

**Radio Society of Great Britain**  
**Minutes of the 2014 Annual Spectrum Forum Meeting**  
**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014**

**Present**

Murray Niman G6JYB (Spectrum Forum Chairman), John Regnault G4SWX, (VHF Manager), Mark Jones G0MGX (AROS Coordinator), Colin Richards G3YCR & Robin-Page Jones G3JWI (EMCC) Mike Granatt, M0RYK (ECC), John McCullagh G14BWM (ETCC), Steve Nichols G0KYA (PSC)

Trevor Hawkins M5AKA (AMSAT-UK), Ian Brothwell G4EAN (BARTG), Graham Shirville G3VZV (BATC) Mark Marsden G4AXX (CDXC), Bob Bagwell G4HZV (FOC), Dominic Baines M1KTA (G-QRP) Cathy Clark G1GQJ (RAYNET), John Worsnop G4BAO (UKuG), Ron Swinburne M0WSN (VMARS)

**Also Present**

John Gould G3WKL, (RSGB President, previous Spectrum Forum Chairman)  
John Rogers M0JAV, RSGB Board

**1 Minute Secretary:**

It was agreed that John Regnault G4SWX would take the notes

**2 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Ian Greenshields G4FSU (HF Manager), Peter Thomson GM1XEA (ECC delegate M0RYK) Ian Pawson, G0FCT (Contests Committee), Chris Duckling G3SVL (CDXC delegate G4AXX) David Butler G4ASR (The Four Metres Website), Graham Coomber G0NBI (RSGB General Manager) Bob Bagwell (FOC), Trevor Day G3ZYY (UKSMG), Colin Thomas G3PSM, Julian Gannaway G3YGF, Peter Chadwick G3RZP and Stewart Bryant G3YSX

**3 Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference were noted.

**4 Actions arising from the previous minutes (Nov-2013)**

- Discuss with Ofcom a callsign for astronaut Tim Peake: (Completed - GB1SS agreed in principle)
- To extend the Spectrum Forum to include ARDF: (Completed)
- To raise the issues of dealing with AROS reports with Ofcom: (Completed)
- EMC Committee to investigate VDSL2/Gfast interference complaints (Completed)
- To publicise the role of ECC via RSGB website (Completed)
- ETCC to highlight delays on outstanding licence and NoV clearances (Completed & ongoing)
- VHF Manager to contact Contests Committee re participants adhering to VHF band plans. (Completed)
- PSC to discuss extending the HF noise study to VHF. (Completed – extending the study is not possible)
- To adopt an AMSAT proposal for a 50MHz amateur satellite allocation for WRC18 (Completed)
- CDXC to promote good operating practice via RadCom and elsewhere (Completed & ongoing)
- SF Chair to clarify the 'Litmus Tests' terminology (Completed – 'consultation' term in use)
- Spectrum strategy to be updated after licence 2014 review. (Deferred to 2015 after Ofcom outcome)

## 5 Spectrum Reports

### 5.1 HF Manager

On behalf of Ian G4FSU, the Chairman drew attention to the following items from the HF Manager's report: The issue of cross-border remote operation had been a hot topic for discussion at the recent IARU Region 1 conference. It was stressed that TR61-01 did not permit cross-border remote operation. It was also highlighted that IARU Region 2 had adopted the IARU Region 1 7MHz band plan as a step towards better international alignment. It was also noted from the report that participation in the studies for 5MHz for WRC-15 was also ongoing, along with recent applications for 28MHz beacons.

### 5.2 VHF/UHF Manager

John Regnault G4SWX highlighted the following issues from his report:

Regarding the new temporary allocation at 146-147MHz, John stressed the key message from Ofcom that this new spectrum was not for 'more of the same' but experimental digital communications. He also explained how 146-147MHz despite the NoVs being issued was not a normal amateur allocation and that Ofcom had to ensure compliance with long standing international non-interference agreements. It was important that wider bandwidth digital transmissions did not extend beyond the band edges to protect other important services. He stressed that Ofcom would be monitoring and that to make a good case for the NoVs being extended, amateurs would have to demonstrate that they were using the spectrum for the purposes it had been granted. John Worsnop G4BAO suggested that more could be done to publicise simple ways of generating digital modes particularly with PC sound cards. John G4SWX agreed and that he would raise this with Andy Talbot G4JNT. **Action John G4SWX**

The new beacon licences for 432MHz were also highlighted. GB3NGI had just become active with good coverage. On 144 MHz RSGB had been successful with a request to increase the licensed ERP for GB3WGI. Significant numbers of channels in the 70, 144 & 432MHz bands had been 'freed-up' as a result of RSGB papers being approved by IARU Region 1. This should free up a significant number of channels for mixed analogue and digital mode usage.

