



The progress of digital television broadcasting

For more information

Information about the **technical aspects of digital television services**, including implementation plans can be obtained by accessing the ABA's web site www.aba.gov.au/tv/digitaltv/index.htm.

If you are interested in information about **what digital television services are available in your area**, the information can be obtained more readily from www.dba.org.au.

Recent commencements

Digital television commenced in the metropolitan areas of Australia in 2001 and since that time national and commercial broadcasters have made significant inroads into the introduction of digital television services throughout regional Australia.

In the six months since the last update on the progress of the digital services roll-out a considerable amount has been achieved.

The commercial networks have all commenced repeater services in Sydney at Manly/Mosman and Kings Cross and introduced new services along the Central Coast of New South Wales, at Bouddi, Gosford and Wyong.

Broadcasters have also commenced services in Newcastle, the Illawarra and Canberra. The ABC in particular has commenced numerous services in regional areas. It now has digital services operating in regional Victoria at Horsham, Mildura, Nhill, Murray Valley, Upper Murray and Goulburn Valley, along with services in regional Queensland at Southern Downs, the Darling Downs, Mackay, Townsville, Wide Bay and Rockhampton. The ABC has also introduced services in regional NSW at Grafton/Kempsey, Coffs Harbour, Ulladulla, Griffith, the Riverina, Manning River and Richmond/Tweed and regional South Australia, at Mt Burr, the Riverland and Spencer Gulf.

The commercial networks have also made progress in the regional markets, with WIN commencing services in Western Victoria, the Goulburn Valley, Rockhampton, the Darling Downs and the Central Tablelands. Seven and Ten (Southern Cross Broadcasters) have begun services in Gympie and surrounding areas, and are expecting to commence services in Rockhampton in mid October. The Seven Network has also commenced its service in Mackay.

The second commercial television service in Darwin, TND, commenced its digital service in September.

In addition to services in Newcastle, the Illawarra and Canberra, the SBS has also commenced services at Hobart, Toowoomba and Mackay.

What's coming up?

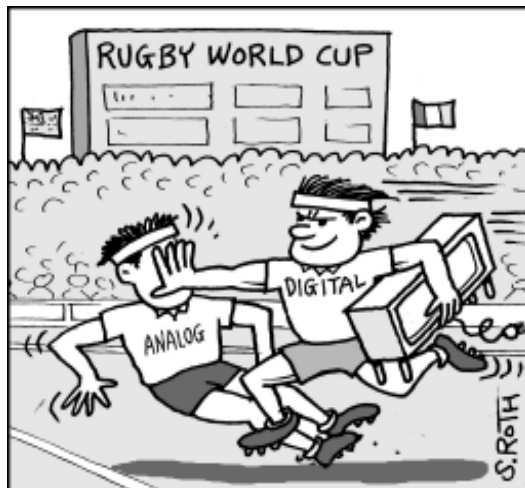
The commercial networks and the SBS are expected to commence operation of their Melbourne digital repeater services at Selby, Upwey, Ferntree Gully, South Yarra, Rosebud, Warburton and Safety Beach by the end of the year.

Repeater services in Adelaide and Perth are also expected to commence by the end of the year, along with commercial services at Bega, Bowral/Mittagong, Broken Hill and Griffith and Cairns.

The Gold Coast and Currumbin services are expected to start up in the first quarter of 2004. This implementation will take place after a considerable upgrade project at Mt Tamborine which has been completed. The new facility is also expected to address a number of the poor coverage issues, identified under the television blackspot program, throughout the region.

Management of interference to existing analog television

Continued improvements have been made to the effectiveness of the interference management scheme, which is co-ordinated and managed by Commercial Television Australia, since its





News Update

inception before the introduction of digital television in 2001.

The scheme provides a telephone hotline as well as brochures for viewers dealing with the specifics of the area and how to overcome potential problems. This is coupled with an extensive on-air and press campaign and mail-out to ensure as many as possible are aware of the introduction of digital television and how to deal with many of the concerns that may be faced by viewers in the respective areas.

Complementing the interference management scheme has been the co-ordinated introduction of digital services in many areas. This has provided broadcasters and viewers alike to assess the impact and deal with any issues that may arise.

As a consequence of the adoption of the approaches identified above the number of issues and difficulties caused to the viewing population have been well below potential estimates. Copies of relevant brochures can be downloaded from the www.aba.gov.au or

www.dba.org.au. Brochures are also available from all broadcaster web sites.

What about the take up of set-top boxes?

Digital Broadcasting Australia, the industry body associated with the introduction of digital television, estimates that there are now up to 145 000 homes with digital receivers.

It is generally accepted that a number of factors have contributed to the upward trend. The factors include: a greater awareness of the benefits of digital television; a greater range of set top boxes available in the market-place (more than 20 models) with prices starting at \$299 for SD-STBs and \$799 for HD-STBs; and finally the growing popularity of the improved viewing provided by widescreen televisions.

DBA reports that sales of wide-screen television sets has reached 250 000. This number is expected to increase with the peak sales period approaching coupled with the news that the Rugby World Cup is to be televised in wide-screen format.



Temporary community broadcasting licences

Allocated from 26 August to 24 September 2003.

<i>Area served</i>	<i>Licensee</i>	<i>Frequency (MHz)</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Date allocated</i>
New South Wales				
Gosford RA1	Wyong – Gosford Progressive Community Radio Inc.	94.9	1–10–2003 to 31–12–2003	10–9–2003
Dunedoo RA1	Talbragar Broadcasters Inc.	101.5	1–11–2003 to 31–10–2004	24–9–2003
Murwillumbah RA2	Heartland Opry Group Inc.	101.3	1–11–2003 to 31–1–2004	24–9–2003
Victoria				
Latrobe Valley RA2	Gippsland Christian Broadcasters Inc.	103.9	1–10–2003 to 30–9–2004	29–8–2003
Swan Hill RA2	Swan Hill And District Community FM Radio Inc	99.1	19–9–2003 to 18–9–2004	29–8–2003
Queensland				
Bundaberg RA1	Bundaberg Breeze Community Broadcasting Association Inc.	96.3	10–9–2003 to 9–03–2004	3–9–2003
Mossman RA2	4CCC Coral Coast Country Community Radio Inc.	100.1	1–11–2003 to 31–1–2004	23–9–2003
Western Australia				
Perth RA1	Western Sports Media Inc.	90.5	17–10–2003 to 8–2–2004	18–9–2003
Cocos Islands RA1	VKW 'Voice of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands' Inc.	96.0 & 105.3	1–9–2003 to 30–04–2004	30–8–2003

