

NZ Radio & Podcast Awards

RBA
RADIO BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION

2025/2026 ANNUAL REPORT



WEEKLY AUDIENCES
FOR ALL RADIO
REMAIN STRONG AT
3.72 MILLION*

NZ MUSIC
AIRPLAY
CONTENT AT
17.12%[^]

636 ENTRIES RECEIVED
IN THE 2026 NZ RADIO
& PODCAST AWARDS,
INCLUDING 98 PODCAST
ENTRIES

55% OF NEW
ZEALANDERS
CONSUME A
PODCAST EACH
MONTH*#

94% OF PEOPLE
CONSUME AUDIO
EACH WEEK, THE
HIGHEST OF ANY
MEDIA FORMAT*#

"DESPITE THE PERSISTENT REPORTS OF RADIO'S IMMINENT DEMISE IN FACT, BY CONSTANTLY EVOLVING AND MEETING OUR AUDIENCES WHERE THEY WANT US TO BE, WE REMAIN THE MOST RELIABLE WAY TO COMMUNICATE AND ENTERTAIN". CLARE BRADLEY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, RBA

FROM THE RBA CHIEF EXECUTIVE CLARE BRADLEY

It is a pleasure and a privilege to be back working in the media sector with all the talented and clever people who make radio the enduring entertainment & information choice for 3.7 million New Zealanders every day.

As the research data set out in this report demonstrates, commercial radio is a vital element of Aotearoa New Zealand's news, information and entertainment ecosystem.

Despite the persistent reports of radio's imminent demise in fact, by constantly evolving and meeting our audiences where they want us to be, we remain the most reliable way to communicate and entertain.

Not that we lack challenges – we continue to operate on an increasingly uneven playing field. We are regulated and pay taxes when the giant global companies which use our content are not. The anomalies in our regulatory framework put us at a disadvantage. Successive governments have been slow to address these anomalies and New Zealand lags behind many of our counterparts in addressing these issues.

2025 did see some baby steps – the repeal of s81 Broadcasting Act 1989, which removed restrictions on advertising on certain days and times, was one. And, as a sector, we welcome the agreed drop in price for our spectrum licences from 2031. But big problems remain and none of this is new:

- The Broadcasting Act 1989 (now an elderly 37 years old) should be repealed and replaced with legislation and a regulatory framework that better reflects our current operating environment
- Effective steps must be taken to ensure the content created by all New Zealanders (including radio) is protected from unlicensed commercial use unless a fair fee is paid
- Access and cost of both transmission and spectrum must be fairly assessed. Key to this is a requirement that local radio & audio content has prominence in technologies such as car audio systems and on smart speakers. Spectrum that enables operators to explore more cost-effective transmission (i.e. DAB+) should be made available to foster growth & variety in content provided to our audiences.

Looking ahead into 2026-2027 we will continue to advocate and negotiate for change that will level the playing field. Working on the design of what will replace the BSA (if the legislation changes to allow this) will be part of our work, as will ongoing work on prominence for radio and audio on all methods of transmission.

We will continue to support the media ecosystem and celebrate our successes. The Radio & Podcast Awards this year, which attracted a record 636 entries, are a wonderful demonstration of the diversity and strength of the Aotearoa New Zealand audio sector.

We look ahead to a year of strong performance across the sector and purposeful media reform to support that performance.

Ngā mihi nui



NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED BY RBA
COMMERCIAL STATIONS

1400+

ANNUAL RADIO REVENUE IS UP TO

\$283
MILLION**

% OF ALL NZ ADVERTISING REVENUE**

6.9%

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF RADIO FREQUENCIES

1050

NUMBER OF RADIO STUDENTS IN 2025

110

RADIO SUPPORTED THE NEW ZEALAND MUSIC
INDUSTRY WITH

17.12%

NZ MUSIC CONTENT ON COMMERCIAL RADIO^

OF LISTENERS AGED 10+ TO ALL RADIO
AS AT SURVEY 1 2026

3.72

MILLION

77.9% OF ALL NEW ZEALANDERS*

OF LISTENERS AGED 10+ TO COMMERCIAL RADIO
AS AT SURVEY 1 2026

3.5

MILLION

73% OF ALL NEW ZEALANDERS*

On average, listeners tune in for 14 hours
25 minutes of commercial radio each week*

15.2%

OF ALL RADIO LISTENING IS ON A
MOBILE OR OTHER DEVICE#

79.5%

OF ALL RADIO STATION LISTENING
IS VIA FM RADIO#

** ASA 2025 Turnover Report

*GfK RAM, S1/26, Total NZ, Cume ('000's) Cume % & TSL, M-S 12mn-12mn, AP10+ (unless otherwise stated)

#GfK NZ Device Report S1/26, Total NZ, %, M-S 12mn-12mn, AP10+. Other device defined as mobile, PC/tablet, TV or other

^ 2025 Radioscope NZ Content Report

^^ RMNZ 2025 Year in Review Report

*# Infinite Dial 2025

RBA
RADIO BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION

NZ Radio & Podcast Awards

2026 NZ RADIO & PODCAST AWARDS

The 2026 Awards cover content produced and broadcast between 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025.

