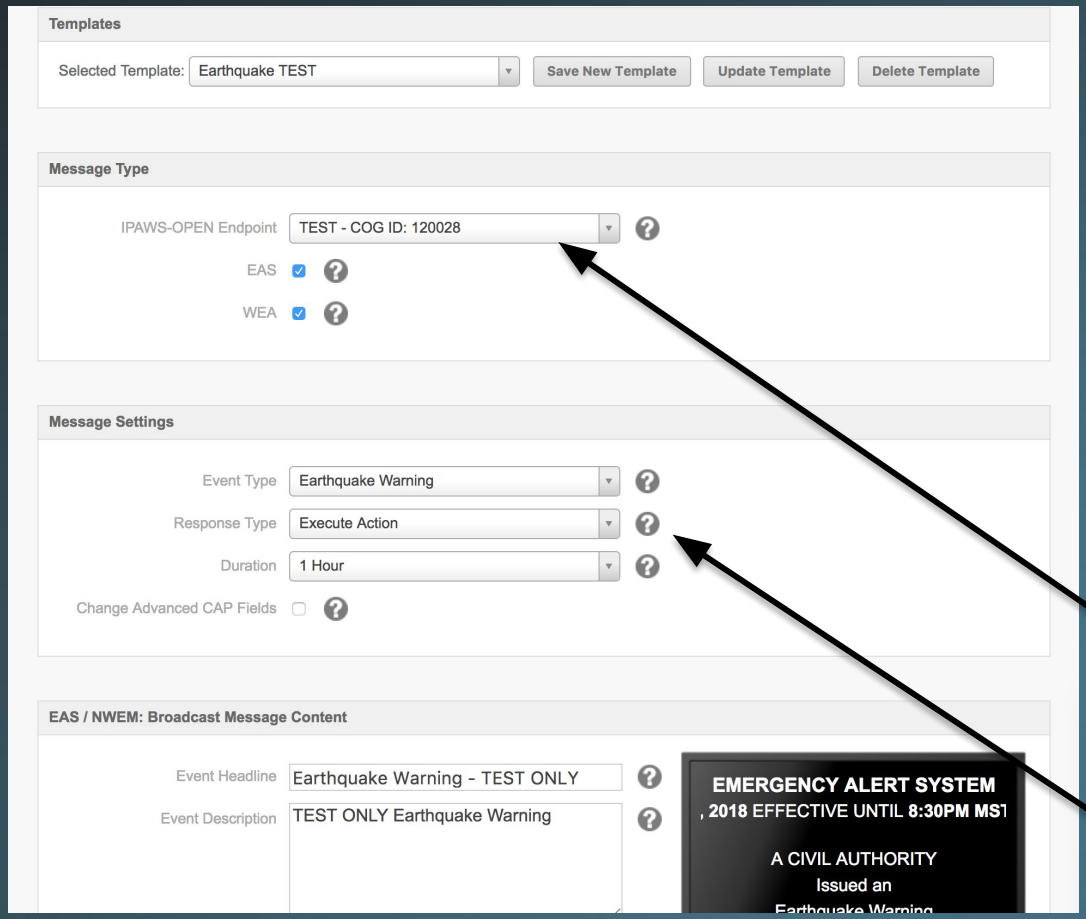
