

ORTE UND STIMMEN AUS SAN DESVELO · BAND 3

RADIO DESVELO

Stimmen, Musik und Nächte an der Küste

ANA BELÉN VARGAS



For the voices that made a night feel shorter.

Radio Desvelo

Voices, Music, and Nights on the Coast

Places and Voices of San Desvelo · Volume 3

A Documentation by Ana Belén Vargas

English Edition · 2026

Note

The document pages shown are, where marked, visual reconstructions based on the archival record described. Dates and attributions are treated in the text according to their respective degree of certainty.

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About This Documentation

The first file did not reach me through the Archivo Municipal. Nor was it in one of the envelopes I had prepared while working on the Depósito Norte. Diego Luján sent me a link and wrote only that he had found an old cassette while clearing out his late uncle's workshop. Beneath the link was the label: Radio Desvelo 103.7 FM - Ruta Nocturna, fragmento de casete, ca. 1994. The file lasted about sixteen minutes. It began in the middle of one song and broke off in the middle of another.

I knew Radio Desvelo from my childhood, but only in the way children know a station: as a voice from a kitchen, as music between the clatter of dishes, as a station identifier that couldn't be separated from the weather or the smell of coffee. My grandmother rarely turned the radio up. If reception was poor, she would turn the set a few centimeters and not explain the movement. It was only much later that I understood that such small touches are part of the history of a local radio station. A station does not just consist of frequency, antenna and program. It also consists of the places where someone puts a device on a shelf, the ways in which a message is passed on, and the patience with which people accept a noise as still usable.

Part of the technical background had already become visible in the documentation about the Depósito Norte. Radio Desvelo had stored cassettes, cables, a dismantled mixing console and temporary emergency power technology there. The Depósito was not a hidden studio. It was a reserve, a storage facility and possibly a connection point in an improvised infrastructure. For this work I therefore asked a different question. Not: What was in the north? But rather: What was heard in San Desvelo and by whom?

I examined the temporary operating license from 1987, program schedules, advertising cards, personnel rosters, maintenance notes and the letter about the cessation of operations in 2004. I compared private photographs with the current building, had technical information classified by people who had worked with analog studio technology and small FM transmitters, and spoke to former employees and listeners. Reconstructed document pages are expressly referred to as reconstructions in this book. Where a date is only on the back, I don't treat it like a stamp. Where a photo shows closeness, I do not claim friendship from it. Wherever a memory sounds precise, I still ask what it is tied to.

The surviving traces do not yield a complete chronology of the station. They yield something else: a history of work, music, bills, bad cables, overdue advertisers, night drives, market prices, and voices that connected a stretch of coast for a limited time. A few pieces do not fit this picture completely. I did not remove them, but neither did I allow them to swallow the ordinary history of the station.

This chronology therefore does not begin with the recording received. Between the provisional permission in March 1987 and the absence of the next program week in September 2004, the building, mast, program, storage and supply were adjusted several times. Not every measure can be proven to be a completed conversion to the exact day.

RADIO DESVELO

CHAPTER 1

103.7MHz

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

OBJECT AND PROVENANCE

*RUTA N. / MIÉRCOLES / MÚSICA /
LADO B*

A label can limit an inventory. It does not replace dating or proof of
origin.

CHAPTER 1

103.7MHz

The cassette sat on a gray workbench on the second day of my visit. Diego had wrapped it in a clean cloth, not because it looked valuable, but because after digitizing it he wanted to avoid pressing still more dust into the case. The transparent plastic had yellowed. Two of the five screws showed slight traces of rust, the viewing window was scratched, and the felt beneath the tape sat slightly crooked. On the white label, someone had written four lines in blue ballpoint: RUTA N., MIÉRCOLES, MÚSICA, LADO B.

B01 • The cassette found



Incompletely labeled C-90 cassette from the former workshop of Nicolás Luján in Puerto Esperanza. Photograph: Ana Belén Vargas, 2026.

His uncle Nicolás' workshop was in Puerto Esperanza. Nicolás had repaired buses and small trucks. In the box where Diego found the cassette there were fan belts, bills, fuses, a roll of electrical tape and other music cassettes. None had been preserved like an archive item.

Some had names of singers, others just days of the week or the number of a vehicle. Diego remembered that his uncle would record music from the radio at night and later transfer individual songs onto a second cassette. At the time, he wasn't interested in the announcements in between. That's precisely why they were preserved.

I photographed the case, the screws, the tape path, and both sides of the label. Dating the cassette on its own would have been dishonest. The model was sold for several years, and the handwriting could not be attributed to anyone with certainty. Internally, much pointed to the mid-1990s. A dance night at the Salón Mar Azul, an advertisement for plots in Las Palmeras, and the known lengths of certain program blocks narrowed the period. Even so, August 17, 1994 remained a working hypothesis, not an inscription.

B02 · Workshop find



Plastic box in which the cassette was stored along with spare parts and other private recordings. Reconstruction according to information from Diego Luján.

Diego had digitized side B on a simple cassette deck. He had roughly corrected the speed and raised the level, but had not removed the

noise. I made a working copy and first listened to the approximately sixteen-minute excerpt without interruption. The file begins in the middle of a song. A woman's voice sings about someone who meant to return in the morning. The announcer then takes a short breath and says: Radio Desvelo, la voz de la costa. He greets people at the terminal, guards in Las Palmeras, and drivers on the Panamericana. Then he warns about sacks that had fallen from a truck near the bend by the unfinished wall.

D01 · Digitization protocol

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

Registro de digitalización

Cinta: RD RUTA N. MIÉRCOLES LADO B
 Fecha: 20 de agosto de 2026 · lado B
 Conversión: copia privada, sin reducción de ruido

TRAMO	OBSERVACIÓN
Inicio	El fragmento comienza dentro de una canción.
Primera transición	Identificación de la emisora; leve variación de velocidad.
Bloque central	Publicidad, avisos y música; ruido de cinta constante.
Pasaje técnico	Cambio breve del ambiente de sala; origen no determinado.
Final	La grabación termina durante una canción.

Las marcas describen la copia de trabajo. No sustituyen una datación del original ni establecen una cronología exacta del programa.

RECONSTRUCCIÓN RD-D01-2026

First technical notes on digitization. The markings are for editing purposes and do not date the original.

On the second listen, I wrote down more than names. I noted when paper moved, when a jingle ran too fast, when the room sounded smaller, and when the automatic level control audibly yielded after a loud brass passage. The excerpt contained five songs, four longer announcement blocks, an advertisement, a notice about a found wallet, and several greetings. It did not seem selected. There was no beginning that opened a story and no ending that closed one. The tape had

preserved only the part that Nicolás had left running for his music recording.

The comments under Diego's private upload helped with names, but not with evidence. Someone recognized Mariela Rojas, another wrote that the brass could be Brisa del Norte. Two people argued about the year. I treated each comment as a lead that could lead to another source, not as a self-confirming source.

B03 · Cassette label detail



Label from side B. An exact date cannot be established from the handwriting and material.

Only by comparing it with an older interview tape did I recognize the voice with certainty. It was deep and warm, but not smooth. Between two sentences there was often a pause long enough to frighten an inexperienced announcer. Beto Saldaña let those pauses stand. By then, the street and a loosely fastened sheet of metal could be heard in the workshop. On the tape, Beto said people should drive slowly near the unfinished wall. I put the cassette back in the cloth and wrote his name on the working folder for the first time.

