



Australian Government

**Department of Broadband,
Communications and the Digital Economy**

DIGITAL SWITCHOVER LIAISON OFFICER

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

August 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Background - Digital Television Switchover	3
3. The Objective of the Program.....	5
4. Eligibility	5
5. The Role of the Funded Organisation.....	6
6. The Role of the Digital Switchover Liaison Officer	6
7. Funding Arrangements	8
8. Expression of Interest (EOI) Process.....	10
9. Grant Application Process	11
10. Reporting and Evaluation	13

1. Introduction

The Digital Switchover Liaison Officer Program (Program) will fund non-profit organisations or government entities (alone or as a consortium), within each of the switchover regions defined by the Australian Government (Government), to employ a Digital Switchover Liaison Officer (Liaison Officer), or Officers. These Officers will develop and implement a community engagement strategy designed to help viewers in those regions to convert to free-to-air digital television.

On 19 October 2008 the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Senator the Hon Stephen Conroy (the Minister) announced an indicative region-by-region timetable for switchover to digital television across Australia. The latest updated version is at Attachment A. The actual date for analog signals to be switched off in each region is legislatively determined by the Minister.

On 10 May 2011 the Minister announced a continuation of funding for the digital switchover program including extending and enhancing on-the-ground community engagement through localised communication within each switchover area.

These Guidelines relate to the funding of Liaison Officers in the switchover regions of Southern NSW, Northern NSW and Tasmania, which will be switching over to digital-only television signals in 2012 and 2013. These three regions contain a number of switchover areas (see Section 2.2. for details).

Note: *As the switchover dates for Southern NSW, Northern NSW and Tasmania have not been set by legislative determinations yet, these Guidelines can only give a general approximation of the timing for applications for each switchover region.*

1.2 Further Assistance

Questions about the Program can be directed to the Manager of the Community Liaison Section, by calling the Digital Switchover Taskforce (02) 8023 3700 or by emailing switchover_community.officer@dbcde.gov.au

2. Background - Digital Television Switchover

Digital Television Switchover is the process of converting Australia's analog system to digital. Before the end of 2013, free-to-air analog channels will be switched off region by region and replaced with digital-only signals. Switchover has already occurred in the following regions:

- Mildura/Sunraysia (30 June 2010)
- Regional South Australia and Broken Hill (15 December 2010)
- Regional Victoria (5 May 2011).

Regional Queensland is switching over on 6 December 2011.

Digital television benefits viewers by providing improved picture and sound quality and greater program choice.

The Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy (the Department) is responsible for coordinating and overseeing Australia's transition from analog to digital television. The Department is administering the Program.

Further information about switchover is available on the Department's Digital Ready website at www.digitalready.gov.au.

2.1 Digital Switchover Regions

The indicative timetable at [Attachment A](#) contains a list of all the remaining switchover regions. As indicated in the timetable, after regional Queensland on 6 December 2011, the next three regions to switch over are Southern NSW, Northern NSW and Tasmania.

The Government has provided funding for Liaison Officers in regions that have already switched over and is funding the engagement of Liaison Officers in the regional NSW and Tasmanian switchover regions on a similar basis.

Southern NSW is expected to switch over in the first half of 2012, Northern NSW is expected to switch over in the second half of 2012 and Tasmania is expected to switch over in the first half of 2013.

2.2 Digital Switchover Areas

The southern and northern digital switchover regions of New South Wales comprise several switchover areas, for the purpose of facilitating and coordinating Australia's switch to digital television. Digital switchover regions covered under these Guidelines are listed below, along with the switchover areas included in each. Applicants are required to cover at least one of these switchover areas in their proposal and may cover more than one switchover area if desired.

Tasmania has a single switchover area that could be covered by more than one Liaison Officer if desired.

	Southern NSW Switchover Region	Northern NSW Switchover Region	Tasmania Switchover Region
Switchover Areas	Griffith/Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area	North West Slopes and Plains	Tasmania
	South West Slopes and Eastern Riverina	Richmond/Tweed	
	Illawarra and the South Coast	Northern Rivers	
	Central Tablelands and Central Western Slopes	Hunter	

Maps showing approximate geographical boundaries of the switchover areas within the regions are at Attachment B.

