

Radio Society of Great Britain
Minutes of the Spectrum Forum
Saturday 3rd November 2012

Present:

John Gould G3WKL Chair, Bob Bagwell G4HZV (FOC), Dom Baines M1KTA (G-QRP), Mario Brashill G2DPA (AROS), Ian Brothwell G4EAN (BARTG), Cathy Clark G1GQJ (RAYNET), Graham Coomber G0NBI (General Manager), Ian Greenshields G4FSU (HF Manager), Trevor Hawkins M5AKA (AMSAT-UK), John McCullagh G14BWM (ETCC), Graham Murchie G4FSG (UKuG), Steve Nichols G0KYA (PSC), Murray Niman G6JYB (Microwave Manager), Ed Taylor GW3SQX (CC), Ian Underwood M0YMK (VMARS).

1. Appointment of minute secretary

It was agreed that Graham Coomber (GC) should take the minutes. It was agreed that all papers should be taken as read, and in the interests of time, only significant issues raised for discussion.

2. Apologies for Absence

Bob Whelan, G3PJT (RSGB Chairman), Dave Wilson, M0OBW (RSGB President), David Butler, G4ASR (VHF Manager), Chris Cummings, G4BOH (Intruder Watch), Chris Duckling, G3SVL (CDXC), Colin Richards, G3YCR (EMCC), Colin Thomas, G3PSM, Graham Shirville, G3VZV (BATC), John Rogers, M0JAV (EMCC), Keith Bassett, G7NBU (AROS Coordinator), Peter Chadwick, G3RZP, Trevor Day, G3ZYY (UKSMG)

3. Terms of Reference

The amended terms of reference were agreed, noting the inclusion of the Code of Conduct, which was common to all committees.

4. Action Arising from previous minutes.

It was noted that all the actions arising from the previous meeting had been completed specifically,

- 40m Band Plan (5.1)
- DQRM article prepared and published (7.5)
- Highlight AM usage in band plan narrative (7.10)
- Spectrum Strategy updated published (9)
- Continue Pressure and Support to Ofcom on Primary User issues (5.3) - Done/Ongoing

5. Spectrum Reports

5.1 HF

Report Accepted.

DX Code of Conduct

John, G3WKL, reminded the Forum of the RSGB's efforts at IARU since 2002 to address DQRM, where the successes had been (with UBA) to gain IARU Region 1 recognition of work by others, specifically the Operating Procedure and Ethics Booklet in 2008 and DX Code of Conduct in 2011. Ian, G4FSU, reported on discussions at the RSGB Convention, chaired by Bob Whelan, regarding poor operating on HF, specifically DQRM. The Forum welcomed the intention of the DX Code of Conduct group to highlight the understanding that the DXpedition organisers have a key role in helping to minimise this problem. The meeting also told that there is an intention to link financial incentives to good operating through the support of the major funders of DXpeditions. The meeting agreed that the RSGB through the IARU should support the work of those involved with developing the DX Code of Conduct, and the work of the DXpedition sponsoring funds.

40m Band

Ian, G4FSU, reported that PSK31 activity seems to be moving above 7.040 MHz and appears to be less of a problem than it used to be. It was noted that this frequency was still set as a default in some software.

It was agreed that IARU Region 1 should be urged to take action to persuade Regions 2 and 3 to harmonise with the Region 1 Band Plan.

Action: Ian, G4FSU, to contact Region1 representative at Region 3 conference to see if this can be raised at the conference this week.

Action: Ian, G4FSU, to approach Region 1 to submit paper to the next Region 2 conference.

5.2. VHF/UHF.

Report Accepted.

Terry Steven's sad loss was noted. John, G3WKL, reported that arrangements were in hand to appoint a VHF Manager.

It was noted that the 144 MHz band plan had been updated twice during the year for Digital Voice calling and gateway frequencies.

5.3 Microwaves

Report Accepted.

Backlog of NoV applications.

Murray reported that efforts continued to speed up approvals from Ofcom. It was noted that this problem was not confined to microwave frequencies. John, G3WKL, reported that whilst the RSGB

meet with Ofcom on a regular basis, there is no mechanism for the Society formally to meet directly with primary users, and this added to delays.

Spectrum Release (to mobile providers)

3.4 GHz – Murray reported that, for some time, it had been accepted that most of this band will be released above 3410 MHz.

2.3 GHz – Murray reported that papers had been submitted to Ofcom describing the current activity on this band and highlighting, in particular, the ATV repeaters that will have to move/become digitised. It was noted that a decision from Ofcom was awaited.

Action: Murray to put note in 2.3 GHz band plan to indicate that band is subject to regulatory change.

Action : Murray to publish update in Feb RadCom, noting that Sweden has lost access to 2.3 GHz.

Action: Murray to continue pressure and support to Ofcom on Primary User issues

6.0 Committee Reports

6.1 Electromagnetic Compatibility Committee

Report Accepted.

Powerline adaptors (PLA) (draft standard FprEN50561-1)

As EMCC was unrepresented at the last minute due to ill health. John, G3WKL, reported that despite the best efforts of the RSGB to influence the BSI (mirroring similar action by the DARC), the UK and Germany both voted in favour of the draft standard and it was likely that it would be approved. Whilst the HF Amateur Bands will be notched (and this should offer primary protection), the potential effects of intermodulation into our notched bands were unknown.

It was stressed that people experiencing problems with PLA should report them to Ofcom.

Solar PV

John, G3WKL, reported that the major concern was the lack of installation standards and that every situation will be different.

