

Amateur Radio Observation Service . Report of Coordinator to Spectrum Forum 2012

General

Coordinator Keith Bassett G7NBU and Deputy Coordinator Mario Brashill G2DPA were appointed in March of this year. They are responsible for coordinating the monitoring activities of the AROS Observers across the country.

The Amateur Radio Observation Service is an advisory and reporting service of the RSGB which is intended to assist radio amateurs and others who may be affected by problems which occur within the amateur bands or which develop on other frequencies as a result of amateur transmissions.

The service investigates reports of licence infringements, or instances of poor operating practice which might bring the Amateur Service into disrepute. Reports, complaints and associated supplementary information are accepted from any source and the contents of each communication are regarded as confidential material.

Observers

In April 2012 there were 25 Observers listed in the AROS records. However by October this year, following AROS representation at the Hamfest further Observers were recruited bringing the numbers to 77.

Although the Observers are spread across the country there is a need for further Observers to effectively cover the south of England particularly the south east.

Cases

Since April 2012, 26 complaints have been made to AROS. A few of these were resurrected cases from previously reported incidents which had not been resolved or their history was known to AROS. So far 7 of the 26 cases have resulted in letters being sent by AROS to suspected culprits advising them that their behaviour is subject of complaint. They are advised that AROS has reasonable cause to believe that their call sign/identity is associated with the bad behaviour and has been recorded by Observers.

Five of the letters have been responded to in a positive way. One of the letters was answered in an abusive way. The remaining letter was not acknowledged. In all cases, as far as we can ascertain, monitoring suggests that the behaviour has been suitably modified.

We currently have one case under review where we are considering referring the gathered information to Ofcom for their consideration of further enforcement action.

Cases have also included:

- Several cases of pirated callsigns including a G4 call sign (Station now closed down after enforcement action from Ofcom).

- Sending offensive SSTV / Easy Pal images.

- Unlicensed Echolink being used on 144.650.

- 2 cases referred to RSGB Intruder Watch.

- 1 case referred to the ETCC.

2 Metre Repeaters.

A continuing theme of the complaints that are received by AROS is that the vast majority of the reported nuisance activity is taking place on 2 metre repeaters and appears to be involving the same abusers on a regular basis. The reported behaviours include apparent drunkenness and foul language, abuse aimed at fellow amateurs, silent keying, jamming frequencies with music or verbal ranting.

Some repeater keepers have turned off the repeaters for a period of time in an attempt to discourage their abuse. However other repeater keepers appear unwilling to take any action to control the repeater activity and this may give an impression that the bad behaviour is condoned.

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