



## Registering an Alerting Authority

The title of this a presentation is “Registering an Alerting Authority”.

This presentation is designed to be part of a series of training sessions that cover various aspects pertaining to CAP-enabled alerting systems.

The recommended pre-requisite for this session is “Introducing CAP”, CAP-101. In that session, you learned that alerting information in the CAP format is often available via “news feeds” on the Internet or other delivery services.


CAP alerts are of interest not only to emergency management offices but to many other individuals and organizations involved in evaluating hazard threats, reporting, alerting, dispatching, or otherwise dealing with the effects of emergency situations.

Yet, potential receivers of alerts need a mechanism to help them discover these news feeds as sources of alerting information.

In this session, we will address only alerting authorities that are endorsed by governments as “official” sources.

In keeping with ITU and WMO recommendations, alerting authorities that are endorsed by governments should have their alerting information sources and/or CAP news feeds registered at least in the international Register of Alerting Authorities.

Let’s look at what will be covered in this session specifically.



## Learning Objectives

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On completion of this session, you should be able to:

1. Describe how a source of CAP alerts differs from a register of alerting authorities.
2. State why it could be useful to have registered entries for official alerting authorities.
3. Describe who can edit alerting authority entries in the international [Register of Alerting Authorities](#).
4. List some characteristics of alerts from a particular authority as they would be found in the Register of Alerting Authorities.
5. Describe how one can stay current with changes to the international Register of Alerting Authorities.
6. Give an example use for an 'object identifier' as would be found in a CAP alert.


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Here are the Learning Objectives for this session.

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4. List some characteristics of alerts from a particular authority as they would be found in the Register of Alerting Authorities.
5. Describe how one can stay current with changes to the international Register of Alerting Authorities.
6. Give an example use for an 'object identifier' as would be found in a CAP alert.



## Presentation Outline

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- 102.1 Characterizing an Alerting Authority
- 102.2 Identifying Alerting Authorities and Alert Messages
- 102.3 Maintaining the International Register of Alerting Authorities
- 102.4 Tracking Changes to Entries in the Register

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Here is an outline of the major topics in this presentation.  
The first topic is titled: Characterizing an Alerting Authority.



## Why is a Register Needed?

- Aggregators and other intermediaries may lack direct knowledge needed to distinguish authoritative sources
- This lack becomes more critical as alerting makes more use of large public networks (e.g., the Internet)
- The Register of Alerting Authorities is a reference that addresses that knowledge gap
- Each Register entry asserts that a particular source of alert messages is regarded as authoritative for particular categories of hazards over a particular area

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The need for this register may be fairly obvious.

For instance, aggregators of alerts (such as Google), and other intermediaries (such as journalists), may lack the direct knowledge needed to distinguish an authoritative source of alert messages.

This lack is becoming even more critical as alerting makes more use of large public networks. Because of their sheer size, such networks encompass many more providers. It has now become impossible to know the sources personally, as one might have in a single city.

The international Register of Alerting Authorities is a reference that addresses that knowledge gap. It is similar in function to a referral service: you can have a certain degree of trust in the source because you trust the one who gave the referral.

Each Register entry asserts that a particular source of alert messages is regarded as an authoritative, and describes the particular categories of hazards and the usual alerting area.

Let me note here that each assertion stands on its own merit. It is possible for different register entries to make conflicting assertions, and that situation is fairly common.

For instance, an earthquake in Japan was reported initially by the USGS as magnitude 8.9 and by the Japan Meteorological Agency as magnitude 8.8. Both agencies are valid authorities for the earthquake hazard type. And, in the case of earthquakes in Japan they both post alerts for the same area. (BTW, both later agreed on a revised magnitude 9.0.)



## The Register of Alerting Authorities

- Established by WMO (Public Weather Services) and ITU-T (using the OID register)
- Identifies officially recognized alerting authorities, asserted by WMO Members (treaty among 185 nations and 6 territories)
- Register has categories of alert messages, plus URL's for forecasts and CAP messages
- Users of alert messages and others can subscribe to a news feed to stay current with any changes to the Register

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The Register of Alerting Authorities was developed by WMO in collaboration with The International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

WMO is a treaty-level international organization currently comprised of 191 Members (185 nations and 6 territories). WMO Members are represented by Permanent Representatives (PRs). Register entries can only be added or changed by an editor designated by the PR.

