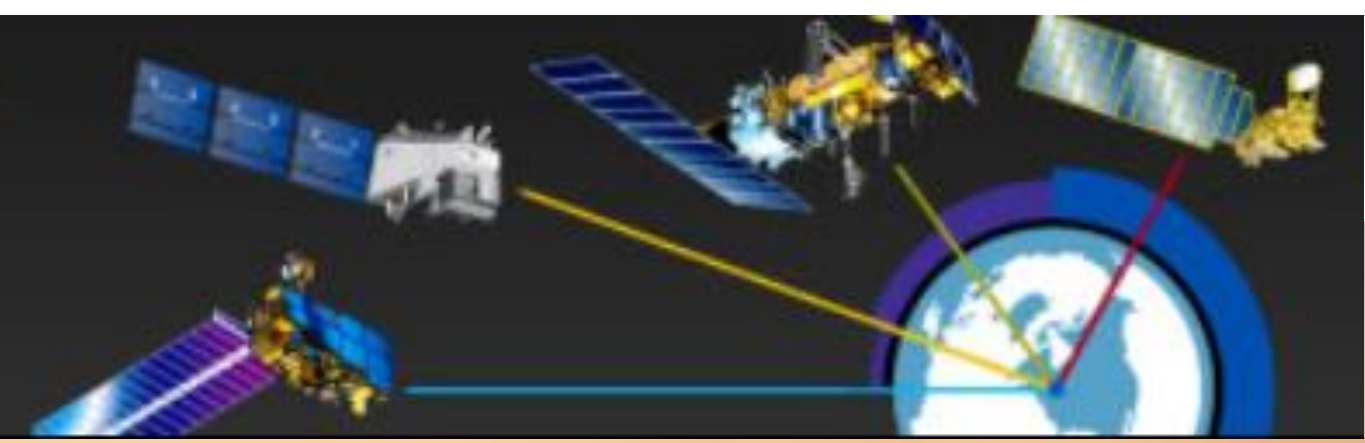


DIRECT READOUT LABORATORY



SUNSET FOR THE NASA DIRECT READOUT LAB: WHAT USERS NEED TO KNOW IMPACTS, TIMELINE, AND NEXT STEPS FOR DIRECT BROADCAST USERS

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The NASA Direct Readout Laboratory (DRL) has supported the global direct broadcast (DB) community for 20 years by providing software, tools, and expertise for processing satellite data in near real time. These capabilities have enabled ground stations, researchers, and operational users to access and utilize Earth observation data from instruments such as MODIS and VIIRS for environmental monitoring, weather analysis, and scientific research.

This poster outlines what the end-of-life of the Direct Readout Laboratory means for current users, including changes to software support, expected timelines, and recommended paths forward. Our goal is to ensure users are informed, prepared, and equipped to transition their workflows with minimal disruption.

DRL – Transition of Support Responsibilities

NASA DRL has been providing ancillary data for use by IPOPP and Simulcast clients for Aqua, Terra, SNPP, NOAA 20 and NOAA 21 spacecraft. This service is planned to terminate with the completion of the Earth Observation System spacecraft missions. The NOAA sanctioned path forward for spacecraft they operate is via CSPP.

- DRL historically supported the DB Community by providing technology and information to acquire and utilize real-time satellite data.
- Provided resources to receive real time sensor data from the satellite rather than waiting for data distribution from NASA or NOAA data Distributed Active and Archive Centers (DAACs).
- **Recent Supported Missions include** Terra, Aqua, Suomi National Polar-orbiting Partnership (SNPP), and Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS) missions (NOAA-20 and NOAA-21).

Recommended Actions for DRL Users

Users are encouraged to transition to community-supported solutions for continued direct broadcast data processing. In particular, the University of Wisconsin CSPP provides ongoing software support and development for many direct readout applications.

For ancillary data needs (e.g., atmospheric, geolocation, and calibration inputs), users should obtain data directly from the original providers. A curated list of recommended sources is available via the NASA Direct Readout External References - <https://directreadout.sci.gsfc.nasa.gov/external-references.html> Engaging with these resources will help ensure continuity of operations and access to up-to-date datasets beyond the end-of-life of the Direct Readout Laboratory.

Timeline

Phase	Description	Date
Announcement	Users are notified of the end-of-life of the NASA Direct Readout Laboratory and begin transition planning	End of May 2026
Documentation	All documents and non-essential pdfs will be archived	June 2026
Support Wind-Down	Intermittent ancillary data outages	August 2026
Website reuaction	One-page DRL website	September 2026
End of Support (EOL)	Shut down independent website, data server, and mailing list	November 2026

What does End-of-Life Mean?

Capability	Status
Software updates	✗ Discontinued
User Support	⚠ Limited
Documentation	✓ Still Available

Alternatives & Path Forward

Mission Status and Shift to NOAA

- As Terra and Aqua approach their end of life, NASA will phase out DRL support for direct readout users.
- DRL has ended the development status and began archive status.
- The DRL software packages such as IPOPP, Simulcast, SPAs, etc. are frozen and archived.
- No new users are being supported
- The past few years NOAA has supported and will continue to support the Direct Broadcast users, handling missions like SNPP and JPSS (NOAA-20, NOAA-21).
- Limited Ancillary Data: DRL only provides current ancillary data (such as ephemeris and spacecraft data); historical archives are discontinued.
- Discontinuation of Data Processing Services:
 - No further imagery generation or sample data distribution.
 - Users must transition to alternative tools and processing chains.

For NOAA supported missions:

Users should migrate to CSPP for data acquisition and processing NOAA will provide long-term support and updates via field terminal systems (FTS - <https://fieldterminal.nesdis.noaa.gov/>)

For NASA Aqua and Terra users:

Users looking for continued data support should explore the University of Wisconsin's supported Community Satellite Processing Package (CSPP) software package. Some legacy software may still be accessible through NOAA-approved repositories.

Contact

direct-broadcast-users-owner@lists.nasa.gov