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## Proposed switch off of UK analogue TV transmissions

Government proposals to switch off analogue broadcast television transmissions are draconian and unnecessary. I write as a retired broadcast systems engineer with several years' practical experience introducing digital television into studio production and editing.

Whilst improved picture quality is achievable using digitally encoded signals in a studio environment when compared with the PAL system, the same is rarely true of digital signals currently transmitted in the UHF bands. Reception of multiplexed digital terrestrial television has shown the signals to lack the robustness of analogue PAL, especially in areas of weak and multi-path reception. Resulting unacceptable picture impairments and loss of sound are due, in part, to reduced transmitter power of digital signals compared with analogue. It is proposed to increase the power of these transmissions at or near the analogue switch off date but the degree of national coverage built up over three decades will not be achieved.

Most receivers and video recorders in use and currently for sale are analogue only and the addition of a "set-top" box enables only one digital channel to be viewed or recorded. Switching off analogue transmissions will deprive thousands of licence payers of a public service – signal quality being forsaken for quantity.