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Meeting of the HFCC by Microsoft Teams at 19.30 19th July 2023

Attendees:

Stewart	G3YSX	Board Chair
Nick	G4FAL	HFCC Chair
Ian	G0FCT	CSC Chair
Mike	G7TWC	
Stewart	GW0ETF	
Graham	G0NBI	
Nick	M1DDD	
Allan	GM4ZUK	
Gordon	MM0GPZ	
Chris	GM3WOJ	
Pete	G4CLA	
Mike	G0GJV	
Tim	G4FJK	
Murray	G6JYB	Spectrum Forum Chair (particularly for item 1)

Apologies for absence

Andy	G4PIQ	VHFCC Chair
Paul	G4PVM	

Nick reported that, with Tim taking an increasing role in the organisation of GR2HQ, Mike, G7TWC had agreed that he should replace him on the committee. The committee recorded its grateful thanks to Mike for his service.

Nick also welcomed Gordon, MM0GPZ to his first meeting.

1. Ofcom consultation.

Murray presented the main proposals in the consultation document that were relevant to RSGB Contests, informed by discussions the Society had held with Ofcom officers the previous day.

It was noted that Ofcom were planning to receive c2000 replies to their consultation document, and previous experience suggested that significant numbers of considered responses on any particular topic would be seriously considered.

It was noted that two proposals for change (RSLs and power levels) particularly affected RGSB HF contests. The committee were pleased to note that Ofcom were proposing to retain the use of SCCs and strongly supported this proposal.

1.1 RSLs

The proposed change to RSLs (from mandatory to optional) if implemented would require the committee to decide what stance should be adopted in our events. It was noted that a few of our contests (FT4 series, FT4 International Day and NFD) used DXCCs as the basis for the scoring system and thus, in these events, the use of RSLs would be a requirement for all entrants. The need for their use in all other HF contests was more nuanced, and thus it was agreed to consult RSGB members after Ofcom's decisions were announced. In practice this would mean that the requirement for RSLs to be used in RSGB HF Contests, would be maintained at least throughout 2024.

Action: Committee to consult in due course. (G4FAL)

1.2 Power changes

The proposed changes to power levels authorised in the three licence classes on bands in which amateur radio enjoyed a primary frequency allocation would allow the committee to review the maximum output power allowed in RSGB contests.

Whilst three contests would remain unchanged (International Low Power, IOTA and Club Calls) the opportunity of increasing the maximum power levels from 10W to 20W and 400W to 1kW in other contests containing Low Power and High Power sections would be available once Ofcom's decisions were published. Once again, it was agreed to consult RSGB members at the appropriate time.

Action: Committee to consult in due course. (G4FAL)

1.3 Whilst not specifically included in the Ofcom proposals, the committee were of the view that the opportunity should be taken to urge Ofcom to increase the power levels allowed in the 160m band.

2 GR2HQ

Nick reported that this year's performance was generally good, despite a lack of operators and partners. Plans for next year included encouraging more UK stations to call GR2HQ stations.

Tim G4FJK will be the committee lead on HFCC for organising the GR2HQ HQ station. (It was noted that the call sign may need to change in light of the Ofcom consultation.)

3 Commonwealth Contest: 7- day team nomination rule.

Nick questioned whether this rule still was still appropriate. It was agreed that Bob, G3PJT be consulted before taking a final decision. **Action: G4FAL**

Post Meeting: Bob G3PJT agreed that dropping the 7-day requirement would be appropriate.

4   FT4 series

Correspondence from members had been received asking that the 15m and 10m bands be included, reflecting the increasing international interest in these events.

In line with other RSGB contests, it was also suggested that the number of results in the 9-event series that counted towards the final table be reduced to allow entrants to miss one or two of the series without detriment.

It was agreed to consult RSGB members on both of these potential changes.
Action: G4FAL

5   FT4 International Day

Correspondence from entrants had been received suggesting an increase in the duration of this event from 12 to 24 hours, once again reflecting the high level of international participation. This could be achieved by introducing two categories: 24 and 12 hours. In the 12-hour category, operation need not be for one continuous 12-hour period, but once operation has commenced in the contest, off periods would be a minimum of 60 minutes.

6   CW NFD: new single band category

Correspondence had been received from an RSGB member asking that a single band (40m) category be introduced from 2024 onwards and offering to sponsor a trophy. After careful consideration, the committee decided that there was insufficient participation in the event to warrant a single band award.

7   AFS award

Mike, G7TWC drew attention to the difficulty of a local club winning the Edgeware trophy or either of the other two winning team AFS trophies. It was noted that whilst the majority of past winners had been drawn from the General Section, local clubs had demonstrated success.

More generally, and with the retirement of Jacqui from the RSGB trophy management role imminent, the committee discussed how we might move to an different form of recognition for winning entrants to our contests, but no appropriate alternative was identified.

8   The future of Field Days

Nick drew attention to the increasing age of that section of our membership who had traditionally participated in one or more of our three NFDs (CW, SSB and VHF) as a portable station and the consequent reduction in the number of /P entrants.

It was agreed that Chris should convene a sub-group of the committee to make recommendations about how to increase participation in NFDs. **Action: GM3WOJ**

As part of this, and in view of the fact that NFDs are co-ordinated on a IARU R1 basis, it was agreed to determine if similar challenges were being experienced by other countries and whether coordinated changes would be appropriate. **Action: G0FCT**