

Glossary of terms for RDS applications

Programme Identification (PI)

This information consists of a code enabling the receiver to distinguish between countries, areas in which the same programme is transmitted, and the identification of the programme itself. The code is not intended for direct display and is assigned to each individual radio programme, to enable it to be distinguished from all other programmes. One important application of this information would be to enable the receiver to search automatically for an Alternative Frequency in case of bad reception of the programme to which the receiver is tuned; the criterion for the change-over to the new frequency would be the presence of a better signal having the same Programme Identification code.

Programme Service (PS) name

This is a text consisting of not more than eight alphanumeric characters which is displayed by RDS receivers in order to inform the listener what programme service is being broadcast by the station to which the receiver is tuned. The Programme Service name is not intended to be used for automatic search tuning.

Programme Type (PTY)

This is an identification number transmitted with each programme item, which specifies the type of programme (31 possibilities including news, classical music, etc.). This code could also be used during search tuning. The code will, moreover, enable suitable receivers and recorders to be pre-set to respond only to programme items of the desired type. PTY code 31 is reserved for an "alarm" identification which is intended to switch on the audio signal when a receiver is operated in a "waiting" reception mode.

Traffic Programme identification (TP)

This is an on/off switching signal to indicate, by means of a special lamp (or a similar device) on the receiver, that this is a programme on which announcements are usually made for motorists. The signal could be taken into account during automatic search tuning.

List of Alternative Frequencies (AF)

Lists of Alternative Frequencies give information on the various transmitters broadcasting the same programme in the same or adjacent reception areas. They enable receivers equipped with a memory to store the list(s), and hence to reduce the time taken to switch to another transmitter. This facility is particularly useful in the case of car and portable radios. Two AF protocols have been defined (Methods A and B).

Traffic-Announcement identification (TA)

This is an on/off switching signal to indicate whether an announcement for motorists is on the air. The signal could be used in receivers to:

- a) switch automatically from any audio mode to the Traffic Announcement;
- b) switch on the Traffic Announcement automatically when the receiver is in a waiting reception mode and the audio signal is muted;
- c) switch from a programme carrying no traffic information to one carrying a Traffic-Announcement.

After the end of the Traffic Announcement the initial operating mode will be restored.

Decoder Identification (DI)

This is a switching signal indicating which of sixteen possible operating modes (or combinations thereof) is appropriate for use with the broadcast signals: mono, stereo, compressed, etc.

Music/Speech switch (M/S)

This is a two-state signal to indicate whether music or speech is being broadcast. Receivers using this feature could be equipped with two separate volume controls, one for music and one for speech, so that the listener could adjust the balance between them to suit his individual listening taste.

Programme-Item Number (PIN)

The code should enable receivers and recorders designed to make use of this feature to respond to the particular programme item(s) that the user has preselected. The code contains the scheduled time of the start of the programme, to which is added the day of the month in order to avoid ambiguity.

Radio Text (RT)

Radio Text permits the transmission of 64-character text messages primarily addressed to new home receivers equipped with suitable display facilities.

Enhanced Other Networks information (EON)

This feature can be used to update the information stored in a receiver about programme services other than the one received. AF, PS, TP, TA, PTY and PIN information can be transmitted for each of the other services. The relation to the corresponding programme is established by means of the relevant PI code.

Transparent Data Channel (TDC)

The Transparent Data Channel is similar to Radio Text and can be used to carry longer text

messages in a form suitable for presentation on a television display, similar to that obtained with teletext. TDC may also be used to send alphanumeric characters, mosaic graphics, or similar data for transmission of computer programmes and similar data not for display. A decoder which implements the user-defined protocol will be required for each receiver using this feature.

In-House application (IH)

This feature carries data intended to be decoded only within the broadcasting organization. Some examples are the identification of transmission origin, remote switching of networks and paging of staff. IH coding may be decided independently by each broadcasting organization, and a special decoder will be required in each case.

Clock-Time and date (CT)

In accordance with the relevant CCIR Recommendations, broadcast time and date codes should use Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) and Modified Julian Day (MJD). The listener, however, will not use this information directly and the conversion to local time and date will be made in the receiver.

Radio Paging (RP)

The RDS Radio Paging feature uses existing VHF/FM broadcasts as a transport mechanism, thereby avoiding the need for a dedicated network of transmitters. Subscribers to a paging service will require a special paging receiver in which the subscriber address code is stored. Four types of paging messages are possible, in principle:

- a simple call (bleeper) without message;
- a 10 or 18 digit numeric message, restricted to fifteen digits in international paging;
- an alphanumeric message of up to 80 characters;
- a functions message in international paging.