

Programme Delivery Guide



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1. Delivery timetable

Radio 4 transmits over 30,000 individual programmes annually – a process overseen by a small team. Producers are responsible for the safe delivery of their programmes to the network and for keeping the network informed of **any** changes that might affect delivery by the agreed date.

The required delivery date of your programme is listed on the Conditional Acceptance or Airtime Confirmation email sent to you by the Scheduling team, and on the transmissions tab in Proteus.

If the required delivery date cannot be met, please send a late delivery notification to the network, with the following details:

- Title of programme
- Transmission Date
- Proposed New Delivery Date
- Reason for Delay

Please note that you will not receive a reply to your notification unless there is a problem with the late delivery.

If your programme is designated as non-topical, the audio and presentation details must be delivered 3 weeks before transmission.

Late delivery without prior notification may jeopardise transmission of your programme and may constitute a breach of contract.

- **contact** R4 Late Delivery
- **email** R4LateDelivery@bbc.co.uk

On-Day Topical Recorded Programmes Scheduled by the Transmission & Delivery Team

In house or Independent companies with access to a BBC Studio delivering on--day topical recorded programmes which are scheduled by the Transmission & Delivery team **must** be delivered **at least 1 hour** before transmission. If, for any reason, your programme can't be delivered by this time you must contact the Transmission & Delivery team as you will have to play your programme out 'as live' from a studio. If you do not have access to a studio for transmission please get in contact with the Transmission & Delivery team to discuss delivery options in plenty of time.

Please note that the Transmission & Delivery team works standard office hours (0930 - 1730 weekdays). Only programmes delivered within those hours can be scheduled by the team. If you cannot deliver within those hours, you should contact Christine Howard, Scheduling Manager, to discuss alternative arrangements.

- **contact** Transmission & Delivery team
- **email** R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk

- **contact** Christine Howard, Scheduling Manager, Transmission & Delivery
- **email** christine.howard@bbc.co.uk

Topical Programmes Scheduled by Production Teams

Programmes and production teams which fall into this category will have a prior agreement with the network to self-schedule. **Only those with this agreement should deliver in this way.**

Programmes **must** be scheduled **at least 1 hour** before transmission. An expected time of delivery and contact number must be supplied to the Transmission & Delivery team.

This is of utmost importance if your programme is due for transmission outside standard office hours. The information will be passed to the Continuity announcers on duty and is required by 1700, at the latest, on the day of delivery.

- **contact** Transmission & Delivery team
- **email** R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk

2. Audio delivery, quality and duration requirements

The general Radio technical requirements are available on the BBC Radio Commissioning website: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/radio/making-content/technical-specification/>

This includes details of the -23 LUFS loudness standard to which all submitted audio must conform.

Note on the 'spirit' of the Radio 4 Technical Guidelines

This is an attempt to capture the sentiments behind the technical guidelines issued to programme suppliers, and to explain the 'sound' that the Network is trying to achieve.

Radio 4 is a predominately speech-based Network which relies on programmes that have dialogue that is easy to follow, particularly as the audience is often listening in less than ideal noise environments (in a car, next to a boiling kettle, etc.) It is important therefore that programmes are mixed without too great a dynamic range, are comparable with Continuity output and maximise audibility.

One of the most annoying experiences for our listeners is having to adjust the volume during, or between, programmes. Continuity Announcements are not compressed, so heavy use of compression should be avoided, as it produces a tiring listen and sounds out of place on the Network. Heavily compressed programmes provide too great a contrast with other programmes and Continuity. As a general rule, if you can hear compression, you have used too much. (Unless the compression has been used for dramatic effect, of course.) The Network does not seek homogeneity, but programme producers must be aware that their programme sits with many others, and that the listener is often tuned in across the day and listening to many different styles. Riding the levels of individual elements within a mix is the best way to produce the best overall sound of a programme, and Radio 4 expects programmes to be built in this way. This means not using hard limiting to control levels.

Process for audio delivery – BBC Suppliers

BBC Suppliers with access to their own dira! Highlander database can transfer audio to Radio 4 using the 'Send to' functionality (select 'R4 and R7' as the destination database when prompted).

All other BBC Suppliers should deliver their audio via the VCS Ingester, a shared folder which automatically ingests audio into the Radio 4 dira workgroup.

