



South African broadcasters call for green light to launch DAB+ trial

London, 18 July 2013

Over 200 radio industry representatives came together on Tuesday at the South African Broadcasting Corporation's (SABC) facility in Johannesburg to attend a landmark workshop on the rollout of DAB+ digital radio and to discuss plans for a high-powered DAB+ trial transmission extending from Pretoria to Johannesburg by end 2013.

Delegates included representatives from the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), the Government Department of Communications, public and commercial broadcasters, policy makers, network operator Sentech, device and automotive manufacturers. The composition of the audience reflected one of the key themes of the workshop, that collaboration across the radio ecosystem is key to the successful rollout of DAB+. The event was endorsed by NAB, the Southern African Digital Broadcasting Association (SADIBA) and SABC. Harris Broadcast provided an on-air demonstration of DAB+ at the workshop.

Jørn Jensen, President of WorldDMB said: "Key benefits for listeners of digital radio are superior sound quality and greater choice. The opportunity to provide more services, especially in areas where FM capacity has reached its limits, is a key consumer benefit. In South Africa, there is scope to provide new services in each of the eleven official languages."

Lynn Mansfield, Chairperson of South Africa's National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Technical Committee, welcomed delegates saying: "DAB+ opens up new opportunities for South Africa's broadcasters to enhance content, develop portfolios of services based on existing brands and to explore new revenue streams."

ICASA indicated that it stands ready to support broadcasting innovation in South Africa, which will be the first country to exploit opportunities for delivery of educational services via DAB+, as well as services for those with disabilities. Broadcasting radio via DAB+ will also allow ICASA to license new entrants where FM bandwidth is congested.

Tuesday's workshop provides strong evidence that interest in digital radio is now extending into the continent of Africa. Following the successful launch of DAB+ in Germany in 2011, a digital radio wave is sweeping across Europe. Similar interest is being shown in Asia Pacific where Australia is leading the way.

ENDS

About WorldDMB

WorldDMB is the global industry forum for digital radio promoting DAB, DAB+ and DMB - the digital radio broadcasting standards of choice in Europe and Asia Pacific. Its global membership includes public and commercial broadcasters, network providers, receiver manufacturers, chip manufacturers, and car manufacturers. Members collaborate to deliver advice and tailored solutions on all aspects of the switch from analogue to digital radio including regulation, licensing, technology trials, network build out, marketing and production of new digital radio content. Broadcast radio professionals have access to this body of expertise which is delivered through leading-edge industry events, car manufacturers' workshops, tailored workshops and seminars and the WorldDMB website via the members-only information portal that includes an extensive online ETI library. More than 500 million people worldwide are within range of a DAB/DAB+/DMB Digital Radio transmitter, there are well over 1,000 services on air and several hundred varieties of receivers are available to market.

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