

April 16<sup>th</sup> 1997

For Immediate Release

Contact: Martin Jacklin, DVB Project Office  
Ancienne Route 17A  
1218 Grand Saconnex  
Geneva, Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 717 2719  
Fax: +41 22 717 2727

## **DVB announces HDTV at 50- AND 60-Hz**

Geneva, April 16<sup>th</sup> 1997. At its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April, the Steering Board of the world-wide **Digital Video Broadcasting Project (DVB)** announced that DVB will incorporate **High Definition Television (HDTV)** as a future application of digital video broadcasting. **From the summer of 1997**, a DVB specification will be available which describes how to use DVB standards to broadcast HDTV services in "50-Hz" countries as well as in "60-Hz" countries.

HDTV will bring sharp, clear pictures and state-of-the-art cinematic sound. The terms "50 Hz" and "60 Hz" refer to the number of TV pictures transmitted to the receiver per second. In a "50 Hz" country, 50 image fields are transmitted per second. "50 Hz" countries include Europe and many other countries around the world, whereas "60 Hz" countries would include North and South America, and Japan.

Since the start of DVB Project activities in 1993, "DVB" has become synonymous with **a consistent set of technical solutions** to broadcasting images, sound and data over **all kinds of media**, such as cable, satellite and terrestrial "broadcast" networks. All DVB standards, whether existing or under development, fully address both 50 and 60-Hz image refresh rates.

The DVB approach provides great **flexibility** in terms of transmitted digital information, owing to its data "container" concept. DVB simply delivers to the receiver "containers" with compressed image, sound or data. **No restrictions exist** as to the kind of information which can be stored in these containers.

At its inception, DVB selected the "MPEG-2" approach developed by the Moving Picture Experts Group (MPEG) for the compression of image and sound data prior to transmission. MPEG-2/DVB compliant systems are capable of delivering anything from multiple-channel Standard Definition (SDTV) or Enhanced Definition (EDTV) to single channel HDTV.

Until now the DVB Project has focused on SDTV to EDTV image quality levels, in response to the existing commercial priorities identified by its members. Now, the DVB Project's decision is to widen the range of recommended image-quality levels to include HDTV.

The "**Main Profile at High Level**" (MP@HL) option of the MPEG-2 compression toolbox has been selected for this purpose. Thus, a **range of HDTV picture formats** may be selected by the broadcaster, including those now finding favour in the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and Digital Audio-Visual Council (DAVIC).

In response to rising demand from many parts of the world where DVB is being broadcast today, DVB-HDTV was defined for both 50- and 60-Hz countries. This will enable broadcasters to use the DVB standards to broadcast HDTV images and sound, in any country.

Owing to the flexibility of the DVB "container" approach, the inclusion of **HDTV does not require the development of a new "DVB-HD" standard**. Instead, only a "guidelines" document needs to be published describing the operating parameters of the video compression equipment to be selected by a broadcaster to generate the MPEG-2 data stream.

With this announcement, DVB's long-standing ability to support High Definition Television is now fully confirmed.

## **Background**

The Digital Video Broadcasting Project (DVB) is a consortium of over 200 broadcasters, manufacturers, network operators and regulatory bodies in more than 30 countries worldwide, committed to designing a global standard for the delivery of digital television. Numerous broadcast services using DVB standards are now operational, in Europe, North and South America, Africa, Asia, and Australasia.