



Australian Government



Regional South Australia: Digital TV reception issues

Coverage from multiple transmitters and logical channel numbering

Regional South Australia switched to digital-only television on 15 December 2010. To receive free-to-air digital TV, your television needs to be able to receive digital signals. You will need to connect a digital set-top box or digital video recorder to your existing analog TV, or have a television with a built-in digital tuner.

New commercial channels are also being added by the broadcasters so residents will need to retune their set-top box or TV to pick up the new digital channels when they commence.

This fact sheet contains information on known reception issues in regional South Australia.

This information may be useful for you in addressing issues yourself or you may want to provide it to an antenna installer who can assist you.

Where can I get information about television services in my area?

To find out about your local television services, the frequencies they are transmitted on, and the expected coverage of the transmitter serving your local area, go to mySwitch on the Digital Ready website www.digitalready.gov.au.

Where do my television services come from?

Viewers in some areas of regional South Australia may be able to receive their television services from more than one transmitter.

For example, viewers in Port Lincoln should take their TV signal from the local transmitter in town. However, some homes may be pointing their antenna so it also receives services from either the Tumby Bay transmitter, which is about 50 kilometres north east of Port Lincoln, or as far away as Adelaide transmitter, which is about 245 kilometres east of Port Lincoln.

To receive the best reception in situations where there is more than one transmitter providing coverage in your area, you will need to ensure that your antenna is pointed towards the transmitter which provides the strongest signal. To find out which transmitter provides the best coverage in your area, you should go to mySwitch and enter your home address.

What can I do to improve poor digital reception?

The first step towards improving your reception is to check your antenna system, to the extent that you are able to, ensure there are no loose fitting connections or plugs, and that your fly lead (the cable connecting your TV or set-top box to the wall) is of good quality. You should also check that the signal is not obstructed in any way, for example, by trees.

You should then ensure that your antenna installation is optimised to receive the best television signals available in your area. This will mean ensuring that your antenna is correctly oriented, and in some cases might include installing a high-gain antenna and a masthead amplifier.

An antenna installer can help you with setting up your antenna installation to ensure that you will receive the best reception. You can find your local Australian Government Endorsed Antenna Installer by calling the Digital Ready Information Line on 1800 20 10 13 or by going to mySwitch and clicking on 'Endorsed Antenna Installers' in the box headed 'Switchover information'. Keep this fact sheet handy to use when discussing your reception difficulties with your antenna installer.

How can I be sure that I'm tuned to the best channels?

Viewers in some areas may find that auto-tuning their set-top box or digital TV for available channels may result in tuning into a service which does not provide the best reception. This is because with logical channel numbering the scan will take the lowest radiofrequency channel it finds first, regardless of the quality of the signal or whether or not it is a local service.

What is logical channel numbering?

Logical channel numbering (or LCN) is the designation of a channel number for a service that is different from the actual radio frequency channel that the service is broadcast on. The advantage of logical channel numbering is that it is more convenient for viewers to find services on a particular designated channel number than on a range of different radio frequency channels. In regional South Australia, the designated logical channel numbers for the national services are 2 (ABC) and 3 (SBS), and for the commercial services 5 (Southern Cross) and 8 (WIN).

Most set-top boxes and digital televisions autotune by starting at radio frequency channel 6 and working up to channel 69. The first channel that is found for a particular service is then stored in the logical channel number for that service. When the local signal is found later in the scan, and the logical channel number is already filled, the channel will be stored somewhere else, typically in the channel range 300–400.

If this happens, when you choose, say, channel 2 for your local ABC service, you may find that the reception is poor because the channel that has been stored in channel 2 is not your local channel that your antenna is oriented to receive.

There are two ways of dealing with this:

1. If you have used autoscanner, you can use the channel up button to find the duplicate channels which are stored elsewhere and decide which is the best channel to watch.
2. You can do a manual scan to ensure that you are tuned to the best quality signal. For instructions about how to manually scan for television channels available in your area, you should refer to your set-top box or digital TV manufacturer's instruction manual. You may also find it helpful to watch the video tutorial about setting up and retuning your digital television or set-top box on the Digital Ready website. To find the video, go to the Digital ready website, click on the tab labelled 'Info centre' at the top and scroll down to 'Video tutorials'. 'Setting up and retuning' is video 4.

