



**All Stakeholders and Members
The Broadcast Research Council of South Africa
By email**

17 September 2020

To all BRC Stakeholders and Members,

RE: Radio Broadcast Audience Measurement Update

It is the mandate of the BRC to safeguard the interests of the marketing and media industry (“Industry”) in South Africa. All BRC decisions are therefore preceded by thorough scrutiny, deliberation, and proper due diligence. It is with this mandate in mind that the decision has been made to terminate the current RAMS contract on the grounds of Force Majeure in accordance with the terms of the said contract. This decision was by no means an easy one but rather one of necessity precipitated by the needs of the Industry the BRC serves.

As transparency and collaboration are both foundational pillars of the BRC, we wish to provide the Industry with insight into the background and deliberations preceding our decision. Please note that the decision to terminate the RAMS contract was based on the current climate we find ourselves in due to Covid-19 and not on any breach or wrongdoing of the incumbent supplier of RAMS data, Kantar (“Supplier”), who we continue to hold in high regard.

As a result of the nationwide lockdown imposed by the South African Government commencing on the 26th of March 2020, all face to face fieldwork carried out pursuant to the RAMS contract ceased. The various extensions of the lockdown by the Government and recommendations of the South African Market Research Association (SAMRA) against face to face interviewing until at least Lockdown Level 2, which was announced on 18 August 2020, prevented our Supplier from going back into field and performing under the RAMS contract for an extended period of time.

On commencement of the national lockdown, the BRC engaged with its Supplier, regarding possible solutions as RAMS data, in its current format, is solely reliant on face to face interviewing. As a result of these discussions, it became clear that in its current format, the RAMS study could not meet the needs of the Industry. As a result, the BRC was presented with the challenge and opportunity to reconsider the BRC RAM Program in its entirety and how best it can serve the Industry going forward.

In the absence of fieldwork and new data off which to model historical data, we were not able to deliver Q2 2020 currency data that was credible, relevant or meaningful for the time period. Reweighting of the Q1 2020 data was considered, however, as it would ultimately not provide an accurate indication of changing listenership behaviours that inevitably occurred during lockdown, it too was not a

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credible option. For this reason, there was no Q2 2020 update/release, nor will there be a Q3 or Q4 2020 update / release using the pre-lockdown model.

Investigations were made with our Supplier regarding a redesign of the BRC RAM currency to move away from face to face fieldwork all together, using alternative approaches which would allow for more frequent data/reporting. While much was gained from this initial investigation, it is apparent that this is a highly complex process that requires careful consideration and input from members and stakeholders. Material change to a currency such as RAMS should be handled with the greatest care and consideration to ensure best practice for our unique South African milieu and that it is not compromised in any manner. It is with this understanding and sentiment in mind that the BRC is in the process of running an RFP that will allow us to take a measured, all-encompassing approach to the re-design and future proofing of the RAMS study.

Currently we are in the process of selecting a pitch consultant to aid in running the RAMS RFP. The process will be as swift as possible; however, it cannot be rushed given the importance of the RAMS study to the Industry. We are inviting various interested parties to sit on the RFP committee in the spirit of transparency and collaboration, ensuring all voices are heard and heeded. We are aiming to complete the RFP and appoint a service provider in Q1 of 2021. The need for interim data is recognized as a priority and to this end, we are investigating various options, which will be communicated in due course. Please note that these options will not yield currency data but rather provide indicative insights into radio listenership in South Africa.

We are cognisant of the substantial strain on Radio Broadcaster revenues due to severely reduced advertising spend in the market, compounded by the lack of Q2 and Q3 currency data. However, the broadcasters are still liable for the payment of levies as we require funds for the RFP as well as interim data needs.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions in connection herewith.

Best wishes,



Gary Whitaker

CEO: BRC SA

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