To request access to the VCS Ingester, please contact either Peter Luff, Technical Co-ordinator, or Christine Howard, Scheduling Manager. They will approve the request and pass it on to Engineering Ops Support for activation.

- **contact** Peter Luff, Technical Co-ordinator
- **email** peter.luff@bbc.co.uk

- **contact** Christine Howard, Scheduling Manager, Transmission & Delivery
- **email** christine.howard@bbc.co.uk

- Programmes can be uploaded to this folder as either .wav or .flac files.
- Regardless of whether you're delivering via dira! transfer or the VCS Ingestor, the naming of your file is important. It should be composed of the Programme Title (in full – no abbreviations please) and TX date.
eg: 'My New Programme 120824.wav'
- If you're delivering multiple episodes of the same series, it's useful for the episode number to be included in each filename.
eg: 'My New Programme Ep3 120824.wav'
- You can also add the Proteus Programme Number to the filename if you wish, but it's not obligatory.
- Please avoid using any punctuation or special characters in your filename.
- As soon as the audio has been delivered, please send an email notification to the Transmission & Delivery team. The Presentation Details for the programme should be completed in Proteus at the same time. **THIS IS CRUCIAL.** The team will listen to the in and out of the programme to check that they match the information supplied in the pres details, and they'll also ensure that the duration quoted matches the audio file. Additionally, they'll spot-check the audio for obvious technical faults and check that the loudness complies with the technical specification. If there are no problems, they will schedule it. They will then contact you to confirm this or discuss any problems.

The presentation office is staffed, Monday to Friday 9.30am – 5.30pm.

- **contact** Transmission & Delivery team
- **email** R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk

Process for audio delivery – Independent Production Companies

You will need a MediaShuttle account to access the BBC's service. To request an account, please contact Peter Luff, Technical Co-ordinator, with the following details:

1. Company name
2. Key contact name
3. Key contact email address

- **Contact** Peter Luff, Technical Co-ordinator
- **Email** peter.luff@bbc.co.uk

Once your account has been set up you will receive some emails from MediaShuttle with links by which you can choose your password and access the system.

The MediaShuttle address is <http://bbcradiodelivery.mediashuttle.com>

MediaShuttle works in all web browsers but users of Chrome will need to install a plugin. There is an app for iOS.

- Programmes should be uploaded as either .wav or .flac files

- The naming of your wav file is important. It should begin with 'R4', followed by the Programme Title (in full – no abbreviations please) and TX date.
eg: 'R4 My New Programme 120824.wav'
- If you're delivering multiple episodes of the same series, it's useful for the episode number to be included in each filename.
eg: 'R4 My New Programme Ep3 120824.wav'
- You can also add the Proteus Programme Number to the filename if you wish, but it's not obligatory.
- Please avoid using any punctuation or special characters in your filename.
- As soon as the audio has been delivered, please send an email notification to the Transmission & Delivery team. The Presentation Details for the programme should be completed in Proteus at the same time. **THIS IS CRUCIAL.** The team will listen to the in and out of the programme to check that they match the information supplied in the pres details, and they'll also ensure that the duration quoted matches the audio file. Additionally, they'll spot-check the audio for obvious technical faults and check that the loudness complies with the technical specification. If there are no problems, they will schedule it. They will then contact you to confirm this or discuss any problems.

The presentation office is staffed, Monday to Friday 9.30am – 5.30pm.

- **contact** Transmission & Delivery team
- **email** R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk

- Please note that delivery emails generated by MediaShuttle itself do not get sent to the Presentation team. You must notify the team of delivery separately.

Failure to complete this step within 14 days of delivering your audio will result in your programme being lost.

Durations

When a programme is commissioned, you will be informed of the required duration. These durations are also available in Proteus as the 'Planned Duration'. All required durations include opening and closing announcements from Continuity. **Please ensure you deliver your programmes to the correct duration.**

The standard durations are:

For a quarter hour slot:	14' including announcements	e.g. Book of the Week
For a half hour slot:	28' including announcements	e.g. 1830 Comedy
For an hour slot:	57' including announcements	e.g. Archive on 4
For a 45' slot:	These can vary – please check your airtime confirmation	e.g. Afternoon Drama

3. Presentation Details

Presentation Details are required at the same time that the audio is delivered. For non-topical programmes this is **three weeks before transmission**. For all other programmes this should be in accordance with the required delivery date as specified in Proteus.

