# Minutes of the 2nd RSGB Contests Committee Meeting of 2014

## Held on Saturday 30th August 2014

## Venue:  Holiday Inn Reading West,  Padworth Lane,  RG7 5HT

## Persons Present:

Ian Pawson, G0FCT (Chair)
Mike Goodey, G0GJV
Ed Taylor, GW3SQX
Steve Knowles, G3UFY (Minutes)
Mike Franklin, G3VYI
Quin Collier, G3WRR
John Quarmby, G3XDY
Stewart Bryant, G3YSX (Board Liaison)
Steve White, G3ZVW (RadCom Radiosport Column)
Roger Dixon, G4BVY
Pete Lindsay, G4CLA
John Cockrill, G4CZB
Dave Edwards, G7RAU
Simone Wilson, M0BOX

## Participating via Conference Link

Chris Tran, GM3WOJ
Mark David, G4MEM

## Apologies for Absence received from

Rob Thomson, G4LMW
Richard Cooper, G4WFR

CONSEQUENT upon some difficulties in establishing the audio conference link, the meeting started a little late, coming to order at 10:12am.

## AGENDA  ITEMS

### 1. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes had been previously circulated and submitted to the Board for publication.  M0BOX moved that they should be accepted and there were no dissenters.

### 2. Matters Arising, not on the Agenda

**(a) HALL of FAME**:
GW3SXQ reported that the expected progress had not been achieved, due mostly to the additional level of work required to administer the Committee's trophies, but also to a domestic house move. He hoped to have the system set up and running before the end of the year.  Date could be

presented either as pure text or as a .csv file. G4CLA remarked that he would have no problems in producing a web page from either format.
\*\*\* Action - GW3SQX dealing \*\*\*

**(b) RULE CHANGE PROCESS:**
Some concerns had been expressed with the submitted plan:
The consultative process had been specified and under it, with the exception of changes imposed from outside (e.g. by OFCOM or IARU), rules agreed at the Autumn Meeting, after the due consultation process, would be locked down, effectively for a minimum of fifteen months.
For example, a change made in August 2014 would be announced prior to the Convention in October 2014, implemented with effect from January 1$^{st}$ 2015 and could not be changed until January 1$^{st}$ 2016 at the earliest.
The Committee was concerned that there appeared to be no provision for it to take damage limitation measures where a proposed change, even if properly approved by consultation, had proved to be a disastrous error.
Similarly, there were no provisions for the Committee to make minor modifications of a trivial nature (e.g. to clarify ambiguities etc) other than to correct typos.
There was some discussion about the definition of limits, but generally the Committee was in agreement that it needed to retain power to make rule changes under such circumstances. With the exception of changes imposed from outside it was agreed that the minimum acceptable period of notice to the members would be three months.

# 3. White Paper Responses
G0FCT presented the results of the White Paper survey (included as Appendix A). Each proposal was discussed by the Committee.

Proposal B1 – Mandatory declaration of equipment, including antennas, in all RSGB Contests.
Response: Clear majority in favour of the proposition.
There was detailed discussion as to the best process available, the Committee feeling that contestants should not be forced to divulge their tactics. It was agreed that submission of equipment details for the information of the Committee should be mandatory, but that the Robot should offer an opportunity for the entrant to refuse publication of that information. If an entrant failed to provide details, it would be at the adjudicator's discretion to make a formal demand for the information. Should the entrant still fail to supply the details, the penalty would be disqualification.

Proposal B2 – Special Merit Certificates – withdrawal if not deserved.
Response: Clear majority in favour of the proposition.
It was agreed that the adjudicator should have discretion to withdraw such certificates but there should be a very good reason for doing so.

