



Media Release

Senator Alan Eggleston

Liberal Senator for Western Australia

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Digital TV a step closer for regional WA: Senator

Legislation passed last week has paved the way for digital television in regional areas of Western Australia.

Senator Eggleston, who chairs the Senator Environment, Communications, IT and the Arts Committee and is a former Port Hedland mayor, said the legislation (which would apply only to WA) would bring big benefits to regional residents.

Senator Eggleston said: "The legislation provides a framework for the conversion of the current analogue television signal into a digital signal. This will mean that people will be able to receive better picture and sound quality on their televisions.

"Residents will also be able to access a third, digital-only commercial television service, in addition to the two current services received in remote Western Australia. This new service will be operated jointly by WIN and Prime.

"This is great news for regional Western Australians, who for the first time ever will be able to access the same level of television services available to their counterparts in Perth.

"Not only is this great news for consumers, but it involves significant cost savings for both WIN and Prime, who will be able to share digital transmission infrastructure. It also involves about \$10 million in savings to the taxpayer because the level of assistance required under the Regional Equalisation Plan is reduced."

Senator Eggleston said that he understood that WIN and Prime's planning for the introduction of digital television services in regional Western Australia was well-advanced, and that they are planning to commence the digital transmission of their current services in 2007, with the new third service starting shortly thereafter.

"This legislation is proof of the Howard Government's commitment to ensuring that rural, regional and remote areas of Australia have access to high quality and technologically advanced services."