CHAPTER 2

The Voice of the Coast

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

FILE AND LOCATION

March 14, 1987 · 103.7 MHz · 500 W

The frequency was determined technically; its significance emerged only in the roads, shops, and homes of the coast.

CHAPTER 2

The Voice of the Coast

In the Archivo Municipal, the operating permit was not in the cultural files, but in a bundle with permits for antennas, generators and commercial connections. The paper dated March 14, 1987 calls Comunicaciones Costeras San Desvelo S.A. as operator, 103.7 MHz as frequency, 500 watts as transmission power and Sector El Faro, Parcela 6 as location. It is a temporary permit. Several later notes concern inspections, fees and the height of the mast. Nothing about the file seems solemn. A local radio station starts out on paper like many other businesses: with responsibilities, deadlines and a cable invoice.

D02 · Operating license 1987

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

Permiso provisional de operación

RESOLUCIÓN PROVISIONAL DE OPERACIÓN
Fecha: 14 de marzo de 1987
Se autoriza provisionalmente a Comunicaciones Costeras San Desvelo S.A. a operar una emisora de radiodifusión sonora en frecuencia modulada.

Frecuencia	103.7 MHz
Potencia	500 W
Ubicación	Sector El Faro, Parcela 6
Titular	Comunicaciones Costeras San Desvelo S.A.

Vigencia sujeta a inspección técnica, registro de antena y cumplimiento de las condiciones municipales.

RECONSTRUCCIÓN RD-002-1987

Provisional operating license for Radio Desvelo, March 14, 1987. Reconstruction based on the received file entry.

Two hundred meters of coaxial cable appears in an early order. There is also a generator, an emergency power battery and work on the mast foundation. A former technician explained to me that 500 watts is neither meaningless nor a guarantee of consistent range. There

was enough loss between the building, antenna, coastal fog, terrain and the receivers to make many different listening experiences out of one number. Centro and El Faro could be clearly supplied on some days, while the same shipment fluttered a few kilometers further.

B04 · Construction phase El Faro



Station building during completion, probably in 1987. The exact date the photograph was taken is not known.

The property is located north of today's El Faro on a slight elevation on the coastal road. The expression Sector El Faro was part of the administrative language of the time; anyone driving past there today would hardly classify the building as part of the actual district. The building is low, one-story and elongated. Three narrow windows face the street. The mast stands on its own foundation behind the building. In the Garúa its tip disappears before the view reaches the sky.

A photograph from the construction phase shows workers at the foundation, partly plastered walls, and loose sand still surrounding the fence. The building was never monumental. From a distance, the mast made the site visible; up close, one saw a small operation with a

cramped studio, technical room, office, and storage area. The reconstructed floor plan contains no Sala B, no tunnel, and no second studio. Its small size explains why recordings and spare parts were later moved off-site.

CONSTRUCTION, MODIFICATION, AND WEAR

The early records do not show a ceremonial opening, but a sequence of work. Operations were provisionally authorized in March 1987; that does not mean the full program was already on air the same day. First the low building had to be enclosed, the separate mast foundation cured, the antenna mounted, and roughly two hundred meters of coaxial cable laid. The generator and emergency battery appear in separate orders. This distinction matters: a station may be an authorized enterprise while its building still lacks plaster and a technician is running a line through a temporarily sealed duct.

The interior was not created in a single state either. The construction drawing shows the studio, technical room and office or storage. Earlier photographs initially show bare walls and a simple table; later pictures a larger used mixer, additional cassette decks, acoustic surfaces and more paper storage. It cannot be determined which panels were already installed in 1987. What is certain is that the room was adapted to its operation: noise from the street and generator had to be limited, cables had to be kept away from walkways and heat had to be removed from a very small technical room. Today's finding contains traces of multiple solutions, not the frozen state of the first day of broadcast.

The burden grew with the program. Beto's first verifiable contract begins in 1988, when Radio Desvelo must have already been more than a technical test arrangement. In the late 1980s, music, market prices, notices for fishermen, municipal notices and advertising coalesced into a more reliable daily routine. This didn't just require moderation. Telephone cards had to be sorted, advertising texts recorded, records

and cassettes stored, invoices tracked and spare parts procured. The narrow office became a storage space, the studio both a workplace and an archive. What appears neatly separated on the floor plan was often just a door or a stack of paper apart in everyday life.

Two different events mark a new phase in 1993. The license was renewed while forty-eight cassettes and twelve open reels, with Norte listed as recipient, were moved into storage. The move points not to a secret expansion but to limited space and technical renewal. New or newly acquired used equipment entered the studio; older units were to be inspected or retained as reserves. The Depósito Norte therefore received recordings, cable reels, a dismantled mixing console, and, at times, emergency-power equipment. The station did not become larger by declaring a second room a studio; it stayed operational by moving material out of its small building.

A permit from 1995 concerns the replacement of the mast. The word renewal should not automatically be read as a completely new building. Coastal air, salt, wind and the maintenance of the red beacons put a strain on connections, paint and individual components. The file allows work, but does not specify an acceptance date for each position. Photographs from the second half of the 1990s continue to show the same location and basic shape. Parts were probably replaced and secured while the foundation and location remained in place. This explains why the mast remains the same in memory, even though its technical history includes several interventions.

In 1998 and 1999, technical and economic traces accumulated. One check concerns supply and antenna path; an application lists spare parts for the generator. Both are unspectacular and that is precisely why they are important. An old generator does not just fail the moment it comes to a complete standstill. Before that, it starts worse, demands parts, is only used for certain loads or remains under observation during a shipment. At the same time, advertising bills

were paid later and devices continued to be used for longer. Improvisation was no longer just a local way of working, but increasingly a result of limited resources.

The ministerial warning from 2002 and the only provisional extension in 2002/2003 show that the end did not suddenly fall from heaven. The station still had frequency, remaining staff, buildings and programming, but its scope became narrower. Technical defects, fees, missing spare parts and fluctuating advertising revenues did not have a separate effect. A repaired generator did not solve a licensing issue; a temporary extension paid no wages. The building north of El Faro remained externally the same, while the conditions in which it was possible to broadcast from there gradually deteriorated.

D03 · Logo and station identification



Early version of the station logo on business stationery without a reliable date.

The name promised more space than the building. On early business stationery, a black circle appears with a white coastline and three narrow waves. These include RADIO DESVELO and LA VOZ DE LA COSTA. The logo is sober and corresponds to the typography of small

companies in the late 1980s. It does not claim technical superiority. It asserts belonging.

B05 · Radio Desvelo today

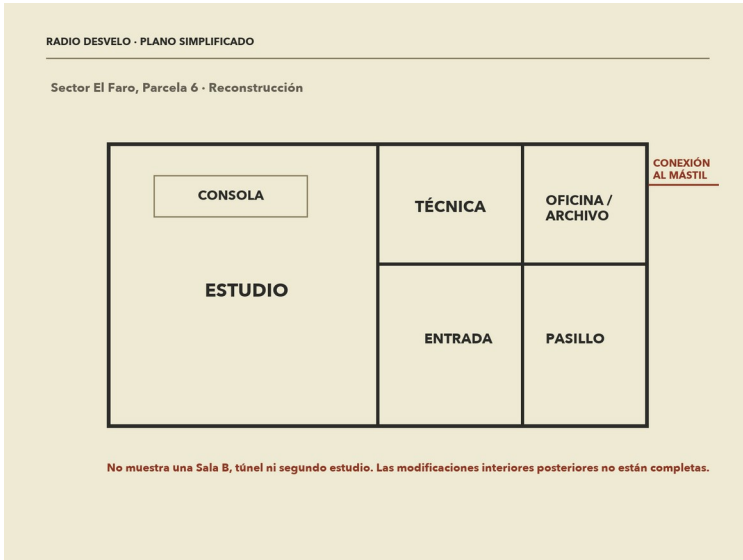


Radio Desvelo north of El Faro. Regular broadcasting ended in 2004; the building and mast remain in place in 2026.