Presentation Details should be delivered via Proteus. Please contact the Transmission & Delivery team for further advice if required.

For all programmes, producers **must** provide a time of transmission contact number on the Presentation Details.

Please ensure that you provide any relevant pronunciation guidance using the approved modified spellings which can be provided by the BBC Pronunciation Unit.

- email pronunciation@bbc.co.uk

Please use the Technical and Presentation Advice section of the form to alert us to anything in the programme which could cause concern at the time of broadcast. This includes unusually long silences, the deliberate use of distortion, poor quality archive material and the use of either Big Ben or the GTS (pips).

Using the PIPS:

Please note that use of Big Ben or the GTS must be cleared with the Head of Presentation in advance. The GTS cannot be used in its entirety; a maximum of 3 pips is allowable and this **must not** include the final long pip.

- Contact Head of Presentation Katy Hubbard
- email katy.hubbard@bbc.co.uk

4. Announcements

Opening and closing announcements

How we present your programme to the audience is part of their experience so please consider these very carefully. Avoid repeating the opening annos said by Continuity at the start of your programme.

Announcements should be brief, preferably no longer than 15" in total, except when absolutely necessary (e.g. to include Action line information, content warnings or a serial recap).

If necessary Radio 4 Presentation will amend or cut back announcements and/or programmes. Please refrain from pointing the audience to BBC Sounds to listen to the programme that has just been broadcast. Pointers to Sounds are best delivered within the body of the programme by the Presenter if there is something additional to point to. For example further episodes, box sets or other series.

References to times of the day (eg: "Good evening") or other programmes within a series (eg: "in tomorrow's programme) should be referred to only in the continuity announcements which can be amended for future transmissions. This is due to some episodes potentially being repeated out of order or on an ad-hoc basis in future.

Serials should always include a recap. This should be included in the overall duration.

On-air Credits (*revised for 2024*)

We appreciate the importance of credits for teams, however, they need to be **proportionate and relevant** to our audience. We are therefore adding an extra production credit and on occasion one craft credit. Junctions form a vital part of our station sound and are a crucial way for us to increase our listening hours by moving the audience around the schedule. Therefore, on-air credits are limited compared to TV or Podcasts.

Radio 4 Presentation oversees all credits, not Commissioning.

Dos: This applies to pre-recorded credits and credits read by Continuity.

1. After your Presenter credit our policy is two production credits: producer and AP, producer and researcher, producer and editor or 2 producers. For dramas, the two production credits may be director and producer. Please do not refer to Line, Series or Executive Producers.
2. In addition, for particular programmes, where it is relevant to the production for example a drama, one craft credit such as sound designer will be accepted as required. Please contact R4 Presentation: R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk to request this additional credit. Please make it relevant to the audience experience and not too technical. We suggest you avoid Sound Engineer and Technical Producer for example.
3. Studio Manager/Studio Director credits are accepted on live News strands but not on other live strands, recorded programmes or programmes recorded as live.
4. BBC Audio/Studios and Independent production company credits are also allowed and please add any around the UK credits.
5. We allow one company credit on-air. The company which is editorially responsible for compliance will be credited. For example:

Xxxxx was a BBC Audio Cardiff production for Radio 4.
Xxxxx was a Whistledown production for BBC Radio 4.

We will send back any pre-recorded credits that do not comply with the above to be edited.

And Don'ts: This applies to pre-recorded credits and credits read by Continuity.

- 1 We will not accept 'vanity credits' for example "with thanks to xxxx..." or Commissioning credits.
- 2 Podcasts that are due to be transmitted on Radio 4 will need to adhere to our on-air policy. Please supply an on-air version.
- 3 We do not credit production 'teams', which includes Production-Co-ordinators.

Exceptions to the rule include:

Drama and some readings (see below), some programmes in which credit must be given to the creator of the format for legal reasons (e.g. *Desert Island Discs*).

NB: Any pre-recorded announcements must be mixed over music or sound effects. If it is not appropriate to mix these as part of the programme, please include them in the written Presentation Details.

