



Australian Government



Northern New South Wales: It's time to get ready for digital TV

SWITCH-OFF SNAPSHOT

- Between 2010 and 2013 analog free-to-air TV signals throughout Australia will be switched off and free-to air TV will be broadcast digital-only.
- Australia is on track for switchover to digital TV by 2013 with **82% of households** nationwide already converted.
- Mildura/Sunraysia was the first region to switch to digital-only TV (30 June 2010) followed by regional South Australia and Broken Hill (15 December 2010), regional Victoria (5 May 2011) and regional Queensland (6 December 2011).
- Areas of Southern and Central NSW, ACT and Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA) will switch-off analog TV signals on 5 June 2012.
- At least **84 % of the 540,000 households in the Northern NSW switchover area** have already converted to digital-only TV—an increase of 34% since early 2009.

What is happening across Northern NSW?

The following areas of Northern NSW will be switching to digital-only TV on **27 November 2012** (see map below):

- ***Hunter***
eg Newcastle, Port Stephens
- ***Northern Rivers***
eg Coffs Harbour, Forster and Grafton
- ***North West Slopes and Plains***
eg Tamworth, Armidale and Inverell
- ***Richmond Tweed***
eg Byron Bay, Tenterfield and Lismore

Digital Ready Information Line **1800 20 10 13**



Early switchovers

For some towns relying on a self-help transmission tower that broadcasters are upgrading to digital, switch-off on analog TV may occur earlier than 27 November 2012. Residents in these towns will be informed about their earlier switchover dates.

The following towns are currently scheduled to have their self-help tower upgraded to broadcast digital:

- Stroud
- Elizabeth Beach and Pacific Palms
- Forster
- Maclean/Ashby
- Smiths Lake
- Armidale North
- Uralla
- Warialda
- Byron Bay
- Ocean Shores

New Digital TV services

Broadcasters have confirmed the following locations as likely candidates for the establishment of new digital TV services. New digital TV services are established by broadcasters in areas where there has previously been poor, or in some cases no, television coverage.

- Anna Bay
- Belmont North
- Broken Back
- Warners Bay
- Boambee Peak
- Emerald Heights/Forest Glen
- Woolgoolga

Switchover for the rest of New South Wales

Southern and Central NSW, ACT and MIA will have their analog TV signals switched off on 5 June 2012, and Sydney and Gosford will switch in December 2013.

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What is digital TV?

The word 'digital' simply refers to the way in which TV signals are broadcast (sent) and received by TVs in homes around Australia. Currently, in Australia TV is broadcast in both digital and analog. However, the analog signals will be gradually phased out across the country by 2013, and Australian TV will be broadcast in digital-only.

Why is Australia moving to digital TV?

To improve the viewing experience

- There are 16 free-to-air channels available on digital.
- Digital TV offers better sound and picture quality
- Digital TV offers features such as an Electronic Program Guide and widescreen format.

To embrace worldwide developments in technology

- Overseas programs are increasingly made in digital format only
- Australia will join those nations who have already switched or are currently switching, including the United States, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden and New Zealand.

To free up broadcast space for exciting new services

- It's costly and inefficient to continue to broadcast both analog and digital signals
- Turning off the analog signals will free up spectrum space that can be reused for new services such as mobile broadband.

mySwitch

The mySwitch tool on the Digital Ready website, www.digitalready.gov.au, enables residents to find information about the digital TV services they should expect to receive at their location and advice on how to get the best digital TV reception, including information about local transmitters.

What assistance is available?

To find out more about the switch to digital-only TV and how to get ready:

- Call the Digital Ready Information Line, 1800 20 10 13
- Visit the Digital Ready website, www.digitalready.gov.au

The Digital Ready website has a range of information materials, instructional videos and translated information.

The Australian Government is also providing practical and financial assistance to help eligible households switch to digital TV. Two assistance schemes are currently available to lend a helping hand; the Household Assistance Scheme and the Satellite Subsidy Scheme.

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Household Assistance Scheme

- The Household Assistance Scheme offers installation of satellite TV equipment or terrestrial TV equipment for eligible pensioners, this includes a digital high definition set-top box, antenna and cabling if required and you own your own home. The installation is free-of-charge.
- HAS is for people who have a functioning TV, have not converted to digital TV and receive the maximum rate of one of the following pensions:
 - Age Pension;
 - Disability Support Pension;
 - Carer Payment;
 - Department of Veterans' Affairs Service Pension; or
 - Department of Veterans' Affairs Income Support Supplement.
- Centrelink will write to eligible pensioners inviting them to apply by calling 1800 556 443 or visiting a Centrelink Service Centre.

Satellite Subsidy Scheme

- The Satellite Subsidy Scheme (SSS) offers installation at a subsidised cost of satellite TV equipment for eligible households. This includes a Viewer Access Satellite Television (VAST) set-top box, satellite dish and associated cabling.
- SSS is only available to households that rely on an analog TV signal from a self-help retransmission tower not being converted to digital TV.
- SSS will open for Northern NSW and areas of remote Northern NSW on 1 June 2012 and close on 10 August 2012.
- Eligible SSS households will be sent a letter from the Digital Switchover Taskforce inviting them to apply for the subsidy.
- Households can check their eligibility for the subsidy and apply online via the Digital Ready website www.digitalready.gov.au/subsidy or by calling 1800 20 10 13.
- For the current list of towns across Northern NSW and areas of remote Northern NSW eligible for SSS visit:
<http://www.digitalready.gov.au/government-assistance/satellite-subsidy-scheme/SSS-rollout-towns.aspx>

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Digital Switchover Liaison Officers

Digital Switchover Liaison Officers (DSLOs) will be available in switchover areas during the months leading up to switchover. The officers work across the switchover region with local councils and community organisations, and they may also host or participate in local events or give presentations to local groups on how to switchover to digital television.

DSLOs for the northern NSW switchover region will be on-board in the coming months.

MORE INFORMATION

For all the latest news and information:

- Visit www.digitalready.gov.au
- Call the Digital Ready Information Line on **1800 20 10 13**
- Subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter
<http://www.digitalready.gov.au/info-centre/email-subscription.aspx>

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Media enquiries can be directed to the Digital Switchover Taskforce:

- Email: Switchover_media@dbcde.gov.au
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