

DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL TELEVISION AND CURRENT ANALOG TV RECEPTION – A GUIDE FOR THE ILLAWARRA AND WOLLONGONG

This brochure has been prepared by WIN, Prime TV, Southern Cross TEN, the ABC and SBS to assist television viewers in Wollongong and the Illawarra.

Q1. When did digital terrestrial television transmissions begin in the Illawarra and Wollongong area?

A. Transmissions by Prime, WIN and Southern Cross TEN began from Stanwell Park near Wollongong in June 2001. ABC and SBS services in this area are expected to begin in March 2003.

ABC and SBS digital services from Knights Hill for the Illawarra and Brokers Nose for some of Wollongong began in 2002.

Win, Prime and Southern Cross TEN will operate their digital services from Knights Hill from 10 February 2003

ABC will begin its services for North Nowra from Cambewarra Lookout on 1 March. Other broadcasters from this site are not expected to begin their digital services for some time.

The digital channel allocations for all broadcasters from all these sites are listed in the table below.

Illawarra and Wollongong Digital Channels

STATIONS	ABC	SBS	WIN	SC10	Prime
Illawarra Knights Hill	51	54	36	37	38
Wollongong Brokers Nose	51	54	36(1)	37(1)	38(1)
Stanwell Park	52	49	40	43	46
Nowra North	66	63	34	40	43

Q2. Could these digital terrestrial television transmissions affect reception of existing analog television services for the Illawarra and Wollongong eg the list of services in the table below?

Illawarra and Wollongong Analog Channels

STATIONS	ABC	SBS	WIN	SC10	Prime
Illawarra Knights Hill	56	53	59	62	65
Wollongong Brokers Nose	30	32	3 & 41	44	47
Stanwell Park	33	48	39	42	45
Nowra North	32	29	35	41	44

- A.** None of the digital services from Knights Hill, Brokers Nose or Stanwell Park which commenced in 2001 or 2002 were reported to cause interference to existing analog television services. The ABC and SBS services at Stanwell Park and the ABC service for Nowra North are also not expected to cause any interference when they commence.

However the digital transmissions of WIN, Southern Cross TEN and Prime which begin on 10 February 2003 from Knights Hill have been allocated UHF channels 36, 37 and 38, and hence will cause interference to the connection between some VCRs and TV sets.

This is because many VCRs are still connected to the TV set by a single cord and use one of channels 36, 37 and 38 to “transmit” the VCR output to the companion TV set.

If this form of interference is being experienced it will occur to all TV channels and when replaying tapes from the VCR. It can be overcome by following the steps outlined in the answers to **Q 3** and **Q 5** in this leaflet.

It is also possible some other forms of interference to the reception of existing individual analog services could occur eg to just SBS transmissions from Knights Hill. If this occurs follow the advice provided in the answers to **Q 4** and **Q 6** in particular.

- Q3. If the interference I am experiencing occurs on ALL channels what should I do? (If interference is only to some channels go to question 4)**

- A.** First establish what might be the source of the interference.

Step a. Check to see if the interference is coming from some local source. It could come from a nearby motor, computer, mobile phone or other electrical or electronic device or a loose cable or a damaged antenna.

Check that none of these potential sources of interference are affecting your reception and attend to them if necessary.

Step b. Make sure that your VCR is not faulty. To check this, disconnect the TV antenna cable (not the Pay-TV cable, if present) from the wall socket (while following the manufacturer’s guidelines on safety), and then play a pre-recorded video cassette.

If it plays back satisfactorily, then your VCR is OK and the problem is probably due to interference from an external source.

If it does not play back satisfactorily, then your VCR needs attention and you should follow the manufacturer’s instructions if it is still under warranty, or otherwise call a service organisation.

Now reconnect your TV antenna cable at the wall socket.

Step c. Turn off your VCR and check the local stations on your television. The interference should disappear.

If the interference is still present on ALL channels, then your TV needs attention and you should follow the manufacturer's instructions if it is still under warranty, or otherwise call a service organisation.

If the interference disappears, it means it was probably caused by the new digital services from **Knights Hill** and you will need to change your current VCR to the TV set connection (Go straight to **question 5**).

Many people set their TV to "video" and change channels using the remote control on the VCR or Pay-TV set top box. In these cases, a new digital service may be using the same channel as the VCR or set top box does to "transmit" signals to the TV set.

