

The Wednesday 30 September Re-tune

A Briefing (Final Version)

25 September 2009

This briefing paper has been prepared to explain what will happen on Wednesday 30 September 2009, when all Freeview equipment will need to be re-tuned. It explains why the re-tune is necessary for digital TV switchover, what will happen on the day, how the re-tune is being communicated, and what support is available.

1. What is going to happen on 30 September?

- On or after Wednesday 30 September 2009, all Freeview TVs and boxes will need to be re-tuned. This is because of improvements coming to the Freeview platform, and some services, including Five, moving to new frequencies. The changes will ensure that Five is available to all Freeview homes at the point of switchover; along with BBC One, BBC Two, ITV1 and Channel 4. It will also enable around half a million Freeview viewers to get Five for the first time from 30 September.
- During the morning of Wednesday 30 September, the following Freeview services will move:
 - **Nationwide**, for all 18 million Freeview homes, the following services will move between multiplexes¹, and will be 'lost' until the viewer re-tunes:
 - Five
 - ITV3²
 - ITV4²
 - ITV2+1 (which will also move channel number in England and Wales from 27 to 33)
 - Discovery will launch its new Freeview channel, Quest, on 30 September, so viewers of main TV transmitters will find this new service at channel 38 when they re-tune.
 - Some Freeview channel numbers will change on 30 September:
 - Pricedrop will move from 43 to 37
 - SuperCasino will move from 48 to 39
 - Rocks and Co will move from 49 to 40
 - Adult channels will be grouped in the 90s
 - Space will be reserved for future HD channels in the 50s
 - Top-Up TV Anytime channels will be moved from 38-41 to 307-310

¹ Note that the nationwide re-tune on 30 September, and the S4C move in Wales on 9 September, involve only services moving between multiplexes, and not the multiplexes themselves moving frequency. As such they are different from the Rowridge changes in March 2009, and should not incur any coverage, aerial, or reception issues.

² Note that relay viewers in those areas that have already switched will lose ITV3 and ITV4 as they move onto commercial multiplexes. See Appendix 1.

- **In addition, in areas that have already gone through switchover** by 30 September (5.6% of UK homes, representing c.1.5 million homes in Border, West Country and the Kilvey Hill, Preseli and Carmel transmitter groups in Wales) the following services will also move between multiplexes¹, and will be ‘lost’ until the viewer re-tunes:
 - All UK-wide BBC Radio stations (Radio 1, 1Xtra, Radio 2, Radio 3, Radio 4, Radio 5 Live, 5 Live Sports Extra, 6 Music, Radio 7, BBC Asian Network, BBC World Service).
 - BBC Red Button service 301.
- **In addition, at the Huntshaw Cross and Redruth main transmitters**, serving around 133,000 homes in north Devon and west Cornwall, all three commercial multiplexes will move frequencies (and change to the 8k transmission mode), and services including the following will be ‘lost’ until the viewer re-tunes:
 - Sky Three, Sky News, Sky Sports News, Dave, E4+1 [Arqiva Multiplex A]
 - Yesterday, Film4, 4Music, TMF, Ideal World, Dave ja vu, ITV2+1, Virgin 1+1 [Arqiva Multiplex B]
 - Fiver, Five US, Virgin 1, G.O.L.D, CITV, QVC, ESPN, CNN [SDN Multiplex]
- Even if the service name still appears on the on-screen menu, viewers will find that the channel itself is not available until they re-tune.
- The process is expected to complete by lunchtime, and Freeview viewers will be able to re-tune their equipment at any point after that. Note that they do not need to re-tune *on* Wednesday 30 September itself if they are not around, but they are encouraged to re-tune as soon after this date as they can to avoid losing services.

2. Why is the 30 September re-tune necessary?

- The 30 September re-tune is necessary to prepare the Freeview platform for future improvements and to ensure that from the point of switchover Five will be transmitted on a public service multiplex, which will have universal coverage at switchover, rather than on a commercial multiplex, with lower coverage at switchover.
- The re-tune will enable all DTT homes to receive Five at the point of switchover. ITV3 will swap places with Five, moving from a public service multiplex, to a commercial multiplex.
- The re-tune will also pave the way for the future introduction of Freeview HD, by clearing services from BBC Multiplex B in post-switchover areas, which will make space for the HD channels when they launch.
- The broadcasters have chosen to make other channel changes on the same day, in order to minimise the number of re-tunes for Freeview viewers. ITV3 and ITV2+1 will also move; and Discovery will launch its new channel Quest.
- Freeview and the broadcasters are encouraging Freeview viewers to get into the habit of re-tuning from time to time, to ensure that they have all of the available channels, and to keep their equipment up to date.

