



BROADCASTING DIGITAL MIGRATION

FACTSHEET

KEY FACTS (General)

- TV technology has been in South Africa since 1976.
- Today, 13-million households in South Africa own TV sets and able to access Free-to-view channels.
- Before 1990, the broadcasting of sound and video through airwaves was done by analogue signals.
- Digital broadcasting started after 1990, where sound, video, text and still images could be transmitted in the form of binary digits i.e. ones and zeros.
- Digital migration is a process of moving from analogue to digital broadcasting for TV and radio.
- South Africa is not the only country going through digital migration process.
- The main objective for South Africa to migrate from analogue to digital is free up the spectrum that will be used for mobile broadband and other ICT communication related purposes.
- In 2006, the International Telecommunications Union held a World Radio-Communication Conference (WRC-06) where it was resolved that all countries in Europe, Africa, Middle East and the Islamic Republic of Iran (region 1) should migrate from analogue to digital broadcasting services

by 17 June 2015. South Africa is one of the member states, signatories of the conference.

- SADC region has agreed to set December 2016 as the new deadline to migrate from analogue to digital broadcasting.
- South Africa coordinates its frequency plans with other countries to ensure that there is no interference with other countries' broadcasting signals.

SOUTH AFRICA'S BROADCASTING DIGITAL MIGRATION PROGRAMME

- Government is responsible for developing the policy for Broadcasting Digital Migration (BDM).
- South Africa together with world starts the migration with TV, and radio will follow later.
- South Africa has chosen European Standard, DVB-T2 and DVB-H for the Set Top Box.
- Subsequent to the protracted legal wrangle of the broadcasters on the specifications of the STBs, the court decided to give the government a go-ahead on the control access. The BDM amended policy define control access as a security feature of the STB. Broadcasters are at liberty to include a conditional access using a vendor of their choice.
- Currently there is dual broadcasting (analogue and digital) in South Africa. The Broadcasting Digital Migration Programme will see the phasing out of analogue signals. The analogue signals will be used to expand the broadband connectivity in the country.
- Government is also responsible for ensuring that funding is available for the Scheme for Ownership Support (SOS) for poor households and for the development of a STB manufacturing strategy.
- Your STB will be able to receive digital channels from all licensed South African broadcasters.
- Some viewers may need new TV aerials. Whether or not you need a new TV aerial or an adjustment to your existing TV aerial will depend how good the DTT signal is in your area.

FACTS THAT AFFECT YOU!

- The Minister of Communications will announce the analogue switch off date after consultation with Cabinet.
- If you don't have a set top box by this date, you won't be able to watch any TV programs received by your TV aerial.
- Note that no television currently in the market will be able to receive the digital TV channels without the STB.
- The Government will provide free STB to more than 5 million poor household television owners. The following groups are eligible to receive subsidies:
 - Indigent South African people with green ID book.
 - Households who are in possession of a functioning TV set and are not subscribers to paid television services.
 - Households dependent on social grants
 - Households already covered by the SABC concessionary TV licence scheme.
 - South Africans living around the border region areas of the country and SKA in the Northern Cape.
- The people who will not qualify for the government subsidy will have to buy the STB. Prices will be announced once the STBs are available in the market. The purchase of the STB is a once-off cost. You will, however, have to continue paying your TV license as required by law.
- The benefits of digital TV broadcasting include:
 - Clearer sound
 - More channels
 - A digital TV guide which can be easily updated for more accurate schedules.
 - Excellent picture quality. Picture quality which does not deteriorate with a weaker TV aerial signal. It will be perfect or you will have no picture at all. No more snowy pictures.
 - Allows transmission of high definition (HD) -TV pictures.

- Allows for interactive services like games and apps

ROLE-PLAYERS

- The Department of Communication is the lead department driving the Broadcasting Digital Migration Programme.
- SENTECH is responsible for the country's digital broadcasting network (both terrestrial and satellite), in line with the Broadcasting Digital Migration policy.
- The Universal Services and Access Agency of South Africa's (USAASA) mission is to facilitate and maintain universal services and access to information and communications technology. In the context of BDM, USAASA is responsible for managing the subsidy fund for STB acquisition and distribution.
- ICASA is responsible for regulating the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors.
- SAPO is responsible for the distribution of the STBs
- SABC, Etv and Mnet are currently the terrestrial broadcasters who will be embarking on the process of migrating from analogue to digital broadcasting.
- Community broadcasters are also to migrate from analogue to digital broadcasting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- See the official website for resources and information:
<http://www.gov.za/about-government/government-programmes/digital-migration>