

# RAYNET Report to Spectrum Forum

## October 2014



### 146 - 147MHz

RAYNET feels there is a strong case for considering emergency communications usage within the 146-147MHz band.

Ofcom accepted our need for a mechanism to use in-band VHF repeaters on the Tour de France and supported our use of the 146-147MHz spectrum even while it was allocated for commercial PMSE use on the Tour de France. The reluctance of Arqiva, which were managing this spectrum, to commit to our requirements was not viewed positively by Ofcom.

The communications network provided by RAYNET on the event, using linked in-band VHF repeaters, was very effective, despite the disadvantages of the excessively wide split that was finally used (146MHz / 157MHz). The network proved to be invaluable due to failures of the commercial event communications and of great benefit to our User Services.

Ofcom is aware of the success of our technical approach and of our need for designated access to the top end of 146MHz for repeater outputs. This may have been more influential than any written submission to Ofcom's consultation.

RAYNET groups in Yorkshire are currently discussing the funding to equip the three Kenwood TK-750 repeaters possessed by RAYNET in Yorkshire for use with a split of around 2MHz. This will require several thousand pounds for diplexers for 2-3MHz separation, UHF link radios, aerials, cables and battery power. These networked repeaters will provide a significant capability for resilient and infrastructure independent communications over the distances and terrain that are the norm in this area. Other groups are looking to follow this model.

Used by RAYNET in this way, 146MHz can provide a community service benefit which may be significant in justifying its continued allocation to Amateur Radio despite commercial demands for the spectrum. Furthermore, our use may reduce any likelihood of the spectrum being withdrawn during major events with high PMSE demands.

Please see Appendix 1 for details of the proposal submitted to Ofcom in April 2014.

### RAYNET Spring Convention 2014

The Network organised a Spring Convention at Urmston, Manchester in March. This focussed on a number of aspects of the hobby which RAYNET feels could be of use operationally – APRS, Digital Voice, complex talk-throughs, high speed data and HF data modes. Groups should be broadening their horizons and embracing other technologies which some groups have explored and used effectively. There is still a need to widen the tools we have in the RAYNET toolbox to encompass possible future demands from our User Services. A DVD has been made available with the video presentations, audio tracks, accompanying Powerpoints and speakers notes, so that groups can use these for training purposes.

It is hoped to hold another convention with more technical "learning bytes" on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015 in Oxfordshire.

Cathy Clark  
Chairman  
The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network