Drama and readings credits

Actors' credits

Please remember to put the fictional character first, then the actor, not the other way round. And please ensure that the fictional name in the credits is the one the character is always called. For example, a character may be Mrs Jones, but if in the play everyone calls her Maggie then please call her Maggie in the cast credits and in programme descriptions.

Credits for programmes within a series should include only actors appearing in that episode.

Where original music has been used, the composer and performers may be credited.

Authors, writers, abridgers/adapters and dramatists should be credited in accordance with the BBC's agreement with the Writers' Guild/PMA/Society of Authors. Readers should also be credited where there is a contractual agreement to do so.

Phone numbers

The only numbers that should normally be heard on air on Radio 4 are the Action line, the Radio 4 information line and phone-in numbers. Any rare exceptions must be agreed in advance with R4 Presentation.

- **contact** Transmission & Delivery team
- **email** R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk

5. Compliance

We will not be able to broadcast your programme without a fully completed and signed compliance form. This should be completed in proteus and submitted at the same time as the audio, by the delivery deadline (see section 1 above). For further information about compliance and the compliance form, see here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/radio/editorial-risk-and-compliance>

6. Live Programmes and Outside Broadcast Venues

Outside broadcast producers must provide **two** contact numbers (one on-site, and one mobile number) for the Announcer in Continuity please. Producers are responsible for booking lines from OBs to London, which must include reserve lines. Lines should be booked all the way through to Radio 4 Continuity. Please contact the Transmission & Delivery team for advice on which Continuity studio will be on air at the time of your programme's transmission.

- **contact** Transmission & Delivery team
- **email** R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk

Lines should be booked through Network Bookings who can also offer advice on the type of lines required for the broadcast.

- **contact** Network Bookings
- **email** network.bookings@bbc.co.uk

Outside broadcast producers should give Presentation a programme and paperwork (presentation details, script and/or running order) as a standby against line failure. The standby programme should be slightly shorter than the required duration of the live programme and should have suitable pot points to accommodate different line-loss scenarios. These pot points should be clearly indicated on the paperwork.

When long-running strands are broadcast from outside Broadcasting House in London, a substitute/timeless recorded edition of the programme should be given to Radio 4 Presentation, with all the relevant paperwork as outlined above.

- **contact** Christine Howard, Scheduling Manager, Transmission & Delivery
- **email** christine.howard@bbc.co.uk

7. Versioned and Archive Repeats

When the network selects a programme for repeat, the Scheduling team will notify you. They will ask you to confirm by email that the programme is compliant for repeat in the intended slot, and that there are no editorial standards concerns with a repeat, no topicality or rights issues, or need for repeat fees. This email should contain the name of the senior editorial figure responsible for the programme and is filed for compliance audits.

Versioned Repeats

If a programme needs to be edited after its first transmission (for editorial or legal reasons, or because of a change of duration), please inform Elaine Boyd as a versioned repeat record will need to be created in Proteus. A new compliance form must be signed off for versioned repeats.

- **contact** Elaine Boyd, Scheduling Manager
- **email** elaine.boyd@bbc.co.uk

At the same time, you must notify Radio 4 Presentation so that they can update the playout schedule.

If you normally rely on the Presentation team to schedule your audio, you should deliver the new version in the usual way (see Section 2 above) and supply updated Presentation Details which reflect any changes to the audio in, out or duration as relevant. You can also modify the Continuity announcements if desired.

If you are an in-house team which normally schedules your own audio, you **MUST NOT** overwrite the audio which has already been broadcast. We are required to archive all versions of audio which have been broadcast. Please liaise with the Presentation team as soon as possible and they will guide you through the process for getting your new audio into the schedule. This also applies if your first transmission was LIVE and you are making edits to the audio before the repeat. Please supply updated Presentation Details for the new version of the programme.

- **contact** Transmission & Delivery team
- **email** R4.Presentation-Operational@bbc.co.uk

Archive repeats

All Archive repeats are classified as non-topical.

Please remember to maintain programme support material – e.g. if the Radio 4 audience line has been included on transmission of the origination, appropriate arrangements should be made for the repeat transmission, or the reference to the phone service should be removed from Pres details. If you are editing your programme for repeat, please ensure you inform the Scheduling team (see Versioned Repeats above).

