



Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy

MINISTER FOR BROADBAND, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE

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Industry and Government charting digital TV switchover

Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy, Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, today met with the Industry Advisory Group, charting the transition to digital television.

"Digital switchover will be finalised by the end of 2013, however we still need to convert the nearly 60 per cent of Australians who currently do not receive digital free to air broadcasts," Senator Conroy said.

"There is a global trend towards digital television and it is important Australia is not left behind. The Digital Switchover Taskforce has been established to ensure a strategic approach and the Industry Advisory Group will play a key role supporting and advising its efforts."

"Broadcasters, retailers, manufacturers, antenna technicians, public and commercial housing agencies as well as government departments all have a role to play in the digital TV switchover. Analog televisions, VCRs and other analog recording devices will need to be upgraded, in order to receive and record digital free to air broadcasts," Senator Conroy said.

The Industry Advisory Group comprises representatives from the broadcasting, manufacturing, retail, regulatory and property management sectors (see full list see below).

"The Digital Switchover Taskforce will partner with industry to provide reliable information to consumers in the lead-up to digital switchover. The Industry Advisory Group will contribute on a range of issues, including a detailed switchover timetable, communications, research and practical implementation," Senator Conroy said.

Last month, the Rudd Government announced a \$37.9 million strategy to ensure a smooth transition to digital TV.

The strategy comprises:

- \$8.5 million for the Australian Communications and Media Authority to undertake technical switchover-related projects, including an evaluation of digital TV transmission and reception throughout Australia.
- \$4.8 million for a 'Digital Tracker' to assess issues such as public awareness of digital switchover, intention of households to convert and actual conversion rates.
- \$1 million over two years for research into digital reception problems in multi-unit dwellings with a shared TV antenna system.
- \$6.7 million for an awareness campaign ensuring Australian consumers can be informed and confident about what products will suit their needs.
- \$16.9 million for the Digital Switchover Taskforce, which will coordinate the switchover program within the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy.

Digital switchover is important for all Australians as it not only provides access to such

things as better picture and sound quality and additional channels but it will also free-up spectrum which can be used for the delivery of new and improved broadcasting and communications services.

More information on the digital switchover program can be found at www.digitalswitchover.gov.au

The Industry Advisory Group:

- Kim Dalton, Director of Television, ABC Television
- Bruce Meagher, Director of Strategy & Communications, SBS Television
- Scott Briggs, Regulatory Affairs Manager, Nine Network
- Annabelle Herd, Network Manager, Broadcast Policy & Strategy, Network Ten
- Kate Fitzgerald, Acting Manager, Regulatory & Business Affairs, Seven Network
- Debra Richards, CEO, Australian Subscription Television & Radio Association
- Julie Flynn, CEO, Free TV Australia
- Shirley Brown, Secretary, Regional Broadcasters Association
- Andrew Brine, President, Australian Community Television Alliance
- Ross Henderson, Chairman, Australian Electrical & Electronic Manufacturers' Association
- Colin Doyle, Technical Director, Consumer Electronics Suppliers Association
- Michael Lonie, E-Commerce & Tenancy Services Director, Australian Retailers Association
- Clive Morton, Terrestrial Media Services Director, Broadcast Australia
- James Shaw, General Manager, Analysis & Coordination Division, Australian Communications & Media Authority
- Jackie Zelinsky, representing the National Community Titles Institute

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