

## 2021 Band Plans

In this edition of *RadCom* are the 2021 Band Plans (on pages 44 – 48). These incorporate a number of changes from the October 2020 IARU Region 1 General Conference, as well as some other updates and feedback by Spectrum Forum members. They are also available on the RSGB website in various formats, where more detailed change notes can also be found to guide users in the Excel master. In summary:

**HF:** One of the most significant changes is the removal of the 6kHz bandwidth limits in the 29.00-29.51MHz range for facilitating innovative digital mode experimentation by terrestrial and satellite users. In practice, a maximum bandwidth of 200kHz has been enabled that can support HF video and datalink experiments, subject to a new footnote that guides their usage.

**VHF/UHF:** The 50MHz band plan sees a major overhaul of the 50.5-52MHz range. A key goal is to support three expanded centres for wideband digital modes. These were first introduced in the 2019 IARU Vienna changes and now expanded up to 500kHz bandwidth. This will initially support Reduced Bandwidth DATV (RB-DATV), but we hope it will encourage other novel modes, applications and advanced compact but wideband antennas. Other 50MHz changes include more flexible FM/DV usage, the deletion of obsolete designations and updates to a few others. Like 29MHz, a footnote includes key guidance. In other bands changes are relatively modest in 70 and 144MHz, whilst the 435-438MHz range is now clarified for experimental data and satellite usage. The RSGB expect to discuss further changes in 2021 as we accommodate demand and new developments.

**Microwaves:** An ongoing trend to make narrowband segments more flexible, by using a unified 2.7kHz bandwidth, sees 500Hz limits removed in 2.3 and 3.4GHz.

**Transmitter Setup & Linearity:** A growing concern has been poor quality emissions by operators. Both HF and VHF are in scope of this new and important general footnote, which all amateurs are asked to note and promote:

*“Close attention should be given to power amplifier linearity to control the final transmitted bandwidth and avoid spectral regrowth affecting adjacent users. In particular this can be a major issue when operating digital modes. It is recommended that operators do not use more power than is necessary, and that care is taken to ensure sound cards, interfaces, and other equipment are properly set up so as to minimise the potential for interference.”*

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 in the Operating section of the RSGB website – and if you are unsure, by all means contact the relevant Spectrum Manager: hf.manager@rsgb.org.uk, vhf.manager@rsgb.org.uk or microwave.manager@rsgb.org.uk.

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