

## **VHF MANAGER REPORT for Spectrum Meeting November 2010**

Since the last Spectrum Meeting I have continued to carry out voluntary work at a national level for all UK radio amateurs with an interest in the VHF and UHF spectrum and at an international level with counterparts throughout IARU Region-1.

### **NATIONAL MATTERS**

#### **BAND PLANS**

The national VHF and UHF band plans have recently been reviewed as part of the process for inclusion within the 2011 Year Book. It was noted that the 430MHz band plan needed some sympathetic rework but this would be put on hold until after the IARU Region-1 conference in 2011

#### **SPECTRUM FORUM WEB SITE**

I have completely updated the VHF and UHF pages within the Spectrum Forum website <http://www.rsgb.org/spectrumforum/vhfuhf> with new up to date material. Covering the 50MHz, 70MHz, 144MHz and 432MHz bands each individual page has details of licence conditions, a detailed look at the band plan with explanatory notes, how to get started and what equipment is needed, propagation modes and how to keep up with the latest developments, activity period and contests.

#### **SPECIAL RESEARCH PERMITS**

The SRP/NoV process continues to work well with applications for the 50MHz and 144MHz being processed very quickly. Requests for Special Research Permits within the 432MHz band have not been successful, all being rejected by the Primary User. It is recommended that SRP applications for use on the VHF/UHF bands are directed through the VHF Manager in the first instance. Recently a request for a 50MHz SRP was sent directly to OFCOM. It was rejected on the grounds of excessive field strength at a neighbouring property.

#### **70MHz BAND - POWER INCREASE**

A request for a +4dB increase in output power within the 70MHz band (to bring it in line with other HF/VHF/UHF bands @ 26dBW) was submitted to OFCOM. However the Primary User have been unable to agree an increase in power due to their usage within that band. I have asked for it to be reviewed again with specific frequency/bandwidth limitations.

#### **UK VHF BEACONS**

To assist the RSGB Board I wrote a positioning paper on the number of UK propagation beacons needed to provide an effective service within the VHF and UHF bands. The paper particularly identified the strengths and weaknesses of UK beacon stations in the 50MHz, 70MHz, 144MHz and 432MHz bands. It is of considerable concern that a number of VHF and UHF propagation beacon are being forced to closed down permanently. Primarily this is due to funding issues associated with commercial broadcast sites. The situation is particularly poor on the 432MHz band where it is expected that only two UK beacons units will remain active.

#### **HIGH ALTITUDE AMATEUR BALLOONS**

Wideband data-signals have recently been reported as being heard within the 144MHz weak-signal sub-band. One unit was heard operating on 144.390MHz, located within the narrow-band section of the 144MHz band - just 10kHz below the beacon band. This area is used for weak-signal meteor scatter (with maximum bandwidth of 2.7kHz) and not 25kHz NBFM that the commercially available module produces. Other frequencies being used are 144.800MHz - used for APRS (with 12kHz max. bandwidth) and 145.175MHz which is a 2M repeater (RV62) input frequency. These frequencies appear to be based on North American 144MHz allocations.

Amateur aeronautical mobile operation via balloon (or paper planes) are also using licence exempt devices operating at 433 and 436MHz.

## **AWARDS**

Following the demise of the VHF Committee the VHF Manager picked up the responsibility for awarding the:

Harold Rose Trophy (to the person making an outstanding contribution to 50MHz),  
Louis Varney Cup (for advances in space communication),  
1962 Committee Cup (for the best VHF equipment development).

Following consultation with UKSMG (50MHz) and AMSAT-UK (Satellites) it was agreed that the recipients of these trophies in 2010 should be:

Lance Collister W7GJ, Paul Robinson 2E1EUB, Chris Whitmarsh G0FDZ.

## **INTERNATIONAL MATTERS**

As a member of the IARU Region 1 VHF/UHF/Microwaves Committee I have represented the RSGB in International VHF/UHF liaison work.

This has been mainly regarding band planning issues but particular emphasis has been made with the possible expansion of the 70MHz band throughout IARU Region-1. To this end I have assisted a number of fellow VHF Managers in developing proposals being presented to their national administrations.

### **IARU REGION-1 MEETING, VIENNA, FEBRUARY 20-21 2010**

In preparation for the IARU Region-1 interim meeting held on February 20-21 2010 a number of proposals were written and forwarded to the Region-1 VHF/UHF & Microwave Committee. The papers discussed Moonbounce and Meteor Scatter allocations within the 50MHz band and the use of alternative frequencies (69.950MHz) near to the 70MHz band.

More significant was a proposal to move the current 50MHz beacon band (within IARU Region-1) to 50.400-50.500MHz. This has met with considerable opposition particularly from the UK Six Metre Group.

### **VHF SUBMISSIONS for the IARU REGION-1 CONFERENCE 2011**

The following papers (and others) are being written for the 2011 conference.

50MHz: Refarming the narrowband section (circa 50.0 – 50.5MHz) based on suggestions by UKSMG and other feedback. This will require worldwide co-ordination.

144/430MHz: Recommendations for aeronautical mobile (balloon) frequencies.

European Contest Calendar: Based on a request for IARU Region-1 to provide a database of National Society VHF/UHF contests.

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VHF MANAGER**