

RSGB EMERGING TECHNOLOGY COORDINATION COMMITTEE (ETCC)

REPORT FOR SPECTRUM FORUM 2013

Purpose

The ETCC functions to develop and enhance the UK Amateur Radio Repeater Network together with Data Communications systems and to promote the introduction and rollout of appropriate new technologies.

Our Main Activities:

- To receive, scrutinise and advise on all proposals in respect of analogue and digital repeaters and data communications systems.
- To process finalised and agreed proposals onwards to Ofcom.
- To liaise with Ofcom and other bodies as required.

Current Issues

It will not be a surprise to learn that delays with frequency clearances continue to be a major issue. We did have a significant number of NoVs issued in late 2012 and early 2013 but progress since then has been variable depending on Ofcom's workload. The main problem areas are still in 70cms and the bands above although there is an Ofcom agreement with one of the Primary Users to process proposals in small batches and this appears to be working reasonably well.

We were however somewhat hearted by a number of ATV clearances coming through recently, especially in respect of 23cm and 3GHz DATV repeaters together with one 23cms wideband 'DD' digital data proposal. The 23cms successes appear to be as a result of choosing frequencies from the new 23cms bandplan, devised to avoid wherever possible the spectrum used by aeronautical radars. It was also good to see a recent success with a 10GHz ATV proposal for GB3FY near Fleetwood.

Primary Users

We agree with others that a face to face meeting with the Primary Users may facilitate further clearances and this is being vigorously pursued via Ofcom at this time and are hopeful that this aspiration will finally be achieved.

Spectrum Release

One future development which is further detailed in the Microwave Managers report is the proposed release in 2013/2014 of some PU spectrum at 13cms. This is likely to require many changes in frequency for installations in that band although there may be a little respite in that implementation appears to have slipped to 2014/2015. In preparation for these changes a team of BATC members (including Noel G8GTZ who has now joined the ETCC as our TV manager) had a very interesting session with Ofcom at Baldock demonstrating typical ATV equipment in 13cms and assisting with measurements. This visit is referred to in greater detail in the BATC report from Graham Shirville G3VZV.

Online Forms

The new online processes and forms which we have been trialling on the ETCC website are now in operational use and wherever possible automate the production of Notices of Variation (NoVs). The full use of these forms still awaits the agreement of an MoU between the RSGB & Ofcom. Once this agreement is in place the entire workflow process can be implemented. In the interim manual intervention is still needed for the final issue of paperwork to prospective NoV holders and this creates some unnecessary delays

At the time of writing of this report there are some 26 NoV requests with Ofcom awaiting clearance.

Internet Gateways

Steve G8SFR our Datacomms Manager has been very busy this year implementing some IARU changes to the data band plan in 2 Metres. This has meant considerable shuffling of Gateway allocations so our thanks to everyone who cooperated in this exercise and especially to Steve for all his hard work.

Emerging Technology

One final item of note is a move by some groups away from the dominant Icom Amateur D-Star digital standard towards the commercial DMR standard initially developed by Motorola as MotoTRBO and based on an ETSI standard. This allows two voice slots per carrier and a worldwide Amateur network known as DMARC is growing up around it.

Acknowledgments

I mentioned Graham G3VZV earlier and I would in my final comments wish to put on record our thanks to him for his 30 plus years of service so freely given to the ETCC and its predecessors, surely a record in RSGB committee membership!

Thanks also go to Andrew G8DOR for attending the Forum on my behalf this year.

John McCullagh G14BWM

**Chairman ETCC
October 2013**