These PR's are from National Meteorological and Hydrological Services. Many of these services have operational responsibility as a national alerting authority for weather and related hazard threats. Also, given that the bulk of public alerting messages today concern weather-related threats, their public alerting infrastructures are often used for other kinds of hazard threats. So, alerting authorities designated by WMO PR's makes a good base for alerting authorities worldwide.

Each entry in the register indicates the category types of the alert messages and the typical alerting area. There is an optional text entry to describe the law or policy basis of the authority. The entry can also give URL's linking to forecasts as well as alert messages.

Aggregators of alert messages and others can subscribe to a news feed to stay current with any changes to the register.



## Register Entries

- Alerting authority could be any nationally authorized organization
- Each Register entry asserts a particular source of alerts as authoritative
- Register may includes URL for forecasts and URL for CAP messages
- Aggregators of alert messages and others can subscribe to a news feed to stay current with any changes to the register

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In the international Register of Alerting Authorities, nations and certain institutions are expected to enter the alerting authorities that are officially recognized.

The entries are made only by the official national representative to the World Meteorological Organization. Although representatives to WMO are heads of meteorological and hydrological services, each represents their entire nation.

Therefore, entries In the international Register of Alerting Authorities should include all alerting authorities in that nation, not just those who deal with weather and water alerts.

Each entry can also give a usual area of alerting and URL's for relevant forecasts and CAP messages.

Aggregators of alert messages and others can subscribe to a news feed to stay current with any changes to the international Register.

**Alerting authorities by WMO Member or Organization**  
 To monitor updates to this Register, subscribe to the [RSS](#) or [ATOM](#) news feed.

<input type="radio"/> Afghanistan	<input type="radio"/> Albania	<input type="radio"/> Algeria	<input type="radio"/> Angola	<input type="radio"/> Antigua and Barbuda
<input type="radio"/> Argentina	<input type="radio"/> Armenia	<input type="radio"/> Australia	<input type="radio"/> Austria	<input type="radio"/> Azerbaijan
<input type="radio"/> Bahamas	<input type="radio"/> Bahrain	<input type="radio"/> Bangladesh	<input type="radio"/> Barbados	<input type="radio"/> Belarus
<input type="radio"/> Belgium	<input type="radio"/> Belize	<input type="radio"/> Benin	<input type="radio"/> Bhutan	<input type="radio"/> Bolivia
<input type="radio"/> Bosnia and Herzegovina	<input type="radio"/> Botswana	<input type="radio"/> Brazil	<input type="radio"/> Brunei Darussalam	<input type="radio"/> Bulgaria
<input type="radio"/> Burkina Faso	<input type="radio"/> Burundi	<input type="radio"/> Cambodia	<input type="radio"/> Cameroon	<input type="radio"/> Canada
<input type="radio"/> Cape Verde	<input type="radio"/> Central African Republic	<input type="radio"/> Chad	<input type="radio"/> Chile	<input type="radio"/> China
<input type="radio"/> Colombia	<input type="radio"/> Comoros	<input type="radio"/> Congo	<input type="radio"/> Cook Islands	<input type="radio"/> Costa Rica
<input type="radio"/> Cote d'Ivoire	<input type="radio"/> Croatia	<input type="radio"/> Cuba	<input type="radio"/> Cyprus	<input type="radio"/> Czech Republic
<input type="radio"/> Democratic People's Republic of Korea	<input type="radio"/> Denmark	<input type="radio"/> Djibouti	<input type="radio"/> Dominica	<input type="radio"/> Dominican Republic
<input type="radio"/> Ecuador	<input type="radio"/> Egypt	<input type="radio"/> El Salvador	<input type="radio"/> Eritrea	<input type="radio"/> Estonia
<input type="radio"/> Ethiopia	<input type="radio"/> Fiji	<input type="radio"/> Finland	<input type="radio"/> France	<input type="radio"/> French Polynesia

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This is the OID tree at the node for alerting authorities of countries. I've shown the pull-down list of the 185 countries that are WMO Members.

Here we can see that alerting authority OIDs registered for the US will all start with 2.49.0.0.840 because the ISO 3166 code for the US is 840. Cuba has **192** for its country code.

