



RSGB HF Manager's Spectrum Forum Report

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Summary

The main work this year has been the continued focus on HF band plan alignment with other regions, including the submission and presentation of papers at the IARU Region 1 General Conference.

IARU Region-1 General Conference

The RSGB submitted three HF papers to the Conference (Committee-C4), all of which were accepted. The 5 MHz band plan, initially proposed at the Interim meeting in Vienna in 2016 was ratified and has in the meantime also been adopted by Region 2. The proposals to realign the digital segments of the 3.5 MHz and 10 MHz band plans with Region 2 were also ratified.

It was also agreed to set up a working group to discuss HF band planning between Region 1, 2 and 3 with the longer term goal of aligning band plans as much as possible between regions. The RSGB will form part of this group with discussions taking place before the end of the year.

3.5 MHz

In accordance with the agreements in Landshut 2017 (and Vienna 2016), the digital segment of the 3.5 MHz band plan now starts at 3570 kHz in Region 1, bringing it into line with Region 2. Although the loss of 10 kHz in the CW exclusive segment is regretted, it was felt that the very large growth in digital mode activity justified the decision, noting also that CW is anyhow allowed over the whole of the band.

5 MHz

The RSGB proposed a usage plan for the 5 MHz WRC-15 allocation at the Interim Meeting in 2016, which was ratified in Landshut. Region 2 has also implemented this plan at their General Conference. We will continue to work towards the goal of achieving a harmonised band plan at 5 MHz across all regions. The term usage plan instead of band plan is deliberate as it is recognised the band is extremely narrow and that real time flexibility may be required, especially in the case of primary user activity.

Many countries have already implemented the new 5 MHz band and the number of countries with article 4.4 permissions continues to grow. Unfortunately, the UK is still not likely to have access to the full 15 kHz segment in the near future although some of the UK allocation overlaps the WRC-15 segment. The potential for confusion exists as there are many different allocations, but for the most part operation is orderly. The main problems continue to be out-of-band operation by some operators. The RSGB has published guidelines and recommended operating frequencies on its website to help ensure compliance.



10 MHz

As with 3.5 MHz, the digital segment of the band has been extended down by 10 kHz and now starts at 10130 kHz, bringing it into line with Region 2. Especially at 10 MHz where transatlantic propagation exists almost 24 hours per day, having incompatible band plans on popular modes was considered to be untenable.

Wireless Power Transmission (WPT)

High power WPT charging systems are being developed for the electric vehicle industry as well as existing low power wireless charging technologies used for mobile phones and similar portable electronic devices. These are inductive systems that do not operate in amateur bands, however there is considerable concern that harmonics and other out-of-band spurious signals from these systems could cause widespread interference to the amateur LF bands (and other radio communication services) given the power levels and proliferation of these devices.

The RSGB, in conjunction with the IARU and other services is actively involved in representing the amateur service interests at the ITU and CEPT.

Other Issues

Harmonisation of 1.8 MHz still remains a desirable objective, not only to increase the allocation in some countries to the full 1810 - 2000 MHz band, but also to resolve the power limitation above 1850 kHz. Some early discussions have taken place, but it is unlikely to be addressed at the ITU for some years at least.

The HF Manager is a de facto trustee of the RSGB DXpedition Fund, which raises money for DXpeditions through sales of raffle tickets at the RSGB Convention and individual donations. A number of DXpeditions were funded throughout the year; full details are reported by the DXpedition fund.fund.

Awards

The two main awards for HF are presented at the RSGB Convention. The nomination process and committees are managed by the HF Manager. This year the following awards were made:

- ROTAB Trophy: Bob Barden MD0CCE
- G5RP Trophy: Will Davies 2W0WOD

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