



## DIGITAL RADIO UK PRESS RELEASE

### UK RADIO'S DRIVE TO DIGITAL



Parliamentarians heard today from Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Communications and the Creative Industries and leading radio broadcasters, that the future for radio in the UK is digital. At a “Go Digital” reception in the House of Commons, Minister Ed Vaizey confirmed that the Government Digital Radio Action Plan has now been completed, and that significant progress had been made in the transition to digital radio in the UK. The Minister confirmed that Government will announce their decision on a future radio switchover at the end of the year and hailed the positive progress in terms of consumers, cars and coverage.

The reception was hosted by Lauren Laverne and brought together many well known radio presenters including Neil Fox, Denise Van Outen, Elaine Paige, Paul Gambaccini, Ricky, Melvin and Charlie, Al Murray, Pete Waterman and David ‘Kid’ Jensen, with over 70 MPs.

Helen Boaden, Director of BBC Radio, said that the BBC digital radio stations were well loved by listeners and that the BBC was continuing to invest in digital content and the expansion of DAB digital radio coverage. She welcomed the Government commitment to a decision on radio switchover this year and said that this would provide welcome certainty for the industry.



Ford Ennals, CEO of Digital Radio UK, highlighted the importance of radio listening in cars and announced that nearly 40% of new cars in the UK now come with digital radio as standard [CAP/SMMT June 2013: 39.4%], which compares with 25.1% in June 2012, and just 12.1% in June 2011.

He said that major car brands BMW, Mini, Land Rover and Jaguar already have 100% of new cars with digital radio as standard and that Ford, Audi, Volvo and Toyota have the majority of their cars with digital radio. Mr Ennals also confirmed the Toyota announcement that its leading Lexus brand will have digital radio as standard in all new cars from September.

Parliamentarians also heard from John Cresswell, CEO of broadcasting and communications infrastructure company Arqiva, who confirmed that DAB digital radio coverage of both national and local stations continues to expand and that Ofcom has completed the plan for building out DAB coverage to FM equivalence.

In his comments the Minister hailed the excellent progress in digital radio listening, with 34.3% of all radio listening hours now on digital platforms, and 50% of the UK now listening to radio on a digital platform each week. Minister Ed Vaizey said that the results of a Government consumer switchover trial in Bath showed that consumers are very satisfied with digital radio, that four in five (80%) prefer it to analogue radio, and that 9 in 10 would recommend it to friends and family.

Communications Minister Ed Vaizey said: *"These are exciting times for digital radio as recent years have seen more and more people choosing to listen through digital means. More than a third of listening to the radio is done through digital now and almost 40 per cent of new cars now have digital radios fitted. I look forward to seeing the industry continue to grow in the coming years."*

Ford Ennals, CEO of Digital Radio UK, says: *"Clearly the future for radio is digital and today's announcement that nearly 40% of new cars have digital radio fitted as standard shows increasing momentum among car manufacturers, which means that listeners will be able to enjoy the additional choice of stations and the sound quality of digital radio on the move."*

Helen Boaden, Director of BBC Radio, says: *"The BBC is committed to a digital future for radio and is investing in expanding the DAB coverage of our national stations and innovating online to*



*provide a better service to listeners: feedback from our successful digital radio coverage of Glastonbury proves yet again how much our audiences love digital radio."*

John Cresswell, CEO of Arqiva, says: "Arqiva is fully committed to investing in Radio's digital future and is continually improving national and local DAB coverage so that more listeners can come to love digital radio."

**Editors' notes:**

- 34.3% of radio listening is to digital platforms (RAJAR Q1 2013)
- 50% of UK adults listen to radio via a digital platform each week
- 39.4% of new cars come with digital radio as standard (CAP/SMMT June 2013)
- The DCMS Go Digital final report can be found [here](#)

**About Digital Radio UK**

Digital Radio UK works with Government, broadcasters, manufacturers, retailers, and a wide range of stakeholders to accelerate digital listening, to enable the expansion of the digital radio platform, and to ensure that industry meets the consumer-led criteria to be achieved for a proposed radio switchover. Digital Radio UK's Board comprises representatives from the BBC, RadioCentre, Arqiva, Global Radio, Bauer Media, Real and Smooth Ltd and Absolute Radio, together with Intellect and the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders.

**For further information**

Jane Ostler, Communications Director, Digital Radio UK  
Jane.ostler@digitalradiouk.com 07817 411240