### 5.3 Microwave Manager

Murray Niman G6JYB highlighted the recent announcement that 2300-2302MHz would soon become available under a NoV lasting three years with 400W power to partly offset the loss of other 2.3GHz spectrum. He also indicated that there would be new access to >275GHz giving amateurs an opportunity to demonstrate innovation at extreme frequencies.

It was also mentioned that all GB3xxx propagation beacons had to have new NoVs, which had been a challenging task to complete – the process had also released the new 432MHz beacon authorisations. Ofcom now insist that multiple beacons with the same keeper should have only one callsign.

The need to improve activity on the microwave bands particularly with younger members was stressed. The 'Hamnet' using adapted Wi-Fi equipment was cited as popular usage of the 5.7GHz band in Germany and neighbouring countries.

### 5.4 AROS Co-ordinator

AROS Co-ordinator Mark Jones G0MGX highlighted that the revamped organisation had expanded to 104 monitoring volunteers. Most areas were well covered, though there remains a shortage in the SE of England. Many of the AROS reports involved abuse on repeaters and it was found that some repeater keepers were difficult to contact.

John Gould G3WKL proposed that a message of thanks should be sent by the RSGB to all of the 104 AROS Volunteers. – **Action: John G3WKL**

### 5.5 Intruder Watch Co-ordinator

No issues were raised

## **6 RSGB Committee Reports**

### **6.1 Electromagnetic Compatibility Committee (EMCC)**

Colin Richards G3YCR and Robin-Page Jones G3JWI highlighted the work of EMCC in dealing with the impact of interference resulting from a range of new technologies.

They highlighted their presentation at the RSGB convention that included issues of VDSL and was available to download from the RSGB web site.

A concern was the falling number of EMC advisors, which assist members in dealing with EMC problems.

John G3WKL commented that following RSGB inputs, that IARU Region 1 had agreed to upgrade the EMC WG to a full committee (C7) and modify the terms of its Political Relations Committee to enhance lobbying as well as technical standards work.

### **6.2 Emergency Communications Committee (ECC)**

Mike Granatt, M0RYK said that during busy weekends RAYNET sees congestion on 2m hence there was a need for emergency communications channels in the 146-147MHz band. He suggested that RAYNET members would not be pleased with the draft band plan that did not show a RAYNET allocation.

### **6.3 Emerging Technology Coordination Committee (ETCC)**

John McCullagh GI4BWM highlighted that ETCC generates many NoVs for Ofcom to issue. Whilst other NoVs have updated terms, those for AX25/packet are yet to be revised and reissued. Following a recent Ofcom notice, ETCC were waiting for returns from users to see how many people were still using AX25 packet. This is one of many areas where RSGB performs a 'clearing house' function in support of Ofcom. John also reported a useful meeting with CAA who are the primary user for parts of the 1296MHz band.

### **6.4 Contest Committee (CC)**

The Contests Committee report was mostly concerned with their recent consultation. John Regnault G4SWX did highlight that the CC also provide assistance in vetting contest callsigns, although it was Ofcom that issued them.

### **6.5 Propagation Studies Committee**

Steve Nichols G0KYA has database created from reverse beacons on 6m to assist with analysis of propagation mechanisms. This database is now available on the Internet from a link on G0KYA's blog.

The PSC has revised the way in which propagation forecasts are produced for GB2RS and invites feedback.

It was also noted that the HF study with Leicester University on noise aggregation/propagation is also available on a link from the PSC web pages on the RSGB site.

Dominic Baines M1KTA asked about why personal WSPR beacons were run 24x7, citing an example of WSPR on 7.001MHz for 48 hours continuously. Steve Nichols G0KYA said that personal WSPR beacons should be on frequencies specified in the band plans else there may be a case for reference to AROS.

## **7 Group Reports**

### **7.1 AMSAT-UK**

Trevor Hawkins M5AKA highlighted the recent lunar fly-by of an amateur radio package and that two amateur satellites had been lost in a recent launcher failure. He also mentioned that the input frequencies for the proposed geostationary satellite transponders could possibly generate issues with blocking of 2.4GHz ISM users.

### **7.2 BARTG**

BARTG was mostly concerned with HF activities but did note the lack of a VHF data modes contest. John Regnault G4SWX indicated that the new IARU-R1 70MHz contest would have a section that included MGM. BARTG were also grateful for assistance on contest logs/results

### 7.3 BATC

Graham Shirville G3VZV reported that BATC are actively supporting experimentation and the development of lower bit rate (sub-500 kb/s) digital video transmission. They were aware of a number of comments made as a result of the ATV column in November 2014 RadCom. BATC are clear that they do not support the regular use of transmission modes that go against existing RSGB/IARU band plans. It is hoped that all TV enthusiasts should follow the BATC recommendations for responsible use of spectrum for video.

### 7.4 CDXC

Mark Marsden G4AXX introduced his report and also indicated their members had been active in replying to the Licence Review and looked forward to harmonisation of 1.8MHz

### 7.5 FOC

Bob Bagwell G4HZV did not have any significant issues to be raised.

