
GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

No. 954

6 December 2013

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS ACT, 2005 (ACT NO. 36 OF 2005)**PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF BROADCASTING DIGITAL MIGRATION POLICY (AS AMENDED)**

1. The Minister of Communications intends to amend the Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy issued in *Government Gazette* No. 31408 on 08 September 2008, as amended in *Government Gazette* No. 35014 on 07 February 2012 and *Government Gazette* No. 35051 on 17 February 2012 (the Policy), to the extent indicated in the Schedule.
2. Interested persons are invited to provide written comments on the proposed amendments, within 30 calendar days of the date of publication, addressed to -

The Director-General, Department of Communications; For attention: Mr. W Dlangamandla, Chief Director: Technology, Digital Migration Project Office
Block C, iParioli Office Park, 1166 Park Street, Hatfield, Pretoria
Private Bag X860, Pretoria, 0001
bdm@doc.gov.za; (012) 4278039/ 4207737/ 4278000

3. Comments received after the closing date will be disregarded.



Yunus Carrim, MP
Minister of Communications

SCHEDULE

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF BROADCASTING DIGITAL MIGRATION POLICY (AS AMENDED)

Amendment of acronym in the List of Acronyms

The List of Acronyms in the Policy is amended by the substitution for the acronym 'MPEG-4' of the following acronym:

"MPEG-4 - Improved video and audio (AV) compression technology developed by the Moving Picture Experts Group."

Amendment of paragraph 5 of the Foreword by the Minister in the Policy

The following paragraph is substituted for paragraph 5 of the Foreword by the Minister in the Policy:

"In conclusion, the time to migrate to a digital broadcasting system has inevitably arrived. We need to embrace it because it is a major step in improving our people's lives and I sincerely hope that this policy is a bold step in our quest to achieve that goal. The looming switch-on date requires us to work at the speed of light, consistent with our business unusual strategy to enhance the benefits of digital television to all our people."

Amendment of paragraph 1 of the Executive Summary of the Policy

The following paragraph is inserted after sub-paragraph 8 of paragraph 1 of the Executive Summary of the Policy:

"To avoid challenges in implementing the Digital Migration programme, caused mainly by differences between broadcasters and also between some manufacturers, the use of a control system is not mandatory. However, the STBs will have a control system to protect Government's investment in the subsidized STB market and the local electronics industry and, with rapid technological changes, for future use by broadcasters who might not want to use it on implementation."

Amendment of subparagraphs 1 and 2 of paragraph 2 of the Executive Summary of the Policy

The following paragraphs are substituted for subparagraphs 1 and 2 of paragraph 2 of the Executive Summary of the Policy:

"The switch-on of the digital television signal will take place by 01 April 2014. The date for switch-off of the analogue terrestrial signal will be determined by the Minister of Communications after engaging with the Cabinet and the relevant stakeholders.

National broadcasting digital signal coverage shall cover 84 percent of the population by March 2014. Areas that may be deemed difficult or uneconomical to reach will be covered by DTH satellite using the DVB-S2 technology."

Amendment of paragraph 2.1.3 of the Policy

The following paragraph is substituted for paragraph 2.1.3 of the Policy:

“2.1.3 Universal Service and Access and the availability and accessibility of broadcasting services to all citizens is a key component of successful digital migration. In order for households to continue to receive television services on their current analogue TV sets after the analogue signal is switched off, Set-Top-Boxes (STBs), which convert the digital signals into analogue signals, are required. The total TV-owning households in SA are estimated at 13 million, of which approximately 65 percent rely exclusively on free-to-air broadcasting services. Of these 13 million TV households, about 6.2 million are poor households who would find it very difficult to afford STBs.”

Amendment of paragraph 3.3.1 of the Policy

The following paragraph is substituted for paragraph 3.3.1 of the Policy:

“3.3.1 Government has decided that the digital signal should be switched on to commence the dual illumination period by 01 April 2014. The date for switch-off of the analogue terrestrial signal will be determined by the Minister of Communications after engaging with the Cabinet and the relevant stakeholders.”

Amendment of paragraph 5.1.1 of the Policy

Paragraph 5.1.1 of the Policy is amended -

- (a) by the insertion of the words ‘that can be used’ after the word ‘tools’; and
- (b) by the insertion of the words ‘if STB control is used by broadcasters’ at the end of the paragraph.

Amendment of paragraph 5.1.2.2 of the Policy

Paragraph 5.1.2.2 of the Policy is amended by the insertion of the words ‘that can be used’ after the words ‘system’ and ‘and’ respectively.

Amendment of paragraph 5.1.2.4 of the Policy

Paragraph 5.1.2.4 of the Policy is amended by the insertion of the words ‘that can be used’ after the words ‘download feature’.

Amendment of paragraph 5.1.2.6 of the Policy

Paragraph 5.1.2.6 of the Policy is amended by the insertion of the words ‘that can be used’ after the word ‘system’.

Amendment of paragraph 5.1.2.7 of the Policy

Paragraph 5.1.2.7 of the Policy is amended –

- (a) by the substitution for paragraph 5.1.2.7 of the following paragraph:

“5.1.2.7 have a robust STB control system that -

- a) is not mandatory for use by broadcasters in the transmission and management of their broadcasting services;

b) can be used to ensure that consumers don't have to own multiple boxes for both current and future broadcasting services; and

c) can provide long term benefits to the broadcasting industry as a whole;"; and

(b) by the insertion after paragraph 5.1.2.7 of the following paragraph:

"5.1.2.7(A) To avoid subscription broadcasters unfairly benefitting from the STB control system, Government's investment in the STB Control System will be recovered from those subscription broadcasters that choose to make use of the STB Control system; and"

Amendment of paragraph 5.1.2.8 of the Policy

The following paragraph is substituted for paragraph 5.1.2.8 of the Policy:

"5.1.2.8 Enable access to a secure bootloader mechanism to ensure access to the STB control system by broadcasters on the DTT platform that choose to make use of the STB control system."

Amendment of paragraph 5.1.4 of the Policy

Paragraph 5.1.4 of the Policy is amended by the insertion of the words 'that can be used' after the word 'System'.

Amendment of paragraph 7.2 of the Policy

The following paragraph is substituted for paragraph 7.2 of the Policy:

"7.2 Transmission facilities for MUX 1, or any multiplex allocated for the public broadcaster, shall aim to achieve 84 percent population coverage by 31st March 2014. The remaining 16 percent shall be covered by the DTH satellite network which shall have a footprint covering the entire geography of South Africa. This will thus enable analogue switch-off in South Africa with 100% population and geographic coverage for the public broadcasting services."

Amendment of paragraph 9 of the Policy

The following paragraph is inserted after paragraph 9.2 of the Policy:

"9.3 To avoid challenges in implementing the Digital Migration programme, caused mainly by differences between broadcasters and also between some manufacturers, the use of a control system is not mandatory. However, the STBs will have a control system to protect Government's investment in the subsidized STB market and the local electronics industry and, with rapid technological changes, for future use by broadcasters who might not want to use it on implementation."
