

ANALOGUE ENDS IN NORTH OF SCOTLAND

Final switchover in STV North region completes today

The last analogue television signals in the STV North TV region were switched off today, marking the start of an all-digital era and extending Freeview across the north of Scotland.

As switchover completes for 70,000 homes across Inverness and the Great Glen, digital TV is now available through an aerial to virtually all households in the North for the first time.

Shortly after midnight, analogue BBC One, STV, Channel 4 and Five were turned off permanently at the Rosemarkie transmitter group, enabling extra channels to be broadcast from 12 local relay transmitters serving thousands of homes.

The changes also affect existing Freeview viewers who may find some of their channels missing this morning. The services have moved to new frequencies and can be restored by retuning Freeview TVs and boxes.¹

Digital UK, which has co-ordinated the switch, and the Switchover Help Scheme are today running advice points and a roadshow to provide support for viewers who need it. The Help Scheme is still open to applications from older and disabled viewers who may qualify for help including a choice of equipment, installation and aftercare.²

Paul Hughes, Digital UK's National Manager in Scotland, said: "This is a truly historic day for television in the north of Scotland as we wave goodbye to the old analogue system forever. Viewers across the STV North region now have a greater choice of TV services and many are enjoying the benefits of digital television for the first time.

"As with any change on this scale, some people may need a bit of extra help so we and the Help Scheme are on hand to give advice and assistance to those who may need it."

The Help Scheme remains open to applications until 20 November 2010.

Digital UK is providing support through local advice points, its website (digitaluk.co.uk) and an advice line (08456 50 50 50). A switchover roadshow is also running today in Falcon Square, Inverness.

- ends; notes follow -

Notes to editors

1. Retuning

How to retune your Freeview, Top-Up TV or BT Vision equipment:

- Switch on your digital box or digital television
- Press 'menu' on the remote control
- Select 'set up' or 'installation' option
- Select 'first time installation' option (sometimes called 'factory reset', 'full retune' or default settings')
- Press "OK" if your equipment asks if you want to delete all your channels - don't worry this is normal
- Channels will be automatically installed. This may take a few minutes; your equipment may shut down and restart

These instructions are a guide only – each product works slightly differently. For more information on retuning visit digitaluk.co.uk/retuning

2. **Switchover Help Scheme:** People aged 75 and over, eligible for certain disability benefits, registered blind or partially sighted or living in care homes are entitled to practical help from the BBC-run Switchover Help Scheme. For £40, they will be given equipment to switch one TV per household to digital. They will be able to have that equipment installed if they want it, a demonstration of how it works and a number to call while they get used to things. If they're eligible and also on income-related benefits, the help will be free. Everyone eligible will be contacted directly before switchover. More information is available on 0800 40 85 900 and online at helpscheme.co.uk.

Digital TV switchover is the process of converting the UK's terrestrial television system to digital. Between now and 2012, analogue channels will be switched off region by region and replaced with free-to-air digital TV and radio services (Freeview). Switchover will extend Freeview coverage virtually to the whole of the UK and free up airwaves for new services such as ultra-fast wireless broadband and mobile television. Digital services are also available via broadband, cable and satellite.

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation established in 2005 to lead the implementation of digital switchover. It is jointly owned and funded by the public-service broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Five and S4C), and the digital multiplex operators.

The Switchover Help Scheme is run by the BBC under an agreement with the Government to help older and disabled people make the change to digital TV. More information is available from helpscheme.co.uk.

Images and video clips are available to media free of charge from vismedia.co.uk.

Follow us on Twitter for live updates on switchover: twitter.com/Digitaluk

Contacts

Marion Jones. Weber Shandwick.

marion.jones@webershandwick.com

01463 716739

digitaluk.co.uk/press