



Virginia Association of Broadcasters Legal Review



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Legal Memorandum

REMINDER: FCC's Voluntary DIRS 2018 Exercise Rescheduled for September 13-14

This is a reminder that the FCC has rescheduled its voluntary DIRS 2018 exercise for next week—on September 13-14, 2018. “DIRS” is the abbreviation for the FCC’s “Disaster Information Reporting System.”

To reiterate, participation in both DIRS and the September 13-14 exercise is strictly voluntary, but we (and the Commission) recommend that stations strongly consider electing to participate in both. DIRS is a web-based system that communications providers, including broadcasters, can use to report real-time communications infrastructure status and situational awareness information to the FCC during times of crisis, including severe weather events. When DIRS is activated during real disasters, broadcasters report information, including whether stations are transmitting, the power status and locations of transmitters, whether the stations are transmitting from alternate locations, and whether stations have functioning generators.

The purpose of the September 13-14 exercise is to help DIRS users become familiar with the system and ready to file DIRS reports when a real disaster strikes.

The September 13-14 DIRS Exercise. According to a recently released [Public Notice](#), on September 13, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. EST, the FCC will send a DIRS 2018 EXERCISE activation letter to broadcasters that are registered in DIRS. To simulate an actual disaster, the letter will request that broadcasters participating in the DIRS exercise file a first set of reports by 3:00 p.m. EST that day. The FCC will also ask broadcasters to update their reports by 11:00 a.m. EST on September 14, 2018. (Note: the DIRS 2018 exercise was originally scheduled for August 23-24, but the FCC delayed it to September 13-14 due to Hurricane Lane.)

Registration Remains Available. Broadcasters that have not already registered in DIRS can do so now. The FCC provides these instructions to register for DIRS and/or participate in the test:

- Go to the URL for DIRS at <https://www.fcc.gov/nors/disaster/>.
- For broadcasters that do not have a login, there is a link on the login page that will allow broadcasters to get a User ID and password.
- When creating a new account, the FCC asks that users use a company name instead of station name under “Reporting Company.” If a company name is used, only one account will be needed to input information on any station owned by the company.
- There is a “forgotten password” link on the login page for those that have a User ID but do not remember the password.
- The FCC requests broadcasters that have a User ID and a password to use them to log into DIRS and update contact information if needed.
- There Commission has made a User Manual available at the DIRS website.

Many broadcast groups have instructed their stations to register for—and participate in—DIRS. Some broadcast groups have determined that local stations can best make those decisions for themselves. If your station is part of a group of commonly-owned stations, be sure to check internally whether it is desirable to register for DIRS and participate in the September 13-14 exercise.

If you have any questions concerning the information discussed in this memorandum, please contact your communications counsel or any of the undersigned.

Tim Nelson, Editor

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