3. Will all digital equipment need to be re-tuned?

- All Freeview equipment, including Freeview TVs, Freeview boxes and Freeview+ recorders will need to be re-tuned. Seventy per cent of UK homes (18 million homes) have at least one piece of Freeview equipment on their main or second TVs.
- BT Vision and Top-Up TV boxes (which use the Freeview signal) will also need re-tuning.
- Note that while *some* Freeview equipment does automatically identify new services when they are first launched, the service moves on the 30 September are different, and we believe that most or all equipment will need to be re-tuned by the viewer.
- Analogue TVs do not need to be re-tuned.
- Satellite and cable services - such as Sky, Freesat and Virgin Media – are not affected.

4. Why is this happening on 30 September?

- Parliament has required Five to move to a public service multiplex, to provide universal coverage at switchover.
- For technical reasons this can only be done nationwide and on one day; the move has to be completed before the Granada region switches to digital starting on 4 November 2009.
- The broadcasters have therefore chosen Wednesday 30 September as the best time before Granada switchover to re-tune.
- The viewers at Huntshaw Cross and Redruth in the West Country would have had to re-tune anyway on that day, and so it saves these households an additional re-tune.
- We recognise that for viewers in areas switching in the latter half of 2009, this adds one more re-tune to other re-tunes that are required at each switchover date, and in Wales on 9 September for S4C (to move S4C to a public service multiplex). Unfortunately, these different technical events need to take place at different times.

5. Will anyone lose any services?

- It is important to note that the Freeview platform is always subject to changes in channel line-up.
- Around half a million current Freeview viewers will be able to receive Five for the first time after the re-tune, as it moves to a multiplex with higher coverage.
- Unfortunately, we estimate that the some viewers will lose access to ITV3 and ITV4, as they move to commercial multiplexes with slightly lower coverage.
- Freeview viewers who are watching relay transmitters in areas that have already switched over by 30 September (30% of viewers in Border, West Country and parts of Wales; or around half a million homes) will lose access to ITV3 and ITV4 as they move to commercial multiplexes that are not broadcast from the relay transmitters.
- The Community Channel service on Freeview will be closed on 30 September in areas which have already switched over.

6. How is it being managed?

- The technical operation and communications plan to inform Freeview viewers has been jointly agreed by Freeview, Digital UK and the UK's public service broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Five and S4C).
- The broadcasters are responsible for the technical changes, and informing their viewers of the re-tune (see 7 below).
- Freeview is leading the press and PR promotion of the re-tune.
- Since the re-tune is required as part of digital switchover, Digital UK is supporting the process by making available its new re-tune website and helpline, running supplementary advertising in the press (see 7 below), and communicating with trade and housing (see 8).

7. What communications and support is there?

- A comprehensive communications campaign launched on 17 September, including:
 - A new automated re-tuning phonenumber (on [0845 605 1122](tel:08456051122)) and website (at tvretune.co.uk) have been created, providing product specific, easy-to-follow re-tuning guides. The website also has a video showing viewers how to re-tune.
 - Trails running in BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Five airtime.
 - On-screen 'pop-up' messages on Freeview versions of the channels operated by the public service broadcasters (BBC One to BBC Four and BBC News, all ITV channels, all Channel 4 channels, and all Five channels) from Thursday 17 September until Sunday 4 October. On-screen messages are also appearing on Freeview versions of the UK-wide BBC Radio services.
 - Full page on-screen message will appear in place of those TV channels and radio stations which have moved from Wednesday 30 September until Sunday 4 October.
 - National press advertising on Sunday 27 and Wednesday 30 September.
 - All major electrical retailers, including Comet and Curry's, are displaying posters and leaflets promoting the re-tune, and providing advice on how to re-tune.
- See the [Appendix 2](#) for sample wording of the on-screen messages, and a screenshot of the new TV Re-tune website.

