

Guidance for using the FCC Disaster Information Reporting System (DIRS)

By Gary Timm, Broadcast Chair, Wisconsin EAS Committee

October 25, 2007

This document contains information not included in the current FCC DIRS User's Manual.

How DIRS Works:

- DIRS has been created to allow communications companies to report the status and needs of their operations to the FCC during times of crisis.
- All broadcasters and cable operators should register on the DIRS website now.
- During a disaster, you will be contacted by the FCC if DIRS is activated in your area.
- At that point, stations and cable operators will be requested to report their on-air/off-air status on a daily basis, as well as any needs they have.

Things to know before going to the website to register:

- The final "Production Version" DIRS site to use is: <https://www.fcc.gov/nors/disaster/>
- Note: You must use "https" and you must include the trailing "/".
- DANGER: The beta version of DIRS is still online at an address with "selafoss" in the URL. DO NOT use the "selafoss" beta site. It looks exactly like the correct "www.fcc.gov" site above, but the beta site will not register you for the active DIRS program.
- Anyone who previously registered on the beta site must now go to the Production Version site above to obtain a new Password. Use instructions below to find "Reset Password Page"; on the next page that appears, enter your beta site User Name and email you used to register.
- For new DIRS users, you must sign up under your company name, such as "Clear Channel".
- If someone else from your company has already registered using your company name, you may need to get a Company ID code from that person in order to complete your registration.

Registering on DIRS:

- 1) Go to: <https://www.fcc.gov/nors/disaster/>
- 2) The first page is the Security Notice. Click, "Accept".
- 3) The next page is where beta site users can get a new Password. Click, "Reset Password Page". New users should click on "New User Page".
- 4) In the Reporting Company field, click the dropdown arrow to see if your company is already registered. If so, pick your company from the list, and fill in the Company ID field with the code given you by the previous user to register your company. Default code is 11111111 (eight 1's).
- 5) If you are the first user registering your company, fill in your company name in the New Company field. Leave the Company ID blank. All companies are assigned the default Company ID of 11111111 (eight 1's) when first registering. If you fill in another number, it will not be honored. To change the Company ID from the default, you must be a Report Coordinator. See User Levels section below for details. Once changed from the default, all subsequent users from your company will need to know the new Company ID code to complete their registration.
- 6) Pick the Type of Company, such as "Broadcaster" or "Cable".
- 7) Fill in your contact information below that. You are only allowed one phone number in each phone number field and only one email address, but it is permissible to register your name more than once with different contact information.
- 8) In the Address fields, put your company division or station call letters on first line, street address on second line, and city/state/zip on third line.
- 9) When all information is filled in, click "Submit".

10) You will then get a screen giving your personal DIRS-assigned User Name and Password. User Name will be whatever is in front of “@” in your email address. The Password is randomly assigned by DIRS. You can then Log In and change your Password if you wish. Note that your User Name and Password have nothing to do with the Company ID used on the first page, which is only used once to gain access to become a New User, but never used again on the system.

User’s Manual

- After registering, it is recommended that new users read the DIRS User’s Manual. A link is found in the upper-left corner on each page of the website.
- Be aware that the current version, August 3, 2007, **contains errors**.
- Most importantly, the URL given on Page 1 of the Manual is for the “selafoss” beta site. As noted above, DO NOT use that URL. Instead, use the URL noted above.
- On Page 34, regarding filing a New Broadcast Disaster Report, under Call Sign it says the field is limited to 4 characters. The field in fact will accept 7 characters.
- Also on Page 34, regarding filing a New Broadcast Disaster Report, note that the “Fuel” field is only to indicate “Adequate/Inadequate/No Fuel, etc.” If you need fuel, you are to note the type of fuel needed in the “Notes” field.
- Also on Page 34, regarding filing a New Broadcast Disaster Report, you need only fill in either Lat/Long or City/State – you do not need to provide both.
- There may be more discrepancies, as there were other changes requested by users of the beta version that may have been made to the website but not documented in the User Manual. If you find anything on the site that does not agree with the Manual, please email your findings to John Healy at the FCC email address below.
- While not perfect, the FCC is reaching out to help us stay on the air during disasters, so we should be happy for that – and hopefully the website/Manual kinks will work out in time.

User Levels There are two levels of Users on the DIRS system:

- Report Inputters: Can file any type of report but can only update/resubmit reports that they personally have originally submitted. All Users start out as Inputters.
- Report Coordinators: Will be allowed to update and resubmit any report that was filed by someone from their company, as well as be given access to change the Company ID and Company Information, and manage the other User accounts.
- Information not in the User Manual: The only way to elevate a User from Inputter to Coordinator status is by sending an email to: John.Healy@fcc.gov. His phone number is: 202-418-2448. He can also be contacted for any issues with the system.
- Once a user is upgraded to Coordinator status, the Coordinator will receive an email from FCC-Disaster@fcc.gov every time a new user from that company registers on DIRS. The User Name of the new user will be given in the email.
- The Coordinator can choose to be notified by email when a real Disaster Report is submitted by any user in that company. Go to the Manage User screen, and change Email Notification to “Yes” for the Coordinator’s User Name.

Being Prepared to File DIRS Broadcast Disaster Reports

When the time comes to fill out a Broadcast Disaster Report, users will need their FCC Facility ID number and their transmitter site coordinates expressed in decimal form. Coordinators in particular might want to gather these details ahead of time for all facilities in their company. To convert minutes/seconds coordinates to decimal coordinates, use FCC site:

<http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/bickel/DDMMSS-decimal.html>