

MATS ÅKERLUND, 1952-2017



Mats Åkerlund, Vice-Chair of the EBU New Radio Group and Head of Digital Strategy at WorldDAB member, Swedish Radio, has died after a short illness. Mats worked for more than 40 years at Swedish Radio, had several international assignments in radio, and was a valued member of WorldDAB.

Mats joined Swedish Radio in 1973 as a journalist and was director of Swedish Radio's local radio station in Uppsala from 1986 to 1995. He was then head of the national radio channel P3 from 1995 to 2000. From 2001 to 2010 he was director of the New Media Department at Swedish Radio.

Mats was very active in the development of digital radio, working closely with colleagues both at home in Sweden, and internationally within WorldDAB and the EBU. He contributed to the development of insights on how new technologies and distribution help shape the future of radio.

Mats lived in Uppsala, 70 km north of Stockholm. A keen floorball fan, for over 15 years, he was Chairman of Storvreta IBK, one of Sweden's largest floorball clubs with more than 1700 members. The floorball league will honour Mats in this week's derby match against Sirius which will begin with a minute of silence and Storvreta IBK will play the match wearing black armbands.

On behalf of the WorldDAB Steering Board and all members, we thank Mats for his invaluable contribution to the world of radio and digital radio. Mats will be sadly missed by his fellow members and associates within WorldDAB, and fondly remembered for his kindness, intelligence and passion. As one colleague aptly put it: "Mats always had development and co-operation in mind, always pleasant, always wise. A true friend of radio."

Mats was 65 years old.