Proposal B3 – Enforcement of IARU Region 1 Band Plans.
Response: Clear majority in favour of the proposition.
The Committee noted that there was a small number of influential (and vocal) UK contesters who were holding the position that as the HF Band Plans define only 'contest-preferred' segments they are merely recommendations and may be ignored. G0FCT will consult with the HF manager regarding this position.
However, the Committee also noted that this view is definitely not held amongst the rank and file of the hobby in general, particularly in Europe, as evidenced by the DQRM experienced during recent AFS SSB contests.
The Committee were agreed that IARU HF Band Plans should be incorporated into RSGB contest rules. At VHF it was felt that the situation was less clear, particularly regarding Calling Frequencies

as opposed to Centres of Activity.  It was also hoped that it might be possible to move the RSGB Slow Morse transmissions on 144MHz into the All Mode section of the band.

Proposal B4 – RSGB to run full-length DATA contest at HF and/or VHF in addition to BARTG events.
Response: More 'No's than 'Yes's.
M0BOX reported that BARTG events are well-supported and well-administered.  Relations with RSGB are excellent, but there was always the risk that BARTG might feel that their toes were being trodden on.  The Committee agreed that BARTG do a good job and, particularly in view of the non-committal response to the White Paper, that this proposal should not be further considered at this time.

Proposal B5 – Rewards for perfect logs.
Response: Clear majority against this proposal.
The Committee agreed that this proposal should not be adopted.
G3WRR remarked that it had been drafted as an alternative to the demands from a few high-profile contesters for multiple deductions for errors, in the style of ARRL and CQ.  This response had not solved the problem which had still to be addressed.
There was some discussion about penalties, their effectiveness at discouraging poor operating, and their effect on inexperienced operators and so on.  It was agreed that multiple deductions should be a consultation item for next year.
*** G0FCT to include in next White Paper ***

Proposal B6 – No station to win more than one trophy in an event.
Response: Less than 50% of respondents expressed an opinion.
The Committee could not agree on this proposal, with strong points being made that entrants who put in the effort to win multiple trophies should receive their just rewards, that entrants might feel unhappy at being awarded a trophy inscribed "Winner ..." when they weren't a winner, and that there might be issues if a trophy that had been donated specifically for a "Winner" or "Runner-up" should be awarded to an entrant that hadn't achieved the required place.
A vote was required, conducted by show of hands, resulting in FOUR in favour of the proposition and EIGHT against.  The proposition will not be adopted at this time.

Proposal H1 – Inclusion of Single-Operator Assisted and Un-Assisted categories in HF contests.
Response: A large majority in favour of this proposal.
Changes will be incorporated in Rules Reviews.

Proposal H2 – Non-Club stations in HF AFS Contests – separate awards.
Response: A small majority in favour of the proposal.
Rules to be redrafted to specify 'Club Entrant' for the individual trophies.

Proposal H3 – Changes to HF AFS to alleviate overcrowding.
Response: Few respondents; CW – no clear recommendation; SSB – majority in favour of option (1)
The Committee were in agreement that the levels of occupancy on 80m CW coupled with the inconclusive results of the consultation did not justify any changes at this time.
The Committee were not unanimous in accepting the need for change on 40m.  A vote on the adoption of recommendation (1) was held by show of hands, with NINE in favour and THREE against.
Details for implementation in the January 2015 contests.
*** G3WRR to draft rules, assisted by GM3WOJ ***

Proposal H4 – Change to 80m AFS timings.
Response: Few respondents ... clear majority for No Change.

The Committee were in agreement that there should be no change in the timing of the 80m AFS events.

Proposal H5 – UK participation in the 160m contests.
Response: Few respondents but substantial majority in favour of everyone-works-everyone.
This change to be implemented forthwith.  The duration of events is not to be reduced.

Proposal H6 – 21/28MHz Contest
Response: All suggestions approved.
The Committee was concerned about suggestion 5 (UK-UK contacts to count for points etc.) on the grounds that propagation would unfairly disadvantage some entrants.  Suggestions 1-4 will be implemented for 2015; suggestion 5 will be reviewed at a later date.

