



## RSGB 2017 Spectrum Forum Meeting Minutes

Holiday Inn Garden Court Hotel Sandy Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Present:-



### 1 Meeting Secretary

Cathy Clarke and Steve Thomas took notes

### 2 Apologies

Nick Henwood (President), Mark Jones G0MGX (AROS/IW), John GI4BWM ETCC (covered by Noel G8GTZ), Graham Shirville (BATC) – Noel G8GTZ will also cover, Ian Brothwell G4EAN (BARTG), Mark Marsden (CDXC), Graham Murchie (RSGB Chair), Peter Chadwick G3RZP (Spectrum/WPT), Trevor Day (UKSMG), Colin Richards G3YCR, Ron Swinburne M0WSN (VMARS)

### 3 Terms of Reference

The current ToR were noted and are likely to be reviewed in future along with other Committees

### 4 Actions arising from 2016 meeting

- 5MHz and VHF Beacons – Steve Nichols gave an update on GB3RAL. The 5MHz one is now permanently closed (whereas GB3ORK has been restored on 5MHz). The VHF ones ideally need a new more accessible site
- IARU Region-1 Papers (For Landshut) – closed

## 5 Spectrum Reports

In general reports were taken as read to save time. Key points were noted as follows:-

### 5.1 HF

Ian G4FSU noted that band plans were now quite well aligned in Region-1 and Region-2. However significant work remained in Region-3, who currently do not have a very detailed or conventional format.

A goal for harmonising the 1.8 MHz allocation is unlikely to be achieved -until 2023 at the earliest

### 5.2 VHF

John G4SWX explained that a significant number of band plan changes were agreed at the IARU R1 Conference at Landshut. There is also effort being directed to streamline the Ofcom SRP process.

Experimental spectrum - Access remains problematic in Scotland due to legacy use. Figures from HQ are currently:-

- 71 MHz – Low - impeded by SRP process
- 146-147 MHz - 225 NoV renewals in one week! (1945 overall in the previous year)
- 2300-2302 MHz- 62 NoVs recently renewed out of 294
- 275 GHz - 42 NoVs

### 5.3 Microwave

Barry G4SJH commented that 5GHz currently has most pressure on it. The Ofcom consultation for 5GHz Wi-Fi expansion to 5725-5850 in mid-2016 had quite a number of amateur responses to it. In contrast to many countries we have gaps in the UK amateur allocation impeding use of the full 5650-5850 range (eg for video or Hamnet).

The 2.3 GHz band is also important. There continue to be delays in the Ofcom auction of 2.3/3.4GHz and the band is significantly fragmented for narrowband use in particular.

**5.4/5.5 – AROS /IW – No report**

### 5.6 Spectrum Consultant

Peter Chadwick G3RZP had covered for IARU at CEPT SE24 (430 MHz medical use) and for Ian at ITU re WPT-EV. Peter was thanked for his assistance

## 6 Committee Reports

### 6.1 EMC

The annex to the EMC report is to be held over until it is published in RadCom. The ongoing EMC Committee Consultation had 1180 responses so far (see report). A key goal is to be able to re-focus time away from less popular topics to the more important things.

**6.2 – ECC** No separate report – See 7.7

### 6.3 ETCC

NoV demand was high, exasperated by the desire for different digital modes. This can lead to channel shortages or being 'wasteful' of spectrum - actual activity was noted as not matching NoV demand. One alternative was multimode systems, but they are not ideal. ETCC and the VHF manager will continue to confer.

## 6.4 Contest Committees

UKACs have increased activity. CSC were processing Short Contest Callsigns – another example of RSGB doing (free) work for Ofcom...

## 6.5 Propagation Studies

There is a prospect of a beacon at Poldhu. WSPR would be used on 20m as part of the GB3SSS system – though it is not applied for yet. PSC reminded the meeting that they had videos available for download for club meetings as part of a session that could include remote Skype Q+A

## 7 Group Reports

### 7.1 AMSAT UK

Spectrum access was highlighted as an issue, including concerns at 5 GHz and in 23cms

### 7.2 BARTG

It was noted how FT8 activity on HF bands had seen explosive growth!

### 7.3 BATC

Innovative developments continue across the bands. 5.6 GHz interest was ramping up based on low cost video senders. Meanwhile for DATV, over 200 Portsdown kits had been sold and distances of over 200km are often achieved in the 146-147 MHz band.

### 7.4 CDXC

They also reported how FT8 was being rapidly adopted by the DX community. They also expressed concern regarding VDSL2 interference.

### 7.5 FOC

Expressed their concern regarding increases in domestic electrical noise.

### 7.6 G-QRP

There continue to be instances of DXpeditions splattering over the QRP centres of activity – some of them G-stations. This needs greater awareness and reminders in RadCom

- **Action HF Manager for Radcom reminder**

### 7.7 RAYNET-UK

The term 'Emergency' in the 5MHz band plan had caused some detailed internal discussions

### 7.8 UK Microwave Group

See detailed report – quite comprehensive

### 7.9 UKSMG

Looked forward to the prospect of WRC-19 being successful. FT8/JT65 were proving to be popular.



## 8 WRC-19

It is possible that for the first time in ages it may not be held at ITU HQ in Geneva. All agenda items and their key positions remain to be finalised. 50MHz was meeting resistance and uncertain at present. In the UK 52-53 is in use by PMSE audio links.

For WPT an unusual approach is that it will be deliberately treated as a radio and not ISM application. Currently no system has been put forward for testing in the preferred 79-90 kHz range for cars (only buses at 20 kHz).

## 9 IARU-R1 General Conference

See slides. There had been a record RSGB input – especially in C5 (VHF/Microwave). Numerous band plan changes or confirmation of previous Vienna changes had occurred. C3 had focussed sessions on budget, growth and youth. C7 held its first formal EMC meeting. The event was generally considered to be very successful; and well organised by the DARC hosts.

## 10+11 Strategy: Spectrum, Licensing & Noise

See slides for historical stats and graphs. Whilst the overall numbers such as >50000 Full Licensees look impressive, this includes a significant number of Silent Keys etc. A short period saw Ofcom proactively contacting licensees resulting in ~3500 being cancelled (as SK cases were verified)

As expected this session prompted a broader discussion on what attracts new amateurs:-

- The hobby is not as appealing to under-25s as we might wish
- Our need to protect VHF/UHF spectrum overlaps the Hackers/Makers who are largely content to use exempt devices at these frequencies and thus see little need for an amateur licence
- Accessible club stations, increasing noise 'pollution', social media promotion were also raised

## 12 2018 Draft Band Plans

The main changes were circulated. Most were from the IARU Conference but some were also editorial. 5MHz, 50MHz and 144 MHz would see particular changes.

ETCC had a number of changes for 70cms that would also be included for Gateways, hotspots and reverse shift 7.6MHz usage.

Some key changes are also in footnotes such as digital experimental use provisions in 50 & 433 MHz and provision for WSPR successors in 144, 432 and 1296 MHz.

Based on feedback, some further wording/editorial work will be undertaken prior to their publication in Radcom in due course.

## 13 Next Meeting

After many years at Sandy the alternative location of London (Civil Service Club) was floated and agreed as being more accessible by train by most.

## 14 AoB

None