This affiliation didn't come about through music alone. The Municipalidad delivered notices, the Mercado delivered prices and lost property reports, stores paid for advertising time, drivers brought plates or parts, and listeners called with greetings and road conditions.

Radio Desvelo was privately operated, but its day-to-day work was between municipal information, business and neighborhood.

D04 · Floor plan of the studio



Simplified floor plan based on construction drawings, photographs and current external measurements. Not all later interior renovations are registered.

When I photographed the 2026 site, the dark green door was closed. The yellowish-beige plaster bore traces of salt and moisture, the fence had rust, the gate had a faded prohibition sign. There was no light in the building. A passing driver briefly reduced his speed, perhaps because of my camera, perhaps out of habit. The mast remained upright. The building was no longer in use, but it was still a place where a frequency had an address.

CHAPTER 3

A Day on Air

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

PROGRAMMING AND DAILY LIFE

precios del mercado · mensajes · música

The daily schedule arranges programs. Everyday life rearranges
them every time.

CHAPTER 3

A Day on Air

For this chapter I placed four program plans side by side. None completely cover the same year. One sheet contains corrections in blue and red pen, another just the days of the week and rough blocks. A third is a later copy. An ideal broadcast day cannot be constructed from them. Repetitions can be seen: early notices for fishermen, morning news, market prices, music, paid messages, greetings, Sunday boleros and, in several years, the nightly *Ruta Nocturna*.

A CHANGING PROGRAM

The schedules show not only different days of the week but different stages of development. In the early phase of 1987/88, the sequence was still broad: news, music, and individual municipal notices. Later sheets divide the morning more clearly into information for fishers, reports, and prices, while the evening gains longer blocks of music and greetings. *Ruta Nocturna* does not appear in the same form on every surviving schedule. Sometimes only the name is listed, sometimes a long night block, sometimes a handwritten shift. The station adapted its program to listeners, staff, and paid airtime; it did not maintain an unchanged schedule for seventeen years.

The editorial work changed with the telephone desk. At first, a list beside the microphone apparently sufficed. Later photographs show card boxes, a local directory, and separate stacks for paid and unpaid notices. This was not a major reconstruction, but an institutional adjustment: the station received more information than could be broadcast immediately. A telephone operator judged legibility and urgency; the announcer decided order and tone. A small station thus became an address to which people reported things even when they did not know who was on duty.

Advertising gave the daily schedule a second chronology. New businesses appeared and others disappeared; prices and telephone numbers changed while the jingles continued to run. For the radio, the Salón Mar Azul was first a recurring advertisement and only later a place of memory. Pinturas Alcázar, the hostel, the gas station, and small traders did not buy abstract reach. They bought the likelihood that someone at the Mercado, in a workshop, or on the coastal road would hear their name. When money was short, slots were shortened, invoices deferred, or goods accepted. Program history is therefore also the history of what the station could afford in a given year.

In the late 1990s, repeats became more common. That's not automatically a sign of decline on local radio; repetition is part of the service. However, in the context of reminders, missing parts and thinned out plans, it changes its meaning. A block of music that used to be a conscious selection could later also bridge time. A news column remained, although fewer staff filled it. The external form of the program thus survived longer than some of the assumptions on which it was based.

D05 · Program board

RADIO DESVELO · PROGRAMACIÓN SEMANAL							
HORA	LUN	MAR	MIÉ	JUE	VIE	SÁB	DOM
04:30	pescadores	pescadores	pescadores	pescadores	pescadores	pescadores	pescadores
06:00	noticias	noticias	noticias	noticias	noticias	noticias	boleros
08:00	precios	precios	precios	precios	precios	precios	boleros
10:00	música	mensajes	música	mensajes	música	música	música
14:00	música	música	música	música	música	música	música
18:00	noticias	noticias	noticias	noticias	noticias	música	música
22:00	RUTA NOCTURNA	RUTA NOCTURNA	RUTA NOCTURNA	RUTA NOCTURNA	RUTA NOCTURNA	RUTA NOCTURNA	RUTA NOCTURNA

RECONSTRUCCIÓN A PARTIR DE VARIOS PLANES INCOMPLETOS

Weekly schedule of Radio Desvelo, probably early 1990s. Reconstruction from several incomplete templates.

Before dawn, the radio was a work tool. Fishermen wanted to hear weather and coastal conditions. Traders were interested in prices, although one market trader explained to me dryly that the information was sometimes out of date after the first delivery. This bothered him less than I expected. The prices were not intended to evaluate each box. They would have shown whether the morning went roughly the same as other mornings.

In the Mercado, a portable radio sat on a high shelf between the scales, boxes and goods. Nobody poses in the historical photo. A woman weighs onions, a man carries a sack, and the device remains at the edge. It was also remembered in conversations: not as the center, but as part of the noise space. Voices, shouts, knives, boxes, water and music overlapped each other.

B06 · Radio in the Mercado



Portable radio in a row of stands of the Mercado Municipal, around 1992. Private archive, recording location classified via the damaged concrete column.

The telephone operator worked with index cards. She asked for names, deleted phrases that were too long and put urgent things in another row. Lost documents, broken down vehicles and greetings to hospital patients could be on the same table as a paid advertisement. Not everything was sent. Some cards only have a tick; others the name of a moderator or a time. The selection was practical editing without a big name.

D06 · Advertising card Pinturas Alcázar



Advertising text for Pinturas Alcázar. The side note concerns the playback speed of the jingle.

Advertising financed the operation and inadvertently preserved the city's history. Pinturas Alcázar promised color for the home and protection for the family. A hostel in Centro advertised warm water, the Salón Mar Azul advertised a dance evening, a gas station in Puerto Esperanza advertised a mechanic for the night. Bills were paid late. Sometimes goods or spare parts appear in the notes where money would have been expected.

A commercial ran a little too fast on the cassette fragment. The bright voice rose unnaturally at the end. Beto did not comment on the error. He then gave a time, warned of low Garúa, and reported a wallet at the western entrance of Mercado. This transition is typical. The program did not separate entertainment, traffic, advertising, and neighborhood as neatly as a later archive would like.

B07 · Telephone and message cards

Telephone desk through which greetings, missing-item notices, and information were passed to the announcers.

Towards the evening the attention shifted. Blocks of music became longer, greetings became more personal, and road conditions became more important. The handover to the night was not a transition into another world. It was the same city with fewer doors open and more people whose work lay outside the visible day. On the last map I closed that afternoon was the red stamp RUTA NOCTURNA. Next to him was a card with the note: first reports, then music.

CHAPTER 4

Behind the Microphone

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

INTERVIEW EXCERPT · BETO SALDAÑA

“If it lights up, I guess we need to get started.”

The surviving conversation predated the later reports. Beto talks about work, not a secret.

CHAPTER 4

Behind the Microphone

The interview begins with a jab at the microphone. Paper slips, a chair moves, and Beto Saldaña says: If it lights up, I guess we have to start. The unknown interlocutor laughs. Not Beto. Only after a short pause does he add that the lamp sometimes lit up without the tape running. It is not a mysterious sentence. It's a man's memory of devices he didn't fully trust.

