

# SOLAR 'N' SAT

## SATELLITE TV

### **What is Optus Aurora?**

Optus Aurora is a service provided by the Australian Government, funded by the taxpayers and carried on the Optus C1 satellite that enables access to free to view channels via satellite using a satellite dish, satellite receiver and smartcard. The service is intended for those people who live in areas that are poorly served by land based (terrestrial) tv transmitters and for those people who are traveling.

Although the channels are free to view, they are scrambled (encrypted) and require a smartcard to permit access to the channels. This encryption is similar to that used by Foxtel and Austar Pay TV but there are no subscription fees.

### **What channels are available on the Aurora platform?**

The free to air channels available to domestic users are Westlink, GWN (Seven Network), WIN TV (Nine Network), Seven Central (Seven Network), Imparja (Nine Network), ABC (all time zones), SBS (All time zones).

There are also numerous radio channels available.

### **Can anyone connect to the Aurora network?**

Everyone in Australia can purchase a satellite system and have their smartcard activated for ABC & SBS. There is no criteria to be met. This is good for people who receive good quality reception on their commercial channels, but experience poor quality on ABC & SBS. In order to have the commercial channels activated via satellite however, they must fit into one of the following groups

- A) You are in a approved remote satellite area,
- B) You are in a area that receives poor terrestrial (land based) reception
- C) You are traveling in a caravan/motorhome in remote inland areas

If you fit into category A, you can have your card activated for all channels. There are no requirements other than to purchase the necessary equipment. If you are not sure if you are in an approved remote satellite area - click

[http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_90217](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_90217)

If you fit into category B, you will have to arrange for a qualified antenna technician to come to your property and perform a site survey (at your cost). The site survey will determine whether adequate signal levels can be obtained by using a 20 foot mast (maximum), an appropriate antenna and mast head amplifier. The survey will then be submitted to the Australian Broadcasting Authority. If approved, you can then purchase a satellite kit and have your smartcard activated. This process generally takes around 6 weeks.

If you fit into category C, you can have your smartcard activated for periods of 6-12 months at a time. There is no activation fee, and the smartcard can be re-activated as many times as required. You must be traveling however.

### **Broadcasters licensed areas.**

Imparja and Seven Central are licensed to broadcast into every state except Western Australia. GWN, Westlink and WIN TV are licensed to broadcast in Western Australia only.

This means that if a person lives in remote Kimberley region in WA, they would receive GWN, WIN TV, Westlink as well as ABC and SBS. If a person lives in remote South Australia then Imparja, Seven Central, ABC and SBS would be activated.

For travelers, while touring throughout all states except WA, Imparja and Seven Central, ABC and SBS will be activated. When crossing over into WA, you are supposed to contact Optus and have GWN and WIN TV activated instead of Imparja and Seven Central even though any of the channels can be picked up regardless of where you are.

### **What equipment is required?**

The Optus C1 satellite carries the Aurora platform. This satellite replaces Optus B3. Optus C1 is a high power satellite 220% more powerful than Optus B3. This enables adequate reception all around Australia on an 65 – 90cm satellite dish.

The LNB, attaches to the end of the satellite dish and collects and amplifies the signal which is then fed through good quality coaxial cable to the digital receiver/decoder.

The smartcard is inserted into the decoder. Of course a good solid mount is required to hold the dish in place. Unlike a standard antenna, the dish must be precisely aligned to the satellite.

In summary the parts required are:

65-90cm satellite dish  
LNB  
Mount  
Cable  
Receiver/decoder  
Smartcard

### **What are the benefits of satellite TV?**

All broadcasts from the Optus C1 satellite are in digital format. The picture quality is superb no matter where you are. The sound quality is crystal clear. Also, with the lower costs of electronic components, the cost of a good quality satellite kit is less than the cost of setting up masting, antennas and amplifiers and the results are guaranteed.

Where can I find maps of the remote area broadcast service area?

Follow this link to the remote area maps.

<http://www.aba.gov.au/licplan/planning/licareas/defmaps/remote.shtml>

We can tailor a satellite system to suit your needs.

If you think you could benefit from a satellite system, give us a call and we'll answer all of your questions.

The Team at Solar N Sat