

SWITCHOVER TIMINGS ANNOUNCED FOR WEST COUNTRY, WALES AND GRANADA

Digital UK today announces further details of the timetable for digital television switchover in three regions of the UK.

In line with the start dates announced by Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell in September 2005, Digital UK is now able to publish individual switchover timings for transmitters serving more than 4m households in West Country, Wales and Granada.

At switchover, each transmitter will cease broadcasting analogue television services and begin transmissions of high-power digital signals, making digital TV through an aerial (Freeview) available to virtually all homes. Currently, one-in-four households cannot receive digital television via an aerial.

Digital UK, the independent body leading switchover on behalf of UK broadcasters, is running information and assistance campaigns in the three years leading to switchover in each region. Information booklets are being delivered to every home along with advertising on television, radio and in regional publications.

Ford Ennals, Chief Executive of Digital UK, said: "Today's announcement of the timetable for transmitter switchover in the Westcountry, Wales and Granada TV regions is another milestone on the UK's path to digital TV.

"We first announced the regional timetable, then the transmitter timetable. Nearer the time, we will announce the month and day of switchover. We intend to share information with the public as soon as possible, and to provide public information and practical assistance to the public throughout the process."

- end -

Contacts

Joe Smithies
020 7462 5442
joe.smithies@digitaluk.co.uk

Jon Steel
020 7462 5428
jon.steel@digitaluk.co.uk

Fishburn Hedges (public relations)
Rosie Strachan, Joanna Kwiatkowska or Matt Cooper: 020 7839 4321

Notes and timetable follow over

Notes to editors

The timetable announced today identifies the calendar quarter during which each transmitter will switch over. Digital UK aims to publish the exact date for each transmitter approximately six months ahead of switchover.

- Q1 January - March
- Q2 April - June
- Q3 July - September
- Q4 October - December

West Country

<u>Timing</u>	<u>Main transmitter to switch (with associated relays)</u>
Q2 2009	Beacon Hill , serving south Devon Stockland Hill , serving south-west Somerset, parts of west Dorset and south-east Devon, including Exeter
Q3 2009	Huntshaw Cross , serving north Devon Redruth , serving west Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Caradon Hill , serving much of Cornwall and Devon, including Plymouth

Wales

<u>Timing</u>	<u>Main transmitter to switch (with associated relays)</u>
Q3 2009	Preseli , serving south-west Wales Carmel , serving south Wales
Q4 2009	Llanddona , serving north-west Wales, including Anglesey Moel-Y-Parc , serving north-east Wales
Q1 2010	Blaenplwyf , serving west and central Wales Long Mountain , serving east-central Wales Wenvoe , serving south-east Wales, including Cardiff

Granada

<u>Timing</u>	<u>Main transmitter to switch (with associated relays)</u>
Q4 2009	The entire Granada region will switch to digital in this quarter, when the Winter Hill transmitter and its dependent relays – serving Lancashire, Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cheshire, are converted.

Border

The transmitter timetable for Border, the first region to switch, was confirmed by Ministers in July this year. For reference, the Border schedule is:

<u>Timing</u>	<u>Main transmitter to switch (with associated relays)</u>
Q4 2008	Selkirk , serving Scottish Borders
Q2 2009	Caldbeck , serving Cumbria, Dumfries & Galloway and the Isle of Man

Broadcast signals do not have precise boundaries, and therefore viewers do not necessarily receive their television picture from the nearest transmitter. Digital UK is developing a postcode database, available from next year, that will tell viewers which transmitter is closest to them.

In three of the 14 TV regions, switchover will be completed in the calendar year *following* that in which it begins. These regions are Border, Wales and Scottish, where the switchover programme will run from 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively.

The regional timetable for switchover, announced by Tessa Jowell in September 2005:

<u>TV Region</u>	<u>Switchover commences</u>	
Border	2008 (completes 2009) *	
West Country	2009	
Wales	2009 (completes 2010)	
Granada	2009	
West	2010	
Grampian	2010	
Scottish	2010 (completes 2011)	
Central	2011	
Yorkshire	2011	
Anglia	2011	
Meridian	2012	
London	2012	
Tyne Tees	2012	
Ulster	2012	

* Under a flagship project announced by Ministers Shaun Woodward and Margaret Hodge in July, the Cumbrian town of **Whitehaven** and its surrounding area will become the first place in the UK to switch to digital in October 2007, one year ahead of the national programme's commencement in 2008.

About Digital UK

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation leading digital television switchover in the UK. The company manages the upgrading of the UK's 1,154 television transmitters for digital; explains switchover to the public; and works with industry to ensure understanding and support for switchover. Digital UK is funded by the public-service broadcasters and multiplex operators. Our consumer helpline is 08456 50 50 50. For press pack and material visit digitaluk.co.uk/press.

About switchover

Starting in 2008 and ending in 2012, TV services in the UK will go completely digital, region by region. The UK's old analogue television signal is being switched off and replaced with a digital signal. This will create a fairer situation in which everyone has access to a choice of affordable digital services. Switchover will also allow the UK to remain a world leader in broadcasting.

digitaluk.co.uk/press