



BRC RAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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THE BROADCAST
RESEARCH COUNCIL
OF SOUTH AFRICA



Methodology

A full write-up of the methodology is available in the BRC RAM Technical Report on the [BRC website](#).

How is BRC RAM conducted?

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The survey is conducted through a placement questionnaire (establishing general radio listening behaviour and demographics) and a seven-day self-completion diary. All interviews are done face-to-face by trained interviewers.

How are respondents recruited?

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Please see details under the "Sampling" section.

Why is the BRC RAM diary paper-based, rather than e.g. making use of technology available on cellphones?

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The BRC Terms of Service, formulated during the tender process, specified that the survey be paper-based. Paper diaries were deemed to be best suited as they are accessible to everyone in South Africa, regardless of education level, literacy, or type of devices in household (e.g. not everyone in South Africa has access to a smartphone).

The diary is purposefully kept very simple, with limited written words in the diary to cater for all literacy groups. All instructions are translated into all 11 official languages to cater for all backgrounds.

Why are stickers used?

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With more than 300 radio stations covered by the survey, stickers are an efficient way to ensure the correct radio station is captured. The methodology has been validated extensively. Blank stickers are provided, or respondents may write radio stations by hand, if required.

Do the respondents place their own stickers?

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This varies, depending on the household:

- Respondents are first asked which radio stations they listen to. This is established through unaided and aided questions to ensure the capture of the maximum possible number of stations.
- The questions are asked of everyone in the household. The main respondent answers on behalf of the household, or other household members answer for themselves if they're available during the interview.
- The diaries are populated from stations listened to, in the order they were mentioned by the respondent (i.e. the station mentioned first is placed in the first column of the diary flap, the second station is placed second and so forth).
- TNS strictly controls for the pre-labelling of the main respondent's diary only (e.g. the person present during the interview). If the main respondent is unsure of the radio stations the other household members are listening to, the diary is not populated and stickers are included in the diary for the flooded respondent to use.

Is the diary methodology used elsewhere in the world?

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Yes, this is fairly common. The following countries also use diaries to produce a radio currency (some include online versions as well as paper):

- Australia
- Baltics (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia)
- Belgium
- China
- Finland
- India
- Malaysia
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Philippines
- Turkey
- UK

This is not the total list as there is no central register of radio methodologies world-wide.

Is the sticker methodology used elsewhere in the world?

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The use of a paper diary and placement of stickers is widespread, especially in markets where there are a large number of radio stations (as in South Africa). The UK uses the same methodology as South Africa.

In terms of whether the interviewer applies the sticker to the diary (i.e. pre-populating the diary), this information is not widely reported. However, in Australia, two stickers from the respondent's favourite radio station question are placed in the diary, to assist in demonstrating how the diary works.

Stations included in the survey

How does the BRC decide which radio stations to include in the survey?

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All stations broadcasting on an AM or FM frequency, as published by ICASA (The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa), are included in the survey. This excludes radio stations that broadcast exclusively through streaming.

Why are online (streaming) radio stations not included in the survey?

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Currently, the incidence of people listening to radio stations is quite small. However, this is monitored in the Establishment Survey, and will be included once it becomes more prevalent in South Africa.

How can I check whether a radio station was included in the survey?

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The figures for all the stations included in the survey are published on the [BRC website](#).

How can I request that my radio station be included in the survey?

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Please send an [email](#) to the BRC with the station details. Please include all relevant details:

- Station name used in broadcasting
- Station name registered with ICASA
- Station coverage area (provinces)
- Contact person

Will all radio stations be able to view a profile of their listeners?

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No, only stations with a base size of 40 or more respondents are released in the Third-Party Software. Once 12 months of fieldwork have been completed, stations will have the option to use a 12-month weight, viewing data for the whole year, and can then view their listener profile.

As an example, if a station achieves a sample of $n=30$ in the first data release (six months), listening for that station will be recorded under "Non-qualifying stations" as the base size is too small for analysis. If the station receives a similar amount of listeners after 12 months, they will have $n=60$ listeners, and will be able to view this profile if they use the 12-month weight in the Third-Party Software.

Sampling

A full write-up of the sampling methodology is available in the BRC RAM Technical Report on the [BRC website](#).

What is the BRC RAM sample?

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30 000 household interviews per year, conducted amongst members of the household aged 15+.

