

## **DIGITAL TERRESTRIAL TELEVISION AND CURRENT ANALOG TV RECEPTION – A GUIDE FOR CAIRNS**

This brochure has been prepared by WIN, 7 QLD, Southern Cross TEN, the ABC and SBS to assist television viewers in Cairns.

**Q1. When did/will digital terrestrial television transmissions begin in the Cairns area?**

- A.** The ABC digital TV service from Mt Bellenden-Ker serving some areas around Cairns began transmissions in November 2003. The ABC digital TV service for Cairns East and Cairns North transmitting from Mt Yarrabah and Saddle Mountain respectively are expected to operate from 1 March 2004. The Seven Queensland Cairns East and Cairns North services and the WIN Mt Bellenden-Ker service are expected to begin in March also.

The channel allocations for the above services and the channel allocation and prospective start dates for all the others at all three Cairns transmitting sites are outlined in the table below.

### **Cairns Digital Channels**

<b>STATIONS</b>	<b>ABC</b>	<b>SBS</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>SC10</b>	<b>7 QLD</b>
<b>Mt Bellenden-Ker</b>	8 Nov 03	29 Jun 04	12 Mar 04	6 Nov 06	11 July 05
<b>Saddle Mountain</b>	42 Mar 04	52 Jun 04	49 April 04	46 Jun 04	43 Mar 04
<b>Mt Yarrabah</b>	42 Mar 04	52 Jun 04	49 April 04	46 April 04	43 Mar 04

**Q2. Could these digital terrestrial television transmissions affect reception of existing analog television services in Cairns eg the list of services in the table below?**

### **Cairns Analog Channels**

<b>STATIONS</b>	<b>ABC</b>	<b>SBS</b>	<b>WIN</b>	<b>SC10</b>	<b>7 QLD</b>
<b>Mt Bellenden-Ker</b>	9*	30*	39	10*	33
<b>Saddle Mountain</b>	56	53*	65	5A Buchan's Point	59
<b>Mt Yarrabah</b>	41*	35	50*	47*	44*

\* the channels marked with an asterisk could be subject to adjacent channel interference. See next Answer for details

- A.** Because the digital channels allocated to the ABC, SBS and Seven Queensland at Mt Bellenden-Ker are "adjacent" to channels used for analog television services at that site there is a small possibility that some households which access their television services from Mt Bellenden-Ker could experience interference to one or

more of the ABC, SBS and Southern Cross TEN analog services after the adjacent channel digital transmissions from Mt Bellenden-Ker begin (see the table in the answer to **Q1.** for digital start date details).

The same could happen to the reception of just the SBS analog service from Saddle Mountain and all but the SBS service from Mt Yarrabah for the same “adjacent” digital channel reason.

The analog channel table in the answer to **Q2.** marks with an asterisk all those analog services from each site which potentially could experience some adjacent channel interference from the “next door” digital transmissions **from the same site.** However such interference can only occur after the relevant adjacent digital channel has commenced transmission.

While theoretically some of this adjacent channel interference might occur, experience in other Coverage Areas where digital television has begun and similar channel allocations exist, indicates that very few homes in and around Cairns will experience this problem. If however such interference to just one or a few of the relevant analog television services is experienced after the adjacent digital services begin (see the table in the answer to **Q1.** for expected start dates) go to **Q 4** and **Q 6** for assistance.

**Q3. If the interference I am experiencing occurs on ALL channels or when I replay tapes from VCR 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.

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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 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.

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**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 “Better Connected” PO Box 563 Mosman 2088 (asking for the “AV Leaflet”), or view a copy of the AV leaflet on [www.dba.org.au](http://www.dba.org.au) (the web site of Digital Broadcasting Australia) or the web site of most 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.

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**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 a local TV service agent it would be worthwhile making 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 Mount Bellender-Ker, Saddle Mountain or Mount Yarrabah or services emanating from other areas of regional Queensland;
- 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 your local TV service agent who will be assisted if you have handy all the information outlined in **step 3** above. It would also assist 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.

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