



RSGB Contesting Committees

Report to Spectrum Forum

Review of 2017

RSGB contesting activities continue to be orchestrated by the contesting committees; the HF Contest Committee (HFCC), the VHF Contest Committee (VHFCC) and the Contest Support Committee (CSC). Nick G4FAL is the Chair of the HFCC, Andy G4PIQ is the Chair of the VHFCC and Ian G0FCT is the Chair of the CSC. Nick is leaving the HFCC at the end of 2017 and a replacement is being sought.

The two 'spectrum' contest committees (HFCC and VHFCC) are responsible for their contest strategy for the annual RSGB Contest Calendar (balance of contests, contester development, etc.), rules, adjudication principles and their development through consultation. These two committees are also responsible for communication for contest matters in their part of the radio spectrum. The CSC is responsible for providing IT support, adjudication, Special Contest Call administration, trophy management and communication that is related to these functions.

The new HF Contest Rules (rewritten during 2016) have been largely accepted without rancour. The main point of disagreement with the new rules has been the one day log submission period for all short duration contests which has caused problems for a few clubs.

The Chair of the VHFCC has convened another working party with participants drawn from members of the VHFCC, CSC and active contesters from all regions of the UK & CD to discuss and develop alternative scoring systems to B2 (the current scheme). A one day workshop chaired by the President was convened in June. The alternative scoring schemes were discussed in depth. Two schemes were selected to be put to a vote by the VHF contesting community. The result of the vote was that the scheme used in the Nordic Activity Contests (NAC) will be used for the UKAC in 2018 onwards on 6m, 4m, 2m, 70cm and 23cm. The SHF UKAC will continue to be scored on a 1 point/km basis with no multipliers or bonus points.

Both the HFCC and VHFCC have issued several focused surveys (using SurveyMonkey) during 2017 to consult on various contest rule related issues.

Once again, two Contest Forums (HF and VHF) were run at the RSGB Convention. More time was allocated this year to each forum to allow more topics to be discussed in greater depth.

Most of the discussion in the VHF Contest Forum was about how to increase activity in weekend contests and how to encourage new blood into contesting. Various suggestions were discussed by forum attendees and these will be consider further by the VHFCC. It was



also reported to the forum that entry levels are still continuing to slowly increase in all but a few of the RSGB VHF contests.

In the HF Contest Forum, the consequences of the 2017 rule changes were discussed. Overall, the changes appear to have been positive with increased participation in most RSGB HF contests. In particular, the Low Power Contest had a massive increase in participation (66% increase). The rationale behind some of the new adjudication principles (e.g. not penalising out-by-one serial numbers (OB1), no extra penalty for a 'not-in-log' (NIL) QSO) were also discussed. The one day log submission period was also discussed. Finally, a few options for 2018 rule changes were debated. Forum participants suggested that at least two power categories should be introduced in the 160m contests to cater for those who could not or did not want to run full licensed power. Also, it was agreed that in the CW QRS zones, operators should reply to CQ calls at the speed of the CQing station. The majority of the forum considered that it was very off-putting for less experienced CW operators who were calling at 15 WPM (or less) to be called at 30+ WPM.

The CSC has managed to adjudicate all RSGB HF and VHF contests in a timely manner. The results for the majority of the short duration contests have been published within 14 days of the date of the contest and the results for the longer duration contests have generally been available within 28 days of the date of the contest.

The CSC continues to be responsible for processing all Special Contest Callsign (SCC) applications and for issuing the Notice of Variation (NoV) to the successful applicants on behalf of Ofcom. The Chair of CSC is responsible for this activity. So far, 179 valid applications have been processed resulting in the issuing of 56 new NoV and 123 renewal NoV.

Ian Pawson, G0FCT
Chairman, RSGB Contest Support Committee