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Press release

digitaluk

END OF THE ANALOGUE TV ERA

The UK's analogue TV era will come to an end on 24 October 2012, it was announced today.

Eighty years from the first experimental broadcasts, the old five-channel system will be switched off for good. The date will also signal the completion of digital television switchover which started in 2008, since when millions of viewers have seen coverage boosted with extra channels and clearer pictures.

Announcing the end-date for analogue TV and switchover, David Scott, Digital UK Chief Executive, said: "The analogue era was a defining period for TV but the fully digital age will be even better, with a greater choice of channels for viewers everywhere. I'm looking forward to October next year when we will have brought the benefits of digital to every corner of the country."

The first experimental analogue television broadcasts started in August 1932. The technology was officially launched by the BBC in 1936 and went on to inform and entertain viewers with coverage of landmark events such as the moon landings and classic shows from Nationwide to Morecambe and Wise.

The UK's switchover programme started in 2008. At its conclusion in 2012, inside the timetable set out by Government, more than 15 million new viewers will have been brought into coverage for Freeview services. Digital UK is on course to complete the project at least £53 million under budget.

- ends ; notes follow -

- The last analogue TV signals will be switched off in Northern Ireland on 24 October 2012.

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 satellite, cable and broadband.

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, Channel 5 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.

Arqiva undertakes the engineering work for TV switchover as owner and operator of the transmitter network.

Images are available to media free of charge at digitaluk.co.uk/press. Follow us on **Twitter** for live updates on switchover at twitter.com/DigitalUK.

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