Q4. If the interference I am experiencing is not on all channels what should I do?

A. Again, it is important to establish what might be the source of the interference.

Step a. Check to see if the interference is coming from some local source. Carry out the same checks described in **step a** in the answer to **question 3**.

Step b. If possible retrieve the manual for your television set and VCR (or try to obtain one from your local retailer or manufacturer) and see if altering the fine tuning control, reduces or removes the interference.

Q5. If I have identified that the interference is occurring to the output channel of my VCR (through steps a, b and c of question 3) what can I do to help myself?

A. You have three major options:

Option 1. Use the A/V connections

Connect your television to the VCR through the audio and video (A/V) connections and watch video cassettes with the TV in "video mode" rather than "TV mode". This is the simplest and best solution and it gives you better picture quality.

The A/V connections are sockets (generally white, red and yellow) on the back or front of the equipment which are usually marked "VIDEO OUT" and "AUDIO OUT" on a VCR and as "VIDEO IN" and "AUDIO IN" on a television set.

Check your VCR and television set manuals for details on connecting the equipment. A/V Cables are readily available from electrical retailers.

If this connection is possible with your VCR you do not need to do any more.

Do not however disconnect the current single lead VCR antenna “out” to TV set antenna “in” connection.

If you require more details on how to carry out option 1 speak to your local TV retailer, or send a self addressed stamped envelope to your local TV station (asking for the “AV Leaflet”), or view a copy of the AV leaflet on www.dba.org.au (the web site of Digital Broadcasting Australia) or the web site of any of the local TV stations.

However, not every TV has A/V connections. If yours does not see Option 2.

Option 2. Retune your VCR output channel

Warning

Follow the manufacturer’s guidelines at all times.

Do not open the case of your VCR or television set, or you may receive an electric shock.

If your television set or VCR does not have A/V connections, you can retune the output channel of your VCR to a channel where there is no interference. This may involve trying several channels before you find one that is not being used locally.

Follow these steps:

Step a. Consult your VCR manual and follow the instructions on how to retune your VCR (making sure to follow all safety guidelines). It will either be by using:

- A menu system, appearing either on-screen (using the remote control) or by pressing buttons on the VCR front panel display or
- A small tuning screw in the back of the VCR (generally earlier model VCRs).

Step b. After changing your VCR’s output channel, you may need to retune your television set to receive the signal from the VCR.

To retune your TV, consult your TV manual for instructions (making sure to follow all safety guidelines). Retuning will probably involve using the TV’s “channel set up” function to scan the UHF channels on the TV set to find the VCR signal. Some TVs have a simple automated process for carrying out channel set up.

Option 3. Temporary solutions – you can temporarily remove the interference and still enjoy your TV and VCR!

Even if you have not got AV cords or your VCR needs retuning but you cannot do it immediately, it should not stop you from having interference free use of your TV and VCR:

- You can still watch TV – just turn your VCR off and use the TV set to tune channels as normal.
- You can still play video cassettes – just unplug the antenna from the back of the VCR when you do it.

Q6. If the advice in this brochure does not help me to resolve my interference problems what should I do and who should I ring?

A. If you are in this situation it is important that you follow the steps below:

Step 1. Keep a close record of when the interference problems are occurring (including the date and approximate time and duration of interference).

Step 2. Check with neighbours to see if they are experiencing the same problems for the same duration at the same times.

Step 3. Before calling the broadcasters' technical advice line (the telephone number can be found at **step 4** below) for help please make a record of the following:

- Model and make of your television set/s and when purchased;
- Model and make of your VCR/s and when purchased;
- Whether you have an external or internal antenna and when installed;
- If you have an external antenna, how many television sets in your house are fed from it?
- Whether you have some device which is associated with your external aerial which amplifies the available signal strength;
- What are the television services you normally watch e.g. the local services from Knights Hill, Brokers Nose or Stanwell Park or Sydney stations;
- As clearly as possible a description of the form the interference is taking;
- How long you have lived at your current location?

Step 4. Having collected the above information you should ring **1800 55 22 88** for further assistance, but please have your television set and VCR manual handy if possible. It would also assist the call centre to help you if you can ring from the room where the television set and VCR are located.

Q7. What should I do if I am suffering interference to my Pay-TV channels?

A. Contact your Pay-TV service provider.