How is the sample drawn?

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The survey uses Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) sampling to identify each Small Area where four interviews will be conducted. The likelihood of a Small Area being selected is linked to the area's size, so the more people in a Small Area, the higher the chance that it will be chosen in the sample.

Is probability or non-probability sampling used?

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Probability sampling is used – all persons in South Africa aged 15+ have a chance to be selected for the survey.

Is the sample proportionate?

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No, the sample is disproportionate in that there is a higher (disproportionate) allocation of Metro areas. The sample frame is drawn to be spread over 60% Metro, 20% Small Urban and 20% Rural. This is then weighted to the actual population proportions of 41% Metro, 29% Small Urban and 31% Rural.

My radio station broadcasts in a limited footprint. How do I know what the sample in this footprint was?

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Data is released detailing province, area type (Metro, Small Urban and Rural), and Metropolitan area type.

What is the sample by province and area type?

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The sample is updated annually based on IHS estimates, but for Q4 2016, the household sample breakdown was as follows:

	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LP	MP	NW	NC	WC	Total
Metro	396	156	2,436	672	0	0	0	0	836	4,496
Small Urban	140	160	204	248	104	216	164	88	176	1,500
Rural	280	32	8	392	364	180	180	24	44	1,504
Total	816	348	2,648	1,312	468	396	344	112	1,056	7,500

What quotas are placed on the sample?

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Other than province and area type, no quotas are placed on the sample i.e. TNS doesn't specify to interviewers which race or age to interview – all this is a natural fallout of the areas selected in sampling.

Which areas fall under Metro, Small Urban and Rural?

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Areas are classified into one of three area types based on a fixed set of criteria and using the municipal code and geography type as per Stats SA Census 2011, namely:

- **Metro** – Small Areas (SAs) falling within the boundaries of the eight 'Metropolitan Municipalities' as defined by the National Demarcation Board (that being Ekurhuleni, City of Johannesburg, City of Tshwane, Mangaung, Buffalo City, Nelson Mandela Bay, eThekweni and City of Cape Town) AND classified as 'Urban' according to the geo type variable in the Census 2011 data.
- **Small Urban** – Small Areas that are within the borders of one of the 'Metropolitan Municipalities' (municipal code) and defined as 'Farm' or 'Traditional' (geography type) or are within the borders of an 'Other Municipality' (municipal code) and defined as 'Urban' (geography type).
- **Rural** – Small Areas that are classified as 'Traditional' or 'Farm' in the Census 2011 data (based on the geo type variable) and are located within 'Other Municipality'.

For a full list of the areas under each area type, please refer to the [BRC website](#).

Data

How often is data released?

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Data is released two months after completion of the fieldwork period, as shown below:

Quarters	Fieldwork period	Data release
Q1 & Q2	January - June	August
Q2 & Q3	April - September	November
Q3 & Q4	July - December	February
Q4 & Q1	October - March	May

What data is released?

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A quarterly presentation is produced based on data from the six months preceding the report, outlining the quarterly sample, general listening trends and station-level results. The presentation is available on the [BRC website](#).

In addition, dashboards are produced on a quarterly basis for each Commercial and Public Broadcast Service (PBS) station with a base size of 40 or more, and the 25 Community stations with the highest respondent base, outlining the listening figures, average time spent listening, station-listener profiles (demographics, device and location listening) and quarter-hour curves. The dashboards are available from the BRC.

How far back can I trend the data?

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Since BRC RAM is a new service, trending starts from the service's inception date, namely January 2016.

Can I compare the data to SAARF RAMS?

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No, trending with the previous RAMS is not advised as the BRC RAM is a new measurement with a different survey design, sample frame and methodology.

How do I read the Station Dashboard?

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This section shows the week-cume and day average (7-day and 5-day) for Station A

This section is a profile of the station's listeners, i.e. only the people who said they listened to Station A in the paper diary



The number of listeners (respondents) of the station. E.g. if n=50, this section is based on 50 respondents

The device and locations on which and where Station A is listened to

Exclusive = listeners of the station who only listen to that station

The data shows listening for my radio station outside of the station footprint – how can that be?

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A station can pick up listeners from provinces outside the station's footprint area if, for example, a listener is listening to the station online, the listener travelled during the time of the diary, or they're listening to the station through the DSTV Audio Bouquet.