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A NEW ERA FOR AUSTRALIAN FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION

Free TV Australia congratulates everyone involved in the successful transition to digital-only television.

After 57 years of great analogue television Australian viewers have made the change to the digital era seamlessly.

This week's analogue switch-off in Melbourne and remote Central and Eastern Australia marks the end of a huge project to convert 8.7 million households and more than 1,000 transmitter sites.

Broadcasters funded 100 new gap-filler sites so that as many viewers as possible can receive digital terrestrial television and the VAST satellite service has ensured all Australians continue to have access to free-to-air television.

Free TV Chairman Harold Mitchell said: "The analogue switch-off program has been a huge success, delivering viewers more channels for free and better quality pictures and sound.

"The government has also raised nearly \$2 billion from the sale of digital dividend spectrum with around another billion dollars expected from future sales.

"This project has been a genuine partnership between television broadcasters and government – from the planning stages, through to implementation and now, finally, completion.

"It has been a massive communications and infrastructure project to make sure that all Australian viewers reap the benefits of digital terrestrial television.

"We congratulate everyone involved on a project delivered on time and with minimal disruption and cost to viewers.

"Free TV broadcasters look forward to providing even better services through digital television, but most importantly we will continue to provide a strong and authentic Australian voice in news, sport, drama and children's programming – available to all Australians regardless of where they live and for free."

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