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Weather Radar Could Return to Service on August 6

The WSR-88D (Weather Surveillance Radar-1988 Doppler) weather radar operated by NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) in Guam and maintained by the U.S. Air Force with support from the NWS Radar Operations Center (ROC) remains offline at this time, but with an estimated return to service set for 6 August 2024.

The WSR-88D, Guam's sole source of weather radar data in the Marianas and used heavily by NWS meteorologists, regional emergency managers and the public, has been out of service since November 2023. The WSR-88D underwent significant upgrades during the 2023 Service Life Extension Program (SLEP), in which the weather radar remains in optimal working order. However, new components were necessary in March 2024 for the automatic power transfer switch. This switch safely transfers the radar from commercial power to generator backup while also protecting the system from the frequent power surges in the months following Mawar. Without the transfer switch, continuously running the radar could result in significant damage and further perpetuate the issues.

Those parts arrived and were installed, as were new batteries for the UPS. However, the Radar, Airfield, and Weather Systems (RAWS) team encountered additional problems at the radar site, including communications line issues and HVAC problems in the equipment shelter. The RAWS team continues repairs on site as well as troubleshooting remaining communications issues.

By 6 August 2024, the UPS systems are expected to have had all necessary diagnostic assessments completed to put the WSR-88D into full service again. The timeline is subject to change based on the findings of the diagnostic assessments, but that date is the most ground-truth-accurate timeline available currently.

We thank the public for patience and understanding during the extended downtime of the weather radar.

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