



Minutes of RSGB VHFCC Meeting (Audio Conference)

Friday 9th March

Attendees: G4PIQ (Chair), G0FCT, G0GJV, G3YSX (Board Liaison), G4CLA, G4HGI, GD8EXI, GM8IEM, G8TIC

Apologies for absence: G3XDY

1. Activity Review

- 1.1. A review of entry levels during the 2017 season was undertaken and is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2. UKAC entry levels remained very healthy with 2m, 70cm and 23cm remaining broadly flat. There was around a 15% decline on 50 MHz, and around a 15% rise on 70 MHz and a 25% rise in the SHF events.
- 1.3. Most of the Weekend events are also in growth, particularly the 6m Trophy, 2m Trophy and many 4m contests. There are also some exceptions –
- 1.4. May and October UHF events & 1.3 / 2.3 / 10 GHz Trophies – these are specialist events but are not growing. We will see if the inclusion of the 10 GHz Trophy within the VHF Championship this year has any effect
- 1.5. 4m and 6m CW events – these have plateaued at a low level
- 1.6. There was also a reduction in entry levels to the 6m AFS for the first time in several years
- 1.7. The Christmas Cumulative Contests also declined this year
- 1.8. Activity for 2018 has so far been affected by weather, but it is too early to draw any overall conclusions about overall activity levels although GM8IEM raised a concern that activity may be declining in GM this year.
- 1.9. Not all the events are recorded in the tracker.
- 1.10. There was a discussion around whether we were now running too many contests as we continue to add events to the calendar, but remove few, causing a dilution in activity levels. We agreed to keep entry levels under monitoring and review the calendar for 2019.
- 1.11. We recognised that we should look more widely at what was happening to European activity levels and the numbers of QSOs made to Europe within the Tuesday night events.
- 1.12. MGM activity appears to be increasing – we would hope this will flow into the MGM contests to be held later in the year
- 1.13. There continues to be a fair amount of discussion around the use of KST, but both sides of the discussion are well represented. We will review the impact of the experimental changes to Low Power and Backpackers later in the year.
- 1.14. FMAC does not appear to be meeting its aims of engaging new contesters – it remains very much a UKAC warm-up event. We need to try and get the publicity out to clubs that it exists.
- 1.15. We should also carry out an analysis to see how many people have gone from FMAC -> UKAC, or any from UKAC -> FMAC during the contest lifetime.
Action: G4PIQ to add SHF UKAC, FMAC and VHF NFD sweepers to the tracker
Action: G4PIQ to run analysis of FMAC -> UKAC and UKAC -> FMAC movement
Action: G4PIQ to organise for a UKAC message to go out to clubs

2. GDPR

- 2.1. The GDPR regulations which come into force in May 2018 will have implications for the society and for the operation of the committee – but the issues will primarily fall within the remit of the CSC. Thank you to Mike, G8TIC for a valuable brief on the subject.

2.2. There will be a meeting on this subject with the lead board member prior to the Leadership Team meeting on Saturday 17th March.

Action: G0FCT to draft actions required

3. Celtic Knot

3.1. The operation of the GMDX Celtic Knot competition was discussed, and it was recognised that the event is not under control of the RSGB – it is consuming public domain data published by the committee.

3.2. We welcomed the operation by GMDX of an opt-out scheme for stations not wishing to take part in the GMDX event.

3.3. We also provided a suggestion to GMDX around the naming of their sections. Any GDPR requirements will be managed within the GDPR activity.

Action: G0FCT to review for GDPR implications

Action: GM8IEM to feedback comments / suggestions to GMDX

4. MGM Contest

4.1. The first MGM contest is fast approaching.

4.2. It is interesting to note that casual FT8 activity on 2m looks to be showing up a whole new group of stations who aren't well known on the band. It maybe that MGM is actually the area where we are more likely to pick up new contesters.

4.3. Richard, G4HGI has been busy promoting the event across Europe with all the Region 1 VHF Managers e-mailed. Ian, G0FCT has also put it in for inclusion within the next IARU Region 1 Contest Newsletter. More publicity is good.

Action: All to promote the MGM contests wherever possible

5. Trophies

5.1. The contest committees are currently reviewing what to do with trophies as a result of logistical challenges at HQ – the trophies are taking more than the available storage space.

5.2. VHFCC agreed that trophies were an important incentive in encouraging regular entries and in having clubs encourage as many of their members to come on as possible.

5.3. There are a number of contests where we would like to award trophies where we currently don't, and we have had offers of donation which have been placed on hold pending getting to a position where we know how we can manage these additional trophies.

5.4. It was recognised as important that we have a common policy across HF and VHF contests.

Action: G4PIQ and G0FCT to meet with RSGB GM and G4FAL to agree a way forwards

6. Publicity

6.1. Publicity remains one of the areas where we need to do much more. G4PIQ has had offers of help but has held off on the basis that it would be better to have a common approach across both HF and VHF, but it is now important that we move this on.

6.2. There are multiple channels which we need to co-ordinate and actively manage and develop a strategy. The Facebook group now has 1105 members for example. There are also the Groups.io reflector and the e-mail newsletters.

