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## Opening Shot

### (Re-)Introducing NPR Distribution Services

NPR Satellite Services, the content delivery enterprise managed by NPR Distribution, has changed its name to NPR Distribution Services (NPRDS). Despite the change in moniker, the newly rechristened NPRDS will continue to be an industry leader in providing reliable, nationwide solutions for audio, video, and data content delivery via satellite, terrestrial and hybrid networks.



For more than 30 years, NPRDS has been providing comprehensive content delivery solutions to commercial broadcasters and networks. NPRDS offers C-band transponder space on Intelsat's Galaxy 16 satellite, which provides complete geographic coverage of the United States, including Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

NPRDS also offers terrestrial distribution via the Internet, including its proprietary service, The Hub @ NPRDS, a full uplink and distribution capability for public and commercial broadcast networks seeking both national and international distribution, coupled with 24x7x365 operational support and redundancy for reliability.

"The name change to NPRDS is due to the expansion and growth of our services over the past several years," said Joe Schifano, NPR Distribution's Sr Director of Business Development. "Our full-time and occasional use satellite services remain an important part of our business, but we've experienced so much growth with our Hub @ NPRDS service that we felt it deserved to be reflected in our name. The point of this is that we can service our customers with whichever delivery platform is most appropriate for their needs and budget."

NPRDS representatives will be at the NAB Show in Las Vegas from April 9-12, 2018, at Booth #SU2821. If you'd like to arrange a meeting, please send an email to [linkup@npr.org](mailto:linkup@npr.org). You can also learn more about NPRDS at <http://nprds.org/>.

Please note that we're still in the process of updating all of our materials.

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## Spring Solar Outage Season Has Officially Begun

The Spring 2018 Solar Outage season began February 26, and the PRSS has made available resources to help stations work around this twice-yearly phenomenon. If your station receivers are experiencing fluttering or inconsistent performance, it may be due to these outages.

A solar or sun transit outage is an electromagnetic phenomenon wherein a station downlink is temporarily unable to receive a satellite signal due to interference from the sun as it passes behind the satellite. Solar outages occur on a predictable schedule and affect downlinks in the U.S. for about ten consecutive days, for as much as six minutes a day, twice each year.

To obtain solar outage information for your location, please visit <http://prss.org/tools-and-resources> and see the section on Solar Outages on the left-hand side of the page. In this section, you will see a pulldown menu. Click on it and move the cursor down to your state to see what the solar outage schedule is for your area.

Some users attempting to access this information with a smartphone may have difficulties scrolling down to their area. If you are experiencing this issue, select the top option "-Any-" and you will see the schedules for all states in the country, and you can scroll down to the appropriate selection.

\*\* Please be aware that for some states with multiple city options, such as Florida or Alaska, you should adhere to the times associated with the city that is closest to you. Also please be aware that the times given for Spring are in ET and that this year's time shift will occur on March 11, right at the end of the outage season. Stations that have their outages on March 11th will need to add one hour to the predicted times in the table. \*\*

If you have any questions or concerns about solar outages, please contact the PRSS Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or [prsshel@npr.org](mailto:prsshel@npr.org).

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## Daylight Saving Transition Coming Up Quickly

The transition from standard time to daylight-saving time (DST) will occur at 02:00:00 ET on Sunday, March 11, 2018. The ContentDepot transition to DST is very straightforward:

If your local computers have been updated with the latest DST patches, they will automatically step forward at 02:00:00 local time on Sunday, March 11 (check with your automation/playback system vendor to see if you need to do any special maintenance or procedures to accommodate this transition).

### Operational Considerations

The ContentDepot headend will transmit stream setup data and commands for the 03:00:00 ET hour at the end of the 01:00:00 ET hour. We recommend you review your station schedule for Sunday, March 11 to verify your local programming flow from 01:59:00 ET to 03:00:00 ET. In ContentDepot, the 02:00:00 ET hour on Sunday, March 11, does not exist and will not execute. The system will operationally step from 01:59:59 ET to 03:00:00 ET.

The only operational function in your ContentDepot file storage receivers affected by DST offset is the automated deletion of files based on their kill dates. The SFX 4104 receivers still operate on the "old" DST transition dates, but deleting files an hour later for three weeks won't make any difference in local operation. Displays and log entries will be incorrect for three weeks, but that's easily remedied, if desired, by hand-setting the time zone an hour "ahead" at a convenient time. There is no operational effect of any DST change in your stream decoders-they always function in Coordinated Universal Time.

