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## **National Communications Authority**

*- Press Release*

### **NCA EMBARKS ON MARKET SURVEILLANCE TO PROTECT CONSUMERS FROM UNCERTIFIED DTT SET TOP BOXES**

#### **For Immediate Release**

The National Communications Authority (NCA), has embarked on a market surveillance exercise on Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) receivers (televisions and set top boxes) within the Greater Accra Region.

The surveillance exercise is part of the Authority's quest to protect consumers when television analogue broadcasting finally switches over to digital broadcasting. It is also to ensure that the DTT receivers sold on the Ghana market have been certified by the NCA and conform to the acceptable standards.

The NCA team visited various outlets where DTT receivers were being sold and found out that while there were certified receivers on the market, some dealers were also selling uncertified receivers, thus putting the consumers at risk. A number of the uncertified receivers, mostly set top boxes, were seized with the aid of the Ghana Police Service, they include the brands listed below:

- Mac Sunny
- Open Box
- Free Sat
- TuchnoSat
- Odaimond Star
- J-Star
- Vidbox
- Combo
- DigiSat

The Director for Engineering at the NCA, Mr. Henry Kanor, said the Authority has officers at Ghana's ports who assist customs to check that all communications equipment entering Ghana are safe and comply with our national standards. He said that although this was being done, some unsafe and uncertified equipment was entering the market through other channels. Mr. Kanor said, the NCA which has an important role in protecting the public from imported unauthorized equipment, in taking the necessary steps to ensure compliance to the

type approval regime has employed the use of market surveillance. He said it is important that dealers and importers comply to protect users with regards to environmental health and safety standards including electromagnetic radiation and emissions.

On her part, Mrs. Nana Defie Badu, the Director for Consumer and Corporate Affairs, said it is very important for all consumers to educate themselves and be aware of the DTT Migration Exercise. She went on further to say that the exercise is important not only to protect consumers from dangerous products but also to ensure a level playing field for businesses. Mrs. Badu said the exercise would be replicated in other regions.

The NCA, together with the Digital Broadcasting Migration Committee and under the auspices of the Ministry of Communications, has embarked on a nationwide educational campaign to educate consumers and create awareness of the DTT Migration. The campaign is also supported by the Ghana Independent Broadcasters' Association and the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC).

The surveillance exercise was conducted in accordance with Sections 71 and 72 of Act 775 of the Electronic Communication Act, 2008, which gives an authorised officer of the Authority the power to:

- test equipment or an article found in the place
- examine a receiver displayed for sale, at a point of import, or at a warehouse
- search for equipment, articles, books, records or documents that may provide evidence of (i) contravention of this Act or of Regulations, or (ii) require the owner or person in charge of the place to give the authorised officer the reasonable assistance required for the examination or search of the place,
- seize and take away equipment, articles, books, records or documents if it appears that there has been (i) a contravention of this Act or of any Regulation or (ii) a breach of condition of licence or frequency authorisation, and lodge the items seized with the Authority

The Authority has a mandate under Section 66 of the Electronic Communications Act, 2008, Act 775 to certify terminal equipment of public electronic communications network. The Authority may regulate, prohibit the sale or other distribution or connection of terminal equipment or other device that is provided in the country primarily for the purposes of circumventing, or facilitating the circumvention of a requirement of this Act.

Effective 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2014, it became illegal to sell set-top boxes that do not conform to the minimum specifications in the Ghana market per the DTT Receiver conformance regime.

The Authority will like to remind the general public that all set top boxes and integrated Digital TV sets should conform to Ghana's DTT Receiver standards. Conformance to Ghana's DTT standard is marked by the 'Digital Ghana' logo affixed on the receiver. Before you make any purchase, please make sure the logo below is affixed on the equipment.



*Figure 1: HD Logo for receivers that supports both High Definition (HD) and Standard Definition (SD)*



*Figure 2: SD Logo for receivers that supports only Standard Definition (SD)*

The list of approved DTT receivers is published on the Digital Switchover Page on the website of the National Communications Authority and the Digital Ghana website ([www.nca.org.gh/](http://www.nca.org.gh/) / [www.digitalghana.org](http://www.digitalghana.org)). NCA's offices are also open to the general public for information on vendors selling unauthorized set top boxes and TVs.

