



Australian Government  
Department of Communications

**SUBJECT: REGULATION OF DIGITAL TELEVISION**

**TIMING: 4 FEBRUARY 2014**

**KEY ISSUES:**

Out of scope

3. The lapsing of these provisions, in conjunction with the emergence of new compression standards, such as MPEG-4 and digital television technologies such as hybrid broadcast broadband television (HbbTV) (MT2013/0265 refers), provides an opportunity to consider the broader policy issues surrounding the future regulation of digital television and its place in a converged environment. The Department intends to undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders to gauge their views on many of these technical regulatory issues in the first half of 2014.

Out of scope

**RECOMMENDATION/S:**

That you: Note the information provided	Noted/Please discuss  Malcolm Turnbull .....
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*Simon Pelling*  
Simon Pelling  
First Assistant Secretary  
Broadcasting

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Date: 2 December 2013

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Out-of-Scope of the request

Out of scope

To date, broadcasters have expressed an interest in s47C and migrating all broadcasting and datacasting services to MPEG-4. As noted in earlier briefing, not all digital receivers in homes can receive services using MPEG-4, although that is likely to improve over time as most retail equipment is now MPEG-4 capable.

**ISSUES**

The completion of digital switchover process, and the lapsing of a number of rules that have governed the provision of free-to-air digital television services to date, provides the Government with an opportunity to consider how these services should be regulated in the future. Some of the policy issues that will need to be examined in this context are highlighted by the following questions:

s47C

9. Should broadcasters be permitted to commence a transition to MPEG-4 in the short term?

s47C

**CONSULTATION:** Legal Division, ACMA

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Summary of digital television regulation**

The following tables below outline the regulatory obligations that were placed on commercial and national broadcasters before and after switchover.

Out of scope

**Broadcasters in metropolitan areas and aggregated regional licence areas**

Broadcasters in these areas are...	Before switchover	After switchover
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Out of scope

Authorised to transmit services using MPEG-4 encoding technology <sup>1</sup> (see MT2013/0265 for further information on the transition to MPEG-4)	x	✓
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<sup>1</sup> While not prohibited under the legislation, the former Government expressed a preference for the introduction of MPEG-4 only services to be delayed until after digital switchover had been completed

Broadcasters in the remote licence areas and smaller regional licence areas

Broadcasters in these areas are...	Before switchover	After switchover
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<p>Out of scope</p>
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Authorised to transmit services using MPEG-4 encoding technology (see MT2013/0265 for further information on the transition to MPEG-4)	x	✓
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