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Press release

digitaluk

ISLAND WAKES TO A DIGITAL DAWN

Freeview signals move to full power ■ Viewers should retune again

The final stage of digital TV switchover in the Isle of Man is on course to complete today, extending digital terrestrial television (Freeview) coverage to all households served by the Douglas transmitter group.

All terrestrial TV signals were turned off shortly after midnight and a team of engineers worked through the night on the switch to all-digital TV services. Analogue services will remain switched off permanently, allowing Freeview channels to be broadcast from all ten on-island transmitters for the first time.

Viewers receiving their signal from an on-island transmitter will see the number of TV channels available free via an aerial increase from four to around 20.

When the transition is completed by mid afternoon, Freeview, BT Vision and Top Up TV equipment should be retuned in order to receive all the channels available.

Digital TVs or analogue sets converted with a digital box will be able to receive BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1, Channel 4 and Five, plus additional digital channels such as BBC Three, BBC Four, BBC News, ITV2, ITV3, E4, More 4 and digital text and radio services.

Sarah-Jane Gray of Digital UK said: "I'm pleased to report that the technical transition went according to plan and, from today, many more viewers will be able to receive digital TV free via an aerial. People in the Isle of Man have responded really well in adapting to the change and preparing in good time."

Digital UK, the independent body leading switchover, continues to provide support through local advice points (see notes), its website (digitaluk.co.uk) and helpline (08456 50 50 50). A switchover roadshow is also running today in the Market Square in Castletown.

The Switchover Help Scheme is still welcoming applications from eligible older and disabled people to get help to convert one television – including a choice of equipment, installation and aftercare. Eligible people who have already converted a TV set without assistance can still apply to convert a second set. Help Scheme engineers will be working in the area over the switchover period to help with retuning and viewers can contact the Help Scheme on 0800 40 85 901.

- ends; notes follow -

Notes to editors

1. To retune your Freeview, Top-Up TV or BT Vision equipment, follow these steps:

Note: These instructions are a guide only – each product works slightly differently. Your instruction manual will explain the process for your particular product. Make sure you do a full retune following the guide below. Some product menus have ‘add channels’ or ‘auto search’ functions which may not restore all channels.

- 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.

For more information on retuning visit digitaluk.co.uk/retuning

- Stage one of switchover took place on 18 June when analogue BBC Two was turned off and replaced with BBC digital channels at the Douglas transmitter group.

Advice points

Switchover advice points are running at the following locations on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 July, from 10am-4pm:

Douglas: Age Concern, 19 Drinkwater Street, Douglas, IM1 1AT

Ramsey: Town Hall, Parliament Square, IM8 1RT

St John’s: Tynwald Mills, IM4 3AD

Port Erin: British Legion Hall, Droghadfayle Road, IM9 6EE

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 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, S4C and Teletext), 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. Every eligible person will be offered practical help to convert one of their TV sets to digital in the run-up to switchover in each region. People are eligible if they are aged 75 years or more, have lived in a care home for six months or more, get (or could get) certain disability benefits, or are registered blind or partially sighted. Most people will be asked to contribute £40 towards the help but for those on certain income-related benefits, it’s free.

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

Contact:

Gemma McNeilis

Smith & Smith PR

gemma@smithandsmithpr.co.uk

07962 532 098

digitaluk.co.uk/press