



REGIONAL TELEVISION DSO ASSISTANCE

Criteria for Determining Eligibility

NZ On Air will apply the following criteria to all regional broadcasters applying for DSO Assistance. NZ On Air may make any practical modifications to these criteria to ensure appropriate funding decisions are made:

- **Regional focus** – broadcasters must be located in and broadcasting to an identified region. Regional broadcasters will need to provide evidence of locally focused content being produced and broadcast on an ongoing basis (for example, coverage of regional news, current affairs, information, sport and cultural events).
- **Business viability** – funding will only be provided to viable ongoing businesses. Regional broadcasters must provide satisfactory financial statements for the past two years and adequate financial projections for the next year.
- **Technical viability** – the regional broadcaster will need to demonstrate its proposed technical solution for digital transmission is viable and cost-effective.
- **Timing** - funding will be available twice yearly over the 2011/12 and 2012/13 financial years until the DSO has occurred in each region. This timeframe will enable some flexibility for regional broadcasters to determine the exact timing of their move from analogue to digital broadcasting.

The following criteria apply to those regional broadcasters located within Digital Terrestrial Transmission (DTT) coverage.

- **Transmission** – funding may be provided towards either stand-alone transmission within DTT coverage (subject to licence availability) or through the national DTT network. This recognises that some regional broadcasters prefer stand-alone transmission due to the ongoing costs of accessing the DTT network. However, regional broadcasters with a preference for the stand-alone option must be able to demonstrate they have appropriate spectrum licences and the capability to operate effectively as a stand-alone transmitter, including ensuring audience access to their signal.
- **Freeview compatibility** – broadcasters will need to be accessible via a Freeview receiver. Whether they prefer a stand-alone or DTT network transmission option it is crucial regional broadcasters are able to be “found” by viewers via the Service Information (i.e. channel listing) provided by Freeview. Full programme listings on the Electronic Programme Guide are not essential but a Service Information listing for viewer navigation to and from the network services is necessary.
- **Retrospective** – regional broadcasters who began the move to DTT after 1 September 2010 will be eligible to apply for DSO Assistance.

- **Cap and approved uses** – funding for any one regional broadcaster will be capped at \$70,000. Funding may be available for the capital and some operating costs of the transition from analogue to DTT (including transmission equipment, linking, any re-tuning services and in-fill transmission costs). Funding will also be available for simulcasting in analogue and digital transmission up until DSO. Funding will not be available for “in studio” costs, station personnel costs, administration or overheads. Drawdowns will be contingent on the provision of verifiable and competitive third-party invoices, where applicable.

The following criterion applies only to those regional broadcasters located outside DTT extension coverage:

- **Broadband** – funding may be provided towards the capital costs of using viable existing broadband capability for transmission. This includes linking and software. Regional broadcasters will need to prove viability in terms of audience size and broadband speed and accessibility in their region. Funding may also be available for “simulcasting” in both analogue transmission and broadband up until the DSO. Funding will not be available for “in studio” costs, station personnel costs, administration or overheads. Drawdowns will be contingent on the provision of verifiable and competitive third-party invoices, where applicable.