

## **European Nations ask the Commission to let the market decide Commissioner Reding continues to push for DVB-H**

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WorldDMB welcomes indications that Commissioner Reding has decided not to follow through on her threat of mandating for one mobile TV standard in Europe. In an address to European MEPs on Thursday (29<sup>th</sup> November) Reding emphasised the importance of European technology in the growth of mobile TV in the region.

Using EU regulation to choose standards in the media industry would jeopardise technological innovation, reduce consumer choice, threaten European radio and reduce the freedom of choice for existing and prospective providers of mobile TV. **The European Commission's push for DVB-H** as the single mobile TV standard in Europe was met with **harsh criticism from European Member States** on Thursday (29<sup>th</sup> November).

A recent report on Mobile TV submitted to the European Parliament by its Policy Department (IP/A/ITRE/FWC/2006-087/LOT 2/C1/SC2) could leave MEPs with an **inaccurate and potentially misleading overview** of the current mobile TV situation in Europe. The report left out any mention of the successes of the other European mobile TV standard, DMB. In fact, the report contains over 10 factual mistakes and incorrect data. For example, the report claims that 'DVB-H is backwards compatible with DVB-T' leading readers to expect minimal required investment to upgrade a DVB-T network to include DVB-H. However, this is not the case as a DVB-H network requires its own infrastructure, which is estimated to cost about four times as much as a comparable DMB network. The report further states that the only country to have trialled DMB is Italy. In fact, **DMB has already been trialled in 14 European countries**, including France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, the UK, Luxembourg, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Malta, the Czech Republic and Portugal.

At the Council meeting last Thursday the Commission proposed to add DVB-H to the list of standards for preferred technologies in Europe which EU Member States have to support and encourage. DMB is an ETSI standard and has already been adopted by a number of member states who have also chosen the closely related and compatible Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) standard for their digital radio services.

European Broadcasters have invested hundreds of millions of Euros in DAB/DMB infrastructure and content, whilst consumers have spent hundreds of millions buying digital radio receiving equipment. Any signal that EU regulation could make DVB-H the only acceptable standard threatens to undermine these investments, confuse European consumers, destabilise the European digital radio industry and discourage European innovation.

DMB is a European standard which has been successfully exported to many other parts of the world. There are already over 150 terminals and devices commercially available and approaching ten million receiver devices already sold, making **DMB the most prolific mobile TV system in**

**the world.** In the field of digital radio, DAB is a great European success story, with nearly six million receivers sold in the UK alone. Members of **WorldDMB** – the international, non-governmental organisation which promotes the adoption and implementation of Eureka 147 based technologies (the DAB and DMB standards) – are confused by the Commission's support for DVB-H as the sole Mobile TV standard in Europe, to the extent of threatening to exclude DMB.

**Quentin Howard, President of WorldDMB** says, "I am baffled by mobile TV briefing document from the studies department of the European Parliament. It ignores important information gathered by the European Mobile Broadcasting Council and presents factually inaccurate information about mobile TV in Europe. No single standard or system can possibly provide the only viable solution for mobile TV. DMB is a low cost, low risk option and unequivocally better suited to some markets and business models than DVB-H. Equally, DVB-H may suit other markets but it comes at a higher cost and higher investment risk. There seems to be no reason why the Commission should hide the successes of DMB"

DMB is currently the world's most successful mobile TV standard with millions of devices already in the market. It is widely used in Korea, and as part of the DAB family is the only European technology for mobile broadcasting sanctioned by China's state regulator. Germany launched Europe's first commercial Mobile TV service (during the FIFA World Cup in the summer of 2006) using DMB technology. In fact, many European countries such as Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, France and the UK have expressed their intention to use **both DVB-H and DMB** for commercial mobile broadcasting services. Given the unique differences between the two standards, it is important to allow countries the flexibility to decide which business models and investments are necessary for the success of mobile TV in the individual markets.

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**Notes to Editors:** The foundation standard DAB and related standards such as DAB+/DMB can be seen and heard in nearly 40 countries from Canada to Australia, across Europe and the Far East. Countries including India, China and South Africa are testing DAB and developing consumer trials. More than 500 million people worldwide are within range of a DAB/DMB transmitter, and there are nearly 1000 services on air. Created from the onset to enable mobile reception with audio, video and multimedia capabilities, the DAB standard has recently extended its lead into the world of mobile multimedia delivery through its compatible DMB and IP applications. DMB is DAB's Mobile TV solution and shares the same core standard, infrastructure and receiver technology. The launch of the world's first Mobile TV services took place in Korea in December 2005 using DMB technology. Further DMB launches have taken place in Germany and shortly in France. DMB is on-air in China in five cities and more DMB mobile TV services are expected to launch elsewhere in Europe during the coming year. An upgrade to DAB, called DAB+, has a highly efficient audio coding has been ETSI standardized. Many countries throughout Europe and in the Asia Pacific are planning commercial launches of DAB+ digital radio services in 2008.

#### **About WorldDMB**

WorldDMB is an international, non-governmental organisation whose role is to promote the awareness, adoption and implementation of Eureka 147-based technologies worldwide. The organisation's name refers to 'digital multimedia broadcasting' including radio, mobile TV and broadcast new media services. Its members include public and commercial broadcasters, receiver manufacturers, companies and bodies committed to the promotion of services and equipment based on the Eureka 147 family of standards.