8. How will trade and housing be informed?

- Digital UK has written to all major electrical retailers and aerial installers on its database, as well as to manufacturers and social housing providers, alerting them to the re-tune.
- As noted above, electrical retailers on Digital UK's lists have been supplied with re-tuning leaflets and posters to put up in-store, reminding Freeview viewers to re-tune on or after Wednesday 30 September.
- Freeview and Digital UK are also working with trade publications, such as ERT Weekly and Retra Alert magazine, to explain the re-tune.

9. Will there be extra help available for Help Scheme customers?

- Help Scheme customers with Freeview equipment who have not retuned before will get re-tuning instructions, and will be able to call the Help Scheme for further assistance with re-tuning.
- Help Scheme customers with Freeview in West & North Wales and Granada will receive a letter reminding them to re-tune at both stages of switchover as well as on or after 30 September (and additionally on or after 9 September in Wales). The letter will enclose easy-to-follow re-tuning instructions for their specific equipment.

APPENDIX 1: Summary of Channel Changes on Wednesday 30 September

Post-Switchover Areas

Border, West Country and West Wales (Kilvey Hill, Preseli and Carmel)
= 1.5 million homes or 5.6% of the UK

	Main Tx Viewers (69% of viewers)	Relay Tx Viewers (31% of viewers)
MOVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five ITV3 ITV4 ITV2+1 BBC Radio BBC Red Button service (channel 301) PLUS for Huntshaw Cross & Redruth : All COM MUX channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five ITV2+1 BBC Radio BBC Red Button service (channel 301)
LOSSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Channel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITV3 ITV4 Community Channel
GAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quest 	None

Pre-Switchover Areas

Rest of Wales and Rest of the UK
= 25.1 million homes or 94.4% of the UK

	Main Tx Viewers (73% of viewers)	Relay Tx Viewers (27% of viewers)
MOVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five¹ ITV3² ITV4² ITV2+1¹ 	N/a (no DTT)
LOSSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some may lose ITV3 & ITV4² 	N/a (no DTT)
GAINS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quest Some may gain Five and ITV2+1¹ <p>(although note that ITV2+1 will only be available in England and Wales until the new ITV channel launches)</p>	N/a (no DTT)

1. Note that in pre-switchover regions Five coverage will increase by 2% or approx. 500,000 homes by moving from a commercial to a PSB mux

2. Note that in pre-switchover regions ITV3 & ITV4 coverage will reduce by 1.4-2% or approx 500,000 homes by moving from a PSB mux to commercial a mux

APPENDIX 2: Communications Examples

TV Re-tune Website:

The screenshot shows the 'TV Re-tune' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'FAQs', 'Re-tune guides', and 'Text size'. The main heading is 'TV Re-tune' with the date 'Wednesday 30 September'. Below this is a menu with options: 'Why do I need to re-tune?', 'How do I re-tune?', 'Troubleshooting', and 'Useful contacts'. A search bar is also present. The main content area is divided into several sections: a large banner for 'Re-tune on or after Wednesday 30 September' with a sub-heading 'Viewers with a Freeview TV or box need to re-tune from lunchtime onwards, to continue receiving digital channels and pick up new ones.'; a 'What's happening and why?' section with an image of a remote control and text explaining the need for re-tuning; a 'How to re-tune' section with an image of a remote control and a list of links: 'Re-tune guides and instruction manuals', 'Troubleshooting', and 'How to re-tune' video; a 'Re-tune news' section with a link to 'Freeview Press Release'; and a 'When do I need to re-tune?' section with a form for 'Your postcode' and 'House name or number', and a 'Go' button. Below the form is a 'Your questions' section with links for 'Why is this happening?' and 'What happens after I re-tune?', and a 'See all FAQs' link. At the bottom of the form is a 'Contact us' section with the text 'Call our help line for more information on re-tuning' and the phone number '08456 05 11 22'. At the bottom of the page, there is a 'Brought to you by:' section with logos for BBC, itv, 4, FIVE, and S4/C. The footer contains copyright information and links for 'Terms & conditions', 'Accessibility', 'Privacy policy', and 'Site map'.

Example wording of the on-screen messages (BBC versions):

Before 30th September: "From 30 September you will need to re-tune your Freeview TV or box using your remote control to continue to view all available channels. Press blue or go to www.bbc.co.uk/retune to find out more. Press yellow to clear this message"

On 30th September: "From lunchtime today you will need to re-tune your Freeview TV or box using your remote control to continue to view all available channels. Press blue or go to www.bbc.co.uk/retune to find out more. Press yellow to clear this message"