6.3. We should use Heather @ HQ for PR via the formal RSGB channels where possible and as appropriate – given appropriate notice (3 weeks ideally)

6.4. GM8IEM can also address the GMDX lists

6.5. There is still an audience which only reads Rad Com – so we need to use this as well

6.6. We also need to engage via club contacts, regional managers

Action: G4PIQ to agree a publicity strategy with G4FAL and G0FCT and then approach volunteers

7. Rule Interpretation

7.1. The committee discussed the situation where one society has been sharing their club station across multiple during the 23cm UKAC events. They appear to be complying with



the 15-minute rule and different stations are worked by each operator – so this feels like quite genuine operating within the current rules.

7.2. The details of the station sharing rule will be reviewed for 2019 based on 2018's activity.

7.3. A number of cases of rules being significantly stretched were discussed and appropriate monitoring / actions agreed

8. AOB

8.1. We discussed whether we should include every calendar month in the UKACs for 2019 – this will be for discussion under our wider rule setting agenda later in the year

8.2. We discussed the issue of our 6-hour section definition being different to the IARU one and the issues that this causes. Our hope is that the new flexibility of our section + the recommended operating times element will improve weekend activity this year –we will monitor and review this.

8.3. Ian, G0FCT will continue to provide feedback into the IARU group and promote our approach. Clearly success in improving our entry levels this year are good evidence of the benefits.

8.4. We discussed meeting dates and that we currently do not have a regular evening meeting slot that all members can make. We need to get a schedule together which works for most of the people most of the time and rotate dates.

Action: G4PIQ to create new meeting schedule

9. Date of Next Meeting: TBA

Appendix A: Contest Entry Levels

Contest	Year																			
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
144 UKAC	20	22	26	36	32	55	73	147	190	257	316	368	495	442	499	574	603	644	655	
432 UKAC	19	12	20	22	22	19	23	34	53	66	166	218	300	293	369	420	417	469	453	
1.3 UKAC	13	14	11	13	11	12	15	12	15	16	47	85	90	136	140	186	201	229	216	
50 UKAC								25	43	59	169	238	237	258	348	437	454	496	435	
70 UKAC								12		20	55	94	108	131	151	207	200	269	309	
SHF UKAC													33	33	27	50	38	65	83	
432 AFS	34	35	30	33	30	26	35	38		28	35	63	76	72	82	98	114	102	109	133
432 AFS Clubs	15	13	14	15	12	11	14	14		12	14	26	34	29	29	44	49	46	50	56
March 2/70	27	35	25		24	25	32	35	23	36	60	59	91	59	72	59	84	63	85	
70 MHz Cums	24	24	20	20	18	20	19	22	29	28	38	50	74	73	76	81	87	88	102	
1st 70 MHz	22	13	12	18	22	22	18	19	21	23	32	35	47	46	40	41	49	58	56	
1st 50 MHz									36	48	39	35	48	42	53	48	49	53	61	
May UHF	30	24	15	17	26		34		29	18	16	20	26	33	39	23	33	53	41	
432 Trophy		21	15	17	20	22	28	23	28	25	28	33	35	37	48	54	37	51	57	
10G Trophy	14	10		5	9	11	10	10	8	11	8	5	12	8	6	8	6	9	7	
70 MHz CW												17	23	19	29	25	25	21	28	
May 144	42	24		33	34	34	41	38	31	48	65	68	65	68	70	74	77	80	93	
Backpackers	54	45		39	55	59	69	50	52	58	52	60	53	35	50	53	60	42	51	
50 MHz Trophy	28	33	25	33	32	28	32	36	42	47	58	56	65	59	63	81	81	93	128	
50 MHz CW														48	38	26	21	21	26	
VHF NFD	68	73		56	59	52	53	58	49	63	76	61	69	54	80	62	58	59	61	
70 MHz Trophy	31	32	16	40	31	32	27	25	27	32	35	30	45	41	49	55	59	59	65	
144 Low Power	32	32	13	23	25	33	34	35	27	28	46	48	36	33	32	35	47	58	60	
432 Low Power	28	23	10	17	19	23	34	18	28	28	33	38	38	31	27	39	51	42	53	
144 Trophy	35	30	34	27	35	37	42	46	55	54	78	75	68	56	66	71	82	85	101	
2nd 70 MHz	22	21	16	18	27	19	16	18	15	20	28	32	28	34	25	33	39	49	35	
1.3 Trophy	15	11	7	13	10	10	10	12	9	9	11	17	20	22	17	18	32	25	30	
2.3 Trophy	12	10	6	8	8	8	6	7	4	4	4	8	11	10	7	8	11	9	11	
Oct UHF	19	15	12	16	15	15	12	21	22	20	23	18	25	25	29	22	40	27	35	
50 MHz AFS		14	17	19	17	21	16	13	11	24	33	32	78	77	84	84	96	111	87	
50 AFS Clubs																				
Marconi	17	14		13	14	13	11	12	17	9	25	22	25	23	27	28	42	32	44	
144 AFS	68	77	74	76	81	60	66	45	48	77	93	125	113	107	115	138	125	156	133	
144 AFS Clubs	18	20	19	21	21	16	17	9	12	18	25	41	40	43	49	58	56	61	61	100
Xmas Cums	25	22	24	20	17	22	28	22	28	28	49	56	61	73	62	84	105	110	80	80