6.2 Emerging Technology Coordination Committee

Reported accepted.

John, G14BWM, reported that the ETCC was producing NoVs for datacomms, and trialling, in beta form, the eventual automation of the system of NoV production. It was noted that data protection issues remain to be resolved by Ofcom.

6.3 Contest Committee

Report accepted

Ed reported on the consultations undertaken for contest changes, a process that will continue. The difficulty of obtaining consensus was noted in view of the wide variety of responses.

6.4 Propagation Studies Committee

Report accepted

Beacons at 50MHz

Murray reported that work continues to produce a paper for the Vienna meeting.

Interference on 10m beacon band

It was reported that this problem continues and is accentuated by the position in the sunspot cycle.

Action: Advise Chris, G4BOH, (Intruder Watch) of continuing interference from Russian taxis and buoys.

HF Noise measurement project

John, G3WKL, reported a Board discussion concerning this initiative and indicated interest in an independent research project (funded by legacy money).

Action : John, G3WKL to discuss with Steve Nichols to agree a way forward.

7. Group Reports

7.1 AMSAT-UK

Report accepted

Spectrum Availability

It was noted that WRC – 15 would be the next opportunity to influence spectrum availability for the Amateur Satellite Service.

Next year, we may have our second astronaut on the ISS (Sarah Brightman). Last time, a special licence was issued and it was suggested that this could be repeated.

Action: GC to discuss with individual and Ofcom.

Italian repeaters

It was reported that an offending Italian repeater continues to block inputs to two of our satellites.

Action: AMSAT-UK to provide detail so that Ofcom (Baldock) can verify issue on amateur

satellite downlinks

Action: Murray to close out IARU action and provide draft paper for submission.

Action: GC to liaise with Ofcom to file an interference complaint.

7.2 AROS

Reported accepted

Mario reported that AROS was formed in 1977 and has been under new management since March. There was a desire to change and raise the profile of service away from the “Band Police” image and to reposition it as an advisory service. There were now 77 observers and there was evidence that the service was improving its effectiveness.

It was noted that there were observer shortages, particularly in the SE England and the London region.

In discussion it was noted that there were some cases where the lower-level licences had been identified by AROS as being illegally used after the original had lapsed, and the licensee progressed up the licensing levels. **Action: GC to obtain policy statement from Ofcom and publish** (Secretary post-meeting note: Ofcom do not revoke lower-level licences as the licensee progresses to higher-level licences. It is possible that the licences noted by AROS had lapsed prior to the move to life-time licence in 2007)

7.3 BARTG

Report accepted

7.4 BATC

Report accepted

It was noted with anticipation that future technical advancements in DATV will reduce bandwidth considerably.

7.5 CDXC

Report accepted

Top Band: 10 kHz extension to 1800 KHz, and increased power between 1850 and 2000 kHz

It was noted that fishing buoys were still present and that gaining the additional 10 kHz was therefore unlikely. It was thought more likely that we might be successful in seeking the power increase following the demise of most primary user services.

Action: Ian to investigate band extension and power increase issues.

40m extension

It was noted that this was unlikely to be included on the WRC agenda in the foreseeable future. Extension to the WRC bands was perhaps a more achievable aim, albeit that there may be other

priorities within IARU.

7.6 FOC

Report accepted

7.7 G-QRP

Report accepted

Listing of an AM centre of activity frequency in the Band Plans

It was noted that this has been raised previously with no success. It was suggested that a “custom and practice” approach would be the only way of moving forward i.e. identify a frequency, use it and make it known.

7.8 UKuG

Report Accepted

Moonbounce

It was noted that this was becoming relatively easy with a 2m dish on 2.3 GHz and 3.4 GHz using the JT modes.

7.9 UKSMG

Report accepted

John, G3WKL, reported that Trevor Day G3ZYY had joined the Forum as the new UKSMG rep and will be assisting on beacon developments.

7.10 RAYNET

Report accepted

7.11 VMARS

Report accepted. It was noted that AM recognition remains the primary aim.

80m expansion

It was thought that this was discussed last year although not recorded in the minutes. There was general support for the intention as a way of reducing congestion on the band. It was thought that 3800-3900 kHz may be the most feasible option.

Action: Ian, G4FSU to speak with Peter Chadwick to clarify proposal. John, G3WKL and Graham to raise with Ofcom at next meeting. (24th January 2013)

8. IARU Region 1 Interim meeting April 2013

John, G3WKL reported that Region 1 holds a General Conferences every 3 years, with an Interim Meeting between the General Conferences. Other Regions have a similar periodicity with their General Conferences. The Interim Meeting provides an effective route to subsequent approval at the General Conference. All spectrum managers were encouraged to submit papers for the next Interim Meeting (deadline 20th January for meeting April 20-21st 2013).

Action: Murray to discuss the synchronisation of 6m beacons with Trevor (This is to be followed up by the new VHF manager)

9 AoB

Data Protection Act.

GC explained that all staff and volunteers who handled personal data were required to understand and comply with the Society's Data Protection Policy. Understanding is to demonstrated by successful completion of the data protection quiz on the website. This should be completed by the end of November. GC confirmed that the quiz was available to anyone wishing to take it. <http://www.rsgb.org/aboutrsgb/dataprotection/?id=dp-quiz-slides&score=video>

Forum Membership

It was agreed to invite ARDF to join the committee **Action John, G3WKL**

11. Date of next meeting. Saturday 2nd November 2013