Note: The Liaison Officer for the ACT and Southern Tablelands switchover area in the southern NSW switchover region will be employed by the Department.

3. The Objective of the Program

The objective of the Program is to prepare viewers of free-to-air television in each switchover region for a smooth transition to digital television by engaging with local residents, organisations and institutions at the community level. Liaison Officers, supported by their funded organisation and the Department, develop and undertake a range of community engagement strategies and other activities designed to help and encourage local residents to convert to digital television. They target groups within the community who may face particular difficulties in switching over to digital television. Target groups which should be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Indigenous residents;
- culturally and linguistically diverse residents;
- residents of remote and rural households;
- the elderly; and residents who are frail and/or infirm;
- people with mental or physical disabilities; and
- low income households.

4. Eligibility

To be eligible for funding under the Program applicants must be either:

1. an eligible state, territory or local government entity; or
2. a not-for-profit organisation.

An eligible government entity includes:

- state/territory government department or agency;
- state/territory government owned business;
- local government and municipal associations;
- local government owned business; or
- business enterprises or other entities jointly owned by state/territory governments and local governments.

Eligible not-for-profit organisations need to be legal entities, such as, but not limited to:

- incorporated associations – incorporated under State/Territory legislation;
- incorporated cooperatives – incorporated under State/Territory legislation;
- companies – non-profit proprietary companies or public companies incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001*; or

- organisations established under or recognised as a not-for-profit activity by Commonwealth or State/Territory legislation (for example public benevolent institutions, or churches).

Applications can be made by individual entities/organisations or by several entities/organisations comprising eligible government and non-government not-for-profit entities/organisations through a consortium arrangement.

Where an application is made through a consortium arrangement, a lead entity should be nominated as the applicant seeking funding on behalf of all the other entities that will contribute to the Program.

5. The Role of the Funded Organisation

Funded organisations are responsible for supporting and managing Liaison Officers' activities on a day-to-day basis. The funded organisation or consortium is required to use the funding, and some of its own resources, for:

- recruiting and employing a Liaison Officer, usually through an open competitive process;
- developing a work plan, with the Liaison Officer and in consultation with the Department, to target and reach residents who are particularly in need of help to switch over;
- overseeing the day-to-day activities of the Liaison Officer and ensuring they are consistent with the objective of the Program;
- providing progress reports, and a final report, to the Department, in collaboration with the Liaison Officer;
- providing access to relevant organisational networks and expertise, for example through existing advisory groups or community networks; and
- providing administrative support to the Liaison Officer by providing office space, and access to resources and facilities such as transport, IT and telecommunications equipment.

The role of the Liaison Officer is described in more detail below.

6. The Role of the Digital Switchover Liaison Officer

The role of the Liaison Officer is to provide information and encouragement to local communities in each switchover area to help prepare local residents for a smooth transition to digital-only free-to-air television.

Neither funded organisations nor Liaison Officers are required to have technical background or special expertise in digital television technologies. The Department will assist the funded organisation and Liaison Officers to acquire the necessary background knowledge. The Department will provide information to each funded organisation, including regular updates on the Department's switchover projects and activities.

6.1 Work Plan

Each funded organisation, in collaboration with the Liaison Officer(s), will need to develop a work plan for approval by the Department, which takes into account the needs of the community in their switchover area(s).

The work plan must include a timetable for all activities, a comprehensive stakeholder list, the geographical areas covered, proposed involvement of other stakeholders in reaching residents and a description of how evidence will be collected to measure the participation of residents in activities.

The work plan must outline the types of engagement strategies which will be used to target all residents who have not switched over and particularly those who may be finding switching over difficult because of various factors including, but not limited to: social isolation, physical barriers, language and cultural barriers, lack of technical help or understanding, or lack of awareness of the switchover process.

6.2 Community Engagement

Liaison Officers will be required to provide information to residents at all stages of the transition including:

- the switchover date for their region or local area;
- targeted advice on how to prepare for switchover including accessing Departmental programs, initiatives and resources, such as the Digital Ready website and information line (1800 201 013);
- how to seek help to overcome technical difficulties such as poor reception; and
- how eligible households can access the VAST service.

