

MEDIA STATEMENT

For immediate release

FUTURE PROOFING COMMUNITY RADIO IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Johannesburg, South Africa, 23 March 2022: Representatives from some 150 community radio stations attended “Future-Proofing” workshops in March 2022, equipping them with the skills to ensure that community radio meets the challenges of the digital age, as well as capitalises on possibilities presented by new technologies and content platforms.

Run by a partnership comprising the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA) and the Media Development & Diversity Agency (MDDA), the 3-day workshops, held in Johannesburg and Cape Town, were based on the NAB’s comprehensive “Future Proofing Community Radio” guide. The innovative guide provides a framework designed to assist the sector to successfully navigate the transition to the digital era. This is an imperative if this sector is to remain viable and sustainable.

“Participation in the workshops and development of the guide are indicative of NAB’s strong commitment to supporting community radio, despite our limited number of community broadcast members,” notes NAB Executive Director, Nadia Bulbulia. “As is widely known, the media landscape, as a whole, is in the midst of rapid and fundamental changes brought upon by the digital era and resulting technology convergence. Not only have the lines between platforms been blurred but access to social media and the internet have enabled audiences to create, curate and shape their own content.

“Such changes are disruptive and pose many challenges to traditional regulated media platforms like radio and its sustainability, but also present opportunities, which could possibly extend community radio’s reach and enable it to further enhance media diversity and pluralism in South Africa.”

The workshops therefore aimed at assisting community radio to respond creatively and effectively to this new and growing digital multi-platform space. This ranged from ascertaining the sector’s training needs considering technological advances, through to equipping radio with an understanding of new developments and possibilities, including enabling policy options and considering how technology can contribute to the sector’s financial sustainability.

The NAB “Future Proofing Community Radio” guide is available for download on the NAB website: <https://www.nab.org.za/resources/entry/nab-future-proofing-guide-for-community-radio>

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About NAB

The National Association of Broadcasters (“NAB”) is a voluntary association that was formed in 1993 to foster and promote the development of a sustainable and robust broadcasting system in South Africa.

It supports the principles of democracy, freedom of expression and the diversity of voices.

As the leading representative of South Africa’s regulated broadcasting industry, the NAB members comprise all three tiers of broadcasters (public, private and community) as well as signal providers and industry associates. It has, since the dawn of SA’s democracy, engaged in policy and regulatory processes that affect the broadcasting sector.

The NAB is funded entirely by its members and responds to a broad range of needs and developments to strengthen and create a favourable climate for a vibrant industry. It established the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of SA (BCCSA) that is recognised by the sector regulator, ICASA.

Further information: www.nabsa.org.za

