

## Digital Switchover Programme

### Ministerial Group on Digital Switchover Meeting

#### Quarterly Progress Highlights Report: MGDS (06) 12

January 2006 – April 2006

To	Alun Michael (Minister of State for Industry and the Regions) James Parnell (Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism)
Copied to	Members of the Ministerial Group on Digital Switchover
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#### 1. Overview

Communications activity in the quarter since the Group last met on 18 January 2006 has been focused on preparation for the launch of the national public information campaign on May 5<sup>th</sup>. This has included continued stakeholder engagement, outreach to the regions, and development of communications and consumer support services (the website and call centre). This campaign is well advanced and will be reviewed at the 26 April Group meeting.

The Select Committee inquiry on 'Analogue Switch-Off' concluded with the publication of the Committee's report on 29<sup>th</sup> March. The Committee recognised the benefits of digital TV and supported the switchover policy. Government will respond to the report's specific recommendations in due course.

Ofcom has reported that digital TV take-up has now reached 70% of households, and GfK reported that by the end of 2005 44% of all TV sets had been converted to digital. BMRB research commissioned by Digital UK shows growing public awareness of digital switchover but work needs to be done to raise public understanding.

#### 2. Workstream Progress Report

##### General

Work in all the workstream is underway with involvement from relevant stakeholders.

A number of the workstreams are adjudged to be Amber trending towards Red including Housing & Property and Targeted help scheme. Both those workstreams will be reviewed at the Group meeting.

### Workstream 0 – Programme Management

- Monthly 'Platform Advisory Group' meeting attended by Sky, cable and Freeview now being held and "shadows" Digital UK Board Meetings.
- Digital UK conducted a 'Stakeholders' Survey' in early April seeking feedback from key stakeholders on the performance of the Switchover Programme and Digital UK in its first year of operation. 95% of respondents believed the switchover programme was achievable. 80% felt they had a good understanding of Digital UK's role and 82% felt that Digital UK was providing good leadership. Many thanks to all those who responded. Summary results will be made available to all respondents.

### Workstream 1 - Communications

- Preparation for the launch of the national public information campaign on May 5<sup>th</sup> has included:
  - Development of the first TV advert for switchover
  - Development of regional and national radio and press adverts
  - Enhancements to the website and call centre
  - Printing 3 million leaflets to be delivered to households in Border, Westcountry and Wales
  - Delivery of merchandising materials to retailers
  - Delivery of press packs to regional media
  - Extension of the regional contact programme to Westcountry and Wales
- Communications materials have been reviewed by stakeholders and tested in focus groups. A demonstration of the materials is on the meeting agenda.
- Digital UK has launched a monthly stakeholder newsletter.
- DCMS hosted a digital TV event at the Whitechapel 'Idea Store' on March 29 to demonstrate digital TV and provide TV and switchover advice to the local community.

### Workstream 2 – Consumer and Market Research

- Ofcom's Digital Progress Report was published on March 17, showing nationwide digital take-up of just under 70%. Further detail will be provided under agenda item 3.
- The Digital UK / Ofcom Switchover Tracker launched on April 3. This face-to-face survey will go to 7,600 households over the coming year, including boosted samples for the first four regions. The survey will track awareness and understanding of switchover, attitudes to switchover, intentions to convert, actual digital conversion, and satisfaction with digital TV. Results from the first 1,000 interviews will be available in late May.
- Digital UK conducted an interim consumer survey in early March which showed nationwide awareness of 66%, and a further 60% of those people demonstrated

a high-level understanding of the implications of switchover. Further detail is provided under agenda item 3.

- Appointment of Spectrum Consultants re building of sales model.

#### Workstream 3 – Consumer Liaison

- Digital UK's regional contact programme has been extended to Wales and Westcountry in advance of the May communications campaign.
- Digital UK has appointed a Regional Manager for the Border region, and has established the first 'Regional Support Group' of local stakeholders in Melrose, Border.
- Digital UK and DCMS will host a stakeholder conference in Carlisle, Border on May 25, and a 'Digital Day' event in the town centre on May 26.

#### Workstream 4 – Transmission Network

- Antenna specifications have been agreed for the Caldbeck (Border) and Wenvoe (Wales) transmitters. The design specification for the Selkirk (Border) transmitter has also been agreed, and Arqiva asked to place the equipment order.
- Digital UK has begun work to develop a predictive coverage database to support consumer communications.

#### Workstream 5 – Housing & Property

- Ross Fraser has been appointed as chair of the Housing Communications Group.
- Government have commissioned a survey of switchover readiness in the Border region.
- Digital UK is recruiting for the appointment of a Head of Housing & Property.

#### Workstream 6 – Digital Equipment

- 10 national retail chains and 212 independent retail chains have signed up to the digital logo scheme (representing approximately 2,300 electrical retail stores, or around 40% of all electrical retail stores). 31 equipment manufacturers have signed up, including all the major consumer brands.
- The Registered Digital Installers scheme was launched on March 16.
- Ofcom published report on ease of use of digital equipment on March 8.

#### Workstream 7 – Targeted Help

- The Bolton trial has been completed and the report due for publication shortly.
- Eligibility criteria for the Targeted Help Scheme have been agreed.

## Digital Switchover Programme

Quarterly Progress Highlights Report: January 2006 – April 2006. MGDS (06) 12.

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- Consultation on the specification and mechanics of the Targeted Help Scheme with consumer groups, the supply chain and digital platforms is ongoing.
- Progress with the Targeted Help scheme is on the meeting agenda for discussion.

### Workstream 8 – Ofcom Regulatory

- Preparation for the Regional Radiocommunications Conference 2006 is proceeding.
- Process for agreeing public service broadcasters' communications obligations underway.

### Workstream 9 – Government Regulatory & Statutory

- Work on BBC Charter and Licence Fee settlement ongoing.