**WMO Register of Alerting Authorities [ home ]**

OID: 2.49.0.0.840.0 WMO Member: United States of America ISO 3166: US USA 840

Issuing Organization: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Hazard Categories: Geo Met Fire Health Env CBRNE

Authorization Basis: The National Weather Service Organic Act of 1890, currently codified as amended in section 313 of title 15 of the federal statutory code (called the United States Code) authorizes the National Weather Service to issue and distribute warnings of environmental hazards. The authority is summarized as: The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public, and the global community. In addition, the National Weather Service supports the Emergency Alert System and provides, in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, public dissemination of critical pre-event and post-event information of all hazards, including natural disasters and terrorist events. The National Weather Service all-hazards support authority emanates primarily from the National Response Framework as authorized by The Homeland Security Act of 2002, codified predominantly as amended in sections 101 to 557 of title 6 of the United States Code, and The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, codified as amended sections 2121 to 5206 of title 42 of the United States Code.

CAP Feed URL: <http://www.weather.gov/alerts/>

Forecasts URL: <http://www.worldweather.org/093/m093.htm>

Alerting Area (NWSE): 73 -176 11 -61

**Map view of the typical area for this alerting authority.**

**Hazard Categories**

- Geo:** Geophysical (earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, etc., includes landslide)
- Met:** Meteorological (weather, storms, etc. includes flood)
- Safety:** General emergency and public safety
- Security:** Law enforcement, military, homeland and local/private security
- Rescue:** Rescue and recovery
- Fire:** Fire suppression and rescue
- Health:** Medical and public health
- Env:** Pollution and other environmental
- Transport:** Public and private transportation
- Infra:** Utility, telecommunication, other non-transport infrastructure
- CBRNE:** Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High-Yield Explosive threat or attack
- Other:** Other events

This is a screen shot of a USA alerting authority, specifically NOAA's National Weather Service.

Here the elements of the register entry are shown as editable fields. This is only available to designated editors who have entered the Register with their personal password.

The first thing you may notice is the "OID" (object Identifier) in the upper left corner, which I'll describe in a little while.

We see listed here each of the hazard categories for which NOAA issues alerts: Geophysical, Meteorological, Fire, Health, Environment, and CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or high-yield explosive).


Next we see that NOAA provided a text description regarding the basis of their alerting authority. We'll get to that a little later also.

In the case of NOAA's National Weather Service, there is already a CAP feed so we see here the URL for that next.

We also see that forecasts are made available thorough the World Weather Information Service, at the URL shown on the next line.

On the map we also see the typical alerting area for this alerting authority.





## Presentation Outline

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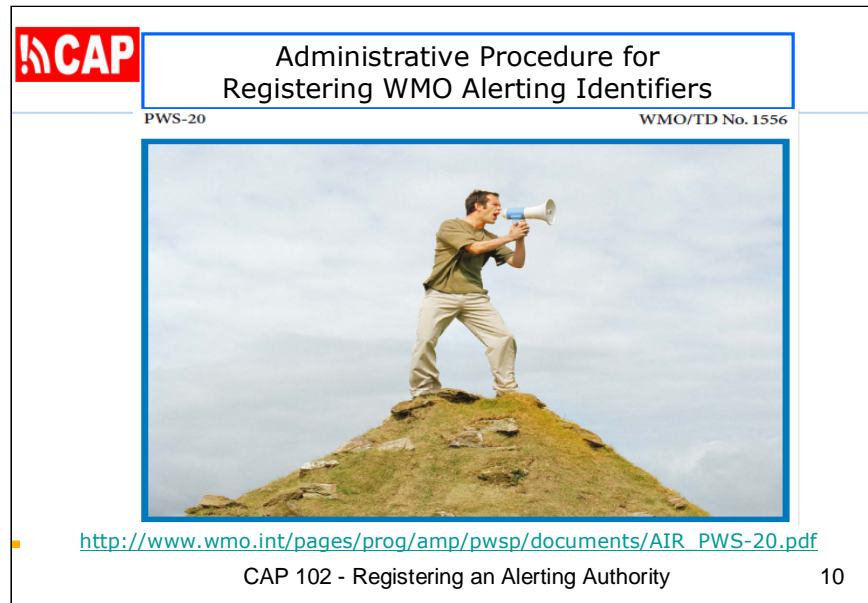
- 102.1 Characterizing an Alerting Authority
- ➔ 102.2 Identifying Alerting Authorities and Alert Messages
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Again, here is the presentation outline and the next topic is titled:  
Identifying Alerting Authorities and Alert Messages



This is the cover of the WMO Technical Document describing the procedure for registering alerting identifiers.