B08 · Beto Saldana at the podium



Beto Saldaña in Radio Desvelo's studio, probably in the late 1990s. Private archive, photographer unknown.

His first documented contract dates from 1988; renewals run through 1994. A photograph probably shows him at the desk in the late 1990s. Whether he hosted programs regularly until the 2004 closure is not documented. The interview probably took place between 1999 and 2002. Beto was unable to review the surviving

documentation, and I did not visit him in 2026. His present life is not one of the gaps I was entitled to fill for this work.

The contracts make Beto visible, but they do not fully reflect the staff. In the early lists, telephone operators, salespeople, and technical assistance change more frequently than the names of the moderators. Some employment only lasted one program season, others only appear on an invoice or under a signature. The group photo from around 1993 therefore does not capture a fixed core of operations for all years. It shows a moment when six people stood in front of the building at the same time. The station's history also includes those who worked before or after this picture and whose names only appear on individual cards or cable editions.

With every technical adjustment, tasks shifted. When there were more cassettes and a larger console in the studio, someone had to label tapes, clean heads and know about defective channels. As material traveled to Norte, it needed drivers, issue lists and queries. As the generator became less reliable, a night shift began not only with music and messages, but with deciding which load would be allowed to continue running in the event of a failure. The audible voice remained similar; the invisible work behind her became more complicated.

Towards the end of the 1990s, there is more paper on the desk and less free space around it in the photographs. That's not a sure measure of bureaucracy, but it fits the files: technical audits, advertising, licensing documents and inventory ran side by side. Beto was able to get around a scratchy regulator. He couldn't decide alone whether to buy a spare part, pay a fee or fill a position again. The story of a well-known voice should therefore not be confused with the story of a stable operation.

D07 · Three clocks

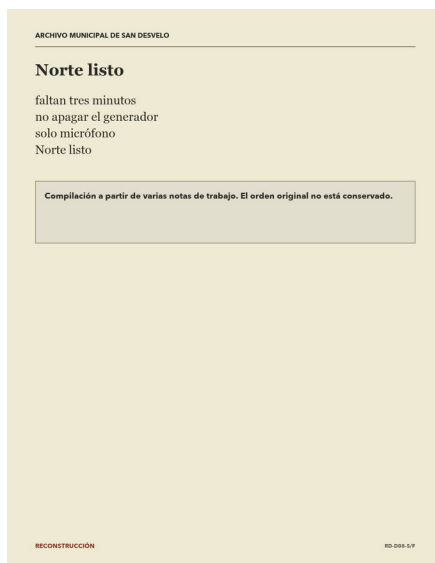


The studio's three time sources were not synchronized. What Beto named in each case is not recorded.

In the photo he is sitting at a large, used mixing console. He holds a sheet of paper in his left hand, the right hand is near the faders. Behind him are cassette decks and a reel machine; a round clock hangs above the door. Beto describes three sources of time in the studio: this wall clock, a rectangular clock on the desk and the display on the telephone. None showed the same time. Which one did he say on the radio? The one that was least wrong.

Many of his gestures sound incidental in the interview. He slowed a tape with his finger when a deck ran too fast. He knew which control scratched when first moved and left it alone whenever possible. He looped the microphone cable so that no one would pull it from beneath his arm when he stood up. He described places not by sector numbers, but by walls, gates, bends, and dogs. A road lay beyond the green gate and before the bend where a black dog usually slept. For listeners, such information was often more precise than an official address.

D08 · Norte listo



Work instructions placed next to the desk during a broadcast. Compilation based on received individual sheets.

The reliability of the voice was an achievement of many people. Eulogio, one of the technicians, reluctantly interrupted Beto. He put a piece of paper next to the desk: three more minutes, don't switch off the generator, just a microphone, Norte listo. Telephone workers sorted messages. Salespeople sought out advertisers and returned with promises that someone later had to account for. Drivers brought cassettes, records, fuses and cables. Cleaners worked around equipment that never got completely cold.

B09 · Employees in front of the studio

Employees of Radio Desvelo in front of the studio, probably in 1993. The names of two people pictured could not be assigned with certainty.

A staff photo in front of the studio shows six employees. Beto is not in the middle. There is a thermos flask next to a cable box. Two people could not be named with certainty. This is more than just a flaw in the caption. It's a reminder of how easily a broadcaster is later reduced to its most recognizable voice, while those who took calls, wrote bills or kept a generator running fall out of the picture.

B10 · Desk after broadcast



Studio workstation after a broadcast. The date and photographer are not known.

In another photo, the studio is empty. On the table there are papers, two cassette tapes, a ballpoint pen and a half-full cup. The microphone is tilted to the side. This shot explains the operation better than any idea of a pristine studio. Radio Desvelo was reliable because people knew its flaws. When I stopped the interview, the digital desk clock in the photo stopped at a different minute than the wall clock. I noted both times and decided against correcting them.

CHAPTER 5

Music for the Coast

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

MUSIC CIRCULATION

five titles · five different paths

Press photos, concert photos and private cassettes do not describe
the same truth, but the same regional circulation.

CHAPTER 5

Music for the Coast

I started with the five songs on the cassette rather than five artist biographies. The names varied in certainty. One announcement was clear, another was obscured by the music bed. There were two titles on a piece of paper from the workshop; three more initially came from memories and advertisements. Only after comparing press photos, cassette covers and event pages could a musical environment be reconstructed.

B11 · Mariela Rojas press photo

Mariela Rojas y Los Luceros del Puerto, press recording of the first regionally distributed cassette, around 1989.

B12 · Mariela Salon Mar Azul



Mariela Rojas y Los Luceros del Puerto in Salón Mar Azul in El Faro. Private archive, probably 1991.

Mariela Rojas y Los Luceros del Puerto is the clearest voice in the fragment. Your song *Volverás con la mañana* starts before the file you received and sounds melancholic without being slow. A bright lead guitar answers the vocal line, a thin organ holds the room together. The press photo shows Mariela with wavy black hair and small gold-colored earrings in front of a five-piece band core. The controlled pose is very different from a private photo in the *Salón Mar Azul*, which shows plastic chairs, a low platform and a cable across the foreground.

B13 · Mariela at Beto



Mariela Rojas during a studio visit to Beto Saldaña. The shipment has not been recorded.

D09 · Cassette case *Volverás con la mañana*

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

Carátula de casete · *Volverás con la mañana*

MARIELA ROJAS Y LOS LUCEROS DEL PUERTO
VOLVERÁS CON LA MAÑANA

Lado A: 1. *Volverás con la mañana* · 2. Puerto sin nombre · 3. Carta a la guardia
Lado B: 1. Al otro lado · 2. Domingo en El Faro · 3. Cuando vuelve el sol

Reproducción hecha a partir de una copia privada dañada.

RECONSTRUCCIÓN

RD-D09-5.7

*Cassette insert from *Volverás con la mañana*. Reconstruction from a damaged private copy.*

This difference is not a contradiction that needs to be resolved. The press photograph shows how a group wanted to appear. The performance photograph shows the conditions under which they worked. In a third image, Mariela sits beside Beto in the studio. On the table is a cassette titled *Volverás con la mañana*. The broadcast itself has not survived. The presence of both people in the same photograph proves the visit, not the content of their conversation.

B14 · Brisa del Norte Group photo



Conjunto Brisa del Norte in an undated press photo, probably 1991.