To find the channel numbers you need to tune to, go to **mySwitch** and enter your address. When the map comes up, click on 'What channels can I receive' and then go to the bottom of the page and click the '+' sign on the tab labelled 'Technical information for [Area]'.

Viewers who want to watch additional services from a transmitter other than their local transmitter should first manually scan their local channels in if they want to have these channels on their logical channel numbers.

Some equipment requires a PIN when you try to do a manual scan. You will have set the PIN when you first installed the equipment.

Region-specific advice for reception problems

Port Lincoln and Western Spencer Gulf

Assessment by the ACMA and Taskforce technicians indicated some residents in Port Lincoln had variable reception due to taking services from Tumby Bay, approximately 50km from Port Lincoln. These had been saved as 'local' channels as they were scanned in first by set top boxes or digital TVs as they were lower radio frequency channel numbers (34-43). The Port Lincoln radio frequency channels (53-62) would appear around channel 350-plus on logical channel menus because the antenna was not pointing directly at this tower.

While the signal strength on these channels can be adequate most of the time, Port Lincoln residents should ensure their antenna is picking up signals from the Port Lincoln tower – not Adelaide or Tumby Bay - to improve reception quality.

Mount Gambier

Assessment by the ACMA and Taskforce technicians indicated that some residents in Mount Gambier had variable reception as they were attempting to receive fortuitous reception from transmission sites within the Regional Victoria licence area (near the Victorian border) and Adelaide (in the Northern parts of Mount Gambier licence area). It was observed that viewers in the south east part of the area have antennas directed towards the Western Victoria transmission site and viewers in the north east part of the area are attempting to receive signals from the Victorian transmission site at Nhill. Attempting to receive weak fortuitous signals can compromise a resident's ability to receive the local services and therefore it is recommended that viewers consider removing their Adelaide focussed antennas and concentrate on receiving the stronger local services or moving to the VAST service. Most households in the Mount Gambier area should be able to receive digital television services from the Mount Burr transmitter site located approximately 38 kilometres north west of the centre of Mount Gambier or one of five other local sites in the area. To improve television reception, households in the Mount Gambier area should have their reception equipment set up to receive services from a local site and not an adjacent market.

Riverland

Assessment by the ACMA and Taskforce technicians indicated that residents in certain parts of the Riverland switchover area were attempting to receive television signals from Adelaide. As transmissions from Adelaide are outside the Riverland switchover/licence areas, any reception from Adelaide is considered fortuitous. Attempting to receive weak fortuitous signals can compromise a resident's ability to receive the local services and therefore it is recommended that viewers consider removing their Adelaide focussed antennas and concentrate on receiving the stronger local services or moving to the VAST service. Most households in the Riverland area should be able to receive digital television services from the Renmark/Loxton transmitter located about four kilometres south west of the centre of Loxton or one of five other local sites in the area, including the new site at Morgan. To improve their television reception, households should have their reception equipment set up to receive services from a local site.

Eastern Spencer Gulf

Assessment by the ACMA and Taskforce technicians indicated that residents in certain parts of the Eastern Spencer Gulf, particularly near Kadina and Moonta, were attempting to receive television signals from Adelaide. As transmissions from Adelaide are outside the Eastern Spencer Gulf switchover/licence areas, any reception from Adelaide is considered fortuitous. Attempting to receive weak fortuitous signals can compromise a resident's ability to receive the local services and therefore it is recommended that viewers consider removing their Adelaide focussed antennas and concentrate on receiving the stronger local services or moving to the VAST service. Most households in the Eastern Spencer Gulf areas should be able to receive digital television services from a local transmitter at the Bluff near Port Pirie. To improve their television reception, households should have their reception equipment set up to receive services from this local site.

What if I still can't receive adequate terrestrial reception?

If your antenna is correctly set up and you are still not able to receive adequate terrestrial reception from your local transmitter, you may be eligible to access the new government-funded digital Viewer Access Satellite Television (VAST) service, which provides the same number of commercial and national TV channels as are available in Adelaide.

For information about the VAST service, please refer to the [VAST fact sheet](#) on the digital ready website.

Where can I find out more?

If you'd like to know more about the switch to digital TV call the Digital Ready Information Line on 1800 20 10 13 or visit www.digitalready.gov.au