



commercial radio  
australia

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Digital radio trial to begin in Canberra

The number of commercial and SBS radio stations available to listeners in Canberra is set to increase with the announcement today by Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) and multicultural and multilingual broadcaster SBS that a regional trial of DAB+ digital radio would begin in Canberra in early July 2010.

Commercial Radio Australia chief executive, Joan Warner said the first regional trial of DAB+ is the next step in making digital radio services available to all Australians.

"The radio industry is committed to ensuring all Australians are able to access free to air radio broadcasting via digital technology. People living in regional Australia must have the same rights of access to digital radio as do those living in the five big cities. We do not want to see a nation of metropolitan digital 'haves' and regional digital 'have nots'." Ms Warner said.

Through a digital radio trial many Canberra radio listeners will be able to experience digital quality audio, robust transmission and significantly improved functionality as part of digital broadcasting including more audio services, text and graphics on screen, plus pause and rewind on some receivers.

"The Canberra trial will provide valuable firsthand experience for regional radio broadcasters in working with the DAB+ signal and increased functionality, while we continue to work to get the Federal Government to commit to allocating spectrum so that regional Australians will have the same right to digital radio as Australians living in metropolitan areas. The trial will also allow us to test how to ensure a signal can be received in a building such as Parliament House, a structure with both man-made and natural barriers," said Ms Warner.

SBS and commercial radio broadcasters, Capital Radio, ARN and Austereo will jointly fund a trial that will transmit from the Broadcast Australia transmission tower on Black Mountain. Although the signal will be at relatively low power for the trial, it is still expected to cover a large part of the Canberra area.

The second phase of the Canberra trial will be a retransmission of the trial signal into Parliament House to allow Federal politicians to experience digital radio first hand.

SBS Managing Director, Shaun Brown said: "SBS radio is pleased to be part of such an important trial and to showcase the additional in-language services available on digital radio to SBS's Canberra listeners."

Supporters of the regional trial include; broadcast transmission infrastructure company Broadcast Australia, and multiplex infrastructure providers and systems integrators UGL Infrastructure/Radioscape as well as digital radio receiver manufacturers who are all keen to fast track the roll out of digital radio into regional Australia.

Permanent full power digital radio services began in Sydney, Melbourne Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth last year and the industry recently released figures indicating there are already nearly 500,000 people listening to digital radio across those markets.

"In 2009, Nielsen research showed 32% of commercial radio listening occurs in the car. In order to ensure rapid integration of digital radio into cars, the automotive industry needs a clear signal from the Federal Government that DAB+ digital radio will roll out across the country. The ability to advertise and promote the sale of digital radios in all markets is also important to ensure the ongoing support of the retail sector," said Ms Warner.

All sectors of the radio industry have made detailed submissions to the Federal Government's Digital Dividend Green Paper requesting the allocation of vacated VHF Band III spectrum for digital radio as analogue TV switches off and that this allocation take precedence over the reallocation or sale of this spectrum for new services such as wireless internet or mobile telephony.

Stations that will be available on the DAB+ digital radio trial transmission:

- 2CA - Capital Radio Network
- 2CC - Capital Radio Network
- Capital Radio Network - 2 additional commercial services to be announced
- Mix 106.3 FM - Canberra FM (Austereo/ARN)
- 104.7 fm - Canberra FM (Austereo/ARN)
- Canberra FM (Austereo/ARN) - 2 additional commercial radio services to be announced
- SBS Radio 1 - News & Information Network
- SBS Radio 2 - News & Information Network
- SBS Pop Asia
- SBS Chill

Another trial is in the planning stages for Darwin and two other areas currently being considered are Townsville and Hobart.

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For more information about digital radio, visit [www.digitalradioplus.com.au](http://www.digitalradioplus.com.au).

## Background

<b>December 2003</b>	<i>Trial begins in Sydney of Eureka 147 or DAB technology.</i>
<b>March 2007</b>	<i>Legislative framework for more spectrum efficient DAB+ technology in place.</i>
<b>May/June 2009</b>	<i>Commercial radio DAB+ digital radio services switch on in interference mode in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth.</i>
<b>July 2009</b>	<i>ABC and SBS commence DAB+ digital services.</i>
<b>August 2009</b>	<i>Major all of industry commercial and public broadcaster consumer launch of digital radio in high power.</i>