B15 · Brisa harbor festival



Conjunto Brisa del Norte at a party on the coast. The place and year could only be roughly assigned.

Conjunto Brisa del Norte was a traveling dance ensemble with changing line-ups. Eight men, two trumpets, a trombone and turquoise shirts characterize the most famous press photo. Baila, morena del puerto is the most open dance moment in the recording. The wind instruments briefly respond to the singer; they do not form a large orchestra. In the harbor festival photo, the group is crowded together, a microphone is too low, and a musician is not facing the audience. It is precisely these small clutters that make the recording credible.

B16 · Viajeros on the bus



Los Viajeros de Paramonga on a trip along the coast, around 1990. Location not confirmed.

Los Viajeros de Paramonga were particularly remembered by riders and younger listeners. Five men stand in front of a bus in a photograph. The shirts don't match, two amplifiers look already repaired, and the small organ looks lighter than its case. No me esperes despierta combines the bright Peruvian lead guitar with a rougher voice. The text asks a waiting person not to stay awake because Garúa and an overheated engine are delaying the return trip. The song does not make the coastal road a symbol; it remains a route to work.

B17 · Viajeros live



Los Viajeros de Paramonga at an evening performance. The repaired amplifier will also appear in a later inventory note.

B18 · Raúl Vergara press portrait



Raúl Vergara y Orquesta Horizonte Azul, press recording for regional radio promotion.

Raúl Vergara y Orquesta Horizonte Azul came from a larger radio world. His well-groomed press portrait, thin mustache and dark suit correspond to national marketing. But the accompaniment remained small: tenor saxophone, electric piano, bass, guitar and reserved percussion. En el último paradero forms the quiet focus of the fragment. In the studio picture with Beto, both of them are talking about a sheet of paper, not into the camera. The photography seems more like a pre-broadcast vote than an artist visit.

B19 · Raul with Beto



Raúl Vergara during a conversation at Radio Desvelo, probably in 1993.

B20 · Arena y Camino press photo



Grupo Arena y Camino, probably 1993. On the back it only says carretera / promoción.

Grupo Arena y Camino is the most recent formation. Geometrically patterned shirts, a small digital keyboard and synthetic toms refer to the early 1990s. The Peruvian lead guitar still remains clear. Una luz en la carretera is towards the end of the excerpt obtained. The distant light in the text is not a mysterious sign. It means that the next town is not far away. The file ends in the second chorus because Nicolás stopped recording or wanted to continue using the tape.

B21 · Arena community festival



Grupo Arena y Camino at a community festival, probably 1994. Photographer unknown.

D10 · Five cassette labels

CINCO ETIQUETAS DE CASETE

Mariela Rojas
Volverás con la mañana

Brisa del Norte
Baila, morena del puerto

Viajeros de Paramonga
No me esperes despierta

Raúl Vergara
En el último paradero

Arena y Camino
Una luz en la carretera

RECONSTRUCCIÓN · Copias privadas y cintas promocionales

Cassettes and private copies through which the five titles in San Desvelo and Puerto Esperanza circulated.

Together, the five acts don't sound like a curated album. The brass cumbia, the guitar-driven chicha, the tropical ballad and the early keyboard cumbia share a regional circulation of cassettes, festivals, buses and small stations. Radio Desvelo did not produce this music. However, it gave it local significance. A song recorded in Chimbote could become a memory of a particular street, a shift or a dance evening in San Desvelo. I placed the five reconstructed labels next to each other. Only now did the workshop cassette no longer look like a single find, but rather like a randomly preserved excerpt from a much larger circulation.

CHAPTER 6

Ruta Nocturna

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

RUTA NOCTURNA

“A radio doesn’t know why someone isn’t sleeping.”

The night broadcast was aimed at drivers, fishermen, security guards, bakers, relatives and those waiting.

CHAPTER 6

Ruta Nocturna

For Ruta Nocturna, I listened to the almost sixteen-minute excerpt several times throughout its entire sequence without making a broadcast protocol down to the second. Music takes up the most space; in between there are announcements, advertising, greetings and short transitions. The sequence obtained leads from Mariela's melancholic Cumbia through Brisa del Norte and the Viajeros to Raúl's Ballad and finally to Arena y Camino. It is a random section of the tape, not a complete broadcast.

D11 · Ruta Nocturna program card

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

Ficha de programa · Ruta Nocturna

RUTA NOCTURNA · RUTA SECUNDARIA
Horario habitual: noche; variable según el plan
Fragmento conservado: aproximadamente 16 minutos
Contenido: música, saludos, anuncios y avisos de carretera

Material asociado: anuncios locales · notas de trabajo · copia privada

RECONSTRUCCIÓN

RD-D11-07

Program card from the material envelope of Ruta Nocturna.

Beto said in the interview: A radio doesn't know why someone isn't sleeping. The program was therefore not only aimed at truck drivers. Fishermen heard them as long as reception lasted along their stretch of coast. Security guards placed a device near the door. Bakers began their work before the last hours of the program ended. Workers at a

fishmeal plant heard greetings for the night shift. At a hospital in Chimbote, relatives waited for news, while families in San Desvelo tried to pass the same night with a dedication.

Mauro, a driver heading toward Casma, appears in one greeting. He still has two hours ahead of him, Beto says. I was later unable to identify a full name. Several drivers remembered a Mauro; none remembered this exact trip. Emilia Rojas is named as the woman accompanying her sister in the hospital. Her name does not automatically connect the broadcast with Mariela Rojas. Similar names are more common in a small regional population than the clear connections one might later wish to find.

B22 · Driver Kuestenstrasse



Radio reception on the road between Puerto Esperanza and San Desvelo, circa mid-1990s.

The excerpt contains a specific road report: North of Puerto Esperanza, bags fell onto the road near the curve on the unfinished wall. Another message describes a vehicle behind the green gate and in front of the curve with the black dog. This language was not

inaccurate. It was tailored to an audience that knew places by visible and shared features.

B23 · Fisherman with radio



Fishermen only reliably heard Radio Desvelo in part of the coast. Photo from a private archive, dating uncertain.

The time announcement was also practical and prone to errors. In an announcement, Beto briefly restarts and corrects himself by a few minutes. There were three clocks in the studio that didn't match. This explains why different private recordings can differ in terms of time information. It explains no more than it proves.

B24 · Bakery before the start of the day



Early work in a bakery in Centro. The radio on the shelf can be seen more clearly in a second shot.

In a later section the sound changes for a short time. Beto's voice becomes dryer, there is a quiet hum underneath it, and paper is pushed next to the desk. He tells the technicians that they can be heard well and that they will continue without haste for the time being. Then he says the line about the radio and the insomniacs. After the next song, the usual studio space is back. An auxiliary line or another microphone is sufficient to explain this single change.

The night captured by the recording is neither empty nor automatically mysterious. It is full of work and waiting. A driver sees only the road in the headlights. A fisher hears the broadcast between engine and wind. In the bakery, flour lies on the table while the station's final music is already part of the morning. Ruta Nocturna did not connect these situations because all listeners shared the same story. It connected them because a familiar voice knew that different things were happening at the same time.

D12 · 02-17 Paso Norte

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

02:17 · Paso Norte

Ficha de trabajo sin programa asignado
 02:17
 Paso Norte
 Verificar luces del cerro

La nota se examinó como un hallazgo independiente. No existe una relación técnica demostrada.

RECONSTRUCCIÓN RD-D12.5.7

Back of a program card. The meaning and date of the two notes have not been conclusively clarified.