#### What Else Do You Need to Do?

The most important action you can take is make sure that your local production systems (including time-of-day displays) have the latest updates so that they'll properly step forward. You should also check with your automation/playback system vendor to see if there are any special scheduling considerations for your particular installation.

If you require additional assistance, the PRSS Help Desk is available by telephone at 800.971.7677, or via email: [prsshhelp@npr.org](mailto:prsshhelp@npr.org)

## The News

### Changes to NPR Show Subscriptions in ContentDepot

Important changes will take place in March to the way NPR news magazine subscriptions are organized in ContentDepot.

Starting on Thursday, March 22, 2018, *Morning Edition*, *Here & Now*, *All Things Considered*, *Weekend Edition Saturday*, *Weekend Edition Sunday*, and *All Things Considered Weekend* will each be grouped by subscription hour under a single subscription heading.

Once this change takes place, you will no longer see individual hours of each show listed as unique program subscriptions in ContentDepot. Users will need to click on the respective show's title to find all subscription hours of that show displayed in hourly increments.

NPR representatives said they've come to refer internally to this method of displaying show subscriptions as "incrementing." Incrementing will enable more efficient management of subscriptions, receiver assignments and metadata. It will also streamline station communications in ContentDepot Messaging by eliminating the standalone Station Information subscription pages.

There is no action required on stations' part to make this happen. However, NPR does recommend checking to make sure your subscriptions and Preferred Programs and Mail Forwarding selections are correct.

Further details of how this will look are in the full version of this notice, here:

[https://www.nprstations.org/permalink/programming/newsmagazine\\_subscriptions\\_incrementing\\_0218.pdf](https://www.nprstations.org/permalink/programming/newsmagazine_subscriptions_incrementing_0218.pdf)

Your current subscriptions and receiver allocations will all remain the same, but they will each become visible and editable on a single program page under the program title. PRSS will phase in the "incremented" format of the newsmagazines over a 24-hour period to allow station staff adequate time for review.

Please note the following important dates:

\*Thursday, March 22: *Morning Edition* and *Here & Now* subscriptions change to incremented format after their final feeds.

\*Friday, March 23: The All Things Considered subscription will be changed before 12:00 PM Eastern Time. Changes to subscriptions for Weekend Edition and All Things Considered Weekend will be made by 4:00 PM Eastern Time.

\*Thursday, March 29: Program Rundowns will be sent from their respective overarching show subscriptions rather than from Station Information subscriptions. Station Information subscriptions will be retired.

Again, we urge you to read the full version of this notice at the link above and please contact PRSS at [prsshhelp@npr.org](mailto:prsshhelp@npr.org) or 1.800.971.7677 with questions. Your Member Partnership representative is also available to help at [programservices@npr.org](mailto:programservices@npr.org) or 800.329.5380.

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## ContentDepot Upgrade Improves Drag-and-Drop Feature

There has been yet another ContentDepot upgrade, featuring an expansion of the drag-and-drop tool and more options for producers uploading images for use with MetaPub.

The first piece is that the drag-and-drop feature, which is still officially in 'beta' mode, is now enabled with a group of shows including Studio 360, Q and Pipedreams that their producers have allowed to be used in this testing.

In addition, "Add from CDDrive" has been introduced as a beta to the new uploader tool, allowing users to upload multiple files and folders to CDDrive and attach them to episode segments. Going forward, this function will eventually replace the Episode Upload Queue.

In terms of image uploads, the ContentDepot now allows users to upload images as large as 3,000 x 3,000 pixels. ContentDepot will automatically provide the larger image for MetaPub, and it will also resize the image to 170 x 170 for use with HD systems. This new protocol applies to customer logo, program logo, episode, and piece logos.

There were also several small improvements made to ContentDepot's user interface and MetaPub feature, including:

- Additional composer information has been added to the Classical 24 piece titles
- *Here & Now* now features metadata in MetaPub
- The download button in the Chrome player, which was allowing users to download files unsuitable for broadcast, has been disabled.
- Style changes have been made to subscription pages so that stations can more easily see additional frequency options.

In the coming weeks and months, the PRSS is planning to make the drag-and-drop feature available with all programs and episodes and the episode upload queue discontinued as we encourage producers to the CDDrive feature.

**Tips 'n' Tricks**

## **PRSS Provides FAQ on Combined Carrier Transition**

The PRSS is continuing with its plans to combine all streams and files traffic on a combined carrier. In the process of doing so, we have received multiple questions from the station community. As a result, we have produced this FAQ with information you may find useful.

If you have any questions not covered below, please contact the PRSS Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or [prsshelp@npr.org](mailto:prsshelp@npr.org).

