

Hong Kong to enter era of full digital TV broadcast tomorrow

Hong Kong will end analogue TV services at 11.59pm tonight (November 30) and will enter an era of full digital TV broadcast tomorrow (December 1).

"It is a worldwide trend to implement full digital TV broadcast. Not only does digital TV outperform analogue TV in terms of audio and picture quality, it also allows valuable spectrum resources to be utilised more effectively. Spectrum vacated can be used for various purposes, including high value-added mobile telecommunications services, such as 5G, and to enhance network capacity and relieve congested data traffic at indoor mobile hotspots, such as MTR stations. The switch to full digital broadcast helps support Hong Kong's overall telecommunications services and smart city development," the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau, said.

A vast majority of the Hong Kong population are ready for full digital TV broadcast. According to the survey findings in October this year, only 2.2 per cent (around 58 000) of households were still using analogue TVs. Among those only less than 10 per cent of households indicated that they had not switched to digital TV owing to financial reasons. Households still using analogue TVs will only need to add a digital TV receiver in order to keep accessing local free TV programmes. A digital TV set-top box costs as low as several hundred dollars, while a digital TV set with basic features costs just a little more than \$1,000.

The government has engaged the Hong Kong Council of Social Service to launch the Community Care Fund Digital Television Assistance Programme. It will continue to run until July 15, 2021 to help analogue TV households with financial needs to obtain digital TV receivers. More than 20 000 eligible households have already benefited from the programme since its introduction in January this year. For details, please visit the dedicated website (digitaltv.hkcss.org.hk/en) or call 2922 9230.