

## UK 'Go Digital' key announcements supporting digital radio future

- **Commitment from government and investment by public and commercial broadcasters**
- **Automotive industry support for digital radio including installer schemes**
- **Super integrated chip suitable for mobile announced**
- **Funding of solution for local broadcasters to go digital**
- **Digital tick mark for CE sector and consumers to ensure product quality**

*London, 17 December 2013:* Over 300 radio industry representatives from the UK and the rest of Europe came together yesterday for the Digital Radio UK 'Go Digital Conference' The Radio Theatre, BBC New Broadcasting House in London.

Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Communications and the Creative Industries opened the event by confirming the UK Government's vision of a digital future for radio, saying, "I absolutely believe that the future of radio in this country is digital".

The Minister outlined a series of measures designed to accelerate take up of digital radio with the aim of achieving the listening and coverage criteria required before a date for digital switchover could be confirmed. These included:

- Confirmation of £21m funding from Government, BBC and commercial radio for the roll-out of local multiplexes to 90% of the population
- The offering in 2014 of a licence for a second national commercial multiplex
- Government funding to help develop a route for small local stations to go digital
- Information about converting cars to digital radio to be included in vehicle tax reminders from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).
- The introduction of a Digital Tick consumer certified mark - to be managed by Digital Radio UK.

The conference also saw several announcements from industry players, including:

- Commitment from Halfords, the automotive accessories retailer, that from 2015 its radio range will be 100% digital
- Introduction by Ford of DAB radio as standard into certain commercial vehicles
- Launch of a new low power, low cost digital radio chip from Frontier Silicon and Imagination Technologies.

The Minister also highlighted the importance of digital radio internationally – with digital switchover dates set for Norway and Denmark (respectively 2017 and 2019), significant

progress being made in Switzerland and Germany, the national launch of DAB+ in the Netherlands in September and the recent announcement of launch dates in France for Paris, Nice and Marseille.

This international perspective was endorsed by broadcasters and network operator, Arqiva. BBC Director of Radio, Helen Boaden, spoke of the need to work closely with European broadcast partners, whilst Will Harding of Global Radio stressed the potential for commercial radio operators to grow their businesses on digital radio, pointing to Global's recent launch on national DAB of Capital XTRA. Paul Keenan of Bauer Media highlighted the awareness in Germany that had been raised by his company's commitment to UK digital radio; and Steve Holebrook of Arqiva emphasised the sharing of best practice between network operators across Europe.

Patrick Hannon, President of WorldDMB, said 'WorldDMB supports the many positive announcements made yesterday by the UK government, public and commercial broadcasters, and the UK automotive and digital radio manufacturing industries. The UK has shown that it is clearly committed to a digital future for radio - with generous investment and support from UK government. I am delighted that the UK government and leading industry figures will continue to take a strong lead in the development of digital radio around the world.'

**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.

For more information contact WorldDMB at [projectoffice@worlddab.org](mailto:projectoffice@worlddab.org)

[www.worlddab.org](http://www.worlddab.org)