

department of communications and digital technologies



PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BROADCASTING DIGITAL MIGRATION

13 JUNE 2023

Preparing for the Digital Economy

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Since the last update to the Portfolio Committee, the Broadcast Digital Migration process has been focused on finalising consultations with affected stakeholders regarding the Analogue Switch-off Date and Approach. ASO is the critical step that will release spectrum to other operators and eventually shift the country towards full digital services.

The following key stakeholders were engaged to align on the BDM project objectives and to consolidate the industry inputs towards the conclusion of the BDM process;

- Mobile network operators
- Broadcasters (SABC, eTV and Community broadcasters)
- Signal distributor, Sentech
- Regulator, ICASA

The process of Gazetting the Analogue Switch-off date is on a consultative basis as per the Constitutional Court requirement. We are targeting to achieve the highest alignment on the ASO date to minimize post announcement tensions that could lead to further delays.

The consultations process were based on a two stage approach, where the first approach was based on written submissions. The second phase was based on physical engagements with key stakeholders Broadcasters (SABC, eTV and Community Media), the Signal distributor (SENTECH) and the Regulator (ICASA) to solicit views and further align on Broadcast Digital Migration objectives and the analogue switch-off plan.

The consultation process is also undertaken to harmonize multiple stakeholder views, and to also engage on some of the issues that led to previous litigation actions targeting to align parties where possible.

The consultation process is yielding positive results, wherein key stakeholders are agreeing that ASO should be undertaken to release spectrum for future ICT development requirements.

The key stakeholders have agreed and are buying into a two-step approach where;

Step 1: Immediately switch-off analogue services above 694MHz band to release spectrum for other telecommunications use.

Step 2: Temporarily accommodate some of the high population areas below 694MHz, and switch-off within a given period.

A two-step approach towards ASO is deemed to be a viable approach for broadcasters. They have motivated that this will be a win-win approach that will enable ASO progress, release spectrum and allow them to recover from post COVID and Load-shedding impact .

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

The BDM programme adopted a multiprong approach that utilizes multiple platforms to create awareness on BDM activities. In the past, the awareness programme was rolled out in the following manner.

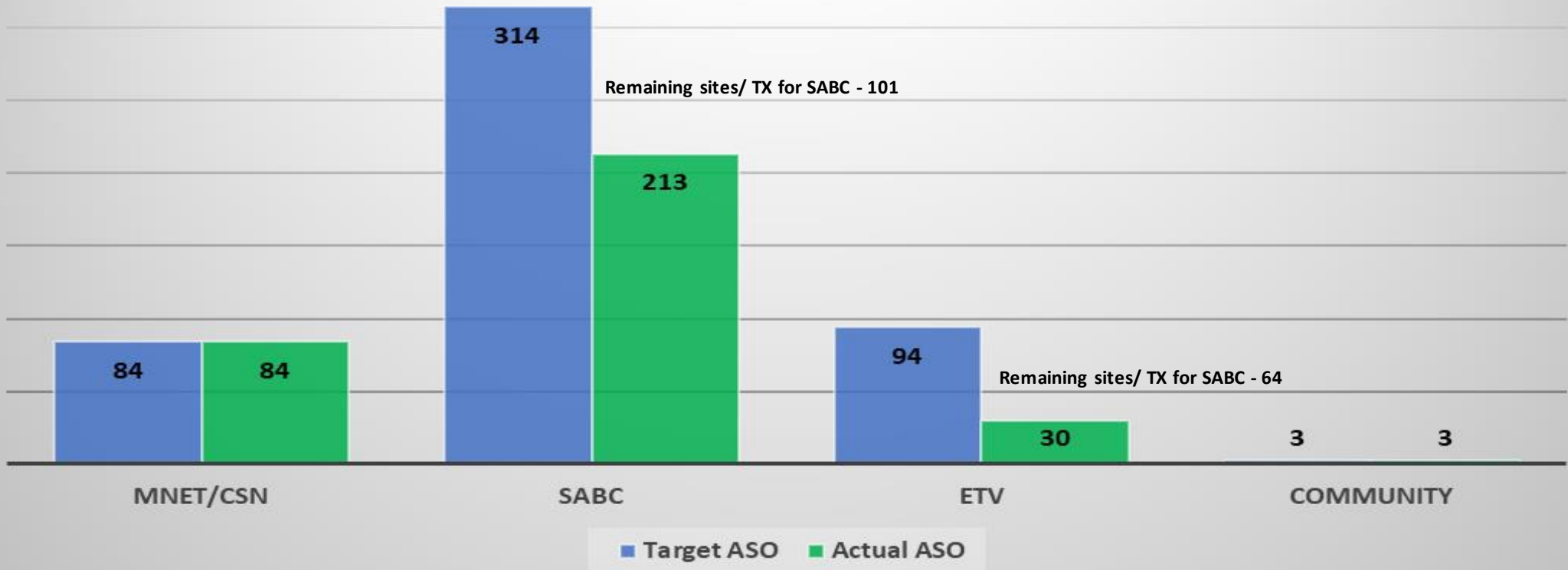
Radio & Television	Direct and Physical Engagements	Online and Print.
Key messages developed in eleven official languages	Registration centre engagements	National Gazettes
SABC Radio & Television	Provincial Imbizos by Ministers & Officials	Social media platforms
Over 90 Community Radio stations	Consultations with SALGA and House of Traditional Affairs and Khoisan	Published frequently asked questions(FAQs)
	Community outreach programmes	Posters and Pamphlets