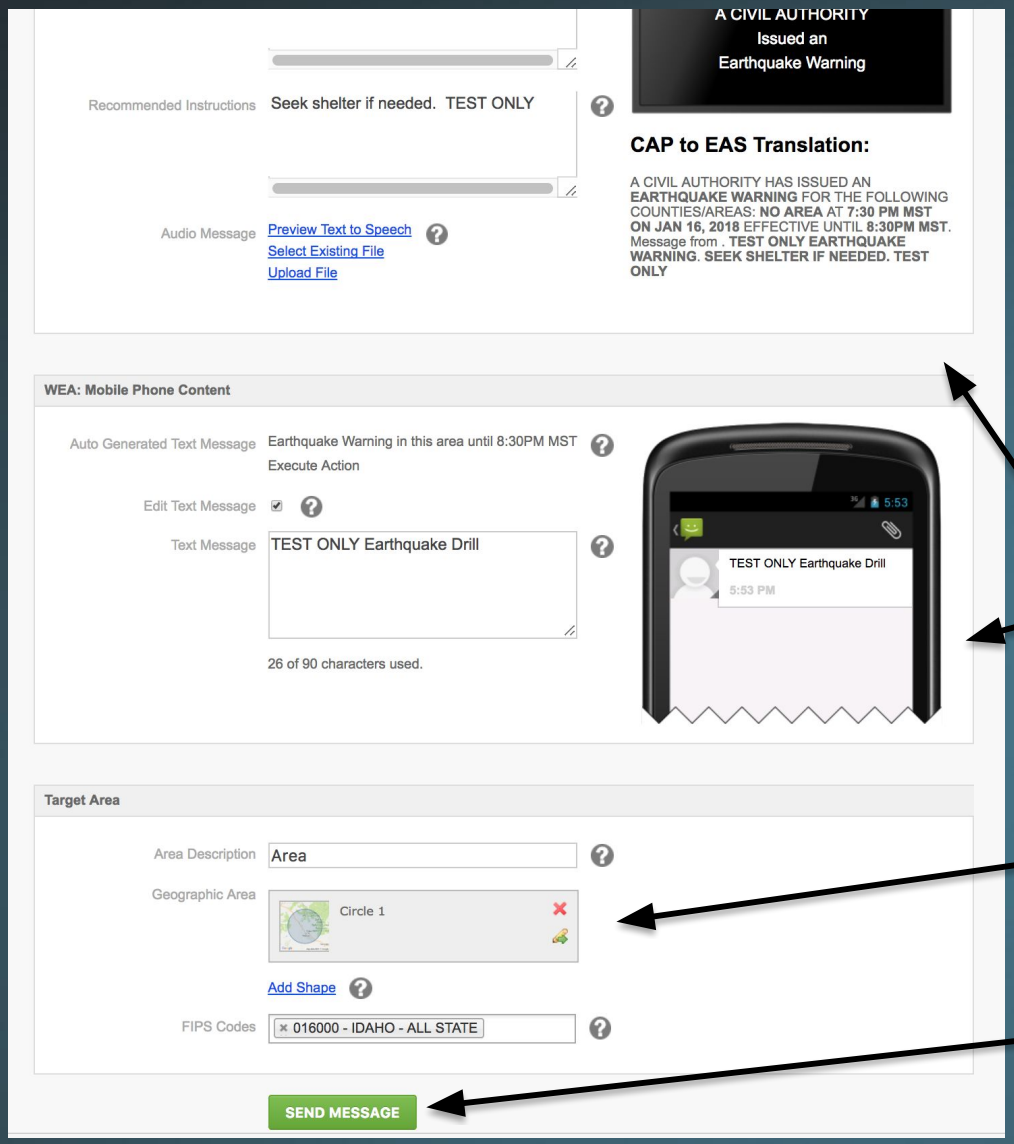


