

**Name and title:** Ian Highet

**Representing:** Self

**Comments:**

My comments relate mainly to the technical quality of much of the current generation of digital radio and what this **MUST** mean for the implementation of digital radio in the future.

At present the quality of DAB using MPEG2 does not match in any way that of a decently set up FM analogue radio. It is also much worse than radio received via Freeview. I am led to believe that this is a feature of the bandwidth or bit rate employed for each individual station in that it is usually inadequate for noise free stereo operation.

My concern is that the existing FM services will be closed or curtailed in some way without there being a replacement of sufficient quality. I also understand that the problem could be alleviated by the replacement of MPEG2 by AAC **AND** the allocation of sufficient bandwidth to maintain the standards that good FM can currently provide. Consequently, there should be no attempt to curtail any of the existing FM services until such time as the quality issues have been addressed.

Incidentally, action should also be undertaken to prevent radio manufacturers and broadcasters from declaring that the current digital radio gives "near CD performance" or "crystal clear reception". It rarely does and statements like this are misleading at best.

As far as AM broadcasting radio is concerned it does seem that that the future must incorporate a move to stereo as is happening elsewhere in the world. This has to be a move in the right direction although comments about bandwidth still apply.