

## **RAI opts for DMB for mobile TV**

From Branislav Pekic in Rome

Italian public broadcaster RAI has opted for the DMB standard instead of DVB-H for the development of its mobile television service.

According to the Stefano Ciccotti, CEO of RaiWay, the company which manages RAI's network infrastructure of the broadcaster, the decision was not only strategic, it was obligatory. He points out that an investment of E300 million would have been required to set up a DVB-H network covering 85 per cent of the population and capable of bringing the signals into homes.

The same coverage, indoor included, with DMB technology costs E8 million. Ciccotti added that RAI is currently capable of covering nearly 40 per cent of the population with DMB at a cost which is practically zero.

The selection of DMB was motivated by two reasons. On one hand, RAI does not have unused frequencies for the creation of a DVB-H network. Also, DVB-H is not being implemented in Italy as fast as planned and the delay is already weighing negatively on the accounts of Italian mobile operators 3 Italia and TIM. Suffering less is Vodafone Italia, which has opted for a revenue sharing agreement with Sky Italia.

RAI has teamed up with digital radio consortia Club DAB, EuroDAB and CR DAB to pool frequencies and launch a combined TV/radio service. By August, the citizens of Rome will be able to receive a package of RAI radio stations, the largest private national radio stations, several local stations and three TV channels (one RAI and two private). After the summer, coverage will be extended to Milan and by Christmas more than half of the Italian population will be covered.