On the back of a program card are the notes 02:17 and Paso Norte. This time does not occur in the historical excerpt. I therefore do not keep the card as part of the shipment, but as a separate report. The recording itself stays at almost two o'clock, with the sand on the side of the road getting darker and a song whose second chorus breaks off. Outside the file, the night continued.

CHAPTER 7

Where the Station Could Be Heard

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

RECEPTION AND ORIENTATION

*behind the green gate · in front of the
unfinished wall*

Local directions could be more accurate for listeners than official
parcel numbers.

CHAPTER 7

Where the Station Could Be Heard

I started the reception card not on the computer but with tracing paper. Beneath it was an old street map, the location from the license file and notes from interviews. I marked only three categories: repeatedly remembered, comparatively certain, and changeable. An exact isoline would have appeared more precise than the sources allow.

Centro, Mercado and large parts of El Faro belong to the best occupied area. Las Palmeras was north and east of El Faro at the time discussed here; its development and thus also the reception experiences differed depending on the year. Los Pinos is deliberately not included on the historical map because the district did not yet exist at that time. Puerto Esperanza appears in private recordings, including Nicolás' cassette. The quality varied more north and south along the coastal road. The 500 watts did not reach an abstract surface; they reached devices in houses, vehicles, stalls and boats.

D13 · Historical reception card



Reconstructed reception areas of Radio Desvelo in the early 1990s. Las Palmeras lies northeast of El Faro; los Pinos is not yet shown. No surviving survey map.

Terrain and Garúa influenced perception. The coast opens the view to the west, while low elevations and buildings to the east could create shadows. Cerro Vigía and Cerro Dormido are both domestic and appear separately on the reconstruction; the drivers' landmarks must not be condensed into a single mountain. Moist air alone does not explain dramatic jumps in range, but antenna height, receiver, lines and local reflections made differences plausible. A former technician warned me about the temptation to recalculate today's measurements onto a historical map.

More important than a line was the acoustic map of the listeners. The unfinished wall, the green gate, a curve, red lights on the eastern hills, the driveway to Mercado, and the dog on the road formed a web of features. Beto could read a message without knowing every address. The listeners filled in the rest from experience.

B25 · Curve unfinished wall



Bend north of El Faro. It was described in several reports concerning the unfinished wall.

I photographed the curve north of El Faro, which is described in several reports of an unfinished wall. Today's wall has been further built and repaired in two places. Nevertheless, the sequence of street, gate and bend agrees with older statements. A parcel number would have explained less.

B26 · Red Lights Coast



Lights of the Eastern Heights as a guide on the coastal road. Location chosen according to historical directions.

The red lights over the coast were landmarks, not mysterious signals. Drivers saw warning lights, settlements and facilities in a changing order depending on where the road ran and how close the Garúa was. In a night shot, the lights are small and separated from each other. Without local knowledge, they say little. With local knowledge, they could mean that a junction was ahead or behind you.

The map was intentionally left incomplete. Chimbote appears as an important reference for greetings and music, but not as a secure core of the reception. Bajo La Arena appears on a later technical network sketch; i was unable to derive a separate supply area for the regular program. When I lifted the tracing paper, what remained on the table were not sharply defined areas, but paths and voices. That corresponded better to the material.

CHAPTER 8

When the Equipment Failed

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

TECHNICAL NOTE

*enlace auxiliar · Norte listo · microphone
only*

An auxiliary line changes the technical path. It does not turn a warehouse into a second studio.

CHAPTER 8

When the Equipment Failed

The generator didn't start when I visited. It was no longer part of the audited inventory and no one had allowed me to use it. I photographed the cable duct, foundation and the place where a line led into the technical room. For the historic failures, I had to rely on maintenance notes, the Beto interview and statements from former employees.

Radio Desvelo was prone to improvisation, but not without rules. Ventilation, power supply, tape devices and cables were interdependent. If a part failed, operations were reduced. A technician named Eulogio kept a list of parts ready in case. In addition to weather abbreviations and times, instructions such as do not switch off the generator, only the microphone and Norte listo appear.

ADAPTATIONS, NOT A SINGLE NIGHT

The technical notes cannot be condensed into a single famous downtime. Ventilation, generator, belt machine and auxiliary line failed at different times. Some memories combine these repetitions because a person remembers the trip with the flashlight better than three similar trips. The files speak for several interventions: material outsourcing in 1993, approved mast work in 1995, testing and generator requirements in 1998/99. Each step responded to a different problem. Together they form a story of continued operation, not a plan for a secret facility.

The mast and the studio required different types of care. Work on the mast concerned corrosion, connections, lightning protection and beacons. In the technical room it was about heat, electricity, levels and the supply. In the studio, the microphone, tape recorders, telephone and desk determined how much of the planned program was actually audible. A defect could therefore be large on the outside and inaudible

on the inside - or small on the inside and immediately noticeable on the radio. The received sentences just don't turn off the microphone and generator are not ciphers. They are close decisions about what part of this system could still be used.

The Depósito Norte became important because Radio Desvelo was too small to keep every reserve in the same location. After the outsourcing in 1993, no second program work was created there. A longer chain emerged: studio, management, supply, warehouse and people who moved material between these points. A provisional feed could temporarily change this chain. It didn't change where Beto sat, where the reports were, or where music was selected. It is precisely this distinction that makes technical history understandable.

As economic difficulties increased, adaptation became frequent postponement. One device remained installed longer because its replacement did not arrive. Another channel was avoided. The generator received a parts claim, but the records do not say that every starting problem was resolved afterward. The radio could still broadcast. Businesses rarely end at the first shortage; they develop routines around it. Later, people remember these routines as normal, even though each of them was once a reaction to something new.

B27 · Generator and cable



Technical preparation after a supply failure, probably early 1990s.

Norte usually refers to the Depósito Norte in the surviving documents. There were recordings, cable reels, spare parts, an emergency power supply, a dismantled mixing console and a tape recorder. In 1993, forty-eight cassettes and twelve open tapes were relocated there. A complete withdrawal is not documented. Only seven cassettes and three tapes appear on a later list.

B28 · Outsourced radio technology



Outsourced technology from Radio Desvelo in Depósito Norte, probably early 1990s.

The photographs from the Depósito do not show the equipment of a regular studio. Microphones, headphones, record players and the paper order that appear again and again in the studio recordings are missing. On the back of a photo it says *transmisión provisoria - Depósito Norte*. This sentence proves a provisional technical use, not a moderation from the warehouse.

In the interview, Beto denied having broadcast there. However, it allows for a bridging. The studio signal could still have originated in the regular room, while supply or transmission was partially routed via another line. A damaged transmission log contains the note *enlace auxiliar*. The Depósito is not mentioned in this line. The connection remains probable, not fully proven.

D14 · Send log enlace auxiliar

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

Registro de transmisión · enlace auxiliar

ETAPA	OBSERVACIÓN
Inicio del bloque	noticias locales
Cambio técnico	generador
Incidencia	enlace auxiliar
Continuación	programación normal

La nota prueba una conexión auxiliar, no un segundo estudio regular.

RECONSTRUCCIÓN RD-D14-5.7

Transmission log with the note enlace auxiliar. The date is not completely preserved on the original.

A blackout evening is described similarly in several sources. First, ventilation and parts of the power supply failed. A technician drove north with cables and a flashlight. Beto stayed in the studio. The tape recorder ran slower. For a short time, only his microphone and a quiet 60 Hz hum could be heard. Some listeners perceived the voice as closer, others as further away. One driver remembered two time announcements.