The SABC has submitted a last mile awareness campaign proposal to USAASA. The proposal is being processed by the SABC and USAASA, targeting to rollout more campaigns in preparation for ASO.

- Since the beginning of the STB registration process in 2015, a total of **1,554,309** applications have been registered for Government subsidised STBs. These numbers include the number of registrations for the extended period of July to 30 September 2022.
- As per the Constitutional Court ruling, the Minister extended the registration deadline to September 2022, and for the extended period of registrations, a total of **178 300** new registrations were recorded.
- SAPO reported that there are late registration applications amounting to **127 000** received between October 2022 and 30th May 2023. There is about **3 000** applications that are being processed.
- We need to finalise a provision process for late applications, and for possible post ASO applications. This is necessary to ensure that indigent households that registers late are provided for during and after the ASO project.

- ❑ MNET has switched off all their 84 Analogue transmission in all provinces across the country.
- ❑ The SABC analogue transmission has been switched-off in the five provinces of the Free-State, Northern Cape, North-West, Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces.
 - 213 Analogue Transmitters against 314 switched off across the country, this include LPLC sites.
 - During the month of May, the SABC switched-off one site in the Western Cape, Grabouw.
- ❑ eTV has switched off a total of 30 sites, against their 94 sites across the country.
- ❑ In the 5 provinces (FS, NC, NW, MPL, LP) where the SABC and Mnet analogue Services have been switched off, Sentech has concluded frequency restacking of spectrum bands for completion of digital migration in these provinces.
- ❑ Achievement of ASO in Gauteng, Western-Cape, Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape provinces will mark the completion of digital migration to enable the final release of spectrum in these provinces

