



RESPONSE TO THE ROLE OF INTEGRATED DIGITAL TELEVISION SETS IN ACHIEVING DIGITAL SWITCHOVER

We welcome your opening comments that the government is committed to ensuring that terrestrial analogue broadcasting signals are maintained until:

- Everyone who can currently get the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form can receive them on digital systems
- Switching to digital is an affordable option for the vast majority of people
- As a target indicator of affordability, 95% of consumers have access to digital equipment

With these statements in mind there are aspects of iDTV that give us concern.

Many of our members rely on the provision of subtitles for their enjoyment of television. With iDTV there is a possible loss of subtitle recording flexibility. The use of a set top box enables the viewer to watch one channel whilst recording another using a mixture of analogue and digital signals. This capability should be available with iDTV or there will be a need purchase a digital VCR or PVR with additional cost.

There may well be a need when switching to reception of digital transmissions for a new or replacement of an existing poor aerial system. This will be an additional cost on top of that to obtain an iDTV. It may well inhibit some people on low incomes from changing.

There is a potential extra cost in any need to change aerial systems due to re-allocation of the broadcast spectrum after the switch over.

iDTVs should not be outmoded in a short time. Currently there appears to be no guarantee that this won't happen, for example with the introduction of new protocols.

Bert Neale
Chairman, Hearing Concern Broadcast Committee

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