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### **Editor's Note**

#### **About the DTT**

Ghana and other members of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) signed an agreement in Geneva in 2006, setting 17th June, 2015 as the deadline for all countries in Africa, Europe and Middle East as well as Russia to migrate to digital terrestrial television broadcasting technology in the Ultra High Frequency (UHF) Band. The Agreement set 17th June, 2020 as the

deadline for the Very High Frequency (VHF) Band. It is, therefore, mandatory for Ghana and the other countries in the areas specified to migrate.

The main reason for the world's migration to digital, is to release valuable spectrum which can be used for other services. Spectrum is scarce, therefore more efficient use of the spectrum is necessary if more terrestrial telecommunications and broadcasting services are to be made available. Ghana coordinates its frequency plans with other countries to ensure that there is no interference between various countries' broadcasting signals. Currently, analogue broadcasting is protected from interference, but this protection will stop by 2017. It is therefore necessary to complete the migration from analogue to digital by 2017.

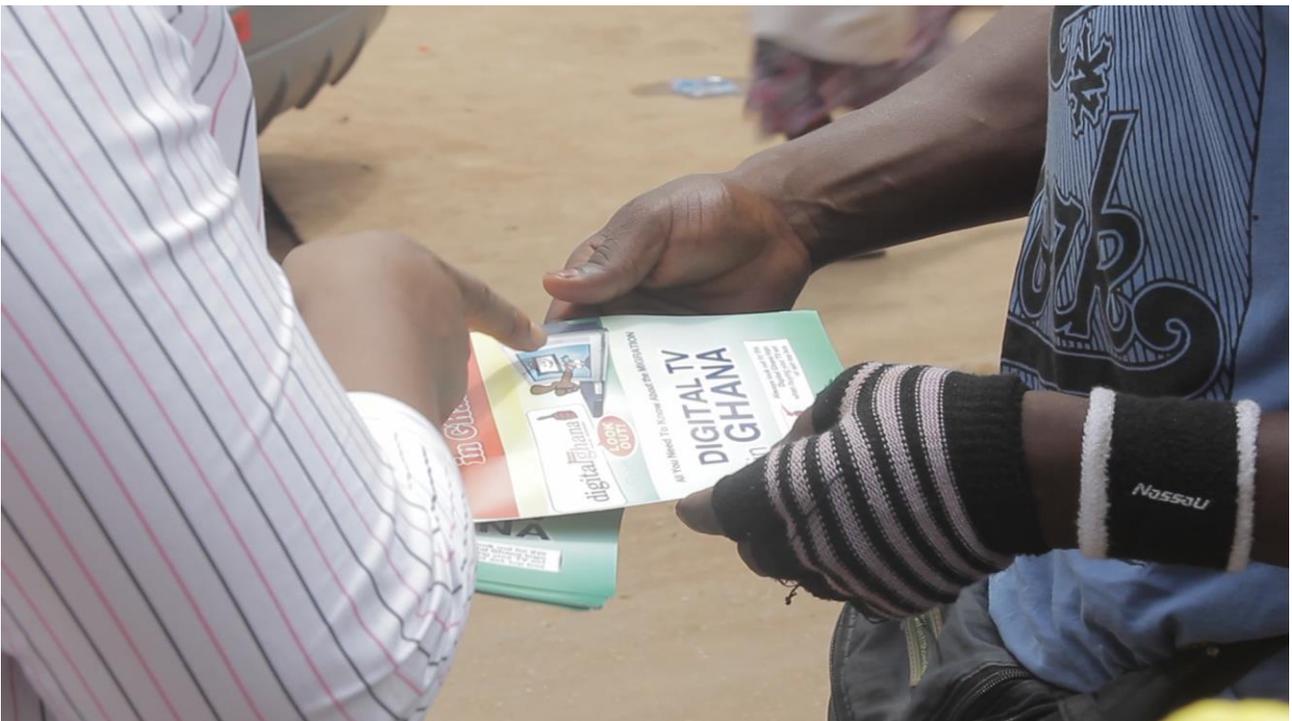
The migration from analogue to digital television broadcasting would most likely have an impact on almost every citizen of this country considering the pervasiveness of terrestrial TV. It is therefore important that the migration is properly managed to ensure that every Ghanaian who watches TV today is able to continue watching TV in the digital domain



***Some of the seized set top boxes from Zongo Lane.***



*Some of the seized set top boxes from Lapaz.*



*Educating consumers on what to look for when buying a set top box.*



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