There have been a number of category changes with the aim to encourage a wider range of entries across all radio stations and podcast producers in New Zealand.

There are currently 65 categories. Entry numbers remained strong with 636 received, including 98 across podcast categories.

Winners of the premier categories in 2026 were:

NETWORK STATION OF THE YEAR

Newstalk ZB

LOCAL STATION OF THE YEAR

More FM Northland

INDEPENDENT STATION OF THE YEAR

Sun FM Whakatāne

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO RADIO

Jana Rangooni

SERVICES TO BROADCASTING

Awards to Eti Fuimaono McCarthy (Radio Samoa), Ray Smith (MediaWorks), Clare Sziranyi (RNZ), Pawan Prasad (Radio Tarana), RNZ's 'Matinee Idle' (Phil O'Brien & Simon Morris), Angela Gordon (MediaWorks) & Jon Dunstan (NZME).

SIR PAUL HOLMES BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR

Heather du Plessis-Allan

There is a search tool on the website that enables users to search for winners & finalists from previous years. The tool allows a search by broadcaster name, station/network, award year and category.

<https://www.rba.co.nz/nz-radio-and-podcast-awards/winner-history>

Thanks to our sponsors & supporters - RCS, GfK, NZ On Air, Music Master Scheduling, AVC Group and Te Mangai Paho. As usual, financial support also came from within the industry - MediaWorks, NZME, Radio Tarana, RNZ, The Radio Bureau, Pacific Media Network and the RBA.



Outstanding Contribution to Radio winner, Jana Rangooni.

Sir Paul Holmes Broadcaster of the Year winner, Heather du Plessis-Allan.

MC Jeremy Corbett with co-hosts William Terite (Pacific Media Network), Perlina Lau (RNZ), Toni Street (Coast) and Simon Barnett (More FM).

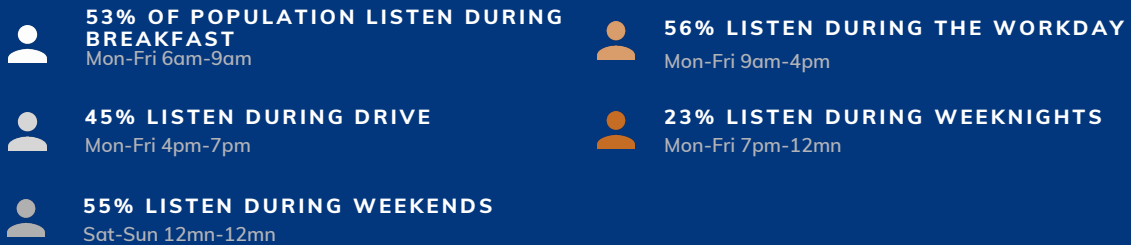
3.5 MILLION KIWIS LISTEN TO COMMERCIAL RADIO EACH WEEK



- 62% of listeners reside in five major metropolitan areas (Auckland, Waikato, Wellington, Christchurch & Dunedin)
- 38% live in other locations within New Zealand
- Audiences have a choice of network, local, independent, student and Iwi stations with AM/FM frequencies across New Zealand and online

Source: GfK Commercial RAM, S1/26, Total NZ, Cume %, AP10+, Mon-Sun 12mn-12mn (Unless otherwise stated).

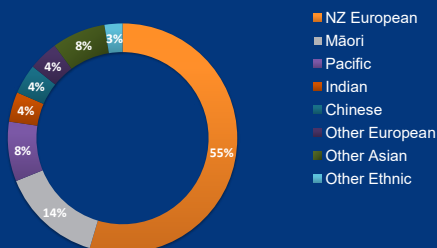
LISTENERS TUNE IN FOR AN AVERAGE OF 14 HOURS 25 MINUTES EACH WEEK*



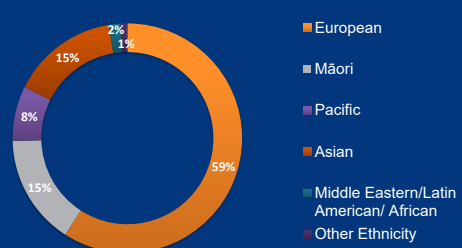
Source: GfK Commercial RAM, S1/26, Total NZ, Cume %, *TSL HH:MM, AP10+, Mon-Sun 12mn-12mn (Unless otherwise stated).

