

Report on WRC-12 Preparations

Preparations for WRC-12 continue, albeit at a slow pace. Meetings of ITU-R Working Parties 5A and B took place in Geneva over November 8th- 19th and these will be followed by a meeting of Study Group 5 on November 22nd and 23rd. Study Group 5 considers the output documents from the Working Parties and approves Draft New Reports where applicable.

Of particular interest to the amateur service at WRC-12 is **Agenda Item 1.23** which is -

to consider an allocation of about 15 kHz in parts of the band 415-526.5 kHz to the amateur service on a secondary basis, taking into account the need to protect existing services;

Unsurprisingly, the main objector to this agenda item has been the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), albeit the band has not been used by the maritime mobile service for almost 15 years (but see agenda item 1.10). Additional resistance comes from the Russian Federation who still operates Non Directional Beacons within the aeronautical radionavigation service in this frequency segment. Negotiations have resulted in four methods being proposed to satisfy this agenda item –

Method A

One worldwide secondary allocation of about 15 kHz to the ARS in the range 493 kHz to 510 kHz.

Method B

One worldwide secondary allocation of about 15 kHz to the ARS between 472 kHz and 487 kHz.

Method C

Two non-contiguous worldwide secondary allocations to the ARS at 461-469 kHz and 471-478 kHz, totalling about 15 kHz.

Method D

No change to the Radio Regulations.

Method A is one of the original proposals with Method B being proposed by the UK as an alternative. Method C was proposed by the U.S. with support now coming from Canada and this is likely to be adopted as the CITELE position. Method D was proposed by the Russian Federation. Within CEPT there is support for Method B but Method C could be considered as an alternative if a European Common Proposal cannot be agreed on the former.

Interestingly the tabling of this agenda item has resulted in the segment 495-505 kHz being proposed as an exclusive allocation for the maritime mobile service within agenda item 1.10.

Agenda Item 1.10

to examine the frequency allocation requirements with regard to operation of safety systems for ships and ports and associated regulatory provisions, in accordance with Resolution 357 (WRC 07);

Tests are currently being carried out on 500kHz using QPSK (not MFSK as reported by a news site) between a site near Brest and a Brittany Ferry plying between France, Plymouth and Ireland. This

transmission which has a 5 kHz bandwidth is audible as far north as the Shetlands and to the east near Berlin.

Agenda Item 1.14

to consider requirements for new applications in the radiolocation service and review allocations or regulatory provisions for implementation of the radiolocation service in the range 30 - 300 MHz, in accordance with Resolution 611 (WRC 07);

The amateur service initially had some concerns over this agenda item as one of the bands proposed was 142-144 MHz. This segment has now been discarded in favour of 154-156 MHz but a watching brief is being kept on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 1.15

to consider possible allocations in the range 3-50 MHz to the radiolocation service for oceanographic radar applications, taking into account the results of ITU R studies, in accordance with Resolution 612 (WRC 07);

This is another agenda item which is being closely monitored. Fortunately none of the proposed bands directly affect the amateur services although one band is directly below the 20 metre band at 13.870-14.000 MHz. The Preliminary Draft New Report has so far had 21 revisions and there is severe opposition to this agenda item from a number of other services.

The next meeting of the CEPT Project Team C that deals with these agenda items will meet in Toulouse in January followed by a further meeting in Vilnius in April and the final meeting in Germany in September. CEPT's Conference Preparatory Group will meet in the UK between 27th June and 1st July (venue to be confirmed but could be Oxford) with the final meeting in Romania in November 2011.

The ITU-R Conference Preparatory Meeting which takes place 12 months before the conference itself will take place in Geneva over the last two weeks in February. It is anticipated that over 2,000 delegates will attend this meeting to agree the CPM Text (462 Pages). The next Study Group 5 meetings will take place during June 2011 with the final session taking place in early November.

The following Draft ITU-R reports can be provided on request –

Draft New Report ITU-R M.[AS 500 kHz CHARS] – Characteristics of amateur radio stations in the range 415-526 kHz for sharing studies.

Draft New Report ITU-R M.[500 kHz] – Utilization of the 495-505 kHz band by the maritime mobile service for the digital broadcasting of safety and security related information from shore-to-ships.

Draft New Report ITU-R M.[AS COMPAT 415-526.5 kHz] – Compatibility of amateur service stations with existing services in the range 415-526.5 kHz.

It should be remembered that these reports are still drafts until approved by Study Group 5.

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