

# Spectrum recall to hit digital TV in September

**D**igital TV viewing is expected to be disrupted in some areas from September as the 700-megahertz spectrum range is recalled for the 5G telecom network.

Viewers will need to self-tune their set-top boxes to get a signal, said the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC).

In February, 700MHz was one of three spectrum ranges put up for auction for use on the 5G network. A certain portion of the range is now used to broadcast digital TV.

NBTC vice-chairman Natee Sukonrat said people in the South can start tuning their set-top boxes from September. Audiences in Bangkok and the surrounding areas can do so from Oct 5.

The set-top box tuning can be done in October for the North, November for

the Northeast and December for the central region.

Col Natee said the tuning can be done from 6am onwards in Bangkok and its surrounding areas and from 5pm in other provinces.

He said viewers can self-tune the boxes without any charges applied.

To tune the boxes, users need to choose "Setting" on the remote control of a set-top box, press auto search and then "OK". Afterwards, the signal for digital TV will return. More details can be found at <http://700.nbtc.go.th>.

"This move is meant to make sure the country is heading towards the 5G technology at full steam," Col Natee said. "This could affect people in some areas where they cannot watch digital TV temporarily. After tuning the set-top boxes, they can view TV programmes again."

According to the NBTC, the country has 38 digital TV channels: 19 for the national level, four for regions and the rest for educational purposes.

The regulator said TV broadcasting reliant on the 510-790MHz range will migrate to 470-694MHz, paving the way for telecom operators to use the range.

The 700MHz range is to be used for telecom purposes from Jan 15, 2021.