The system supports both 'practice' (demo) and 'live' scenarios. Practice alerts can help the team maintaining their skills. Treating them seriously insures that team members are well versed in their own processes and familiar with the software system.

Regardless of whether a template is used as a starting point, and regardless of whether the alert is practice or live, the next steps are to modify, review and verify the message type, message content and other settings for the specific scenario.

Step 3:
Verify Message Type (demo or live)

Step 4:
Complete the Message Settings section



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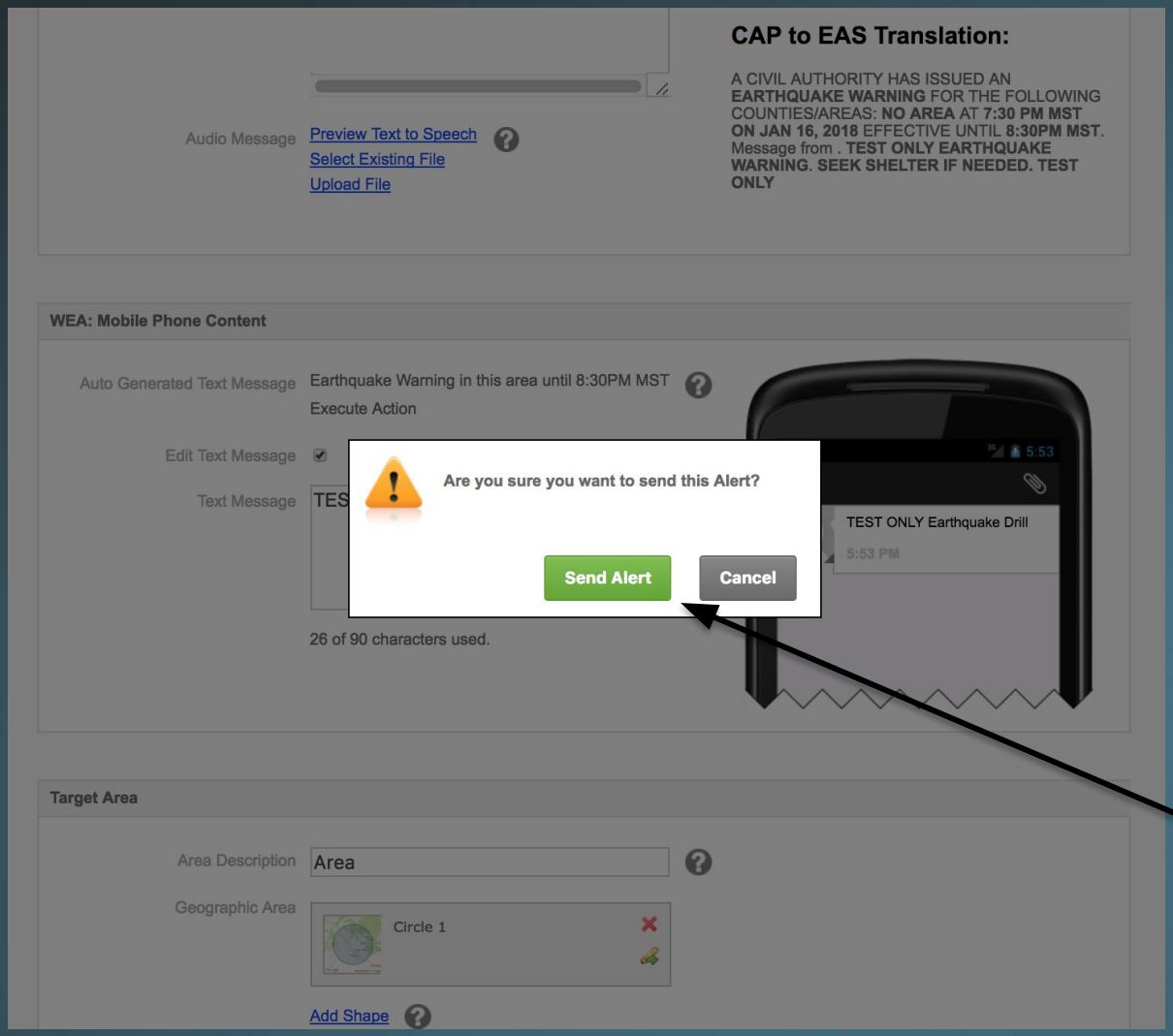
System operators review and edit all information before sending the message in a clear and easy **WYSIWYG** (what you see is what you get) format.

Whether for practice or live scenarios, these content preview steps are very important to ensure that the alert message is accurate and formatted correct before pressing “SEND”.

Step 5:
Create / modify / preview / verify Message Content and Formatting

Step 6:
Specify the target area

Step 7:
Click Send Message



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After completing the form, and pressing “SEND MESSAGE” a third confirmation dialog is presented. This dialog is presented such that the underlying form and previews are still visible.

After the message has been reviewed, the user confirms that the message is to be sent by clicking “SEND ALERT” in the pop up window.

Send Alert will send the message to IPAWS for dissemination to the channels selected.

Cancel will take the user back to the form for further review.

Step 8:
Click Send Alert
As final confirmation

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AlertSense IPAWS software is regarded by FEMA as one of the most intuitive and easy to use in the industry, but software is only one component of an effective public emergency alerting system.

FEMA requires that emergency management teams are trained on proper procedures before they're allowed to use any IPAWS software.

Training includes instructions for how to cancel and retract messages in cases of human error.

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Processes that emergency alerting teams can use to help prevent human errors:

- Treat every practice alert like the real thing. It's a powerful system, be careful!
- Require review and approval by a 2nd person before sending any alert.
- Templates are the responsibility of the emergency alerting team. Clearly name and organize any templates that are created/used, and make sure operators are trained on them.
- Have a plan for false alarms and human error in case they occur.