

OPAUDIT 011 — The scheduled jobs looked registered while pointing at yesterday’s door

Audit ID	2026-09-07-011
Report date	2026-09-07
First observed	2026-09-07 (a recurrence — “cron is fucked again”); last good federation run ~2 days prior. Fleet on 0.7.656D.
Theme	“Registered” is not “running.”
Surfaces	Federation delivery, new-follow catalogue backfill, and version-check cron across the hub and all 24 spokes.
State	FIXED — CONFIRMING Live repair watched working; the permanent self-heal shipped as v0.7.657D but is not yet deployed fleet-wide.
Watched live?	Yes, for the repair — a detached hub federation run completed ok at 2026-09-07 19:06:44, and backfill was proven end to end (see §6). The permanent fix awaits deployment + fleet re-verify.
Reporter	Sean (observed and reported the outage) + Codex (diagnosed the command-path drift, ran the bounded fleet repair, shipped the fix).
Related	OPAUDIT 003 (all paced work lives in the CLI cron — so if cron is dead, delivery is dead); OPAUDIT 012 (the follow-mesh gap this outage exposed); OPAUDIT 006 (the stale relay row seen alongside).
Publication	Public. Operability/availability post-mortem, no exploitable detail.

1. SUMMARY

Federation quietly stopped across the whole fleet for about two days, and it looked like several unrelated features breaking at once — new follows got no catalogue, posts never pushed, the version check went quiet. It was one cause: the scheduled jobs still *existed*, but the command each one ran pointed at a script path that no longer existed. A check that only asks “is the job registered?” said yes. The job was registered to run nothing.

2. WHAT A HUMAN SAW

Federation cron had “stopped again.” New follows were not receiving the catalogue backfill a new follower should get. FoundTextures’ delivery log showed published, federation-enabled posts as *not pushed*. From the outside it read as the whole federation layer being broken.

3. ROOT CAUSE

The tagged crontab entries were present, but their *registered command paths no longer matched the installed scripts*. This is deployment path-drift: a deploy moved or replaced the installation directory while the crontab lines kept pointing at the old absolute path. A check that only confirms the tagged line is present — presence, not command — falsely reports that as healthy. So the scheduler dutifully ran a command that led nowhere, and no paced delivery, backfill, or version check ever happened.

4. EVIDENCE AT DIAGNOSIS

The Cron & Jobs page's command-level verifier (not just a heartbeat) exposed it: on the hub, federation and version-check commands were invalid while RSS was healthy; on the first spoke checked, all three were invalid. The last successful federation run was roughly two days old. Live checking across the fleet found the same stale-path defect on all 24 spokes — a fleet-wide deployment drift, not independent failures.

5. WHAT WE DID

Repair: re-registered the real cron commands through each site's authenticated Cron & Jobs page — the hub first, then the spokes in small batches through the hub's authenticated remote-login path, deliberately *not* pressing RUN NOW on every site at once so the fleet didn't create a thundering herd. **Permanent fix (0.7.657D):** update finalization now refreshes every owned scheduled job to the current absolute path, so a deploy that moves the install directory can no longer strand the jobs.

6. VERIFIED LIVE — AND WHAT REMAINS

A detached hub federation run completed with status `ok` at 2026-09-07 19:06:44 (it did not run inside a browser request — see OPAUDIT 003). A controlled backfill test using two peers (one and two posts respectively) confirmed their accounts and historical posts appeared in FoundTextures' home feed — proving the whole chain works once cron is alive. The permanent self-heal is shipped in source as tag `v0.7.657D` (“NO MORE ISLANDS”) but is *not yet built and deployed fleet-wide*, so this stays **FIXED — CONFIRMING** until every site is on 657D and reports its exact command registered.

7. EYEBALL NEXT

After 657D is deployed, confirm all 25 sites report the exact command as registered. Build a fleet cron report that distinguishes *absent*, *wrong-command*, *stale*, *running*, and *healthy* per job per node — so a wrong command can never again hide behind “present.”

8. THE DOCTRINE THIS INCIDENT CREATED

“Registered” is not “running.” A presence check passes happily on a job whose command points at yesterday's door. Verify the command itself resolves to the script that's actually installed — and when a deploy can move the ground under a scheduled job, the deploy is responsible for re-pointing it.

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