

Minutes of the Spectrum Forum Saturday 2nd November 2013

Present.

Andrew Barrett G8DOR, Graham Shirville (GS), G3VZV, John Worsnop (JW) G4BAO, John Regnault (JR) G4SWX, Murray Niman (MN) G6JYB, Cathy Clark (CC), G1GQJ, Mark Jones (MJ) G0MGX, Ron Swinburne (RS) M0WSN, Graham Coomber (GC), G0NBI, Robin -Page Jones G3JWI, Trevor Hawkins (TH) M5AKA, John Gould (JG) G3WKL, Peter Chadwick (PC) G3RZP, Ian Greenshields (IG) G4FSU, Steve Nichols (SN) G0KYA, Ian Brothwell (IB) G4EAN, Martin Sach (MS) G8KDF.

1 Minute Secretary:

It was agreed that GC and PC would take notes.

2 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from

Bob Whelan, G3PJT (RSGB President), Charlie Morrison, G14FUE (ECC), Chris Cummings G4BOH, Chris Duckling, G3SVL, Colin Thomas, G3PSM, Dom Baines, M1KTA, Graham Murchie, G4FSG, Ian Pawson, G0FCT, John McCulloch, G14BWM, Peter Blakeborough, G3PYB, Trevor Day G3ZYY, Bob Bagwell, G4HZV, John Rogers M0JAV.

3 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference were noted.

4. Actions arising from the previous minutes

(5.10) 40m Band Plan Observing upper limit of 7040 for CW. Region 2 have substantially moved to the same position, and band plans are now reasonably aligned worldwide.

(6.4) – Noise Measurement Project – actioned

(7.1) ISS – no contractual agreement with Russia on launch which is now postponed until 2015/6 at the earliest, and Sarah Brightman's involvement is by no means certain.

There are plans to put a UK astronaut into space, Tim Peake, and it was agreed that it would be desirable for him to have a UK licence. **Action: JG/GC to raise at 05/12/13 Ofcom:RSGB Forum**

The need for there to be a dedicated amateur radio project as part of the mission, rather than just routine schools contacts, was stressed.

QRM from an Italian repeater (IROC) on satellite frequencies is reported to have gone away.

Reported that some changes to Italian 70 cms repeaters is happening.

(7.5) – The HF Manager reported that the 1800 – 1810kHz expansion proposal is ongoing at IARU.

(7.11) 80m expansion 3.8 to 3.9MHz: Ofcom have it noted (The principal user is MoD). The matter is to be kept in abeyance until after WRC15 in view of the move to obtain a 5MHz allocation.

It was noted that ARDF were not members of the forum: **Action JG to invite.**

5. Spectrum Reports

5.1 HF Manager

IG drew attention to the following items in his report

- Consultation had now commenced to confirm the current 5 MHz Band Plan
- 7 MHz. Region 2 had adopted the Region 1 Band Plan as a step towards international alignment.

5.2 VHF/UHF Manager

JR drew attention to the following items in his report

- The proposed release of VHF spectrum is awaited and will generate much work
- An expression of interest has been made to Ofcom for an allocation between 146-147 MHz for Digital operation. To be successful, the need for spectrum to experiment with new modes will have to be demonstrated, not “business as usual”.
- Similarly, an expression of interest for spectrum between 70.5-71.0 MHz has been made, again for innovative use.
- Discussion is underway as to how an allocation between 55-70 MHz might be allocated for experimental use.
- The decline in 432 MHz activity was a cause for concern and additional usage of the band should be encouraged wherever possible – e.g RadCom article, encouraging clubs.
- JG noted the popularity of the Centenary Award and the possibility of a similar award scheme to stimulate activity at VHF/UHF
- JW reported that he has a “boiler plate” presentation about the 432 MHz band that could be used for promoting interest.

5.3 Microwave Manager

MN and the Microwave community were congratulated on the work that they had done with Ofcom. This had greatly helped Ofcom's knowledge of amateur activity. Hopefully the result will be that the amount of spectrum at 2.3 GHz and 3.4 GHz to be lost to amateur radio maybe less than initially feared.

MN reported an EU Commission mandate to CEPT, which requires Wi-Fi applications to be afforded greater protection at 5 GHz, that is a cause for concern.

5.4 AROS Co-ordinator

A moment of silence was observed for the late deputy AROS Manager Mario Brashill, G2DPA

AROS reported that, whilst in 90% of cases, AROS intervention in amateur-to-amateur interference is effective, more support from Ofcom is needed for the remaining 10%. Regrettably, there have not been any Ofcom prosecutions reported for some years, and there appears to be an undue delay in taking any action. **Action: Agenda item for Ofcom:RSGB forum and MJ to attend (paper needed).**

The need to publicise AROS activity and “successes” to the membership was highlighted.

5.5 Intruder Watch Co-ordinator

It was reported that international efforts were producing good results in clearing intruders from the bands. However, the improvement in HF conditions means that intruders into 10m are now more noticeable.