Liaison Officers are not expected to install television equipment for householders. Rather their role is to advise where to go for assistance, where appropriate provide easy-to-follow instructions (for example, on how to connect a set top box) and encourage others in the community to help those who might find switchover difficult to manage.

Liaison Officers will work with:

- community groups/stakeholders that can help residents in need of information and assistance in relation to the switchover (e.g. organisations with existing programs targeted to people with particular needs);
- local government services (e.g. to make use of local venues, communication networks and programs);
- resident and business groups (e.g. providing relevant and timely information on switchover at events, meetings and forums);
- public relations companies and other consultants contracted by the Department to work in switchover areas;
- members of the Consumer Expert Group that advises the Department on consumers' needs and issues in relation to switchover; and

- the Department's staff.

6.3 Information Resources

The Department will provide information materials to the funded organisation for use by Liaison Officers to inform residents about the switchover to digital television. It is expected that Liaison Officers will use these resources effectively for example at local community events including workshops and information sessions. There are also more specialised materials for use with targeted groups and individuals.

Materials include printed formats such as brochures, posters, flyers, and facts sheets. They also include audio visual materials on DVD and other online materials accessible through the Digital Ready website and information line (1800 201 013).

The Department will communicate with the funded organisation and/or the Liaison Officer(s), on a regular basis, to ascertain requirements for materials and seek feedback about their deployment.

7. Funding Arrangements

Grants for each funded organisation are for a fixed amount that would normally cover costs of one full time Liaison Officer per switchover area. As a guide, the amount would equate to approximately \$10,000 per month for salary and some of the administrative support costs. The duration of the Officer's employment would usually be between 6 and 10 months depending on timing and the needs of the community in the switchover region, as determined by the Department. The available funding will provide up to four full time Officers in each of the Southern NSW and Northern NSW switchover regions and up to two full time Officers in the Tasmanian switchover region.

Detailed funding arrangements for Liaison Officers will be established separately with each funded organisation (see Section 7.3, "Funding Deeds").

Although the available funding is designed to cover one full time Liaison Officer per switchover area, it is possible for the funding to be used flexibly in various combinations to employ:

- a single individual recruited to work as the Liaison Officer full time per switchover area, for the entire period of the funding deed;
- an individual who works flexible hours, based on the needs of the community, over different periods of time during the life of the funding deed;
- several individuals who work in different locations, at the same time, to cover some or all of the switchover region; and/or
- several individuals who may work cooperatively to bring different skills and experience to the position.

The applicant organisation will need to propose an effective model for employing and managing Liaison Officer(s) so that the specified switchover areas (that the applicant chooses to service) are covered. Applicants should consider:

- extent of the geographic area of the switchover area;
- population centres and spread of people;
- identified priority groups with particular needs in the community; and
- the communication skills and strategies needed to engage with community groups.

Funding applications will need to demonstrate how the proposed strategy is the most effective one to achieve the required outcomes and objectives of the Program within the available resources, in one or more of the switchover areas.

7.1. Items Covered by Funding

The funding available through the Program is provided to recruit and employ a Liaison Officer and to help meet associated administrative expenses, including:

1. Travel within the Liaison Officer's duty area:

This includes travel costs such as car, fuel, flights, accommodation and meals, for destinations within the Liaison Officer's duty area, in a switchover area, to ensure residents can be contacted and supported. Travel may be for a range of purposes including public events, meetings and networking.

2. Office expenses:

This includes office space, computer/laptop, internet access, fixed line telephone, mobile phone, phone bills, photocopying, stationery and other consumables. It also covers ICT and any administration support.

3. Employment expenses of the Liaison Officer position(s):

This includes the salary and on costs for the Liaison Officer position(s), as well as recruitment expenses other than advertising. These funds could be used flexibly to employ several individuals, depending on the proposed strategy to cover all residents of the switchover area.

The funding may not cover all of the above costs, especially administrative support costs. In this case funded organisations will need to contribute some of their own resources in order to achieve the required outcomes of the Program.