Proposal H7 – Station Inspections for all events.
Response: Large majority in favour of the proposal.
The Station Inspection rule (as per VHF General Rules) will be added to the HF General Rules.  The Committee were unanimous in agreeing that unannounced inspections of stations located in private houses would be considered only in the most extreme of circumstances.

Suggestion H8 – Taken with Suggestion V4

Proposal H9 – Rationalisation of NFD sections
Response: Few respondents, but majority in favour of all proposals.
Changes will be implemented for the 2015 event.
During discussions, GM3WOJ remarked that we should be considering more radical changes, including adopting the DARC model.  The Committee agreed that this was a matter for further discussion on another day.

Proposal V1 – Changes to the UKAC multiplier system.
Response: No clear majority for M5 or M7, Prefix multipliers not liked
The Committee agreed to adopt the Modified M5 system (known as M7) for a 1-year trial period (subject to certain constraints from without the Committee).
An alternative suggestion based on the NAC system will be considered for the next White Paper.
The Committee noted that the Newsletter is a vehicle which can be used to solicit further suggestions for change from the membership as appropriate.

Proposal V2 – Use of Internet chat facilities
Response: Indicates that rules are not fully clear.
This matter was further discussed under Agenda Item 5.

Suggestion V3 – Permitted modes in contests above 30MHz
Response: Few respondents – as many 'No's and 'Maybe's as 'Yes's.
After considerable discussion, the Committee agreed that the IARU mode restrictions would be enforced for RSGB contests.  Only QSOs made using Voice or CW will be allowed – no Machine-Generated Modes will be permitted.

Suggestion V4 (incorporating Suggestion H8)
Response: minimal
This became a Committee-centric matter.  The general feeling was that RSGB may be providing too many events, resulting in a dilution of participation.

At VHF, it was suggested that more weekend activity could be generated by the introduction of short split sections in the larger contests (i.e. a 6hr section to become 2 x 3hr sections).

It was also suggested that it would be possible to combine the 70MHz Cumulative contests with the 70MHz UKACs.

The Committee agreed that both of these suggestions should form part of the next White Paper consultation.

***G0FCT to include in White Paper***

***G4WFR to analyse for most popular 6hr or 2 x 3hr periods ***

M0BOX remarked that it would be possible to piggy-back events on other international contests, such as ARRL or CQWW.

It was further suggested that to 80m Club Sprints were failing and should possibly be replaced by extending the 80mCC series for the extra four months. After some discussion it was agreed that this would be a suitable proposal for the next White Paper.

*** G0FCT to include in next White Paper ***

## 4. Rules for 2015

G0FCT proposed a process for the production of the rules for 2015. The approved proposals from the White Paper would be taken and draft rules drawn up. These would be presented to the Committee for approval. The new and existing rules would then be merged and re-submitted to the Committee for QA and approval. It was hoped that this process could be completed in time for publication before the Convention.

VHF CHAMPIONSHIP – urgent correction required.

Rule 6 of the VHF Championship Rules indicates that a station competing in one section may ask to have his score credited towards a group which is entering another section (for example, a station entering 'SO Fixed' while his group is entering 'O'). Not only does this seem somewhat illogical, but this is NOT possible with the current scoring system and software. The Committee discussed the situation at length and concluded that the rule was erroneous and needed to be rectified. Accordingly the rules will be modified so that an individual MUST enter the same section as a group if their score is to be counted for the group.

This is a correction of an error and so does not need to be part of the consultation procedure.

## 5. Use of ON4KST (and similar)

The use of ON4KST and other internet spotting/chatroom facilities is giving rise to problems. At present, entrants in AX section may fully use 'KST, which has been likened to permission to self-spot on the cluster at HF. Stations not in AX may still use 'KST to glean information to secure a QSO. This has led to the silly situation where complaints have been received that stations in AX are cheating if they choose NOT to fully use 'KST.

There was protracted discussion. It was clear that immediate clarification of the rules was required to make it clear that stations may enter AX and NOT use 'KST actively.