LISTENER MAKE UP REFLECTS NEW ZEALAND'S DIVERSE POPULATION

Radio Audience Ethnicity Breakdown*



2023 Census Ethnicity Breakdown^



Source: *GfK Commercial RAM, S1/26, Total NZ, % of Cume, AP10+, Mon-Sun 12mn-12mn (Unless otherwise stated). ^2023 Census ethnic group summaries: Ethnicity, Published by Stats NZ.

NZ MUSIC

New Zealand music airplay reached 17.12% in 2025.

Genre	2025 Actual	Top Stations
Pop	12.23%	QFM 21.06%
Rock	22.09%	Bayrock 37.29%
Beats R & B	29.15%	Niu FM 54.13%
A/C	12.7%	1XX 28.85%
Dance	14.68%	
Overall	17.12%	

The Top 10 Most Played NZ songs in 2025 were:

Rank	Title	Artist
1	Over Romantic	RIIKI REID
2	Coasty Girl	Shane Walker
3	New Romance	Borderline
4	Carry My Heart	Myshaan
5	How Will I Know	Corrella
6	We Belong	Te Matatini feat. Corrella & L.A.B
7	Seconds to Midnight	Cassie Henderson
8	Cowboy Up	Kaylee Bell
9	Unaware	Te Wehi
10	Back in My Arms	Hori Shaw

Source: Radioscope NZ Content Report 2025

AOTEAROA MUSIC IN 2025

In 2025 music from Aotearoa performed well on radio and steadily across all platforms, and the music industry continued its important work in promoting waiata reo Māori.

LOCAL CONTENT ON RADIO

20.97%

WAIATA REO MĀORI PORTION OF NZ MUSIC ON RADIO

20.02%

LOCAL CONTENT PHYSICAL ALBUM SALES

13.88%

LOCAL CONTENT MUSIC STREAMING CONSUMPTION

6.61%

Source: Recorded Music NZ 2025 Year in Review Report



NZ On Air presented awards to four regional stations and two nationwide radio networks for playing more than 20% local music content over the airways in 2025. From left: Sarah Galbraith, 1XX; Susana Guttenbeil, Niu FM; Todd Campbell, Radio Hauraki; Rebecca Young, Bayrock & Q97 (Absent: CFM from Coromandel FM). Photo credit: James Ensing-Trussell.

ADVERTISING STANDARDS AUTHORITY

In 2025 there were complaints about 306 advertisements and eleven of these were radio advertisements.

One advertisement raised issues to be considered by the Complaints Board and complaints about the other ten advertisements were ruled no further action.

The Complaints Board did not uphold the complaint about advertising a complainant thought was misleading.

Complaints were received about advertisements in the following categories: Advocacy, alcohol, entertainment, finance, household goods and professional services.

The ASA has a range of resources to support code compliance and information about the new Therapeutic and Health Advertising Code on its website.

BROADCASTING STANDARDS AUTHORITY

During 2025, the BSA issued 28 decisions on complaints alleging breaches of the Code of Broadcasting Standards in New Zealand by NZ radio stations. In only one of these decisions was the complaint upheld.

RBA COUNCIL MEMBERS

(REPRESENTING RBA FULL MEMBERS)

Wendy Palmer, MediaWorks (Chair, Executive Board Member)

Leon Wratt, MediaWorks (Executive Board Member)

Jason Winstanley, NZME (Executive Board Member)

Michael Boggs, NZME (Executive Board Member)

Robert Khan, Radio Tarana (Executive Board Member)

Luke Weston, Rhema Media (Executive Board Member)

Jody Chang, Best News Entertainment

Jesse Archer, Peak FM/Great Lake Media

Donald Parkinson, Central FM

Andrew Jeffries, Brian FM

Marcus Forbes, Entain Group/Sport Nation

RBA ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Southland Community Broadcasters

Pacific Media Network

Radio Samoa

RNZ

Free FM

95bFM

RBA AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Radio Computing Services

GfK

JDA

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RADIO INDUSTRY RESEARCH COMMITTEE

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Clare Bradley & Janine Bliss (RBA), **Mike McClung** (NZME), **Brad King** (MediaWorks), **John Hartevelt** (RNZ) & **Don Mann** (Pacific Media Network).

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NZ MUSIC CONTENT MONITORING COMMITTEE

Clare Bradley (RBA), **Paul Kennedy** (Radioscope), **Jo Oliver** (RMNZ), **Leon Wratt** (MediaWorks), **Mike McClung** (NZME), **Jeff Newton & Teresa Patterson** (NZ On Air), **Dylan Pellett & Mikee Tucker** (IMNZ), **Cath Andersen** (NZ Music Commission) & recording label representatives.

Clare Bradley & Janine Bliss
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