Successful applicants should seek independent advice on the taxation treatment of the grant.

7.2. Expenses Covered by the Department separately

The following items will be covered by the Department separately:

- costs of advertising the positions;
- printing of information materials;
- postage of information materials to the funded organisation(s) for use by the Liaison Officer(s); and
- travel and accommodation costs of Liaison Officer(s) to attend initial briefings, and any other subsequent visits, at Departmental offices.

7.3 Funding Deeds

Organisations selected for funding under the Program will be required to enter into a funding deed with the Commonwealth. A draft deed is at Attachment C. The deed sets out terms and conditions on which funding will be provided to an organisation, including the organisation's obligations, payment and management of funding, reporting and other requirements.

The duration of the funding deeds will be determined by the Department based on the needs of the relevant community and the timing of the switchover in each region. The funded organisation may be required to engage the Liaison Officer(s) for variable periods of time, depending on the needs of the population of the switchover area(s). The Department will take into account such factors as the digital conversion rates of each area, and analysis of demographic, technical and geographic characteristics, and the likely timing of the Liaison Officer's appointment.

The Department is required to publish information on individual grants on its website, no later than seven working days after the funding agreement for the grant takes effect, in accordance with section 4.2 of the Commonwealth Grants Guidelines.

8. Expression of Interest (EOI) Process

The Department will call for EOIs to gauge interest and identify organisations that would have the capacity to manage a Liaison Officer. The EOI process will be advertised in the local media in major population centres in each relevant switchover area and on the Department's website. Separate processes will be conducted for each switchover region. Southern NSW will be approached first, and then Northern NSW and finally Tasmania.

8.1 Selection criteria for EOIs to be eligible to submit an application for funding

The Department will use the following criteria to determine whether organisations that have lodged an EOI should be invited to submit an application for funding:

1. Community Engagement

The organisation has the capacity to develop and implement a community engagement strategy within at least one (or more than one if desired) of the switchover area(s), including:

- expertise in providing services to the communities to be served by the Program, particularly the target groups listed in the Guidelines; and
- links with relevant community organisations and/or stakeholder groups;

2. Program and Resource Management

The organisation has the ability to manage and administer a Liaison Officer under the Program, including:

- previous relevant experience including any similar projects managed;
- resources to employ, support and manage an Officer including professional supervision; and
- established governance and accountability arrangements;

3. Implementation Strategy

The organisation has an effective strategy including:

- evidence that they could deploy an Officer to achieve the objective set out in the Guidelines including how the Officer would be able to reach communities in the switchover area(s).

Eligible organisations wishing to lodge an EOI should ensure their submissions are consistent with the objective of the Program, meet the eligibility criteria outlined at sections 4 and 8.1 of these Guidelines, and are submitted in the required form (see [Attachment D](#)). The EOI form may be completed and lodged online, or in hard copy submitted by mail to the Department. EOIs received after the specified closing time will not be considered.

Only eligible organisations that submit EOIs and meet the criteria outlined at sections 4 and 8.1 of these Guidelines will be invited to submit a formal application for funding.

The Consumer Liaison Section in the Digital Switchover Taskforce will assess EOIs against the criteria and recommend to the Assistant Secretary of the Technical Implementation Branch of the Broadcasting and Digital Switchover Division in the Department, whether an organisation should be invited to lodge an application for a grant.

Applicants would have three to four weeks to submit a full proposal.

8.2 Information Package

Organisations wishing to be informed of the timing of any EOI process, should email switchover_community.officer@dbcde.gov.au to register their details. Once the Program is advertised the Department will send current information about the relevant switchover region and/or switchover areas to those who are registered or make a request to the above email address.

9. Grant Application Process

The Department will request formal grant applications directly from eligible organisations that have submitted an EOI and met the criteria at 8.1. The application form is at [Attachment E](#). Applicants must ensure that all information requested in the grant application form is provided in the required format.

