

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

1. Introduction

Representations from the Radio Society of Great Britain for additional frequencies at 5 MHz have resulted in a proposal being received from the 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 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 'Litmus Test' consultation 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:

There is no support for the change from PEP to EIRP and we request that this measurement standard not be changed, taking into consideration the main Amateur Radio licence with the exception of the 137 kHz band specifies power in PEP (and dBW). Available test equipment for the amateur service is calibrated in PEP and calculating EIRP at the frequencies discussed is considered highly impracticable.

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.



15th March 2012

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