

**PACIFIC MEDIA PARTNERSHIP
CONFERENCE 2015**
Partnering for Broadcasting
Apia, Samoa

Media and Communication Challenges for Tonga

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OUTLINE



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About Tonga.



Total number of Islands

• 177 Islands

Total number of inhabited Islands

• 52 Islands

Total Population

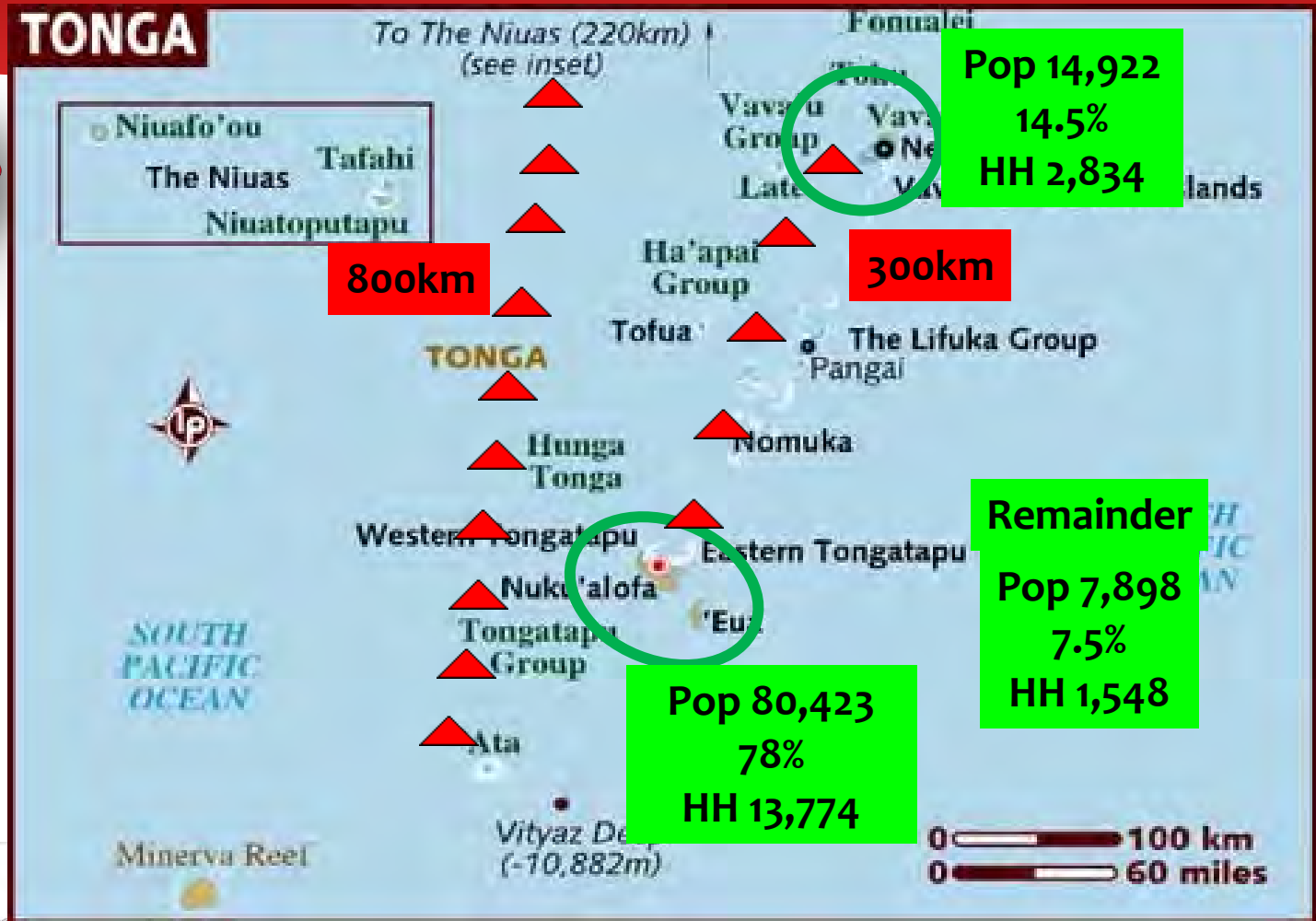
• 103,252

Total land area:

• 750 Sq Kms



Tonga Overview



Source : Kingdom of Tonga, Tonga 2011 Census of Population and Housing



TV Broadcasting Overview



- 3 Existing Broadcasters
- 2 FTA 1 Pay per view TV



Government Owned

2 VHF TV analogue TV channels

40m towers 500W , Service in Tongatapu and Vava'u



Christian Broadcasting Station -Funded by donations

1 UHF analogue TV channel

60m guyed mast 1kW transmitter, Service in Tongatapu



DigiCel (Tonga) Ltd - Commercial Pay TV operation

1 UHF channel DVB-T2 modulation with 28 channels

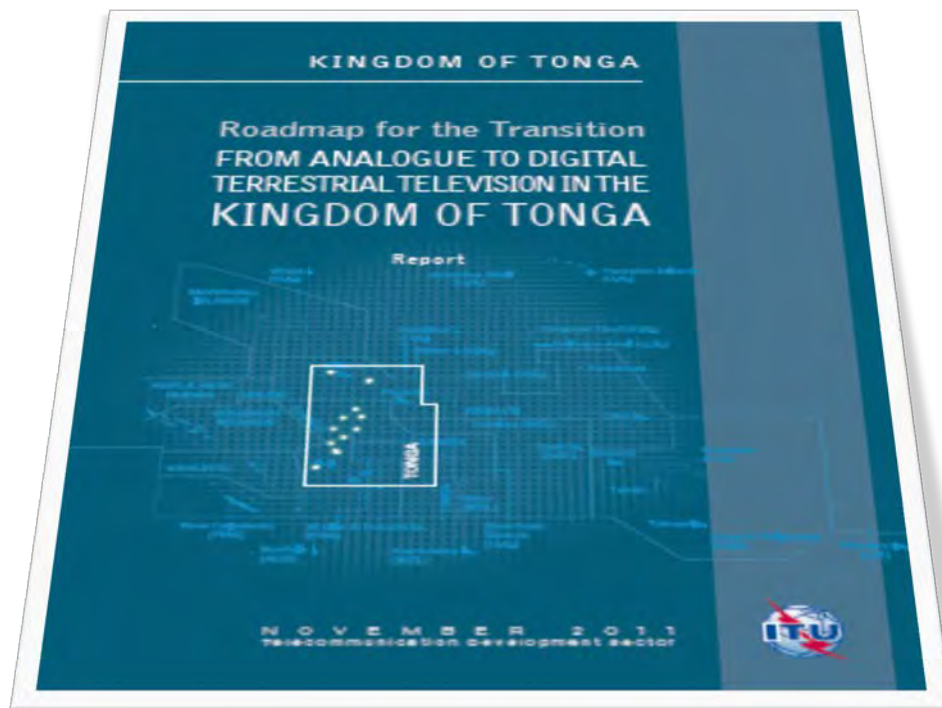
3 services unencrypted 45m tower, Service in Tongatapu.



DTT Roadmap



- * ITU Mission to Tonga in 2011
- * National Roadmap Team developed
- * Report November 2011



Progress...



- * Unfortunately not much progress since 2011.
- * Reasons:
 - * Lack of funding to make a formal transition
 - * Not all parties were agreed on the proposed solution
- * Technology has evolved, pricing has come down and DigiTV (for commercial reasons) have converted to DVB-T2.
- * In addition, TBC did receive a grant to upgrade their analogue transmitters and now have two independent transmission paths for TV Tonga 1 and TV Tonga 2.



ITU 2015 mission Recommendations



- * 1: To change ASO to a new date of no later than December, 2016.
- * 2: That a digital transmission standard be DVB-T2 rather than DVB-T.
- * 3: That the NRT consider 3 proposals and agree on a single solution.
- * 4: That the Kingdom of Tonga Government provides seed funding for the transition on a temporary basis to minimise the costs to the nation.
- * 5: The government assesses Tongan's household's ability to pay for set top boxes for the transition and develop time payment plans or a subsidy scheme for households with low income.
- * 6: That regulatory arrangements are reviewed and licences developed for content providers and multiplex operators.
- * 7: That a project manager be appointed to drive the transition process.



Revised Roadmap



- * A new draft transition project plan was done
- * As a result of the new plan, simulcast commence on October 28th 2015 for Tongatapu.
- * Digital switch on and commencement of the simulcast period for Vavaú on January 27th 2016.
- * Final analogue switch off date for the Kingdom of Tonga on Friday 29th April 2016
- * However this new proposed ASO has not been approved by the Cabinet yet.

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Regulatory and Policy



- * 1: Transitioning to digital will require changes to the licencing of broadcaster
- * 2: As a multiplex model will be introduced whereby the broadcaster no longer may have a direct spectrum right.
- * 3: Reviewing of the Communications Act 2000 is underway which provides an opportunity for changes to legislation to support this digital model.



Funding Hurdle



- * Estimated selling price of a STB to a household is approx. USD 60.
- * But Tongan households are diverse – income sources range from subsistence work, to family remittances from overseas, to wages and salaries. ***Impact assessment of USD ~60 STB is key success factor for the transition to digital.***
 - * Government assistance programmes may be needed
- * Due to lowering technology costs, costing estimated to be USD 640k for broadcaster transmission facilities and receivers

Source : Consultant Report



Challenges



- * Cost involve with the migration for each Broadcaster is an issue.
- * DBN and TBC are now having a different view on the proposed solution outlined in the roadmap.
- * Lost of Goodwill from DigTV on trying to follow the roadmap due to their investment lost.
- * Lack of Technical Skills in Digital Broadcasting



Conclusions



- * The cost hurdle has proven too great in the past for the Kingdom of Tonga to convert to digital television
- * But, Tonga may now benefit from technology change and lowering technology costs to convert and gain the benefits of digital television
 - * Better quality transmission
 - * More services
 - * A platform to build mobile / portable services
 - * Enhanced delivery of government projects and information
- * Tonga has the capacity to convert, including householders, if all sectors work together for a common goal.

Source : Consultant Report





Thank You..



Asia-Pacific
Broadcasting Union



Australian Government
Department of Communications