Following are the selection criteria that organisations submitting applications for funding under the Program will be required to address. All criteria are weighted equally:

1. Networks and Stakeholders

- Extensive organisational networks and infrastructure within one or more of the switchover areas, and/or links to a wide range of relevant communities and stakeholders within the switchover area.
- Links with organisations that have expertise in relation to groups who are likely to find it difficult to switchover, for example the elderly, those with disabilities, and residents who are isolated socially or geographically, including any formal or informal relationships with particular relevant organisations.
- Experienced employees who have expertise in working with community organisations and through networks, who will be involved in the Program.

2. Coverage and Scope

- Ability to reach all residents in one or more of the switchover areas, to provide information and assistance as necessary.
- Ability to develop a travel plan for the Liaison Officer to travel within the switchover area(s) as well as using electronic or other forms of contact, and networked or stakeholder resources, to achieve the Program objective.
- Capacity to work with groups or communities that are likely to experience difficulties, in various locations within the switchover area(s).

3. Engaging Stakeholders

- Capacity to work cooperatively with community representatives to target relevant consumer groups, including engaging other organisations in order to help residents to manage switchover.
- Capacity to develop and carry out an effective proposal that describes how other organisations will be engaged to contribute to achieving the objective of the Program.
- Previous successful involvement in community projects or programs for residents within the switchover area.
- Staff with proven expertise and experience in projects involving community engagement who will be involved in the Program.

4. Program and Resource Management.

- Ability to manage the Program activities effectively, including funding and reporting requirements.
- Previous relevant experience including any similar projects managed, including those funded by a local, state, territory or Commonwealth Government entity.
- Staff with proven experience who will be involved in managing the Program activities.

- Ability to ensure integrity and accountability for the Program through strong and effective governance arrangements including a code of conduct for employees.

5. Community Engagement

- Proven experience and understanding of community engagement principles and a cogent proposal as to how they will be applied to the Program.
- Capacity to implement engagement strategies effectively and relate these to your proposal to carry out the Program and facilitate digital switchover.
- Staff experience and expertise in community engagement.

6. Feedback and Reporting

- Capacity to provide feedback to the Department, through the collection of data, on outcomes and lessons learned.
- Experience with the evaluation of programs and activities.

Applications will be assessed against the above selection criteria and against the extent to which they meet the objective of the Program. The Consumer Liaison Section in the Digital Switchover Taskforce will assess grant applications against the criteria and recommend to the Assistant Secretary of the Technical Implementation Branch of the Broadcasting and Digital Switchover Division in the Department whether an organisation should be given a grant. The final recommendations will be put to the Minister for his approval.

Each applicant organisation will be notified in writing of the outcome of the assessment process.

All information provided by applicants will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth).

Complaints relating to the assessment process or outcome may be lodged with the Department at switchover_community.officer@dbcde.gov.au

Complaints from members of the public regarding the operation of the Digital Switchover Liaison Officer Program or any other switchover program or activity managed or coordinated by the Department may be made by using the “Contact Us” form on our website at www.digitalready.gov.au; emailing us at switchover@dbcde.gov.au, or calling our Digital Ready Information Line (1 800 20 10 13).

10. Reporting and Evaluation

Under the funding deed that they will be required to enter into with the Commonwealth, funded organisations will be required to report to the Department on a regular basis. The Department will require regular updates on activities undertaken and planned (a template will be provided), as well as a comprehensive report every few months analysing progress with switchover in the area, for the various groups and

locations in the community. In particular, the report will need to provide evidence of outcomes and achievements that can be attributed to work undertaken by the Liaison Officer(s), and will also need to highlight any issues or barriers identified that may be preventing a smooth transition to digital television.

The Department will also require the funded organisation to acquit the expenditure of funding provided by the Commonwealth to employ and support the Liaison Officer(s).

Evaluation data will be collected throughout the life of the funding deed to measure whether the objective has been met through evidence-based outcomes. Reporting by the funded organisation, as outlined above, will contribute to the evaluation of the Program.

Liaison Officers, and their funded organisations, will be required to cooperate with the Department in any additional review and evaluation activities.