*** G0FCT to progress ***

The Committee concluded that this was an ideal subject for inclusion in the next White Paper consultation.

***G0FCT to include in next White Paper ***

## 6. Code of Conduct for VHF Contests

G0FCT remarked that there do not appear to be any general contest operating guidelines for VHF. He felt it would be advantageous to produce some for publication on the RSGBCC Website and also in G3ZVW's RadCom column. He proffered a sample set for consideration. This was well received by the Committee which was unanimous in its approval of the project.

*** G0FCT to compile ***

## 7. Trophies

GW3SQX reported that the number of trophies for which the Committee was responsible required a team of three for effective administration.  In addition to an overall administrator (presently GW3SQX) dedicated volunteers were required to deal with (1) HF and IOTA and (2) VHF/UHF/SHF.  Ed hoped that volunteers would be forthcoming.

Ed reported that he had attended the IOTA convention and given a presentation about the IOTA Contest.  The event is generally poorly supported in the Americas and in the Far East, and it was felt that trophies/certificates for USA, BY, JA etc might increase participation.

*** G3VYI to develop, in liaison with GM3WOJ and GW3SQX ***

G0FCT reported that he had again emailed Harwell about the G4DEZ trophy, but was still awaiting a reply.

## 8. Photo evidence for FD compliance

The suggestion was that Field Day entrants should submit photographs of their station/antennas in support of the inspection process.  Discussion revolved around the point that stations cheating could submit whatever photograph they wished, as by the time it had been received the contest would be over and the station dismantled.  The Committee felt the suggestion not to be worthwhile progressing.

## 9. Any Other Business

(1) G3YSX stated that the RA/UY6IM Crimea operation was not valid, on the basis of a UN resolution made in March 2014.  G0FCT will consult with the board over the status of the 1036 IOTA Contest QSOs made by this station.

*** G0FCT to consult with Board ***

(2) G0GJV questioned whether it would be useful to produce full UBNs and scoring for checklogs.  G3WRR felt it would be advantageous for adjudicators to have access to this information, particularly the Reverse UBNs.

*** G0GJV to progress ***

(3) G3VYI reported that, in the IOTA Contest, it had been suggested that 5B4AIF had not always been sending a signal report.  There was no evidence from Committee monitoring, but there had been several reports. However, he had scored so well that even a 10% penalty would not cost him his certificate.  With no previous record of transgression, the Committee felt that a first-instance warning would suffice.

*** G3VYI to contact 5B4AIF and issue warning ***

(4)  A query had been received as to why a certificate was no longer offered for the leading Intermediate Class entrant in the 80mCC contests.  The relevant section appears to have been omitted from the HF General Rules and will be replaced.

*** G3VYI to issue the relevant certificate ***

(5)  M0BOX remarked that Google Hangout provides conference facilities much along the lines of SKYPE.  G0FCT remarked that the Trophies Subgroup might be the ideal people to try that out.

(6)  G7RAU enquired as to the Committee's position regarding Centres of Activity (e.g. 144.300); should contest activity be permitted around these frequencies or not?

G0FCT replied that designated Calling Frequencies must be respected and avoided.  However, Centres of Activity, by definition, are only regions of the band where operation is encouraged and hence it is difficult to proscribe a guard band around an undefined region of the band.  He will consult further with the VHF Manager regarding this.

*** G0FCT to consult with VHF Manager ***

(7) G3WRR enquired about auto-member checks. Fourteen clubs out of our list of 300 are shown as not now affiliated. Who is able to contact these clubs?
G3YSX remarked that there is no reason why G4WFR should not contact the groups concerned and ask them to renew their affiliation.

(8) GW3SQX reminded the Committee that a definition of a Single Operator was now required in the VHF General Rules.

(9) GM3WOJ suggested that the Committee should be considering a SKYPE Conference Call between all members at least once every three months. G0FCT replied that this is something which is under consideration.