Analogue switch-off status - March 2022





STB INSTALLATIONS PER TRANSMITTER & TOWN - EC



SENTECH TRANSMITTER	Total Qualifying	Total Registered aligned to SITA	Total Completed Installations	% COMPLETED of registered households	Required to reach 100% of registered households	80% of registered households	Required to reach 80% of registered households	Above 694 MHz
Aliwal North	5143	1761	1413	80%	348	1409		Y
Barkly East	1265	253	60	24%	194	203	143	
Cradock	8826	1017	370	36%	647	814	444	Y
Butterworth	22404	10074	7566	75%	2508	8059	493	
Cala	7262	6217	4574	74%	1644	4974	400	
Despatch	15805	1808	2602	144%		1447		
East London	52474	11616	8092	70%	3524	9293	1201	
Elands Height	8087	3776	512	14%	3264	3021	2509	
Elliot	1757	1637	1186	72%	451	1310	124	Y
Engcobo	4659	0	0	#DIV/0!	0	0	0	Y
Entshatshongo	14561	6844	3645	53%	3198	5475	1830	
Graaff-Reinet	5373	977	1055	108%		781		
Grahamstown	21903	5043	5190	103%		4034		
Hankey	2254	119	72	60%	47	95	23	
Kareedouw	11884	2595	2410	93%	186	2076		
King Williams Town	53062	11608	5994	52%	5614	9286	3292	Y
Kirkwood	6151	790	1009	128%		632		
Matatiele	14638	12636	10466	83%	2170	10109		
Mount Ayliff	19501	13640	3804	28%	9836	10912	7108	
Patensie	1601	79	17	22%	62	63	46	Y
Port Elizabeth	100325	14180	13238	93%	942	11344		
Port St Johns	6521	1663	476	29%	1187	1330	854	Y
Queenstown	47308	22729	16987	75%	5741	18183	1196	
Somerset East	3053	296	100	34%	196	237	137	Y
Sterkspruit	10882	1814	1419	78%	395	1451	32	
Suurberg	1397	77	11	14%	66	61	50	Y
Ugie	2105	837	621	74%	216	670	49	
Umtata	30478	19788	11497	58%	8291	15830	4333	Y
Willowmore	2368	713	219	31%	494	571	352	Y
Andrieskraal								
Hankey								
Paul Sauer dam								
Ngangeliswe								

- The Eastern Cape has **33 sites** remaining to be switched-off
- 12 Sites are ready for Switch off as they reached the ASO Threshold
- 11 of the 33 sites are above 694 of which 1 has reached the ASO Threshold
- We are working towards achieving threshold for remaining sites by the end of June



ANALOGUE SWITCH-OFF - WC



SENTECH TRANSMITTER	Total Qualifying	Total Registered aligned to SITA	Total Completed Installations	% COMPLETED of registered households	Required to reach 100% of registered households	80% of registered households	Required to reach 80% of registered households	Above 694 MHz
Beaufort West	6221	2755	2 542	92%	213	2204		
Cape Town	273755	46854	37300	80%	9554	37483	183	Y
Ceres	6532	1597	1462	92%	135	1277		
Clifton	1852	2	2	106%		2		
Fishhoek	820	630	521	83%	109	504		Y
Franschhoek	3585	369	234	63%	135	295	61	Y
George	27002	6193	5795	94%	398	4954		Y
Groot Brakrivier	4470	256	184	72%	72	205	21	
Hermanus	9125	2686	1461	54%	1225	2149	688	
Hex Rivier	4370	232	197	85%	35	186		
Kleinmond	1163	284	60	21%	224	227	167	
Knysna	8535	650	596	92%	54	520		
Ladismith (Cape)	2191	630	575	91%	55	504		
Matjiesfontein	629	346	307	89%	39	277		
Montague	2817	653	637	98%	16	523		
Napier	3700	439	384	87%	55	351		
Oudtshoorn	9423	2672	2529	95%	143	2138		
Paarl	20089	4312	4060	94%	252	3449		
Piketberg	18127	3151	1791	57%	1360	2521	730	Y
Plettenberg Bay	6705	524	502	96%	22	419		
Riversdale	9738	1260	892	71%	368	1008	116	
Sea Point	1106	0	0	#DIV/0!	0	0	0	Y
Simonstown	1799	29	29	100%	0	23		Y
Stellenbosch	12113	1214	1172	97%	42	971		Y
Table Mountain	2185	419	352	84%	67	335		Y
Touwsrivier	1594	249	244	98%	5	199		
Tygerberg	29453	7572	7376	97%	196	6058		
Uniondale	1066	189	137	72%	52	151	14	Y
Vanrhynsdorp	11115	1838	1659	90%	179	1471		
Villiersdorp	18967	2936	2077	71%	859	2349	272	
Houtbay		446	180	40%	266	357	177	Y
Aurora								Y
Amandaglen								
Uniondale Town								

- The Western Cape has **35 sites** remaining to be switched off
- 25 Sites are ready for Switch off as they reached the ASO Threshold
- 12 of the 35 sites are above 694Mhz of which 7 has reached the ASO Threshold
- We are working towards achieving threshold for remaining sites by the end of June