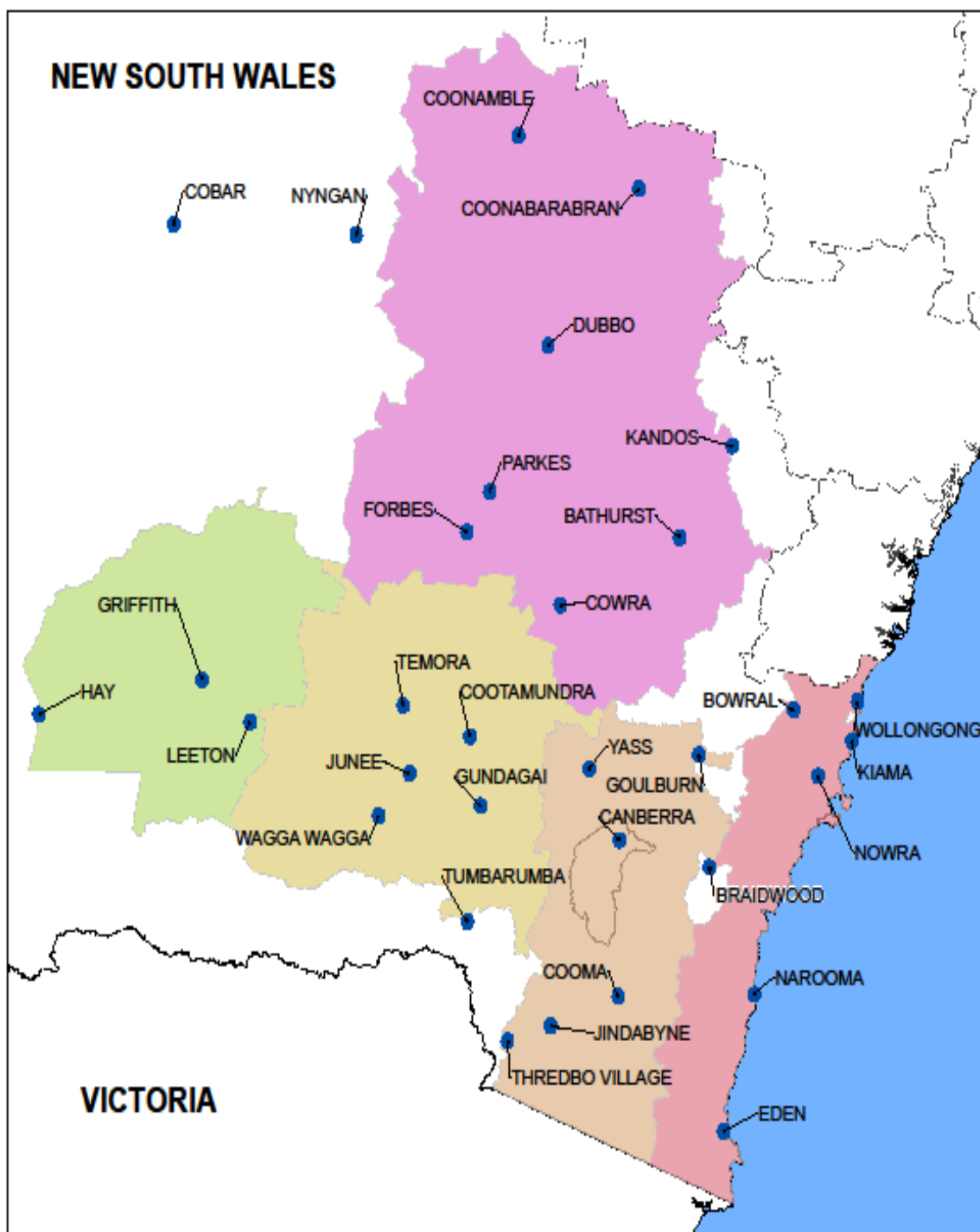
To evaluate the performance of organisations under individual grants, key performance indicators (KPIs) will be included in the funding deeds, taking into account the specific needs of residents in the switchover area. In general, the KPIs will relate to:

- The opportunities provided for identified priority groups to find out about how to prepare for switchover, measured by the number and scope of meetings and activities arranged in key locations in the switchover area;
- The level of participation by targeted residents and stakeholders in the Program's activities, measured by the numbers of attendees in each of the identified priority groups;
- Feedback from stakeholders and participants on the effectiveness of the liaison and other activities;
- Evaluations completed by the Department; and
- A specified level of increased awareness of digital switchover by residents, indicated by surveys, including the Department's Digital Tracker.