### **Question 1: Once the SFX4104s are transitioned to the Combined Carrier, will Carrier A and B both switch to the new channel or should we 'copy' Carrier A's settings to Carrier B?**

PRSS: PRSS is asking stations to keep Carrier B as the Legacy carrier until further notice. In the event there is a problem, the receiver will automatically revert to the Legacy carrier. As we get closer to the end of life for the Legacy Carrier, PRSS will perform a push of updated settings to Carrier B so both A and B match.

### **Question 2: I checked my Receivers and I noticed that on L-Band 2, it has locked to Carrier B. Is this an issue?**

PRSS: There is a chance that your receivers had a fade at some point since November and switched over to Carrier B. This is normal. This just means that you are pulling in files from the Legacy Files carrier on Transponder 5. We will be keeping the Legacy carriers up until the end of April.

### **Question 3: My receiver has locked to L-Band 2 - Carrier B. I have tried to use the option "Lock to Preferred" but that does not seem to work. What am I doing wrong?**

PRSS: You are not doing anything wrong. The "Lock to Preferred" button unfortunately does not do anything. For information about how to force your receiver to lock to Carrier A, please call our Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or email [PRSSHelp@npr.org](mailto:PRSSHelp@npr.org) for additional information.

### **Question 4: Since my receiver is locked to Carrier B what should I be aware of over the next few months.**

PRSS: For Now, PRSS will maintain the Legacy Carrier through April 2018. As we approach the end of April, we will communicate with stations about the end of the Legacy Carrier.

Starting at the end of April, PRSS will start to drop the individual Legacy carriers for a few moments, which will force receivers to lock back onto Carrier A.

When that occurs, your receivers will be pulling in both Streams and Files from the Combined Carrier.

### **Question 5: When I look at my Pro Audio 4104 receiver, I see two different values for L-Band 1 and L-Band 2. Is this an issue that I should be concerned about?**

PRSS: It is normal for the receiver to show two different values for the same carrier.

**Question 6: When I look at my Pro Audio 4104 receiver, I see the Eb/No value is no longer there, what should I look at to determine my signal quality?**

PRSS: The move to DVBS-2 does not have an Eb/No value in these receivers. Stations should monitor both Signal Level Carrier to Noise (C/N). You will not see values for Signal Quality or Eb/No when the receiver is locked onto the Combined Carrier. Also, there will be a slight difference in the readings between the L-band 1 and L-band 2. This is normal.

**Question 7: When I am monitoring Carrier to Noise, what is a good value for my station?**

PRSS: Your station location within the satellite footprint will have some influence on your ideal Carrier to Noise level. At a minimum, PRSS would like stations to have at least a 6 dB margin over the receiver minimum of 5.5 dB. Your receiver could incur a fade if the Carrier to Noise falls to 5.5 dB or less. In general, this means that your receiver should have a C/N of 11.5 dB or greater. If you are below this, you should review your entire RF path to ensure for optimized signal. If you have questions about your signal level, please call our Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or email [PRSSHelp@npr.org](mailto:PRSSHelp@npr.org) for additional information.

**Question 8: Will the Legacy Carrier remain functional for a period of time and if so, when will it be decommissioned? I use a pair of SR2000pro receivers for NPR programming and Breaking News and I'm just curious how long they'll remain useful.**

PRSS: The Legacy Carrier will remain up until April 30th of this year. Starting now, you should be looking to migrate any programming you are taking on your SR2000's over to a subscription within ContentDepot. This will ensure that your programming will continue uninterrupted on the Pro Audio 4104's. After April 30th, stations will not be able to acquire programming from the SR2000 units.

**Question 9: I have programming that I am airing that comes from a SR2000. How do I check to see if I am getting this same programming on my Pro Audio 4104 receivers?**

PRSS: When you log into ContentDepot, look for the menu option in the upper right called: Live Receiver Schedule. When you click on this, you will see a grid showing your station's receivers. You will see the Live programs that are assigned to each audio port of the receiver. This helps you understand what programs you are currently subscribed to and which receiver and which port the program is assigned to. If you do not see the program in question, you should search for it and subscribe using an open available port.

**Question 10: What happens to stations that do not migrate their programming away from the Legacy Carrier via a SR2000 to a subscription within ContentDepot on their pro Audio 4104 receiver?**

PRSS: To maintain audio programming of Live streams, stations must subscribe to those programs within ContentDepot before the end of April. When PRSS shuts off the Legacy Carrier, the station will lose all audio programming from the SR2000.

