

INDUSTRY BRIEFING

From Digital UK, the organisation leading technical co-ordination of the 700MHz clearance programme

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Additional information on 700MHz clearance in Northern Ireland

The next stage of the 700MHz clearance programme in Northern Ireland will take place on Wednesday, 4 September 2019. This briefing provides additional notes and points for installers and retailers to consider.

How will this clearance affect Freeview viewers?

- Freeview viewers may need to retune to continue receiving some TV channels and radio services. Other platforms that use terrestrial TV, such as YouView, BT TV, EE, Plusnet and TalkTalk, will also be affected. Some viewers will also receive Saorview services from the Republic of Ireland (see below). Viewers with queries can be directed to freeview.co.uk/tvchanges and the Freeview Advice Line on freephone **0808 100 0288**.
- Most aerials are expected to be capable of receiving a reliable signal following the changes. However, some grouped aerials - notably group C/D - may need to be updated. A wideband model is generally recommended.¹
- Full details of the affected transmitters, multiplexes, frequencies and aerial group changes for the UTV region are available to download from Digital UK website at digitaluk.co.uk/clearance.

Clearance will take place at the following transmitter groups on 4 September 2019

Transmitter Group	Area Served
Brougher Mountain	south west Northern Ireland
Divis	Belfast and the surrounding area
Limavady	north west Northern Ireland

Saorview

Many viewers in Northern Ireland have separate aerials installed to facilitate reception of Saorview television services from the Republic of Ireland. For those using Freeview TVs and set-top boxes, these services will be listed in the 800 channel section of the EPG. The Republic will also begin its processes for 700MHz clearance on 4 September, launching a simulcast of both of its multiplexes on new frequencies. The Saorview multiplexes will operate on their old and new frequencies until Spring 2020.

¹ Group K or T, or equivalent, appropriate to the specific transmitter.

During an automatic retune TV equipment will usually select one set of these multiplexes depending on manufacturer preference with regards to signal quality, power or the received order.

Saorview will place a 'full-stop' next to the channel names of RTÉ One and RTÉ2 on transmissions across the Republic of Ireland on its existing frequencies. This measure is intended to aid installers or retailers around the border areas who may be asked to retune customer TV sets that receive both Freeview and Saorview. The full stop should not be visible following a successful retune to the new frequencies.

Aerial installers should carefully consider how a dual aerial receiving system will operate when these changes take place in September. Special attention should be given where aerial group diplexers are currently used to combine signals from both Freeview and Saorview aerials. These may filter out the wanted new frequencies in the future, so consideration should be given to alternative arrangements such as use of wideband diplexers, combiners and/or careful alignment of aerials.

For example, in parts of Derry/Londonderry it may be possible to receive transmissions from Saorview and Freeview transmitters using a single aerial.

Further information on the Saorview changes is available at saorview.ie/en/changes

NI Mux

RTÉ One, RTÉ2 and TG4 are also available in some parts of Northern Ireland as part of the Freeview service. These services appear on the Freeview EPG on channels 51, 52 and 53 and are currently carried on the NI Mux, which is broadcast from Brougher Mountain, Black Mountain and Carnmoney Hill transmitters. From the 4 September the transmitters listed below will also broadcast the NI Mux:

- Divis (parts of Belfast only)
- Newcastle
- Strabane
- Whitehead
- Armagh

Radio service RTÉ RnaG is also broadcast on NI Mux at channel 729.

Additional checklist for installers

- If you work with landlords or property managers/factors in the areas listed, please advise them of these changes (including local councils and housing offices, hotels, B&Bs, hospitals and care homes).
- Channelised distribution systems receiving a signal from one of the transmitters changing may need to be adjusted.

Advice and support for Freeview viewers in Northern Ireland, including those also receiving Saorview services, will be available from the Freeview Advice Line. Viewers reliant on DTT who are unable to restore those services affected after a retune as a result of these changes may be eligible for in-home support (See below). In the first instance, all viewers should be directed to the Freeview TV changes website at freeview.co.uk/tvchanges and to the Freeview Advice Line on freephone **0808 100 0288**.



- Digital Mobile Spectrum Limited is responsible for in-home support during these clearance events.

Further support

Free information and support will be available for these retune events.

Information will be available on the Freeview website at [freeview.co.uk/tvchanges](https://www.freeview.co.uk/tvchanges) and advice as well as support can be accessed from the Freeview Advice Line on freephone **0808 100 0288**.

Please direct viewers to this number for initial support.

An information campaign to help prepare viewers, including local advertising and on-screen messaging where possible, will begin in each area approximately two weeks ahead of these changes.

A full listing of the current channels on Freeview is available at [digitaluk.co.uk/channels](https://www.digitaluk.co.uk/channels).

Technical information on UK transmitters is available from the detailed view of the Digital UK coverage checker ([digitaluk.co.uk/coveragechecker](https://www.digitaluk.co.uk/coveragechecker)). You can also use our planned engineering works page ([digitaluk.co.uk/engineeringworks](https://www.digitaluk.co.uk/engineeringworks)) to keep up-to-date and check for ongoing maintenance.

Information on Saorview coverage is available on the Saorview website at [saorview.ie/en/get/coverage](https://www.saorview.ie/en/get/coverage). Details of changes to signals are available at [saorview.ie/en/changes](https://www.saorview.ie/en/changes)

General trade information on the 700MHz clearance programme is available at [digitaluk.co.uk/clearance](https://www.digitaluk.co.uk/clearance).