

TOWARDS ONE RAYNET

Wherever you sit in the RAYNET community, one thing has always been abundantly clear - we need one organisation, and the sooner the better.

Considerable progress towards this goal has been made by the RSGB/RAEN joint working group over recent months without much outward fuss. Now we want to share the proposals more widely.

The shape and status of the likely new, unified RAYNET has been defined. There is a proposed memorandum of agreement between the RSGB and the unified RAYNET which sets out their new complimentary roles and co-operative relationship. A joint statement on the detail and how amalgamation will be achieved has been drawn up by the RSGB and the RAEN and will be published in the Network magazine Raylink.

You can read the full documents at rsgb.org/main/operating/emergency-communications. Here is a summary.

In essence, the new unified organisation will become an affiliated Special Interest Group of the Society. In turn, only the unified RAYNET will have the task of providing the special support which groups need, such as specific insurance and photo ID. And only groups in the unified organisation will be able to use the title RAYNET.

To put these changes in place decisions have to be made by both the RSGB and the Network but the processes are different. The Network is a charitable company comprising of all its members who will have to agree on the necessary changes at a general meeting. Things are simpler for the RSGB groups whose status can be redefined by the RSGB board.

If agreement is reached on both sides, RSGB groups will be invited to transfer to the unified Raynet on or before their RSGB affiliation comes up for renewal.

It's important to note that the unified RAYNET will be a membership organisation like its predecessor. So not only will the group transfer, its members will become members of the unified RAYNET. During transition the unified RAYNET will have an interim management committee until new elections can be held which will include its new groups and members.

Raynet groups will be able to have RSGB affiliation like any other RSGB club for payment of the club fee. (Many groups already have dual affiliation.)

The financial arrangements for the unified RAYNET will be the same as the current Network's - each group will pay a fee based on membership numbers. It may cost more for some groups but it will be an inherently fairer system especially for smaller groups. It will also accurately reflect the cost of providing services that groups require.

Of course it may be that no joint agreement will be reached. That would be very disappointing because the proposals promise a fairer distribution of costs and closer clear working between the RSGB and the unified RAYNET - and above all a better service for our communities and other stakeholders.

Comments and questions are very welcome, via email to future@raynet.org.uk