STB INSTALLATIONS PER TRANSMITTER & TOWN - KZN

SENTECH TRANSMITTER	Total Qualifying	Total Registered aligned to SITA	Total Completed Installations	% COMPLETED of registgered households	Required to reach 100% of registgered households	80% of registgered households	Required to reach 80% of registgered households	Above 694 MHZ
Donnybrook	30221	14663	11 521	79%	3142	11731	210	Y
Durban	309094	54596	54 024	99%	572	43677		
The Bluff	55239	5783	4 378	76%	1405	4626	248	Y
Verulam	235	0	0	#DIV/0!	0	0	0	
Empangeni	4195	2818	2 240	80%	578	2254	14	Y
Eshowe	63172	15726	11 409	73%	4317	12581	1172	
Glencoe	62188	10943	8 060	74%	2883	8754	694	
Greytown	20864	8126	4 401	54%	3725	6501	2100	Y
Howick	8836	477	279	58%	198	382	103	
Ladysmith	13903	6949	4 469	64%	2480	5559	1090	
Loskop	2330	500	449	90%	51	400		
Louwsburg	12124	1653	1 807	109%		1322		
Mooi River	18688	1976	1 840	93%	136	1581		
Newcastle	14386	2937	2 263	77%	674	2350	87	Y
Nongoma	7867	4422	3 939	89%	483	3538		Y
Nqutu	15335	6076	4 116	68%	1960	4861	745	Y
Overport	4789	135	32	24%	103	108	76	
Pietermaritzburg	66410	5061	1 638	32%	3423	4049	2411	
Pongola	6283	1772	1 621	91%	151	1418		
Port Shepstone	34255	12415	10 969	88%	1446	9932		
Qudeni	8246	4936	5 086	103%		3948		
Straalhoek	14557	9319	7 160	77%	2159	7455	295	Y
Ubombo	29702	16874	13 949	83%	2925	13500		Y
Ulundi	16959	9373	8 642	92%	731	7499		
Vryheid	7015	2135	2 352	110%		1708		

- The KZN province has **26 sites** remaining to be switched-off
- 12 Sites are ready for Switch off as they reached the ASO Threshold
- 9 of the 26 sites are above 694Mhz of which 3 has reached the ASO Threshold
- We are working towards achieving threshold for remaining sites by the end of June

STB INSTALLATIONS PER TRANSMITTER & TOWN - GP

SENTECH TRANSMITTER	Total Qualifying	Total Registered aligned to SITA	Total Completed Installations	% COMPLETED of registgered households	Required to reach 100% of registgered households	80% of registgered households	Required to reach 80% of registgered households	Above 694 MHZ
HELDERKRUIN	47717	5926	4 760	80%	1166	4741		
JOHANNESBURG	860775	82441	65 864	80%	16577	65953	89	
WELVERDIEND	51956	8041	7 480	93%	561	6433		
PRETORIA	263499	23724	21 662	91%	2062	18979		
HEIDELBERG	3206	3914	3 487	89%	427	3131		Y
MULBARTON								Y

- The GP has **6 sites** remaining to be switched off
- All 6 ready for Switch off as they reached the ASO Threshold
- 2 of the 6 sites are above 694HZ

- Loadshedding impacting installation rate – installers to extend working time and maximise performance during availability hours.
- Slow run-rate in the provinces due to SAPO logistics challenge – The Department is working with USAASA to procure transportation services.

Following the successful consultation process with key stakeholders, we are targeting to finalise and Gazette the Analogue switch-off date for South Africa during the month of June 2023. The following activities will be undertaken during to month to finalise Step-1 of the plan ;

- Broadcasters submit frequency amendments to ICASA
- Joint Spectrum Advisory Group will meet and make recommendations to Council
- ICASA Council will meet to process recommendations by JSAG.
- Creation of ASO awareness will commence through Insertion of notification messages for households
- Batch one ASO termination & relocate some services to below 694MHz

We have also concluded the technical analyses for step-two of our plan, the Department is working with stakeholders to formally record timelines for this phase, where after the dates will also be included in the Gazette.

