

## **“DAB+ at the heart of listening” as WorldDAB elects new President**

- **Jacqueline Bierhorst elected President of global industry forum for DAB+ digital radio**
- **Bierhorst aims to ensure “every person can enjoy free-to-air digital radio on the move, at home or at work, with DAB+ at the heart of the listening experience.”**
- **WorldDAB Summit 2023 in Munich highlights global growth of DAB+**

**9 November 2023**

Jacqueline Bierhorst has been elected as President of WorldDAB, the global industry forum for DAB+ digital radio. Bierhorst was previously the Vice President, and has represented Digital Radio Netherlands on the organisation’s Steering Board since 2015.

She takes over from Patrick Hannon, who is stepping down after ten years in the role. The handover took place at the annual WorldDAB Summit, held this year in Munich, Germany.

Speaking at the Summit, Bierhorst paid tribute to Hannon’s work as President. “His leadership, enthusiasm, and vision helped shape the course of WorldDAB for the past ten years. We have witnessed an exponential growth of DAB+ across the globe and how DAB+ is now included as standard in every new car in Europe and beyond. It has set the bar high!”

Bierhorst added: “It is a privilege to be part of a mission that not only has the potential to revolutionise the way the world listens to radio but is already making a huge impact helping radio thrive and making sure every person can enjoy free-to-air digital radio on the move, at home or at work, with DAB+ at the heart of this listening experience.”

Elsewhere at the conference, the President of Bavarian regulator BLM, Dr Thorsten Schmiede, gave his prognosis for radio’s future. “If DAB+ continues to develop in this way, it seems likely that in two or three years more people will listen to radio in Bavaria via digital delivery methods than via FM,” he said. “Reason enough for us the Bavarian Regulatory Authority, as part of its ‘Audio Strategy 2025,’ to work together with broadcasters on concepts for a migration to DAB+.” Schmiede stressed this cooperation was critical: “The switchover to DAB+ can only be undertaken jointly and with the greatest possible regional coverage – it should involve as little loss of daily reach as possible,” he said.

Meanwhile, Hervé Godechot of French regulator Arcom, highlighted the rapid growth of DAB. “In France, a total of 556 stations, from major networks to smaller ones, including the public service Radio France, have been authorised to broadcast on DAB+, and 110 multiplexes are currently on air. Since the summer more than half of French listeners are in areas where they access DAB+.” Godechot added that 300 new transmitters will increase population coverage to 62.2% by next March, while the DAB+ trial in the French overseas territory of Martinique has been extended to next summer. Godechot said the forthcoming “white paper” on radio would review the economics and technologies involved, alongside the evolution of uses and roads to success.

Over 400 attendees in Munich and online heard speakers set out the continuing global growth of DAB, with updates on the significant progress being made in Ghana, Indonesia, Bahrain and Australia.

DAB's importance in Android Automotive's latest release was discussed by Joseph D'Angelo of Xperi and Gregor Pöttsch from CARIAD, Volkswagen Group. The increasing role of DAB+ in providing emergency warnings also featured, with the Chair of WorldDAB's Technical Committee, Lindsay Cornell, giving an update the work of an Emergency Warnings task force, set up to define requirements and testing methods for receiver features ahead of international implementation. Media DAB presented Italy's first use of DAB+ in an emergency, in this case displaying an image of a missing girl on receiver screens.

Summit sessions also included the red-hot topic of AI with Luigi Troiano of data company Kebula and Yann Legarson from Radioplayer exploring how DAB+ can work with AI, and how it can help personalisation, while BMT's Mathias Kufner described how it was using AI to generate content cover art for DAB+ displays. Dr Lawrie Hallett of the University of Bedfordshire in the UK previewed his forthcoming report on small-scale DAB+, setting out how it can "grow the digital radio cake" by helping to promote DAB in previously under-served sectors.

#### **Notes to editors**

- WorldDAB Summit 2023 took place on 8 November, 09:00-15:30 CET at Design Offices Munich Atlas, Munich, Germany
- Full details including the schedule and speaker biographies are available at: <https://www.worlddab.org/events/detail/650>
- New WorldDAB President Jaqueline Bierhorst is available for interview – contact WorldDAB.

#### **About Jaqueline Bierhorst**

Jacqueline Bierhorst has been a pioneer in commercial radio since 1987, specialised in distribution, marketing, and content. She has a strong track record in launching and leading successful commercial television and radio channels in The Netherlands and Belgium. From 2011 until 2015 she was project leader on the roll out of the DAB+ network in The Netherlands and since 2015 she is project director Digital Radio NL, a collaboration between public and commercial broadcasters and the Ministry of Economic Affairs coordinating involvement of all stakeholders and joint marketing of Digital Radio. Bierhorst is owner of Jacky B Entertainment Solutions, Vice President of WorldDAB, a member of the WorldDAB Steering Board and an active ambassador of digital radio throughout Europe. She is also a consultant to the Flemish Government, Department of Culture, Youth and Media for the introduction of DAB+ in Flanders, initiating collaboration throughout the Flemish stakeholders on digital radio and country manager Radioplayer Netherlands.

#### **Graphics**

1. Jacqueline Bierhorst, WorldDAB President - headshot
2. Jacqueline Bierhorst, WorldDAB President (left) is welcomed by out-going President, Patrick Hannon
3. Jacqueline Bierhorst, WorldDAB President speaks at WorldDAB Summit 2023
4. Dr Thorsten Schmiege, President of Bavarian regulator BLM addresses WorldDAB Summit 2023
5. Hervé Godechot of French regulator Arcom
6. Christiana Attrams, National Communications Authority, Ghana addresses WorldDAB Summit 2023 on video
7. WorldDAB logo

#### **About WorldDAB**

WorldDAB is the global industry association responsible for defining and promoting DAB digital radio. By bringing together radio industry professionals, WorldDAB provides knowledge and expertise that helps countries successfully adopt and implement broadcast digital radio.

Our 1300+ experts from 117 member organisations in 35 countries across the globe include public and commercial broadcasters, regulators, network providers and manufacturers of receivers, chips, professional equipment, and automobiles.

#### **Press contact**

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