RSGB Committee Reports

6.1 EMCC

MS reported on the problems caused by suppliers of systems using G fast and VDSL2 not configuring their servers to invoke the notches (the option to provide the facility being required by international standards). This was likely to directly affect other spectrum users as well as amateur radio.

Action

JG to liaise with EMCC chairman and RSGB Board on how this is best raised with system suppliers and, if necessary, escalated to Ofcom.

Agenda item for RSGB/Ofcom Forum. How many EMC complaints are received and how are they managed? JC/GC

EMCC action agreed : to review the website and incorporate more soundbites and spectral plots to aid self-diagnosis of interference. Need to educate membership – monthly updates about interference from different types of equipment were suggested.

6.2 Emergency Communications Committee

It was noted that the management of emergency communications within the RSGB had been

reorganised and that the new committee had held its inaugural meeting at Hamfest.

Action: To publicise via the website. GC

6.3 ETCC

It was reported that Primary User clearance is still problematic.

Action :GC to write to PJ with JMc updated list of outstanding clearances.

Agenda item for Ofcom - RSGB forum: GC/JG

Note for RadCom to explain reason for delay (which is not ours): JMc

6.4 Contest Committee

It was noted from the CC Report that they were managing their contest frequencies carefully. The need to enforce Band Plans in VHF contests as well as HF (e.g. 6m) was stressed.

Action: JR to contact Contest Committee chairman

6.5 Propagation Studies Committee

It was agreed that it would be useful if the noise measurement study could be extended to VHF.

Action: SN to discuss with Gwyn, G4FKA

7.0 Group Reports

7.1 AMSAT-UK

The need to promote 50 MHz as a primary amateur allocation including Amateur Satellite Service was agreed, noting that this is likely to be proposed by IARU as a WRC 18 item (preparation starts in a few weeks). **Action MN/TH/JR to discuss best way forward.**

GS reported the confirmed launch date of 21st November 2013 for the FUNCube satellite.

7.2 BARTG

Report noted. JG commented that "All Modes" in the band plans meant any mode that met the Necessary Bandwidth criteria.

7.3 BATC

Noted that real progress now being made. JR suggested that the development of a person-to-person video, perhaps as a development of the FUNCube Dongle, could be a "killer-app" for youngsters.

7.4 CDXC

CDXC's interest in band expansion on 160, 80 and 40m was noted. It was pointed out that extensions to these bands are unlikely in the near future because of the WRC-15 focus on 5 MHz and non-amateur issues at HF during WRC-07.

It was suggested that to address CDXC's concerns on poor operating, endorsed in the FOC Report, that CDXC and FOC might produce a series of articles for RadCom about improving DX operating and also link to syllabus review as a first step . **Action CD/G4HZV**

7.5 FOC

Noted, and covered in the CDXC discussion.

7.6 G-QRP

No report received.

7.7 UKuG

Concern was expressed that despite a membership of 400, there was insufficient activity on the microwave bands. JW appealed to all spectrum forum members to either get active on, or proactively encourage others to try, the bands 432MHz and up and to make it a society priority. To assist in this, JW can provide packaged talks on the topic, and he expressed willingness to present them to clubs.

7.8 UKSMG

No report received.

7.9 RAYNET.

It was noted that discussions were well advanced with the organisers of the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

7.10 4 metre website

No report received

7.11 VMARS

RS proffered thanks to the RSGB and Ofcom for their efforts in obtaining the 5 MHz frequency allocations, especially the 5.317 MHz segment. VMARS would like to see an extension of the 80m band but recognised that this would not be achieved in the short term.

8. IARU Region 1 General Conference Sept 2014.

8.1 Timetable and Process

The need for a timetable and process that allowed discussion with the Membership on proposals before submission was agreed.

Topics for consideration

The following suggestions for topics were made:

C3 Committee (Administration and Operational Matters)

- Misuse of remote stations e.g. call signs not indicating the country prefix of the remote station
- Clarification/definition of transmitted frequency of machine generated modes (MGM).

C4 Committee (HF)

- To support the paper in C3 on MGM a detailed paper would be needed within C4

C5 Committee (VHF and above)

- 50 MHz time-slice beacons
- Confirmation of Amateur Satellite Service at bottom of 2m
- To support the paper in C3 on MGM a detailed paper would be needed within C4

It was noted that we can expect pressure from other national societies on the 70 MHz band plan.

9. Licence Review

Concern was expressed about the lack of understanding of the term “Litmus Test” and whether this was contributing to a lack of input to some of the consultations.

Action: JG/GC to consider the textual definition of the consultations processes

There was the opportunity for additional ideas for inclusion in the Licence Review to be submitted, recognising that it was planned to provide a composite input to the next Ofcom-RSGB forum meeting on 5th December 2013.

10 Other Business

Spectrum Strategy

It was agreed to revisit the strategy after the 2014 licence changes. **Action : Bring forward to 2014 agenda. JG**

Logos

It was agreed that High Resolution logos of affiliated clubs should be made available for RSGB website. **Action: Affiliated clubs**

11. Date of Next meeting

Saturday 1st November 2014, Holiday Inn Garden Court Hotel, Sandy, 11am – 3:30pm