

## French Digital Radio Migration Plans Announced

**The French Government confirms the future of digital radio in France with a new law requiring consumer devices and motor cars to be fitted with digital radio receivers.**

**In June the CSA (Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel, the French media regulator) will publish its eagerly awaited migration and licensing plan.**

*London, 13 March 2009*

The French government has passed into law its support for digital radio migration in France. By 2013 every radio in France will be capable of receiving digital radio services. The government has given a clear message to the industry that digital migration will happen and the process should be fast.

The law sets out a three step programme to integrate digital radio into all radio receivers:

- **1<sup>st</sup> September 2010** – radio receiver which can display multimedia content will have digital radio reception enabled with the exception of in-car terminals
- **1<sup>st</sup> September 2012** – all new terminals will be dedicated to the reception of digital radio and multimedia with the exception of in-car terminals
- **1<sup>st</sup> September 2013** – all radio receivers will be digital

This clear statement of migration to digital radio also includes the car industry, requiring that all cars sold in France from 2013 must contain a digital radio. With a significant amount of radio listening taking place in the car, the move is seen as an important catalyst for the success of digital radio.

Details of the stations which have successfully secured digital licences for phase 1 of the roll out will be published in April after which the French regulator is required to produce its digital radio migration plan in June 2009. The plan will give a precise time schedule, area by area, for the total coverage of France by the digital radio stations.

The French law comes at the same time as the Digital Britain Interim report which set out the UK's conditions and targets for migration to digital radio.

Quentin Howard, President of the WorldDMB Forum, said, "This ringing endorsement of digital radio from two major governments is a positive move which we hope will encourage other European governments to take similar steps. The bold position taken by the French government recognises the need to ensure universal availability of digital receivers and gives the radio industry a solid foundation and certainty with which to plan its digital future. "

During a debate in the French Parliament, Mr. Patrice Martin-Lalande, Vice-Chairman of the Special Commission said, "It is essential to ensure the development of digital radio in our territory... digital radio is also an important issue: heard daily by over 80% of French people, it takes a key role in terms of

pluralism of opinions and cultural diversity... Radio cannot remain the only media in analogue, digital switchover has a triple benefit: improved coverage, improved quality of listening and serves as a lever for development and innovation for the French digital industry”.

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**Notes to Editors:** The foundation standard DAB and related standards such as DAB+ and DMB can be seen and heard in nearly 40 countries from Canada to Australia, across Europe and the Far East. Countries including India and South Africa are testing DAB and developing consumer trials. More than 500 million people worldwide are within range of a DAB/DMB transmitter, and there are over 1000 services on air. Created from the onset to enable mobile reception with audio, video and multimedia capabilities, the DAB standard has recently extended its lead into the world of mobile multimedia delivery through its compatible DMB application. DMB offers a mobile TV and audio solutions and shares the same core standard, infrastructure and receiver technology. The launch of the world's first Mobile TV services took place in Korea in December 2005 using DMB technology and will be the basis for the launch of digital radio in France in 2009. DMB is on-air in China in five major cities including Beijing, and more DAB, DAB+, and DMB services are expected to launch in Europe during the next year. The addition of DAB+ as a highly efficient audio coding has been ETSI standardized and many countries throughout Europe and in the Asia Pacific are planning commercial launches of DAB+ digital radio services in 2009.

#### **About WorldDMB**

WorldDMB is an international, non-governmental organisation with a mandate to promote the awareness, adoption and implementation of Eureka 147 based technologies worldwide. The organisation's name refers to 'digital multimedia broadcasting' including radio, mobile TV and broadcast new media services. Its members include public and commercial broadcasters, receiver manufacturers and other companies and bodies committed to the promotion of services and equipment based on the Eureka 147 family of standards.