D15 · Prueba línea



Tape box and working representation of a short technical audio fragment. No reliable source comparison.

These descriptions explain the dry spatial sound on private recordings. They also show how a technical improvisation can become a second broadcasting point in memory. The difference is important. An auxiliary feed changes a technical path. A second studio would require its own space, staff, equipment and processes. I found no evidence of this.

I placed the reconstructed prueba línea tape box next to the photo of the outsourced technology. The short sound contains humming and a changed voice, but no reliable source comparison. The usual explanations remain strong: line, microphone, level, tape speed. They don't solve every later question, but they protect the past from being retroactively converted into a secret facility.

CHAPTER 9

No Final Broadcast

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

END OF FILE

*CESE DE OPERACIONES · September 28,
2004*

There was no traceable farewell broadcast, just a business that
didn't start the next week.

CHAPTER 9

No Final Broadcast

The last confirmed program week fits on one sheet. Monday to Friday contain news, music, notices and reduced blocks. Two entries are missing on Saturday. The Sunday column is empty. The paper does not provide evidence of any planned farewell broadcast. It shows a company whose planning already had gaps.

D16 · Last confirmed program week

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO	
Última semana de programación confirmada	
DÍA	CONTENIDO
Lunes	noticias · música · mensajes
Martes	programación reducida
Miércoles	música · publicidad
Jueves	noticias · mensajes
Viernes	programación reducida
Sábado	música; dos espacios sin completar
Domingo	
La columna vacía del domingo no prueba una despedida planificada.	
RECONSTRUCCIÓN RD-016-2004	

Program schedule for the last confirmed week. The empty field on Sunday is not evidence of a farewell broadcast.

Several former employees did not remember a final evening. They remembered a week in which no one knew whether the next broadcast would still take place. Advertising was canceled, spare parts were missing, and fees and wages were outstanding. The official phrase economic reasons is therefore correct, but brief. In two words it condenses lack of money, licensing problems, staffing difficulties, and technical exhaustion.

A GRADUAL END

A complaint about nighttime noise was recorded as early as 1996. It proves neither exceptional range nor a specific programming violation; it may have concerned a device, an outdoor loudspeaker, or simply a neighbor's perception. Historically, it shows that the station was still perceived as an audible operation. A few years later, the character of the files changed. Technical inspections, requests for spare parts, and payment questions accumulated instead of new program ideas. The station did not move in a straight line from success to silence. It alternated between functioning weeks and increasingly narrow possibilities.

The 1998/99 request for generator parts appears alongside a technical inspection. Together, the two sheets tell more than the story of one spectacular defect. The power supply and transmission path had to be checked while money for the necessary reserve was lacking. Advertising could fill gaps, but it could not replace reliable investment. Parts were repaired, borrowed, or sought in existing inventories. Some solutions lasted for years, others only until the next damp week. Anyone who later reads only the closure letter overlooks this long phase, during which the station was still working but devoted a growing share of its energy simply to continuing.

The ministry's warning in 2002 and the provisional extension until 2003 did not separate administration and everyday life. A licensing issue was on the same table as a program schedule and an unpaid invoice. Employees were able to continue broadcasting without knowing how long the legal and economic basis would last. That's why no one remembers the moment when everyone collectively decided that Radio Desvelo would end. There were decisions about individual days: another repetition, a shorter night, an unoccupied block, a part that was to be ordered later.

In September 2004, these many preliminary decisions resulted in a final form of administration. The letter states economic reasons and demands that the frequency be vacated. It doesn't say when the microphone was last turned off, which cassette was last put back or who came to the door the following morning. The legal conclusion is precise; the operational conclusion remains distributed. That's exactly why the empty Sunday column fits the tradition better than a farewell broadcast that was invented later.

Even after the end, the facility had to be dismantled, secured and managed. Between 2005 and 2011, documents mention work on the transmitter room, door and fuse, diesel and generator, lightning rod and antenna lighting. These measures are not evidence of regular programming. They show that a switched off transmitter remains a building, a mast, cables and responsibility. The auxiliary system at the Depósito was marked FUERA DE SERVICIO in 2006; other maintenance continued. The infrastructure ended slower than the license.

The letter CESE DE OPERACIONES is dated September 28, 2004. It states the operator, the frequency and the return of the license. 103.7 MHz should be cleared within thirty days. The tone is matter-of-fact. There is no thank you to listeners, no list of employees and no reference to a final broadcast.

D17 · CESE DE OPERACIONES

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

CESE DE OPERACIONES

San Desvelo, 28 de septiembre de 2004

COMUNICACIONES COSTERAS SAN DESVELO S.A.
Por motivos económicos se comunica el cese de las operaciones regulares de Radio Desvelo. La frecuencia 103.7 Mhz deberá quedar libre dentro de treinta días y la licencia será devuelta conforme al procedimiento aplicable.

Emisora	Radio Desvelo
Ubicación	Sector El Faro, Parcela 6
Motivo	razones económicas

Copia registrada por la Municipalidad de San Desvelo. Reconstrucción según el expediente.

RECONSTRUCCIÓN

RD-D17-2004

Letter regarding the cessation of broadcasting operations, September 28, 2004. Reconstruction based on the files.

The inventory after 2004 is also incomplete. Two mixers, three microphones, record player, CD player, cassette player, generator, battery, mast and antenna appear in a list. Some items have been partially taken over from the Municipalidad, others do not have a completed location field. The later frequency assignment to a transmitter from Chimbote says nothing about where an individual microphone ended up.

D18 · Inventory after 2004

ARCHIVO MUNICIPAL DE SAN DESVELO

Inventario posterior al cierre

CANT.	EQUIPO
2	consolas de mezcla
3	micrófonos
1	tocadiscos
2	reproductores de CD
1	casetera
1	generador
1	batería de emergencia
1	mástil y antena

Los campos de ubicación están incompletos; algunos objetos fueron recibidos por la Municipalidad.

RECONSTRUCCIÓN RD-D18-5.7

Inventory list after cessation of operations. The subsequent location of all items is not documented.

After the end, various types of activity remained. The regular program was over. An auxiliary system at the Depósito was marked as out of service in 2006. Maintenance and access to the building are occupied until 2011. In 2018, the investment in an asset portfolio appears as active. These words don't mean the same thing. Active can refer to an administratively managed item. Maintenance can mean backup, control or rework. None of the technicians interviewed confirmed clandestine radio broadcasts.

A photograph from the years after the closure shows the gate closed, the plaster even less damaged than today and the mast lighting apparently well cared for. A municipal vehicle is parked to the side. Its purpose cannot be assigned. The picture is neither evidence of operation nor of complete abandonment. It shows the long interim period in which a place has lost its original function, but has not yet disappeared from all jurisdictions.

B29 · Closed studio after the end



Radio Desvelo after the end of regular broadcasting operations. The municipal vehicle cannot be reliably assigned to any order.

I searched the program cassettes for a farewell and found none. Maybe there were personal sentences that no one recorded. Maybe a show ended with an ordinary title announcement. The last secured act remains the letter dated September 28th. When I closed the folder, the empty Sunday was somewhere between a failed plan and a later idea of finality. The radio hadn't produced an ending that matched his memory.

What Remained of the Station

RADIO DESVELO · LA VOZ DE LA COSTA

TEST STAND

*02:17 · Surround sound · Deep tone ·
Maintenance*

Open findings are stored separately. Their closeness to each other is
not yet a common declaration.

