

2018 Band Plans

In this edition of *RadCom* are the 2018 Band Plans. These incorporate a number of changes from the September 2017 IARU Region 1 General Conference, as well as updates from RSGB-ETCC and feedback by Spectrum Forum members etc. They are also available on the RSGB website in various formats, where more detailed change notes can also be found to guide users. In summary the changes for 2018 are:

HF: Changes are confined to 5MHz. Revisions and in some cases removal of UK-specific designations are intended to improve compatibility with the WRC-15 band at 5351.5-5366.5kHz, to which the UK does not have full access. A new footnote refers users to the 5MHz section of the RSGB website where our HF Manager, Ian Greenshields, G4FSU, provides the latest detailed guidance. This makes 60m effectively a dynamic usage plan, rather than a traditional fixed band plan. The 5MHz band has also been formally added to the 'no-contests' provision that is normally associated with the 10, 18 & 24MHz WARC bands.

VHF/UHF: One of the more substantial changes is in the 144MHz narrowband section which was overhauled at the IARU R1 Conference. It now has a unified 2.7kHz bandwidth segment which includes MGM as well as SSB. The revisions include removal of some old specific designations such as PSK31 and a number of text changes to improve consistency. Another new feature is a new 2kHz wide sub-band for 'Personal Weak Signal MGM Beacons' at 144.491-144.493MHz. A similar change has also been added to 432 and 1296MHz for both WSPR, and future more optimum VHF/UHF successors. Other changes at 432MHz include further provisions for Digital Voice repeaters, gateways and personal 'Hot-spots'. At 50MHz and 434MHz are new provisions for wideband Digital Experimentation (which may be ~100kHz bandwidth).

Microwave: The changes at microwaves are more modest. Apart from the 1296MHz MGM addition, the main change is an overhaul of the 5GHz band plan. This has been reformatted, and the preferred 5760MHz narrowband centre clarified. A note on 2.4GHz narrowband use has been updated for other countries losing access to 2.3GHz. This will be supplemented later in the year, when the Society expands its guidance resources, including for amateur vs exempt use of 2.4 and 5GHz Wi-Fi etc.

As band plans do change over time, please ensure you only refer or link to the current ones on the RSGB website and remove any older ones you have locally. Unfortunately, we still note some websites and unofficial usage charts have obsolete information and urge that these are removed. The latest band plan information, including the master Excel files, can be found on the Operating section of the RSGB website – and if you are unsure, by all means contact either hf.manager@rsgb.org.uk, vhf.manager@rsgb.org.uk or microwave.manager@rsgb.org.uk

Murray Niman, G6JYB, RSGB Spectrum Chair