The obligations of organisations with regard to reporting and evaluation will be set out in detail in the funding deed.

Type	Switchover Area	Major centres	Window
VIC	Mildura/Sunraysia	Mildura	30 June 2010
SA	Broken Hill	Broken Hill	15 December 2010
SA	Riverland	Renmark and Loxton	15 December 2010
SA	Mt Gambier/South East South Australia	Mt Gambier, Naracoorte and Bordertown	15 December 2010
SA	Spencer Gulf	Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Port Augusta	15 December 2010
VIC	Gippsland	Traralgon, Bairnsdale and Mallacoota	5 May 2011
VIC	North Central Victoria	Bendigo and Swan Hill	5 May 2011
VIC	South West Victoria	Ballarat, Warrnambool and Horsham	5 May 2011
VIC	Goulburn Valley/Upper Murray	Albury/Wodonga, Wangaratta and Shepparton	5 May 2011
QLD	Wide Bay	Hervey Bay, Bundaberg and Maryborough	6 December 2011
QLD	Capricornia	Rockhampton, Emerald and Yeppoon	6 December 2011
QLD	QLD Central Coast and Whitsundays	Mackay, Proserpine and Bowen	6 December 2011
QLD	Darling Downs	Toowoomba, Warwick and Dalby	6 December 2011
QLD	North Queensland	Townsville, Ayr and Charters Towers	6 December 2011
QLD	Far North Queensland	Cairns, Port Douglas and Innisfail	6 December 2011
NSW	Griffith/Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area	Griffith and Hay	1st Half 2012
NSW	South West Slopes and Eastern Riverina	Wagga Wagga and Gundagai	1st Half 2012
NSW	Illawarra and the South Coast	Wollongong, Ulladulla and Eden	1st Half 2012
NSW	Central Tablelands and Central Western Slopes	Dubbo, Orange and Mudgee	1st Half 2012
NSW	ACT and Southern Tablelands	Canberra, Thredbo and Cooma	1st Half 2012
NSW	North West Slopes and Plains	Tamworth, Armidale and Inverell	2nd Half 2012
NSW	Richmond/Tweed	Byron Bay, Tenterfield and Lismore	2nd Half 2012
NSW	Northern Rivers	Coffs Harbour, Forster and Grafton	2nd Half 2012
NSW	Hunter	Newcastle, Port Stephens	2nd Half 2012
Metro	Tasmania	Hobart, Launceston and King Island	1st Half 2013
Metro	Perth	Perth	30 June 2013
Metro	Brisbane	Brisbane, Gold Coast and Noosa	30 June 2013
Metro	Melbourne	Melbourne	31 December 2013
Metro	Adelaide	Adelaide	31 December 2013
Metro	Sydney	Sydney and Gosford	31 December 2013
Remote	Regional and Remote Western Australia	Kalgoorlie, Broome and Bunbury	2nd Half 2013
Rem	Remote Central & Eastern Australia	Darwin, Alice Springs and Mt Isa	2nd Half 2013

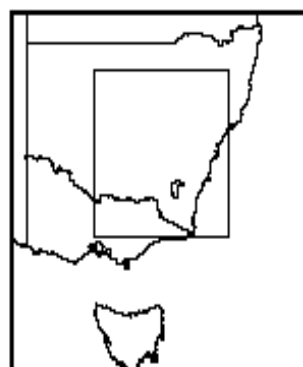
SOUTHERN NEW SOUTH WALES SWITCHOVER AREAS



