

05/04/04

### **Consumer Panel welcomes Ofcom's digital switchover report**

The Ofcom Consumer Panel - the independent body set up to advise Ofcom on consumer interests in the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors - today welcomed Ofcom's report, Driving Digital Switchover.

In a statement issued today, the Panel said that switchover to digital could deliver real benefits to individual consumers, but added that it is essential that switchover is managed in a way that gives priority to the needs of consumers.

The Panel welcomed Ofcom's recommendation to set a firm date for the start of the switchover process so that clear plans can be made and consumer information can start to be provided.

Colette Bowe, Chairman of the Consumer Panel, said: " We can't leave information provision to the last minute. The Panel will be taking a close interest in the information that is provided to consumers about digital switchover. There will need to be completely clear, helpful, non-technical advice widely available.

"We support Ofcom's recommendation that the Government should consider the costs and benefits of offering limited financial assistance to particular groups. Without it some consumers could find themselves disadvantaged by a poorly managed route to switchover. We will be pressing the case for their needs to be properly considered and addressed."

**Ends.**

### **Notes for editors and CSEs**

1. The Consumer Panel is the independent advisory body set up under section 16 (2) of the Communications Act 2003 to advise Ofcom on the consumer interests in broadcasting and telecommunications.

2. The Panel's eleven members appointed by Ofcom are:

Colette Bowe, Chairman  
Ruth Evans, Deputy Chairman  
Azeem Azhar  
Fiona Ballantyne  
Nainish Bapna  
Roger Darlington  
Simon Gibson  
Graham Mather  
Kevin McLaughlin

Kate O'Rourke  
Bob Twitchin

For further details please visit the Consumer Panel website.

**Contact**

Ofcom Media Office  
mediaoffice@ofcom.org.uk  
(+44) (0)20 7981 3033