



RSGB HF Manager's Report

Report for Spectrum Forum, November 2022

Summary

HF activity has noticeably picked up in recent months as sunspot numbers in cycle 25 increase and activity is observed now daily on the higher bands, which also tends to relieve pressure on the 7 MHz & 14 MHz bands that occurs at sunspot minima.

At the ITU level, there is little activity on potential new HF allocations as this is seen as extremely unlikely in the next couple of WRC cycles. There is however continued pressure on our current HF allocations both from other services and rising noise floor levels so the work at ITU on HF matters is more focused on protecting our existing spectrum.

The ending of Covid restrictions in most countries has seen a welcome return to DXpeditions and an increasing number of expeditions have taken place with more announced. The RSGB is a major supporter of DXpeditions

IARU Digital Modes Band Plan Review

The IARU HF band plan review for digital modes received further discussion at the IARU Region 1 interim meeting in Friedrichshafen. There is an agreement in principle to move forward with the proposed plan, noting that changes should really be coordinated across all regions to prevent the band plans diverging across regions, which has caused issues in the past. There is already a global band plan coordination group within C4 with the RSGB as an active member and this will continue.

There are specific proposals for each band; the first priority is to try and rearrange the activity within the existing band plan segments. Where that is not possible, changing the primary usage category may be required; the de facto effect of this will be to extend digital mode activity further into the current all modes segments, which is still in keeping with the current band plans

IARU Region-1 2023 General Conference

This conference will take place in Serbia in November 2023. The RSGB will start to consult on HF issues of interest to members and will draft a number of papers for the conference. It is expected that the HF band plan review will be discussed in detail and the coming months will be key for inputs and suggestions on the plan.

5 MHz

Still noted that the UK is one of the very few countries without access to the full WRC-15 allocation at 5 MHz



Political Situation

Although amateur operation is supposedly politically independent, the Russia - Ukraine conflict has spilled over into the HF bands. A number of contest organisers, including the RSGB, do not currently accept contest entries from stations operating from the Russian Federation or Belarus.

HF Awards and DXpedition Fund

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. Although very few DXpeditions have taken place in 2020 & 2021, the easing of travel restrictions this year has resulted in more expeditions since the summer with even more planned in the coming months.

The two awards for HF are presented at the RSGB Convention, held on-line this year. The nomination process and committees are managed by the HF Manager. For 2022, the following awards were made:

- ROTAB Trophy 2021: Keith Evans G3VKW
- G5RP Trophy 2021: Ian Justice M0RNH

Ian Greenshields G4FSU, RSGB HF Manager