

**REMARKS OF ACTING FCC CHAIRMAN MICHAEL J. COPPS  
IN THE WAKE OF THE DIGITAL TELEVISION TRANSITION  
JUNE 13, 2009**

Good afternoon. I want to welcome everyone to this press conference, the day after the end of full-power analog television broadcasting in the United States.

Yesterday was a truly historic day. For TV broadcasting, it was a final farewell to the Dinosaur Age and the dawn of the Digital Age. We said goodbye to the analog transmission technology that has served us well for the past 60 years and replaced it with something that can serve us even better. Digital will do for television what it has done for every other communications technology it touches—make it better, more efficient, more interactive, more competitive, and more exciting than ever before. The world is going digital, and I have no doubt that over-the-air television had to go digital as well. It's a win-win for consumers and for the long-term health of the broadcast industry.

We should not minimize the scope and scale of what we just went through. Twenty years ago, there was no such thing as digital television. Ten years ago, only a handful of stations were on the air with a digital signal and only a handful of early adopters had purchased digital sets—and most had to take out second mortgages in order to do it. Five years ago, no one knew when the DTV transition would end. And yet yesterday broadcasters, cable and satellite providers, consumer electronics manufacturers and retailers—and, most importantly, consumers—were by-and-large ready to turn off full-power analog signals for good.

I say “by and large” because, as we all know, a transition of this size inevitably entails a measure of disruption. We did our best to anticipate it and to minimize it in the time we had. In the less-than-five months we had since a new team took over, we cut the number of unprepared households in half. We put systems in place like in-home assistance and our National Call Center to help those who were still caught unprepared yesterday when analog transmissions stopped. Job One in the coming days and weeks is to help restore service to those consumers who may still be experiencing difficulties.

But in a broader sense, the transition is not over, even for those of us who dutifully connected our converter boxes by yesterday's deadline. Because despite the understandable focus on June 12, the DTV transition is not a one-day affair. There will be a period of adjustment as we all figure out how to make this new technology work in the real world. Some consumers still need to get converter boxes. Others will have to move or adjust their antennas or perhaps even buy more powerful ones in order to receive the channels they should be receiving. All of us using converter boxes must remember to re-scan our boxes.

At the same time, there may be changes from the transmission side of the equation that will make consumers' lives easier. Some stations are still ramping up to full power and making other necessary adjustments in the days ahead. Also, in certain

cases the FCC can assist stations pursuing technical solutions for offering better coverage.

The point is we all need a bit of patience and perseverance in the days ahead. This is a momentous change and it will take time to get it right. Be assured that here at the FCC, we are working around the clock to make that happen.

Speaking of working around the clock, let me turn the podium over to my colleagues Jonathan Adelstein and Rob McDowell. I can't thank them and our incredible FCC staff enough for their tireless efforts on behalf of the American people.

Commissioner McDowell will give you an update on the Call Center activity yesterday, and Commissioner Adelstein will give you an update on what's happening in the field.

Thank you very much.