

## **DRM+ Currently Tested in St Petersburg, Russia** (Translated by DRM from [Russian text](#))

“Radio Mayak” started the broadcasting in DRM+ at the end of July in St. Petersburg on the frequency of 67.46 MHz. Radioportalk talked to an expert about the first experience of the tests and measurements, as well as about the future of digital broadcasting in Russia.

Experimental digital broadcasting is led by RTRS, "Russian Television and Radio Broadcasting Network". The performer of this experiment is the team of St. Petersburg State University of Telecommunications Bonch-Bruевич (SUT), the companies "Digiton Systems" and "RFmondial". All research work is being carried out at the expense of RTRS.

"Now we broadcast in St. Petersburg from the TV tower, Radio Mayak, in the DRM+ standard" says Sergey Sokolov, CEO and co-owner of Digiton Systems.

### **How are the tests and measurements?**

We have fully DRM+ transmission chain, which includes the content server, the modulator, power amplifier and antenna. The goal of these tests is to prepare a report for the RTRS. This is a research work and experimental broadcasting will continue until the autumn".

In the near future, we do not plan to test other standards, said Deputy General Director of RTRS, Victor Goregliad: "We carried out a similar test – in an experimental zone, in Moscow - in December last year. In this year, work was carried out in St. Petersburg. Now we have tried both digital Standards DAB and DRM+. That is it. Our experts need to evaluate the test. The decision on the outcome is usually taken by the State Commission for Radio Frequencies. That is their prerogative.

### **Results**

In principle, nothing unexpected happened. Everything is predictable and works well. The standards are generally accepted worldwide. We just check them in our environment, and experts make a report on the performance of this standard. For DRM +, we make the experiments in the old soviet frequency range of 66-74 MHz. Both Standard are accepted and used across Europe, but specific issues arise. DRM+ is slightly different, because there are actually no receivers in the required quantity. I hope that this situation with the receiver will be change by the end of this year".

"The test make no big surprises, everything was planned and predicted. It works fine"- says Victor Goregliad. Both Standards DRM+ and DAB exist, the technology has long existed. It is just necessary to make a series of tests, and to evaluate the possibility to develop recommendations on the probable use of these standards in the Russian Federation. This is a necessary procedure that we are performing. Without it you cannot do anything. According to the results of the test the Commission on the development of radio frequencies will decide if it is appropriate or inappropriate to use these standards in the Russian Federation. This is the formal procedure. "

"DRM+ technology is proven, it can be used together with analogue FM broadcasting without turning off analogue transmitters during the transition period " - says Sergey Sokolov. The next step will be taken in a year - it is the Commission's decision on the allocation of some frequency ranges for broadcasting in DRM+. Exactly a year ago, a similar test was made by MTUCI and RTRS with the DAB system in Moscow. As we all know, the decision by the Commission on the frequencies for DAB was not accepted. We are now preparing the documents for the decision of the Commission in relation to DRM+. "

The future of digital broadcasting in Russia is largely dependent on the interest of the broadcasters themselves, says Victor Goregliad.'Current and future ongoing test work will increasingly be judged by the media community and broadcasters. They are the instigators. We make our part with our own money. We have conducted experiments and thus opened the door to the future, so we have prepared a certain foundation, which in the future will benefit broadcasters. The development of digital radio in the country primarily depends on how it relates to the broadcaster. It is more a question for them. We are the network operator, I mean RTRS is ready to respond to anyone who wants to pay for the transmitters and broadcast using a particular standard. We are ready to serve, to provide services, to monitor the operation of the transmitter, set the antenna at their sites. We welcome all. Choices and decisions

about what to broadcast or not broadcast in digital format - is primarily a variety of broadcasters themselves. We depend on what they will decide. It is in their interest ".

A similar opinion was expressed and Sergei Sokolov, "In St. Petersburg, with the experimental digital broadcasting there are no difficulties, because these are handled by experts. In general, the difficulty for the digital broadcasting is formed by the broadcasters today. In large cities stations at the top half of the rankings are doing fine, for the rest it is hard to survive. Digital technology allows to significantly increase the number of channels broadcast but the existing big players don't want to change anything in this market. But sooner or later – there is no other choice - we will launch digital broadcasting. Actually the digitalisation process is slow, because there are no serious players to force the digitalisation. Digital broadcasting today is driven by researchers, developers, enthusiasts ".

Vice-president of the media group "M10" Sergei Yamshchikov believes that the development of digital technologies will largely depend on the speed of entry into the market of digital radios: "I know that car manufacturers are actively working on it. Digital radio will come, sooner or later. The speed of its arrival in our country will depend largely on the number of consumers. I think that the time for analogue radio is not over. I think that the transition can occur in the next four to five years. It took Norway twenty years. And that's fine. In the Netherlands, there are parallel digital broadcasting and analogue broadcasting. Finland generally refused the radio digitisation. Everyone has his own path. Digital radio will prevail. It is a matter of time, but I do not think it will happen very quickly ".

*Elena Dyukova*

**(Translated by DRM from Russian text)**