### 7.6 G-QRP

Dominic Baines M1KTA raised an issue concerning QRP centres of activity suffering from considerable interference during contests. It was agreed that G-QRP would write to the G0FCT chairman of the Contest Committee to see whether this could be addressed with RSGB contest rules.

### 7.7 RAYNET

Cathy Clark G1GQJ asked the VHF Manager for a response to the RAYNET report where they felt they had made a case for an allocation in the 146-147MHz band plan. John Regnault G4SWX agreed to send a statement concerning the 146-147MHz and resulting band plan to RAYNET. **Action: John G4SWX**

The RAYNET report discussed wide split repeaters. Murray Niman G6JYB suggested that on-channel digital repeaters using TDD and DMR could offer significant advantages to RAYNET. Such technology can avoid the need for expensive fixed frequency cavity duplexers (that aren't robust for mobile deployments). Cathy asked for further details - **Action: Murray G6JYB**

Steve Nichols G0KYA asked whether D-Star simplex and DMR can be used in 146-147MHz. John Regnault G4SWX explained that there was already some Digital Voice channels allocated in the 146-147MHz band plan for such use and that if, for example, amateurs succeeded in building TDD repeaters, in the longer term we could reuse frequencies.

### 7.8 UK Microwave Group (UKuG)

John Worsnop G4BAO stressed that the UKuG members were often more focused upon technical challenges and construction, than operating. Membership has grown in the last year by 5% to over 400 and there is an increasing interest in 10GHz EME.

He was concerned that populating the new 2300 - 2302MHz section would be a real challenge. As there were only small numbers of active EME stations on 2.3GHz in the UK, there was a need for others to activate this new section, lest we might lose it again.

In responding to a question as to why the 2300-2302MHz was not available in the Crown Dependencies, Murray G6YJB commented that Ofcom had been recently asked this.

### 7.9 UK Six Metre Group (UKSMG)

Two issues were raised in the UKSMG Report; concern over wide bandwidth DATV transmissions on 50MHz and a proposal by EAARO for an experimental meteor tracking Radar on 'six metres'.

John Regnault G4SWX commented that a letter of complaint had been received from UKSMG concerning the ATV column in November 2014 RadCom. BATC had stated in their report (7.3) that they do not support the regular use of transmission modes that go against existing RSGB/IARU band plans. It is hoped that all TV enthusiasts should follow recommendations for responsible use of spectrum for video.

Concerning EAARO it was agreed that John Regnault G4SWX would write to EAARO to clarify what frequency they would be seeking a licence to use for their meteor tracking work. **Action: John G4SWX**

### 7.10 The Four Metres Website – 70MHz.org

Murray presented a short report on behalf of David G4ASR. Noting the recent Region-1 70MHz initiative, David felt that allocations below 70.0MHz were an anomaly and that efforts should be concentrated on obtaining a 70.0-70.5MHz across all of IARU Region 1.

### 7.11 VMARS

Ron Swinburne M0WSN asked about possible expansion of 3.5MHz band to 3.9MHz. John Gould G3WKL highlighted that this is in the RSGB spectrum strategy but as the items for WRC-18 are currently being fixed, there was unlikely to be much progress for at least the next few ITU WRC cycles.

## 8 Impact of PSSR and IARU Region 1 Conference

Murray G6JYB reviewed the fairly large number of recommendations and band plan changes resulting from the PSSR (2.3, 3.4GHz) and recent IARU Region 1 conference. The notes of the IARU Region 1 final plenary meeting are available on the Spectrum Forum pages on the RSGB website. The Region-1 Conference had agreed a number of changes, particularly to the VHF band plans. The work in progress on the revised 144MHz band plan, which has the most changes, was shown - this is also subject to the current ETCC/Ofcom notice on packet radio.

## 9 Licensing

Murray G6JYB stated that the Ofcom Licence Review consultation had generated over 2,000 responses. Ofcom hopes that all the comments will be published on the web site. John Gould G3WKL said that the RSGB has written to Ofcom concerning the process used in the decision to grant the RSL of 'K' for Cornwall.

## 10 A.O.B.

Nothing was raised under AOB.

## 11 Date of next meeting

The meeting agreed that the next meeting of the Spectrum Forum should be on Nov 7<sup>th</sup> 2015  
The meeting closed at 15:45.

### Actions Summary

Para Ref	Action	Who
5.2	Publicise generating digital modes with PC sound cards (eg for 146-147 MHz)	John G4SWX
5.4	Message of thanks to AROS volunteers	John G3WKL
7.7	Explanatory note on 146-147 band plan and repeater technologies	John G4SWX
7.7	Explanatory note on repeater technologies	Murray G6JYB
7.9	Contact EAARO re frequency usage / licensing near 50MHz	John G4SWX