

## NEWS RELEASE

for immediate release

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2005

### **Switchover dates enable consumers and industry to plan for life after analogue TV**

Ofcom's proposal for the digital television regional switchover sequence has been hailed as "the start of the critical year for UK digital TV" by the industry association, the Digital TV Group. The dates are the closest the UK has come to a firm plan and enable industry and consumers to prepare for the transition.

The proposal, published today, provides detail of when each of the 15 TV regions might switch within the current proposed timetable of 2008 – 2012. While this is still a draft publication, and not a Government announcement, it is clear evidence that digital switchover is getting closer and that key decisions will be made shortly.

Commenting on the announcement, DTG Director-General Marcus Coleman said: "We welcome the publication of this provisional order – this information is essential for the industry to prepare and plan its product and service provisions to ensure the adequate supply of digital equipment to meet increased consumer demands."

The DTG's Director of Public Affairs, Richard Lindsay-Davies, added: "There is plenty of time for consumers to prepare, even in the regions that will switch to digital first. The industry is working together to ensure digital switchover is a seamless process. "

"To help consumers, the DTG has just launched a new web site ([www.digitalswitchover.tv](http://www.digitalswitchover.tv)), commissioned by the DTI. The site, an industry first, has been specifically designed for switchover and advises consumers of the digital TV choices available at their postcode."

As predicted at the DTG Summit last month, it seems that 2005 really will be the critical year for digital TV in the UK. Speaking at the summit, held at London's BAFTA, Sir Gerald Kaufman MP said: "I believe the Government is being more timorous than it needs to be." This was reinforced by the DTG's Chairman, Prof. David Youlton, who reflected that society "has historically reacted to change with uncertainty and fear. There is a tendency to play safe and avoid difficult decisions. These options are now closed!"

Ultimately, the responsibility for digital switchover lies with Government, which is expected to make more detailed announcements, including target analogue cessation dates by region, later this year. A back-stop date (2012) for switchover has already been set in the commercial broadcasters' digital renewal licenses, which were issued in December last year.

Following a long period of investment and analysis, the implementation stage of digital switchover is now beginning.

### **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

#### **IMAGES**

The following print-quality images are available at [www.dtg.org.uk/dtg/press.html](http://www.dtg.org.uk/dtg/press.html) or on request from [mediaoffice@dtg.org.uk](mailto:mediaoffice@dtg.org.uk) / 020 8891 1830:

Regional switchover map

DTG logo

Sir Gerald Kaufman MP speaking at the DTG Summit

Prof. David A. Youlton – DTG Chairman

Marcus Coleman – DTG Director-General

Richard Lindsay-Davies – DTG Director of Public Affairs

### **ABOUT THE DIGITAL TV GROUP**

The Digital TV Group (DTG) is the industry association for Digital Television in the UK: an independent body facilitating the rapid roll-out of digital television and convergence across the communications industry. Its membership stretches from camera to consumer; from the BBC, BSkyB and OFCOM to Sony, Philips and Panasonic, Dixons and Comet through to the Consumers' Association, RNIB and RNID. Its agenda covers all aspects of future technology, public affairs and the setting, promotion and interpretation of standards and good practice. For further information, please see [www.dtg.org.uk](http://www.dtg.org.uk).

Over **100 member organisations** value the business benefits that arise from first-hand participation in DTG activities.

**For more information and to arrange media interviews please contact:**

**David Joyce**, Press Officer, Digital TV Group

[djoyce@dtg.org.uk](mailto:djoyce@dtg.org.uk) 020 8891 1830 07795 962 792