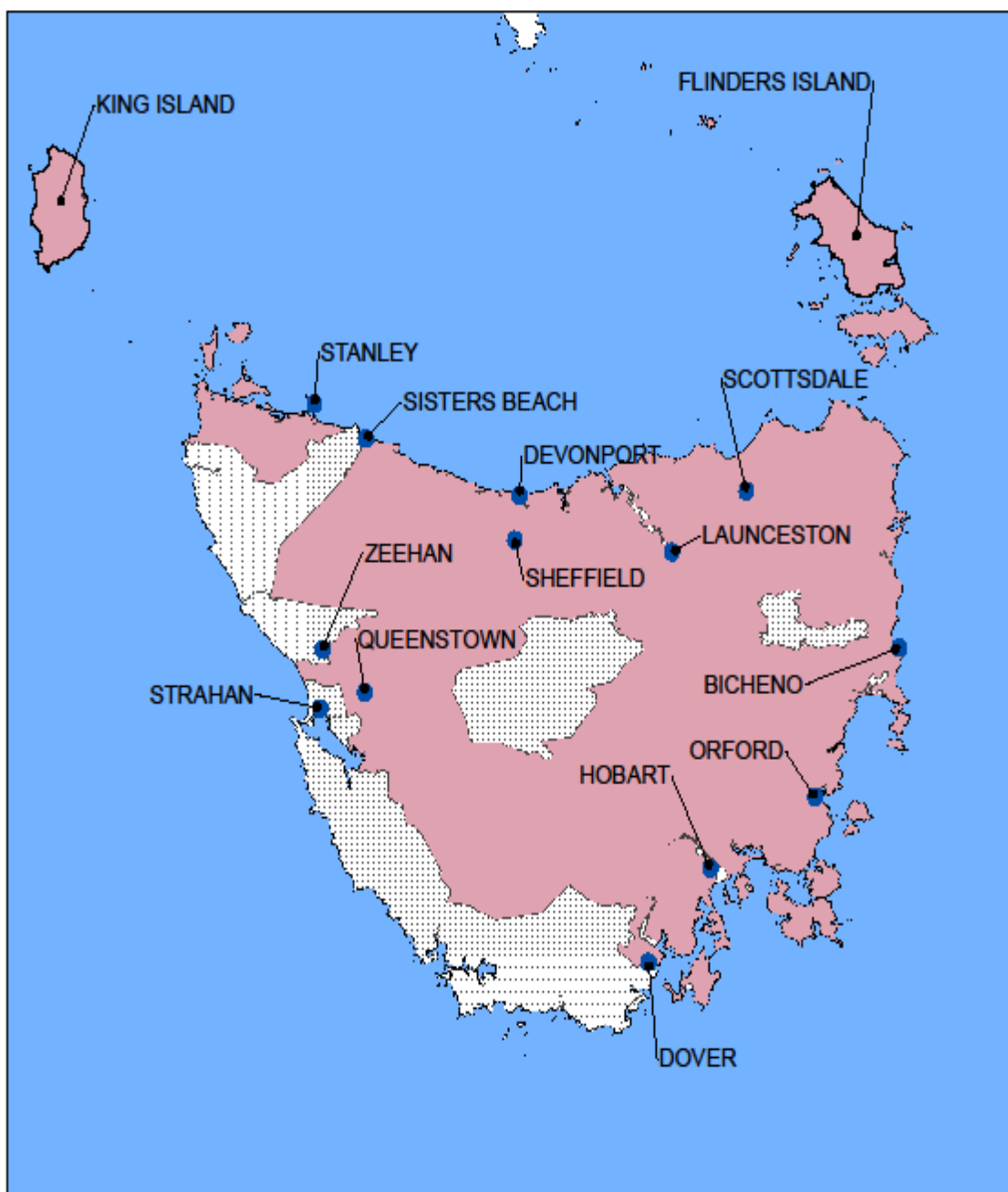
Legend

Switchover Area

- ACT AND SOUTHERN TABLELANDS
- CENTRAL TABLELANDS AND CENTRAL WESTERN SLOPES
- GRIFFITH/MURRUMBIDGEE IRRIGATION AREA
- ILLAWARRA AND THE SOUTH COAST
- SOUTH WEST SLOPES AND EASTERN RIVERINA





TASMANIA SWITCHOVER AREA



Legend

Switchover Area

 TASMANIA

 REMOTE CENTRAL & EASTERN AUSTRALIA

