ALERT HUB
Warning Communication Knowledge Network

ALERT CONVERSATIONS 8

DOCUMENTING U.S. PUBLIC WARNING FAILURE: EARLY FINDINGS FROM THE WARNING FAILURE DATABASE

DATE: 30 SEP 2026, 15:00 CET, ONLINE

Hamilton Bean
Global Advisory Board member

Hamilton Bean is a Professor of Communication at the University of Colorado Denver and an internationally recognized expert on disaster warning systems and public alerting. His research focuses on how warning messages are designed, governed, and interpreted across technological, institutional, and cultural contexts, with particular attention to mobile public alert and warning systems. Dr. Bean has led and contributed to multiple interdisciplinary research projects examining the effectiveness of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), message clarity, public trust, and decision-making during imminent threats.

His work has been funded by agencies including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Japan Foundation, and has informed policy discussions at multiple levels. He is the author of Mobile Technology and the Transformation of Public Alert and Warning and has consulted with government agencies on evidence-based public warning communication practices.

OVERVIEW

The Warning Failure Database (WFD) systematically documents instances in which U.S. public warning systems have failed to meet their objectives. The WFD applies standardized coding to capture technical, organizational, and message-design breakdowns, alongside contextual factors such as hazard type, alerting authority, affected populations, and downstream consequences. This presentation shares early findings from the 2015–2026 pilot dataset of 50 verified cases, illuminating recurring patterns, causes, and equity implications of warning failure. The presentation explores how the WFD can inform alerting policy, system design, and interagency coordination.

REGISTRATION LINK

cost EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

In partnership with
The International Crisis and Risk Communication Association (ICRCA)

INTERNATIONAL CRISIS & RISK COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION
WeAreCrisisComm.com