Today is July 28. Our initial plans had called for today being the first day of the transition from Digi-Cipher II to DVB-S2 on the Florida Transponder. Because of some minor, last-minute glitches that came up at the end of last week, we decided to delay the transition by a few days. We believe that we will resolve these problems quickly and can proceed with the transition later this week.

Remember that during the transition to DVB-S2, your Digi-Cipher II services will be moved. Knowledge Network and Lottery drawings which are seen on Channel 801 will move to Channel 803; the Florida Channel, which is seen on Channel 802, will move to Channel 804. Again these are the Digi-Cipher II feeds of these program services.

Now, here is the REVISED transition timeline:

n   On Wednesday, July 30, 2008, the transition begins at 0600 (6am) EDT. On the first day, DC-II service will be provided across four channels of the transponder. The Knowledge Network and Lottery drawings will be seen on Channel 801 AND Channel 803. The Florida Channel will be seen on Channel 802 AND Channel 804. Downlink sites should tune their DC-II receivers to either 803 or 804, depending upon the service they use, on this first day. Sites should keep their DC-II IRDs tuned to these channels until they are ready to switch to their new DVB-S2 IRD.

n   On July 31 at approx 0600, DC-II service on Channels 801 and 802 WILL END. By that time, sites should have changed channels on their DC-II IRDs. The Tallahassee SOC will begin final testing and proofing of the new DVB-S2 encoders on the 801/802 bandwidth. We expect this testing to take several days.

n   Once DVB-S2 testing is complete and new frequencies have been established, the Tallahassee SOC will begin transmitting the Knowledge Network, Lottery drawings and the Florida Channel in DVB-S2 on the Florida Transponder. Final DVB-S2 frequencies and parameters will be sent to downlink sites and they can begin tuning their new DVB-S2 IRDs.

n   Through August, your services will be simulcast. DVB-S2 service will be seen on the newly designated 18-1 (Knowledge Network and Lottery) and 18-2 (Florida Channel); DC-II service will continue to be seen on Channels 803 and 804. This simulcast will allow us to transition downlinks state-wide from their current DC-II IRDs to their new DVB-S2 IRDs.

n   All downlinks should be encouraged to switch over to the permanent DVB-S2 signal as soon as it is available and their new DVB-S2 receiver is operational. They should not wait until the end of the transition.

n   On SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2008, at 11:59pm (2359) EDT, all downlink sites should have upgraded to DVB-S2 IRDs. DC-II operations on Channels 803 and 804 will end and your programming will only be available in DVB-S2, on 18-1 (Knowledge Network) and 18-2 (the Florida Channel).

When the transition to DVB-S2 transmission from Tallahassee is complete, your sites will no longer be able to use their Digi-Cipher II IRDs to acquire your programming and will need a new DVB-S2 IRD / receiver.
Please also remember to remind sites that standard DVB-S IRDs – including those they may already have in-house -- may not be compatible with this newer DVB-S2 format.
In the event a downlink site is having difficulty with reception of either DC – II feeds or the new DVB-S2 feeds, they should immediately get in touch with you, their primary contact. Please pass their contact info on to me and we will get in touch to help them resolve their problem. Please don't provide them with the direct number for the Tallahassee SOC; while we don't anticipate any major problems, we don't want the SOC to be swamped with calls or to have sites calling outside normal business hours, when we are better staffed to assist them.

We encourage all program providers to pass this information on to their contacts at their downlink sites. Since its possible the regular contact people at your sites may not be engineering or technical staff, we also ask providers to be sure your contacts are clear that this and any subsequent messages need to be shared with the proper technical personnel.