Producers should ensure that time-specific or topical references such as “*Good evening*”, “*tomorrow*” or “*next Sunday is Easter Day*” are removed. On an exceptional basis it may be acceptable to leave in topical references, so long as the presentation details make clear that the programme was first broadcast on an earlier date. If you are unsure whether to leave in a topical reference, please contact Elaine Boyd.

- **contact** Elaine Boyd, Scheduling Manager
- **email** elaine.boyd@bbc.co.uk

You should also inform the network of any event such as the death of a contributor, which may affect the suitability of a programme for repeat. In these circumstances, it is the producer's responsibility to ensure that appropriate permissions have been obtained.

Programme Descriptions should be checked and updated if necessary. Updated descriptions must be supplied at least **five weeks** before transmission (unless the repeat notification is issued by the scheduling office after this date, in which case they should be supplied as soon as possible).

Presentation details must be updated and supplied **three weeks** before transmission to Radio 4 Presentation. (Where editorially relevant these should be amended to state when the programme was first broadcast). The final version of the Programme Description should also be submitted at this stage.

8. On-Air Promotion

Radio 4 broadcasts a wealth of programmes across multiple genres. We want to tell the audience what they can expect in any given week. Promotional priorities (trails) are chosen five weeks before transmission. If you have not submitted a Proteus programme description with details of your programme **six** weeks in advance, we cannot guarantee that your programme will be selected.

If your programme has been selected, a member of the Radio 4 Station Sound Trails team will contact you.

To produce the on-air promotion, a broadcast-quality copy of the programme will be required. Please also bear in mind that programmes which have a complicated music mix under the speech are almost impossible to clip. In these circumstances trail makers will often need a *clean* speech mix of your programme as well.

Occasionally we may ask you to make a trail with your presenter. If you are recording a trail for us, please do not assume announcers will introduce or back-announce them. Your trail should do the whole job itself, ideally ending with the day and time of TX and the length should be no more than 30 seconds in total. The promotions producer involved in your campaign will advise you on the wording of the various endings eg on Wednesday, tomorrow etc

Please include the correct network branding in your trail: BBC Radio 4

For audio delivery of trails and trail material, please refer to the programme delivery process in Section 2.

BBC Suppliers can transfer trails using the Highlander 'send-to' function. Independent Production companies and BBC Studios must use the Radio Delivery Medias Shuttle portal.

Label the audio with the prefix TRAIL, followed by your programme title and the TX date.

As soon as the trail audio has been delivered, please send an email notification to the Radio 4 Duty Producer - DGR4DProd01@bbc.co.uk

It is essential that producers meet the three week programme delivery requirement (see *Delivery*) for the Radio 4 Promotions Team to produce the most effective on-air promotion.

- **contact** Moy McGowan, Lead Producer Promotions
- **email** maire.mcgowan@bbc.co.uk

9. Stock Programmes

We often commission programmes for Radio 4 as 'stock' programmes.

The aim is to slot them into the schedule should another programme fall out or get delayed, rather than having to reschedule the whole slot or running out of available slots to fulfil business quotas. Having stock programmes is reducing the number of major reschedules we have to carry out, and therefore reducing the level of inconvenience to suppliers.

Stock programmes are chosen on the basis that they do not have a specific TX peg and can more easily TX anywhere within a financial year. If one of your programmes is selected as a stock programme but you feel that there is a specific reason why it should have a confirmed TX, feel free to discuss this with the Scheduling team.

We will usually be able to confirm TX details of stock programmes with plenty of notice, so there should be no issue with publicity.

Process:

When delivering programmes for stock, please clearly label any correspondence with R4 Presentation, and the audio filename itself, with 'STOCK'. This will help with the smooth processing of and payment for the programme.

Presentation details without TX details must be provided with the audio to enable Presentation to carry out their normal checks. These should be updated and re-supplied once the TX details are known. Programme descriptions need only be sent / entered once TX has been confirmed at a later date.

Indies will receive payment upon delivery of the programme, rather than on TX.

- **contact**
- **email**

Elaine Boyd, Scheduling Manager
elaine.boyd@bbc.co.uk