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AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IS LISTENING TO DIGITAL RADIO

Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) brought together nearly 100 motor vehicle industry representatives at the recent Sydney and Melbourne automotive workshops to move digital radio listening into more Australian motor vehicles.

Vehicle product managers, engineering planning teams, industry association members, retailers and manufacturers attended the workshops to hear from the radio industry on the status of digital radio in Australia and the progress towards the rollout of digital radio in regional Australia.

Chief executive officer of CRA, Joan Warner said; "Ultimately, the radio industry objective is to have every car sold in Australia factory fitted with a digital radio. We're very pleased with the response from the automotive industry to our workshops and look forward to continued communication."

BMW was the first manufacturer in Australia to announce they would be including DAB+ digital radio as an option.

Internationally, 100 delegates from 65 different companies, including leading car manufacturers Audi, BMW, Honda, Skoda, Hyundai, VW, Daimler and Lotus, attended a workshop held last week in Berlin by WorldDMB. A similar system to Australia is being considered in Europe that would be a pan – European standard of DAB, DAB+, DMB. The DAB+ standard in those vehicles would then function in Australia as well.

Integrating digital radio into vehicles, both in Australia and internationally, will enable the delivery of real-time traffic updates. Radio stations could broadcast text based traffic messages or images to deliver traffic flow information snapshots directly to motorists' digital radios and in the future add information about road works, fuel prices and parking station capacities.

The Sydney and Melbourne workshops outlined the digital radio options available to the 16 million already registered vehicles in Australia, including a self or custom fit car adaptor like the Pure Highway or one of a number of the aftermarket products on the market; the Orion, Bluestate, Crystal, JVC and Kenwood.

Managing director of Directed Electronics, creator of the first Australian designed, fully featured aftermarket product said: "We are excited to be part of the digital radio momentum with the first 2-DIN DAB+ unit released, the Orion AVR6.1, allowing consumers to experience digital radio and its features. The CRA workshops heightened the information level of digital radio to all that attended and hopefully it encourages them to adopt DAB+ in their offerings. "

Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association (AAAA), state manager – southern region, Lachlan Callaway said: "The AAAA is encouraged by the information from the radio industry and its commitment to making sure the automotive industry is well informed about digital radio. With over 800,000 consumers now listening to a DAB+ service, it is safe to assume this rapidly growing market will also be looking for both OEM and aftermarket DAB+ options for their vehicles. This will provide new opportunities for our industry as this technology continues to evolve."

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For further information on digital radio visit: www.digitalradioplus.com.au