
GOVERNMENT NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

No. 232

18 March 2015

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS ACT, 2005 (ACT 36 OF 2005)

AMENDMENT OF BROADCASTING DIGITAL MIGRATION POLICY ISSUED UNDER GOVERNMENT GAZETTE NO 31408 ON 08 SEPTEMBER 2008

I, Azwihangwisi Faith Muthambi, Minister of Communications, hereby amend the Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy issued in Government Gazette No 31408 on 08 September 2008 as amended by amendments published in Government Gazette No. 35014 on 17 February 2012, to the extent indicated below taking into consideration submissions made by stakeholders on the amendments proposed by the Department of Communications on 06 December 2013.

1. Insertion of an Acronym in the Policy

The following Acronym is hereby inserted to the List of Acronyms in the Policy

Inserted Acronym

MUX: 1 Multiplexer 1

2. 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 approach to enhance the benefits of digital television to all our people."

3. 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 and switch-off date of the digital and analogue broadcasting digital terrestrial television signals will respectively be determined by the Minister of Communications in consultation with Cabinet".

The national broadcasting terrestrial television digital signal coverage shall aim to cover 84 percent of the total South African population. Areas that may be deemed difficult or uneconomical to reach will be covered by free-to-air DTH satellite using the DVB-S2 technology”.

4. Amendment of paragraph 1.1.8 of the Policy

The following paragraph is hereby substituted for paragraph 1.1.8 of the Policy:

“1.1.8 In order to continue viewing television using the current analogue TV sets, the public will be required to use set-top boxes (STBs) as a transitional measure, which converts the transmitted digital terrestrial television signal to analogue. Otherwise, it will be necessary to acquire digital-enabled TV sets”.

5. Amendment of paragraph 2.1.3 of the Policy

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

“2.1.3 Universal access, the availability and accessibility of broadcasting services to all citizens are 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 South Africa are estimated at 13 million, of which approximately 65 per cent rely exclusively on free-to-air broadcasting services”.

6. Amendment of paragraph 3.3.1 of the Policy

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

“3.3.1 Government is committed to ensure a successful migration in South Africa. Taking into account the different processes, that need to be completed before digital switch-on, Government has decided that the digital signal should be switched-on, on a date to be determined by the Minister in consultation with Cabinet. The date for the final switch-off of the analogue signal will similarly be announced by the Minister in consultation with Cabinet.”

7. Amendment of paragraph 5.1.2 of the Policy

Paragraph 5.1.2 of the Policy is amended by the deletion of paragraphs 5.1.2.6 and 5.1.2.8.

The following paragraph is hereby substituted for paragraph 5.1.2.2 and 5.1.2.7 of the Policy:

"5.1.2.2 have a control system to prevent government subsidised free-to-air DTT STBs from functioning in non-South African DTT networks.

"5.1.2.7 have a robust control system that will be used to benefit the TV households by ensuring that they continue to receive free-to-air broadcasting services in their existing analogue television sets".

8. Paragraphs 5.1.2(A), (B) and (C) are inserted in the Policy:

"5.1.2(A) In keeping with the objectives of ensuring universal access to broadcasting services in South Africa and protecting government investment in subsidised STB market, STB control system in the free-to-air DTT will be non-mandatory.

"5.1.2(B) The STB control system for the free-to-air DTT STBs shall -

- (a) not have capabilities to encrypt broadcast signals for the subsidised STBs; and
- (b) be used to protect government investment in subsidised STB market thus supporting the local electronic manufacturing sector.

"5.1.2(C) Depending on the kind of broadcasting services broadcasters may want to provide to their customers, individual broadcasters may at their own cost make decisions regarding encryption of content."

9. Amendment of paragraph 5.1.4 of the Policy

The following paragraph is substituted for paragraph 5.1.4 of the Policy:

"5.1.4 The South African Bureau of Standards will develop a conformance testing regime to ensure that STBs conform to the South African Standards for the South African DTT electronic communications network".

10. 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 cover 84 per cent of the population coverage. The remaining 16 per cent shall be covered by free-to-air DTH satellite network, which shall have a footprint covering the entire country. This will thus enable analogue switch-off in South Africa with 100% population coverage for the public broadcasting services".



MS AF MUTHAMBI, MP
MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS