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Radio continues rollout of digital radio with 3.8m DAB+ radios in market

The number of DAB+ digital radios in Australia climbed to 3.8 million in 2017, up 24% over the past 12 months, according to figures released by radio industry body Commercial Radio Australia¹.

The number of DAB+ portable and home radio receivers in market totalled 2.37 million at the end of the calendar year, with another 1.42 million in cars.

CRA chief executive officer Joan Warner said the large increase in DAB+ devices was expected to continue in 2018, with digital radio now standard in 47% of all new vehicles being sold.

“More than 560,000 of the new cars sold in 2017 were fitted with DAB+ radio.

“The adoption in cars is ahead of forecast, which is great news as it means more listeners are able to discover digital radio and the new digital-only stations on offer,” she said.

Ms Warner said 43% of listeners in the five major capitals of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth now have access to DAB+ digital radio at home, at work or in the car.

Permanent digital radio services will be switched on in Canberra, Darwin and Hobart this year.

Commercial radio broadcasters have identified another 13 regional centres as priority markets for rollout within the next five years, including Newcastle, Dubbo, Goulburn and Albury.

Ms Warner said broadcasters are working with the Australian Communications and Media Authority and the Department of Communications on planning and regulatory processes.

Broadcast digital radio via DAB+, which is more efficient than AM and FM, offers listeners better sound, easy tuning by station name, and more choice, with up to 30 extra stations providing formats such as country music, classic rock, 80s and 90s music, sports and children’s programs.

Official radio ratings figures by GfK show an average of 3.77 million people in the five metropolitan markets, or 28% of the available audience, listened to DAB+ each week in 2017².

Listening figures for the new DAB+ only radio stations will, from now on, be released on the same day as the regular metropolitan radio surveys eight times a year, to provide the market with immediate audience data for all stations. The first combined release of radio ratings is due out on Tuesday, March 13.

For more information on DAB+ visit www.digitalradioplus.com.au.

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¹ GfK Point of Sale DAB+ Fusion Reporting including coverage extrapolation and Glass’s Automotive Business Intelligence (excludes sales of aftermarket DAB+ devices in vehicles).

² Total DAB+ audience, Mon-Sun 5.30am-midnight, all people 10+, simulcast station listening via DAB+ and DAB+-only station listening via DAB+ or internet, GfK Radio Ratings average of surveys 1-8, 2017