CHAPTER 10

What Remained of the Station

Access to the building was approved for a limited inventory in 2026. Before opening, Teresa Valdivia reminded me to linguistically separate maintenance, building status and broadcasting operations. The green door was stuck at the bottom. Behind her was not a preserved studio, but a small room with beige acoustic panels, a dark remnant of curtains and a rectangular edge of dust on the floor.

B30 · Empty studio room 2026



Former studio room of Radio Desvelo, 2026. The stand mark of the desk is visible.

The mixer was gone. Loose cable ends lay on the duct, and the round holder above the door remained without a clock. Daylight streamed through a barred window. In the technical room, the feed to the mast and several later repairs were visible. Movable inventory was almost completely missing. Three cassette casings, an empty reel, index cards, an advertising jingle tape, a damaged headphone hanger and an

inventory label were secured from various inventories. They do not come from a common find.

TRACES IN THE BUILDING, 2026

In empty space, these phases cannot be neatly superimposed on each other. The beige acoustic panels are not necessarily part of the 1987 expansion; individual edges and fastenings suggest later additions. The cable duct contains openings and closed branches from more than one work phase. The round trace of the wall clock remained above the door, while only the base of the later large desk is visible on the floor. A finding today preserves changes, but rarely their order.

Even on the outside, the age is not consistent. The foundation, structure and location date from the founding phase. The paint, gate, mast parts, warning sign and individual repair areas were later changed. The permit from 1995, the inspections from 1998/99 and the maintenance notes after 2004 explain why the place looks both old and repeatedly renovated. Nothing about it requires continued broadcasting. It only requires not to confuse the word still with unchanged.

The final adjustment may not have been a technical improvement, but rather a safeguard: close the door, record moving inventory, disconnect lines, control lighting on the pole. Such work remains visible in administrative records for a long time because property must be maintained. They are still important for the history of the station. They mark the transition from a system that was prepared for the next shipment to an inventory that was cared for primarily because it was still there.

I placed five open findings in a separate envelope. First, the index card with 02:17 and Paso Norte. Secondly, different time announcements on private copies. Thirdly, the temporarily dry room sound. Fourth, a low tone on a few technical fragments. Fifth, maintenance and administration information after 2004. Each finding

has its own source. Together they do not provide any technical evidence of later broadcasting operations.

B31 · Mast and foundation



Mast foundation and cable feed. Photograph: Ana Belén Vargas, 2026.

There is also a program plan in three paper versions. The original and a second copy contain the same lines. On a first working copy, EMISIÓN ACTIVA appears faint. The paper edges and other entries match. Copying again did not reproduce the line. I describe the result without turning a single copy finding into an operational file.

D19 · EMISION ACTIVA



Original and two working copies of a program plan. Only the first copy contains EMISIÓN ACTIVA.

There is no technical evidence in this material for the subsequent reception of Radio Desvelo, which plays a role in other reports. At the same time, some traces of tradition cannot be conclusively assigned. These two sentences do not contradict each other. The first protects the border of the document. The second notes that archives do not become complete just because documentation ends.

Teresa helped me check the object list. The mast was upright, the cable duct was in place, and the building was secured. None of it was broadcasting. We left the room, closed the door and checked the gate. The work was unspectacular and that's exactly why it was important. An abandoned place often remains active in management and memory for longer than its original function.

B32 · Secured Surviving Material



Selected material remains from different stocks. Compilation for comparison.

I did not label the envelope containing the unresolved findings with mystery or phenomenon. I wrote Review File: Radio Desvelo. It can be opened later if new sources emerge. The present documentation therefore did not have to build toward an effect. It could end with what the station had demonstrably been: a small local institution that carried voices, music, and practical information across a limited coastal area.

Epilogue

I heard the excerpt one last time in front of the closed area. The Garúa was close enough to take the top of the mast, but not the three windows, the green door and the grate on the gate. The recorder was on my knee, with the notebook next to it. After weeks of comparing, I heard more than I did at the beginning.

Mariela's voice now had a face. The brass section was reminiscent of a blurry celebratory photo. The report about the sacks led to a concrete curve. Paper next to the microphone was part of Eulogio's way of working. The greetings to Mauro and Emilia were not decorations for an old night, but attempts to make distances smaller for a few seconds.

The recording had not become any more mysterious. It was denser. The noise remained noise, the three clocks remained inaccurate, and the dry ambient sound remained technically explainable. The unexplained pieces were also still in the envelope. Documentation does not have to choose between complete explanation and meaningful ambiguity. It can limit both.

In the last surviving song, Arena y Camino sings of a light by the road. The chorus begins a second time and is cut off. Nothing else follows in the file. On the real road, a bus traveled toward Puerto Esperanza. Its tires drew water from a shallow channel, and for a moment I could still hear the engine beneath the tape hiss.

I turned off the device. The station was silent; not the street.

B33 · Ana listens to the recording



Ana Belén Vargas's final listening session with the digitized cassette excerpt, 2026.

Appendix

Chronology

- March 14, 1987 - Provisional operating license for 103.7 MHz, 500 watts, Sector El Faro, Parcela 6.
- 1987-1988 - The building, mast, coaxial path, generator, and emergency-power equipment are installed; programming and staffing stabilize. Beto Saldaña is documented under contract from 1988.
- Early 1990s - Regular programming and advertising structures; expansion of Ruta Nocturna.
- 1993 - License extension; 48 cassettes and 12 open tapes are stored with the recipient name Norte.
- 1995 - Approval to renew the mast; the scope and completion of the individual works are only partially documented.
- 1996 - Complaint about noise at night; exact technical meaning is unclear.
- 1998-1999 - Technical inspection and application for generator spare parts; material difficulties increase.
- 2002-2003 - Ministerial warning and provisional license extension.
- circa 1994 - Working hypothesis for the approximately sixteen minute cassette fragment.
- 09/28/2004 - CESE DE OPERACIONES; regular broadcasting operations end for economic reasons.
- 08/12/2006 - Auxiliary system at Depósito marked as FUERA DE SERVICIO.
- 2005-2011 - Follow-up work and maintenance on the transmitter room, electrical protection, diesel supply, lightning protection, door, generator, and antenna lighting; no documented regular broadcasting.

- 2018 - Investment in the asset portfolio listed as active; no evidence of broadcasting operations.
- 2026 - Documentation, digitization and today's inventory.

Main voices and sources

- Diego Luján - Finder and digitizer of the cassette from his uncle Nicolás' workshop.
- Beto Saldaña - defining, but not only, voice of Ruta Nocturna; older interview, probably 1999-2002.
- Eulogio - technician; work sheets and technical information, where attributable.
- Teresa Valdivia - institutional classification of building status, maintenance and file terms.
- Former telephone workers, traders, drivers, fishermen, bakers and night workers - oral memories, each with limited dating.
- Source Categories - License and Administrative Records, Program Schedules, Private Cassettes, Photographs, Promotional Cards, Technical Notes, Today's Inventory.

Note on the Recording

- The approximately sixteen-minute recording is described as a private find. A public download address had not been finalized at the time of this issue. Working copy file name: RD_RUTA_N_MIERCOLES_LADO_B.wav. The dating around 1994 remains a working hypothesis. A description of the process down to the minute or second is deliberately avoided.

List of Illustrations

B01-B33: Photographic and documentary image series. D01-D19: document pages, plans, maps and working representations marked as

reconstruction. Complete information on origin and uncertainty is provided with the respective images.