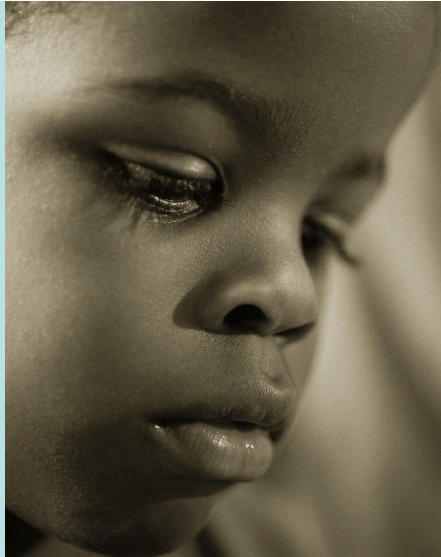


BROADCASTING COMMISSION

More Choices, Better Access and Higher Quality



Planning for the Digital Age

**Cordel Green
Executive Director
Broadcasting Commission
At**

**Commonwealth Broadcasting
Association/International Institute of Communications
Regional Conference
Nassau, Bahamas
January 23, 2008**



Transition to Digital – The policy agenda

Big Ticket Items In Jamaica:

- **Regulatory Structure**
 - Single Converged Regulator vs.
 - Single Telecommunications Regulator (distribution/transmission/spectrum management) + Separate Content Regulator (across all platforms)
- **Digital Switch-Over**
- **Media Literacy**



Regulatory Structure - Convergence Challenges

- **Institutional-Shift towards a converged licence regime**
 - Alternative infrastructure providers
 - Therefore need for unified regulatory framework
 - BUT argument for distinctive broadcasting/content regulator - broadcasting is a 'merit good' – has very important and specialised non-economic cultural criteria.



Convergence Challenges

- **Competition issues**
 - Levelling the playing field (across multiple platforms, systems of delivery and reception)
 - although broadcasting obligations (e.g psb requirements) are different?
 - Cross licensing
 - Consolidation



Convergence Challenges

- **Technical standards and Frequency spectrum**
 - Technology neutrality
 - Demand for Optimal spectrum allocation



Convergence Challenges

- **Culture and Content**
 - Cross-media distribution
 - BUT differences in access, some free over the air, others by selection and subscription
 - Erosion of boundaries (risk of homogeneity?)
 - Distribution channels morphing into a single Internet platform
 - Audience autonomy (how to control problematic content)



Transition to Digital – The policy agenda

- **‘What kind of public policy do we need here?’**
 - engagement with key stakeholders
 - everyone must first understand the subject.



Transition to Digital – The policy agenda

- **In Lieu of a Conclusion, a set of indicative questions are proposed for discussion and debate:**
 - the wider context of convergence, including mobile communications
 - content and diversity benefits : new/more content ?, pluralism, diversity, local programming



Transition to Digital – The policy agenda

- designing a switchover policy – and the ‘do nothing’ alternative
- the different groups of technical standards (ATSC, DVB, ISDB etc)
- Cost-Benefit Analysis, and considerations affecting the choice of technical standards.
- high definition versus standard definition (nb. compression systems)



Transition to Digital – The policy agenda

- ‘must carry’ issues
- competition and fairness issues
- licensing issues
- frequency planning and interference issues
- level of interest in new uses for spectrum



Transition to Digital – The policy agenda

**DIGITAL SWITCH-OVER WORKSHOP MARCH 3 and 4,
2008 - Jamaica**

Regional Participation Welcomed

International and local experts

Lead Presenter, Michael Starks

- Author of *Switching to Digital Television*, published by Intellect Books and the University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Project Manager, UK Digital TV Action Plan
- Director of the BBC's Free-to-View Digital TV Project



Transition to Digital – Role of Regulator

- **Advocate or Facilitator**

- 'committed advocate', pushing for switchover to achieve spectrum efficiency gains, or
- 'wise facilitator'

- **Jamaica's Approach**

- 'wise facilitator' because Digital switchover needs collaboration between policy-makers, industry stakeholders and consumers



THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION-Social perspective

- Mass adoption of technologies that offer new possibilities:
 - interactivity,
 - interoperability,
 - selectivity of content
 - ability to by-pass conventional networks, standard systems of delivery and many regulatory controls.

- Boundless opportunities to be heard, read and seen, without mediation – particularly via the Internet.



THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION-Social Perspective

- Wireless and compression technologies are increasing the portability of media.

- Youth are extremely attracted to portable multimedia devices

- Implications present for exposure of children to potentially harmful content.
 - Aggressive marketing of violent, sexual and profane content is a concern



THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION-Social Perspective

- Inadequate parental supervision of media use
 - single-parent families (40%)
 - children with neither parent at home (17%)
 - **PLUS** it is extremely difficult to supervise children's use of personal media e.g. hand-held video games, iPods and mobile phones



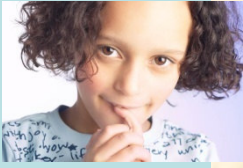
THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION & MEDIA LITERACY

- Greater empowerment of audiences, must be balanced by Media literacy
- BCJ Media Literacy Project being piloted by Joint Board of Teacher Education
- Targets Children in upper grades of primary and preparatory schools i.e. Grades 4 to 6 with plans to expand in the future:



Transition to Digital – OTHER ISSUES

- Digital Rights Management
 - Is interoperability a necessity?
- Spectrum Dividend
 - More TV? (HD, Standard Definition, Mobile TV, IPTV)
 - WiFi, WiMAX and other technologies?
 - More spectrum for mobile?



Transition to Digital – OTHER ISSUES

- Spectrum Dividend

- Will consumers (who are not clamouring for switch-over) be rewarded with just more services and content or improved and different service offerings, including PSB and community services?

- Any demands by the “Sovereign Citizen”?

- My Information Service (MIS) over the air ala YouTube and MySpace?



FEEDBACK

- www.broadcom.org
- info@broadcom.org
- 1-888-99-CABLE (22253)

- www.myspace.com/cordelgreen