

2015 Band Plans

The combination of the IARU Region 1 Conference at Varna, spectrum release and Ofcom licence changes are incorporated into the 2015 band plans on pages 36 to 41. The result is quite a contrast between relatively few changes at HF, as opposed to significant alterations in some VHF/Microwave bands.

HF. The updates for 2015 are confined to the addition of a usage note in the 472kHz band and a wider bandwidth all-modes segment in 29.0-29.1MHz that were agreed at Varna. In addition the licence notes that referred to NoVs for 472kHz and 5MHz have been changed to reflect their incorporation into the new licence and indicate that specific conditions apply.

VHF/UHF. The most noticeable feature is that 146-147MHz has been included. However IARU changes and the Ofcom-ETCC packet review also result in changes to the main 145MHz band. Several packet channels have been cleared whilst the bottom of the band is now shared with new narrowband amateur satellite downlinks.

Both 145MHz and other VHF bands see the deletion of old RTTY and FAX channels amongst others to leave more flexible room for all-modes usage. 70cm also sees some change including a more consistent designation for the 12.5kHz operation of Internet gateways. A landmark change is the removal of the UK beacon segment, reflecting the success in moving to standard IARU beacon frequencies.

MICROWAVE. The Ofcom spectrum release changes see the 2350-2390 and 3410-3475MHz ranges removed from the appropriate band plans and some of the remaining frequencies being reset to all modes. In future this may change further as new data and DATV developments become clear. The new 2300-2302MHz segment (if you have the NoV) is incorporated as a separate table. The 10GHz band also sees a clearout of old designations and updates for repeater and wideband usage. A new shaded warning zone in the bottom 10-10.125GHz section indicates where the Primary User now has increased use, having been pressured out of other spectrum.

GENERAL NOTES. These have also been updated, including the need to refer to specific Ofcom conditions and guidance for certain bands. New notes provide an explanation of MGM (Machine Generated Modes) and firm guidance regarding eSSB usage. Another new note, agreed by IARU Region 1 at Varna emphasises that all VHF WSPR frequencies in the band plans are transmitted centre frequencies and not ambiguous dial settings.

FINALLY... As we have said before, band plans are living entities and do evolve 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. The band plan 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 the HF, VHF or microwave Spectrum Manager (via hf.manager@rsgb.org.uk, vhf.manager@rsgb.org.uk or mw.manager@rsgb.org.uk).
Murray Niman, G6JYB
RSGB Spectrum Chair