



Australian Government



Viewer Access Satellite Television service for Western Australia

The Australian Government is funding a new satellite service to provide digital television to viewers in Western Australia who are unable to receive terrestrial television services.

The new satellite service is known as the Viewer Access Satellite Television (VAST) service.

What channels are available on VAST?

The VAST service features channels carrying programs sourced from WIN Television, Prime (GWN) and West Digital (Ten). It also includes the main national broadcaster services ABC1 and SBS ONE, together with standard definition (SD) channels ABC2, ABC3, SBS TWO, 7TWO, GO!, Eleven and the high definition (HD) channels ABC News 24 HD, SBS HD, 7mate, GEM, and ONE.

ABC news is available through ABC1 on a state basis, viewers in WA will be able to see the ABC WA News.

Who can access VAST?

If you currently receive the Aurora satellite television services under a valid Aurora authorisation you may access the VAST service now.

If you are, or will be, unable to receive adequate digital commercial terrestrial services in WA you may apply to access the VAST service from August 2011. Commercial broadcasters will be establishing terrestrial services at about 50 sites across WA over the next two years to provide the full suite of local digital services. Predictions of the areas that will be covered by these transmitters will be made available in **mySwitch** so that viewers can establish whether they will be able to get digital TV terrestrially or will need to move to the VAST service.

If you are able to receive all of the digital television services from your local commercial broadcasters terrestrially, you will not be eligible to access the VAST service.

How do I access the VAST service?

To apply to access the VAST service, go to **mySwitch** and enter your address. When the map showing your address appears, click on the 'Satellite eligibility' tab and follow the directions.

Your application will be processed within five to fifteen business days, depending on your location.

Viewers are advised not to purchase a set-top box before establishing that they are eligible to receive the VAST service.

To check your eligibility, go to **mySwitch** on the Digital Ready website **www.digitalready.gov.au** and enter your address in the **mySwitch** box on the front page. When the map showing your address appears, click on the 'Satellite eligibility' tab.

To apply for pre-approval to access the VAST service, you will need to enter the dummy decoder number provided on the application form. Once pre-approval is given, you will then need to provide a VAST set-top box and a smart card number (which is provided with the set-top box) to activate the smart card to receive commercial television services.

How much will the equipment cost?

The retail cost for a high definition VAST set-top box with the smart card is about \$280 (including GST), and \$100-\$500 for a satellite dish, depending on the size of the dish required. In most parts of Australia a small to medium size dish will be adequate. However, in some parts of far north Australia a larger dish will be needed. To find out what the recommended dish size is for your area, go to **mySwitch**.

The cost of installation will depend on your location and the individual circumstances of your house. Viewers who live in cyclone areas, or who need to have a larger dish size for some other reason, are likely to have higher installation costs because of the more complex mounting requirements for larger dishes.

Viewers who already receive their television services by way of the Aurora remote area broadcasting service will need to buy a VAST set-top box, but they should be able to use their existing satellite dish.

One VAST set-top box will be required for each TV to be converted to VAST.

Where can I buy VAST certified equipment?

As of August 2011, there is only one VAST certified set-top box available in the market. This is manufactured by Altech UEC and is available from retailers and installers, or direct from Altech UEC. Enquiries about direct sales from UEC can be made by calling (02) 9425 5777.

There are expected to be additional suppliers and distributors of VAST certified set-top boxes later in 2011.

Where can I get more information about the VAST service and digital switchover?

- Call the Digital Ready Information Line on 1800 20 10 13.
- Visit the Digital Ready website at **www.digitalready.gov.au**.

Technical specifications for the VAST service are also available on the Digital Ready website.