The Register is linked to the ISO/ITU OID Tree

joint-iso-itu-t(2) > alerting(49)  
**wmo (0)**  
 child OIDs: authority(0) • country-msg(1) • org(2) • org-msg(3)

**OID description**

OID:	{joint-iso-itu-t(2) alerting(49) wmo(0)}	(ASN.1 notation)
	2.49.0	(dot notation)
	/Alerting/WMO	(OID-IRI notation)


<http://www.oid-info.com/get/2.49.0>

I'd like to elaborate now about that "OID" I pointed out in the record.


The Register of Alerting Authorities follows Recommendation ITU-T X.660, which concerns Registration Authorities and Object Identifiers. The tree of OIDs has been maintained by ITU and ISO for many years. It continues to be used extensively in all manner of standards and telecommunications work globally.

Here is a screen shot of the root of the alerting nodes in that tree. As I noted, each of our Register entries provides information about an official alerting authority. This authority would typically be subordinate to a national entry, but a PR can also designate in the Register other organizations that are not tied to a particular nation.

In addition to the OID for the information we were just looking at (information about an alerting authority), each entry also gets an OID that can be used for globally unique identifiers of alert messages. This means that anyone encountering an alert message with an OID, regardless of its language, can immediately determine which official alerting authority originated the alert.



joint-iso-itu-t(2) alerting(49) wmo(0)  
**authority(0)**



Register entries are typically linked to a nation

-- 183 child OIDs --

- to(776)
- tt(780)
- ae(784)
- tn(788)
- tr(792)
- tm(795)
- ug(800)
- ua(804)
- mk(807)
- eg(818)
- gb(826)
- tz(834)
- us(840)
- bf(854)
- uy(858)
- uz(860)
- ve(862)
- ws(882)
- ye(887)
- zm(894)


**Information:** Each Register entry shall include an OID arc {joint-iso-itu-t(2) alerting(49) wmo(0) authority(0) country(n)}, where n is the numeric country code allocated by the United Nations Statistics Division and country is the ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 code. Assignment of this identifying OID arc is automatic upon designation of an initial editor of the WMO Register of Alerting Authorities.

- Format of this page
- Modify this OID
- Create a child OID
- Create a brother OID

<http://www.oid-info.com/get/2.49.0.0>

This is the OID tree at the node for alerting authorities of countries. I've shown the pull-down list of the 185 countries that are WMO Members.

Here we can see that alerting authority OIDs registered for the US will all start with 2.49.0.0.840 because the ISO 3166 code for the US is 840. Cuba has **192** for its country code.




Entry  
in the  
OID  
tree  
links  
back  
to the  
WMO  
register

[joint-iso-itu-t\(2\)](#) » [alerting\(49\)](#) » [wmo\(0\)](#) » [authority\(0\)](#)  
**us (840)**  
 Child OID: [noaa\(0\)](#)

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**OID description**


<b>OID:</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">{joint-iso-itu-t(2) alerting(49) wmo(0) authority(0) us(840)}</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">2.49.0.0.840</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">/Alerting/WMO/0/840</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">(ASN.1 notation)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">(dot notation)</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 2px;">(OID-IRI notation)</div>
<b>Description:</b>	Alerting authorities of United States	
<b>Information:</b>	More information can be found in the <a href="#">WMO Register of Alerting Authorities</a>	



- [Format of this page](#)
- [Modify this OID](#)
- [Create a child OID](#)
- [Create a brother OID](#)


<http://www.oid-info.com/get/2.49.0.0.840>

This screen is just showing that a US entry in the OID tree links back to the international Register of Alerting Authorities.