**Question 11: Our receivers have all of their ports in use. Can I assign more than one program to a port?**

PRSS: You should not assign more than one program to a port. If you schedule two programs that air at the same time to the same port, ContentDepot will flag this as a conflict. You should only assign one concurrent program to a port at a time.

**Question 12: Our receivers have all of their ports in use. Can we purchase additional receivers if necessary?**

PRSS: Yes, please call our Help Desk at 800.971.7677 or email [PRSSHelp@npr.org](mailto:PRSSHelp@npr.org) for additional information.

**Question 13: What about the Squawk channel? How should my station get Squawk updates?**

PRSS: Squawk is currently available through several sources.

- Stations can subscribe to Squawk via ContentDepot and have the Squawk channel assigned to an available port on their Pro Audio 4104 receivers.
- Stations can retune a SR2000 unit to the dedicated Squawk carrier on Transponder 1.
- Stations will also be able to pull in the Squawk channel via the Legacy carrier up until April 30th of this year.
- Stations can also listen to Squawk via the webstream at <http://npr.org/squawk> , as a backup to the above sources.

**Question 14: Will the weekly test of the Emergency Alert Notification still be available on the sources listed above?**

PRSS: Yes. The required weekly test that is performed each Tuesday at 1:15 pm ET will be heard on all sources listed above.

**Question 15: When I subscribed to the Squawk program via ContentDepot, I see that on my receiver that it is listed as Stream 20, is this correct?**

PRSS: Yes, if you are looking at the subscription port of a Pro Audio 4104, Squawk will appear as Stream 20. PRSS has moved Squawk to Stream 20 in anticipation of both the Future System that is in development and the loss of the Legacy Streams carrier on Transponder 3. Squawk audio can still be heard via a SR2000 on Stream 22 and Stream 20 up until the end of April.

**Question 16: I saw that there is a dedicated carrier for Squawk and I retuned our SR2000 to pull in that channel. I cannot find other programs however like Classical 24 or the BBC. What did I do wrong?**

PRSS: The dedicated carrier for Squawk only has Squawk audio. No other programming is available via this dedicated carrier. Please also note that there are no relays or NTP syncs associated with the dedicated carrier for Squawk. This channel only has Squawk audio.

**Question 17: How long will the dedicated carrier for Squawk remain available?**

PRSS: The current plan is to keep the dedicated carrier for Squawk up until mid-2019. There are several dependencies that can affect this date including the Future System and needs for transponder space.

**Question 18: Where can I find out more information about the Combined Carrier transition?**

PRSS: The PRSS held a webinar in early February to discuss the transition to a combined carrier. The webinar provided a timeline for the events planned for tomorrow, and it also involved an extended discussion on the current and future status of the Squawk Channel. Following the presentation, there was a Q&A session between participants and the PRSS.

Part of the discussion revolved around a guide prepared by the PRSS engineering team on setting a SR2000 receiver to the new SCPC Squawk Channel. To view a copy of this guide, please visit this link: <http://prss.org/sites/prss/files/media/customer-support/Squawk%20SCPC%20Guide.pdf>

An archived copy of the webinar presentation, including the Q&A between the PRSS and stations, is available here: <http://prss.org/sites/prss/files/media/video/2018-02-06%2014.02%20Live%20Streams%20Transition%20to%20Combined%20Carrier.mp4>.

A PDF of the PowerPoint slides, without audio, is available at <http://www.prss.org/sites/prss/files/content-images/customer-support/Combined%20Carrier%2002.06.18.pdf>.

**Question 19: I have checked my receiver, it's locked onto the Combined Carrier, I have good signal and I have updated my subscriptions so everything is now being received by the Pro Audio 4104, is there anything else I need to do?**

PRSS: Wow! Give yourself a pat on the back. Your station is ready!

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## Stay in Touch

### We Want to Hear From You!

EsPRSS-O welcomes and encourages your questions, comments, suggestions and ideas.

- Have you or your team developed a particularly unique and/or nifty technique in operating ContentDepot?
- Are you facing any new challenges and want to get the perspective of others who might be in a similar situation?
- Are you seeing any technology or business developments on the horizon that your pubradio colleagues ought to know about?
- Got a notion on your mind that you want to share with the PRSS?

If so, don't hesitate, write in today!

Send any and all correspondence to [PRSSCommunications@npr.org](mailto:PRSSCommunications@npr.org) along with info on the best way to get in touch with you.

Stay in touch! Send your questions, comments and ideas to [PRSSCommunications@npr.org](mailto:PRSSCommunications@npr.org). As always, the PRSS Help Desk is also available 24/7 at 800.971.7677 or email [PRSSHelp@npr.org](mailto:PRSSHelp@npr.org).



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