## 10. Date and Time of Next Meeting
To be announced. Preliminary suggestion is March 22$^{nd}$ at Sandy, Beds.

The meeting closed at 1532 hours.

## Appendix A – Results of the 2014 White Paper Consultation

| Proposals/Suggestions                                   Total number of Reponses = 112 | For | Against |
|---|---|---|
| Proposal B1 – Equipment declaration | 47 | 16 |
| Proposal B2 – Foundation/Intermediate Certificates | 49 | 12 |
| Proposal B3 – Enforcement of IARU Region 1 Band Plans | 47 | 18 |
| Suggestion B4 – RSGB Data Contests | 22 | 27 |
| Suggestion B5 – Rewarding 'perfect' logs | 15 | 54 |
| Proposal B6 – Fair distribution of Trophies | 41 | 13 |
| Proposal H1 – Addition of Single Operator Assisted category | 46 | 4 |
| Proposal H2 – Non-club stations in 80m AFS | 29 | 20 |
| Suggestion H3 – Possible solutions to overcrowding in 80m AFS | | |
| 1) CW: Introduce 40m and run with split bands | 15 | 15 |
| 2) CW: Only selected stations allowed to call CQ for part of contest | 2 | 27 |
| 3) CW: Introduce a Sprint element | 18 | 26 |
| 4) CW: Contest not considered to be broken | 16 | 7 |
| 5) SSB: Introduce 40m and run with split bands | 18 | 13 |
| 6) SSB: Only selected stations allowed to call CQ for part of contest | 2 | 28 |
| 7) SSB: Introduce a Sprint element | 19 | 25 |
| 8) SSB: Contest not considered to be broken | 11 | 11 |
| Suggestion H4 – Timing of the 80m AFS contests | | |
| Suggestion 1: Contest runs between 1430 and 1830 | 1 | 24 |
| Suggestion 2: Contest runs between 1500 and 1900 | 9 | 17 |
| Suggestion 3: Contest runs between 1400 and 1800 | 30 | 10 |
| Suggestion H5 – Improving UK participation in 160m Contests | | |
| Suggestion 1: Reduce duration to 3 hours | 22 | 10 |
| Suggestion 2: Change format to 'everyone-works-everyone' | 27 | 3 |
| Proposal H6 – Revamping the 21/28MHz Contest | | |
| 1 – The basic rules stay the same | 36 | 2 |
| 2 – The Powditch Trophy to be awarded to the leading multi-mode station | 35 | 2 |

| Proposals/Suggestions                                    Total number of Reponses = 112 | For | Against |
|---|---|---|
| 3 – Additional (Sponsored) plaques to be awarded | 37 | 0 |
| 4 – Introduce UK "HQ" station | 34 | 3 |
| 5 – UK to UK contacts eligible for points and multipliers | 31 | 9 |
| Proposal H7 – Station inspections | 46 | 3 |
| H8 – Suggestions for improving support for HF weekend contests: very low number of suggestions received | | |
| Proposal H9 – Changes to NFD rules (late inclusion in WP so few responses) | | |
| 1) Single transceiver only in Restricted – Simple Antenna category | 10 | 2 |
| 2) No on site skimmer in the Restricted – Simple Antenna category | 9 | 2 |
| 3) Name change for Restricted sections to Restricted-Complex and Restricted-Simple | 11 | 1 |
| 4) Name change for Low power section to QRP | 10 | 2 |
| Proposal V1 – Changes to the UKAC multiplier system | | |
| Proposal V1 (a): retain M5 | 40 | 33 |
| Proposal V1 (b): change to M7 | 32 | 34 |
| Proposal V1 (c): Prefix multiplier system | 16 | 53 |
| Proposal V2 – Use of Internet chat facilities (such as ON4KST) | 35 | 9 |
| Suggestion V3: Permitted modes in contests above 30MHz | 21 | 13 |
| V4 – Suggestions for improving support for VHF weekend contests: very low number of suggestions received | | |