## Presentation Outline

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Back to the presentation outline, where the next topic is shown as:  
Maintaining the International Register of Alerting Authorities



## Maintaining the International Register

- WMO sent letter all PR's in Nov 2009 describing the Register
- PR's responded by designating an editor to maintain Register records for all alerting authorities asserted by the Member
- The designated editor is approved by WMO/PWS and selects a password
- Each editor maintains Register entries on behalf of the Member

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A Letter was sent to all PR's with WMO in November 2009 describing the Register of Alerting Authorities. PR's responded by designating an "editor" to maintain the Register records for all alerting authorities asserted by the Member.

The designated editor is then approved by WMO/PWS, and he or she selects a personal password. That editor then maintains the Register entries on behalf of the WMO Member.


As of December 2014, the Register of Alerting Authorities had records for 254 alerting authorities across 195 countries/territories and two organizations.

There is at least one editor officially designated by each of 124 WMO Members for their alerting authority records.

There are now 131 officially designated and approved Register editors.



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The final topic of this presentation is titled:  
Tracking Changes to Entries in the Register





## RSS Feed for Changes in Register

```

<rss version="2.0" xmlns:georss="http://www.georss.org/georss"
xmlns:cap="urn:oasis:names:tc:emergency:cap:1.1">
- <channel>
  <title>World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Register of Alerting Authorities</title>
  <link>http://www-db.wmo.int/alerting/rss.xml</link>
  <description>WMO maintains this register of statements by WMO Members concerning
the scope of official alerting authorities and locations of online sources.</description>
  <language>en-us</language>
  <pubDate>Fri, 11 Mar 2011 13:14:14+01:00 GMT</pubDate>
  <lastBuildDate>Fri, 11 Mar 2011 13:14:14+01:00 GMT</lastBuildDate>
  <docs>http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/tech/rss</docs>
  <managingEditor>echristian@usgs.gov</managingEditor>
  <webMaster>echristian@usgs.gov</webMaster>
- <item>
  <title>United States of America: National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration</title>
  <link>http://www-db.wmo.int/alerting/authorities.asp?recId=177</link>
  <description>A WMO Member [United States of America] identifies National Oceanic
and Atmospheric Administration as an alerting authority for hazard threats of
these CAP categories: Geo Met Fire Health Env CBRNE.</description>
  <pubDate>Fri, 11 Mar 2011 13:14:14+01:00 GMT</pubDate>
  <guid>urn:oid:2.49.0.0.840.0</guid>
  <author>echristian@wmo.int</author>
  <category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Geo</category>
  <category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Met</category>
  <category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Fire</category>
  <category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Health</category>
  <category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Env</category>
  <category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">CBRNE</category>
  <cap:category>Geo</cap:category>
  <cap:category>Met</cap:category>
  <cap:category>Fire</cap:category>
  <cap:category>Health</cap:category>
  <cap:category>Env</cap:category>
  <cap:category>CBRNE</cap:category>
</item>


```

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Aggregators of alert messages and others can subscribe to a news feed to stay current with any changes to the register.

When any register record changes, the news feed is re-generated in both RSS and Atom formats.

The news feed shows the most recent change first.



## RSS Feed for Changes in Register

<http://www-db.wmo.int/alerting/rss.xml>

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**World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Register of Alerting Authorities**

**You are viewing a feed that contains frequently updated content.** When you subscribe to a feed, it is added to the Common Feed List. Updated information from the feed is automatically downloaded to your computer and can be viewed in Internet Explorer and other programs. [Learn more about feeds.](#)

[Subscribe to this feed](#)

**Kenya: Kenya Meteorological Department**

Today, April 03, 2012, 2:33:19 PM | [smuchemi@wmo.int](mailto:smuchemi@wmo.int) →

A WMO Member [Kenya] identifies Kenya Meteorological Department as an alerting authority for hazard threats of these CAP categories: Geo Met Fire.

**Switzerland: MeteoSwiss**

Friday, August 19, 2011, 7:06:51 AM | [christoph.schmutz@meteoswiss.ch](mailto:christoph.schmutz@meteoswiss.ch) →

A WMO Member [Switzerland] identifies MeteoSwiss as an alerting authority for hazard threats of these CAP categories: Met.

**Hungary: VITUKI**

Tuesday, July 19, 2011, 11:06:48 AM | [smuchemi@wmo.int](mailto:smuchemi@wmo.int) →

A WMO Member [Hungary] identifies VITUKI as an alerting authority for hazard threats of these CAP categories: Met Safety Transport.

