



Australian Government

**Department of the Environment and Heritage
Australian Greenhouse Office**

**SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ‘INQUIRY INTO THE
UPTAKE OF DIGITAL TELEVISION IN AUSTRALIA’**

Recommendation

- That any policy adopted to enhance the uptake of digital television consider energy use implications.

Issues

- The introduction of digital television represents a domestic energy efficiency challenge. As the analog signal is due to be progressively switched off in Australia, the current household stock of 14 million analog televisions will need either a digital set-top box (STB), or to be replaced with an integrated digital television (IDTV).
- STBs currently available on the market vary widely in their energy efficiency. The less efficient models can consume as much energy over a year as a clothes dryer or dishwasher. For example, the greenhouse emissions resulting from 14 million STBs could range from 0.2 - 2.0 million tonnes per year, depending on the efficiency of the STBs.
- IDTV may pose the same energy consumption issues, however early mass rollout is less likely given the upfront expense. STBs are progressively getting cheaper and are also being bundled with other audiovisual product for no extra cost. The table below helps illustrate that STBs are likely to continue to dominate sales over IDTV in the early phase of digital television.

	STB	IDTV
Entry level price	\$99	\$1099
Average price	~\$500 (n=75)	~\$5000 (n=25)
% of June 05 quarter sales	85%	15%

Note: data adapted from *Digital Broadcasting Australia* - www.dba.org.au

- Energy efficiency regulators are developing mandatory energy performance standards for these products on behalf of all jurisdictions. These standards are supported by industry stakeholders and, when introduced, will set the benchmark for acceptable product in the market. Implementation is currently targeted for October 2007, well before the analog signal phase-out, but needs to remain in step with the signal phase-out.

Background

- Australian energy efficiency experts are working closely with the EU, USA and China to ensure an internationally consistent approach for the test method and regulation of STBs and televisions. Given Australia does not manufacture these products, this approach will maximise the prospect of successful domestic implementation.

Contact

Mr Gene McGlynn
Assistant Secretary
Energy Efficiency & Community Branch
Australian Greenhouse Office
Department of the Environment & Heritage
Ph: 02 6274 1773
Fax: 02 6274 1406
gene.mcglynn@deh.gov.au