

Proposal for additional 5 MHz frequencies for the amateur service in the UK

1. Introduction

Representations from the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) for additional frequencies at 5 MHz have resulted in a proposal being received from Ofcom on the 16th February 2012. This document addresses that proposal and contains the Society's observations.

2. Background

With the co-operation of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) the amateur service in the United Kingdom has enjoyed access to five 3 kHz channels in the 5 MHz band since the 1st August 2002. This followed an initial submission made to the then Radiocommunications Agency in February 2001 and was granted for an initial period of 4 years by means of a Notice of Variation (NoV) available on application to a Full Amateur Radio licence. In June 2006 MoD agreed to a further 47 month "Phase 2" extension with the addition of a further two 3 kHz channels. In June 2010 this was further extended for 5 years until the end of June 2015. The RSGB has since requested the conditions of the NoV is varied to harmonise our operational use, whilst still maintaining the experimental focus, with that enjoyed by amateurs in other countries.

3. RSGB Response

The RSGB undertook a web based survey which was open to all UK licensed amateurs and other interested parties. The following is the consensus of the comments received and is forwarded for consideration –

a) Original and proposed extended bands –

Existing (kHz)			Proposed (kHz)		
Bottom	Top	Width	Bottom	Top	Width
5258.5	5261.5	3	5258.5	5264	5.5
5278.5	5281.5	3	5276	5284	8
5288.5	5291.5	3	5288.5	5292	3.5
			5298	5307	9
			5313	5323	10
			5333	5338	5
			5354	5358	4
5366.5	5369.5	3	5362		
5371.5	5374.5	3		5374.5	12.5
			5378	5382	4
			5395	5401.5	6.5
5398.5	5401.5	3			
5403.5	5406.5	3	5403.5	5406.5	3

The RSGB welcomes the offer of additional frequencies within the 5 MHz band and will accept this part of the proposal. The addition of these frequencies will also support studies towards draft Agenda Item 1.4 for WRC-15 –

1.4 To consider the possibility of making an allocation of an appropriate amount of spectrum, not necessarily contiguous, to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis within the band 5250-5450 kHz.

b) Maximum transmitted power (EIRP) - 200 Watts:

We request that the power limit continues to be expressed as transmitter power. It is not practicable to measure EIRP at 5MHz with the techniques available to radio amateurs. It would therefore be very difficult to demonstrate compliance with a power limit expressed in EIRP.

c) Maximum bandwidth (double sideband) - 6 kHz

Agreed

d) Max aerial height AGL –

The 5m height AGL would be a significant limitation and we do not understand the reasoning for this new requirement. Some of the amateur experimentation on these channels has been for emergency communications tests that link with the military and the emergency services. At times, this requires aerials to be placed in urban environments including tops of buildings. A height limitation would severely restrict these experiments. We therefore request that the height restriction be removed.

4. Additional Information

Table 1 details the current 5 MHz worldwide assignments to the Amateur Service under Article 4.4 of the Radio Regulations and is included for information.

Table 1 - Current Worldwide 5 MHz Assignments to the Amateur Service under Article 4.4 of the Radio Regulations

Administration	Frequencies in kHz												
Australia								5358				5428	
Bahrain										5373 (4 kHz)		5405	
Bangladesh	5250-5310												
Cayman Islands					5332	5348		5368		5373		5405	
Croatia	5260-5410												
Denmark & Faeroes	5250-5450												
Dominican Republic	5260	5280	5290					5368		5373	5400	5405	
Finland			5290	5300		5332	5348		5368	5373	5400		
Greece											5400		
Greenland	5260	5280	5290					5368			5400	5405	
Grenada	5250-5450												
Iceland	5260-5410												
Irish Republic		5280	5290								5400	5405	
New Zealand							5320					5395	
Norway	5260-5410												
Portugal			5290							5373 kHz		5405	
Slovakia	5260-5410												
Somalia	5060-5450												
St. Lucia					5332	5348		5368		5373		5405	
Trinidad & Tobago	5250-5450												
U.S. & Territories					5332 (2.8 kHz)	5348 (2.8 kHz)		5358.5 (2.8 kHz)		5373 (2.8 kHz)		5405 (2.8 kHz)	
U.K. & Dependencies	5260 (3 kHz)	5280 (3 kHz)	5290 (3 kHz)						5368 (3 kHz)	5373 (3 kHz)	5400 (3 kHz)	5405 (3 kHz)	
U.K. Proposed	5258.5 - 5264	5276-5284	5288.5-5292	5298-5307	5313-5323		5333-5338	5354-5358		5362-5374.5	5378-5382	5395-5401.5	5405 (3 kHz)

Single frequencies on this chart are the centre frequencies of assigned channels. Frequency ranges are the extreme limits of continuous frequency allocations.



18th March 2012