Displaying 222 / 222

All 222

**Sort by:**

▼ Date

Title

Author


---

**Filter by category:**

CBRNE	41
Env	54
Fire	58
Geo	76
Health	41
Met	212
Safety	1
Transport	1

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Here is a typical browser view of the news feed for the Register.



```

<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<rss version="2.0" xmlns:georss="http://www.georss.org/georss"
    xmlns:cap="urn:oasis:names:tc:emergency:cap:1.1">
<!--
This news feed is an index to official sources of alerts as identified by
WMO Members. This index file does not contain any of the actual alerts.
To obtain alert messages, follow the links for each entry in this index.
Updates to this feed occur whenever there is a change to one of the official
source records referenced. Intermediaries and other consumers of alert messages
should subscribe to this feed for current sources of official alert messages.
-->
<channel>
<title>World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Register of Alerting Authorities</title>
<link>http://www-db.wmo.int/alerting/res.xml</link>
<description>WMO maintains this register of statements by WMO Members
concerning the scope of official alerting authorities and locations of online sources.</des
<language>en-us</language>
<pubDate>Tue, 03 Apr 2012 18:33:19 GMT</pubDate>
<lastBuildDate>Tue, 03 Apr 2012 18:33:19 GMT</lastBuildDate>
<docs>http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/tech/rss</docs>
<managingEditor>smuchemi@wmo.int</managingEditor>
<webMaster>smuchemi@wmo.int</webMaster>
<item>
<title>Kenya: Kenya Meteorological Department</title>
<link>http://www-db.wmo.int/alerting/authorities.asp?recId=80</link>
<description>A WMO Member [Kenya] identifies Kenya Meteorological Department as an alert
<pubDate>Tue, 03 Apr 2012 18:33:19 GMT</pubDate>
<guid>urn:oid:2.49.0.0.404.0</guid>
<author>smuchemi@wmo.int</author>
<category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Geo</category>
<category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Met</category>
<category domain="http://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-X.1303/en">Fire</category>
<cap:category>Geo</cap:category>
<cap:category>Met</cap:category>
<cap:category>Fire</cap:category>
<cap:area>
<cap:polygon>6.27,32.65 -5.27,32.65 -5.27,43.20 6.27,43.20 6.27,32.65</cap:polygon>
<cap:geocode>
<cap:valueName>iso-3166-1-alpha-2</cap:valueName>
<cap:value>KE</cap:value>
</cap:geocode>


```

RSS Feed (View Source)

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This is the “View Source” of the XML for the same RSS feed I just showed



## Review of Key Points

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- Characterizing an Alerting Authority
- Identifying Alerting Authorities and Alert Messages
- Maintaining the International Register of Alerting Authorities
- Designating Editors of the Register
- Tracking Changes to Entries in the Register

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Let's review the key points of this session:

- Characterizing an Alerting Authority
- Identifying Alerting Authorities and Alert Messages
- Maintaining the International Register of Alerting Authorities
- Designating Editors of the Register
- Tracking Changes to Entries in the Register




## What have you learned?

1. Describe how a source of CAP alerts differs from a register of alerting authorities.
2. State why it could be useful to have registered entries for official alerting authorities.
3. Describe who can edit alerting authority entries in the international [Register of Alerting Authorities](#).
4. List some characteristics of alerts from a particular authority as they would be found in the Register of Alerting Authorities.
5. Describe how one can stay current with changes to the international Register of Alerting Authorities.
6. Give an example use for an 'object identifier' as would be found in a CAP alert.

### What have you learned?

1. Describe how a source of CAP alerts differs from a register of alerting authorities.
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6. Give an example use for an 'object identifier' as would be found in a CAP alert.



## Reference Links

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- [CAP Information Site by WMO Public Weather Services \(PWS\)](#)
- [WMO PWS CAP Jump Start Offer](#)
- [OASIS Emergency Management Technical Committee](#)
- [International Register of Alerting Authorities](#)
- [Google Public Alerts](#)
- Intro to CAP (10-minute video) [YouTube](#) [FTP](#)

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Here are some key reference links concerning CAP.

This concludes my presentation.

Thank you for your attention.



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