



Minutes of VHFCC Meeting 8th October 2025

Attendees:

Andy Cook, G4PIQ (Chair),
Pete Lindsay G4CLA,
Richard Baker, GD8EXI,
John Quarmby, G3XDY,
Richard Staples, G4HGI,
Mike Goodey, G0GJV,
Ian Pawson G0FCT,
Mike Tubby, G8TIC,
Stewart Bryant, G3YSX (Board Liaison)

Apologies:

Martin Hall, GM8IEM,

1. Review of Actions

G4PIQ's discussion with G4SWX over band-planning. Ongoing.

G4PIQ's action to discuss how to get contesting into Brickworks is on-going. G4MJS offered to help facilitate this. This remains ongoing. G4PIQ to contact Ben Lloyd and G3YSX to support.

G4MJS to convene a working group on trophies. To include at least G4MJS, G3VYI, G8TIC, G0FCT, G6XSY and a representative from HFCC. This remains ongoing – action taken over by G3YSX and GW4SHF added to the list.

2. Review of Entry Levels

The spreadsheet showing the history of entry levels is attached at Appendix A. Overall between 2023 and 2024, there was a decline in entry levels, including a significant decline in entries the UKAC contests. This is of some concern since these have been such a successful thread of contests. The trend does appear to be stabilising (and improving on some bands) from the first 9 months in 2025, but nevertheless, the trend warrants investigation.

More detailed analysis (Appendix B) shows there is no significant change in the numbers of clubs entering, although there is some churn between clubs. Although unique entrants in the 2m UKAC dropped 20% between 2023 and 2024, the number of sessions entered dropped only 15% implying that more dedicated operators are stickier.

An initial look at the top 10 or so clubs in each section shows less attrition still (of the order of 9%) so it appears that the biggest decline may be in the more casual entrants.

Action: ALL - Informal discussions to be held with sample clubs at the Convention and elsewhere.

We had a long discussion on this topic and of possible root causes including

- Weariness with the format
- Too many contests in the month (and perhaps more widely)
- Noise issues – especially making 6m and 4m – and to some extent 2m much tougher to operate
- Same evenings every month
- The likely winners are too easily predicted

We rejected moving the dates of the events about – maintaining the current structure and co-ordination with Europe was considered important. But we did consider whether we should perhaps run all, or some of the less well supported bands on alternative months. Or consider applying the 8 scores to count rule to the club championship – as well as to the single operator championship. We think these changes could reduce the perceived load on club members. Equally, there was concern that such a move may simply dilute enthusiasm and focus reducing activity. *For discussion at the Convention and we will try and gain as much insight as possible through discussions and any survey.*

We concluded that our best cause of action was likely to try and recruit new blood. We have been poor with publicity and need to recruit someone to support us in this and promote hard in new media. **Action: G8TIC to sound out a possible candidate.**

We also need to keep HQ aligned here. **Action: G4PIQ to talk to Heather Parsons.**

We also felt that some targeted promotion to clubs who have dropped out / reduced entry levels may be worthwhile.

There has also been some decline in some weekend contests.

Backpackers in particular was showing a decline which is a disappointment given that it has the lowest barrier to entry of many contests and being co-ordinated with major contests means. We feel again publicity may be an issue here. We wondered if there was an opportunity to test whether the SOTA community could be persuaded to enjoy the backpackers.

Action: G4PIQ to contact the SOTA team

We also looked at the results of our actions changes from last year

- i. FMACs back to 10W and 50W sections.
This appears to have been successful and entry levels are higher

- ii. May 2m contest moved to 1st weekend in May and reduced to 6 hours. This does not seem to have worked and we will revert this change (but retain bonuses rather than multipliers in the scoring)
- iii. The new fixed section of VHF NFD has been successful while VHF NFD itself remains broadly flat. We're unclear as to whether we should roll back the shortening of the 70cm and 23cm bands in some VHF NFD sections or not. To discuss at Convention.

3. Possible rule changes for 2026

We don't have large number of changes proposed for 2026 at this stage, but will discuss in the forum at the Convention for ideas.

We felt that we should complete the transition from multiplier-based scoring to bonus-based scoring across all contests.

We also propose that Affiliated Societies should be able to make genuine multi-operator entries to our contests without having to have all operators as RSGB members – so extending the AFS and NFD rule more widely.

Appendix A – Entry level review to end Sep 2025

	Year																										
Contest	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
144 UKAC	20	22	26	36	32	55	73	147	190	257	316	368	495	442	499	574	603	644	655	661	634	781	724	610	614	486	435
432 UKAC	19	12	20	22	22	19	23	34	53	66	166	218	300	293	369	420	417	469	453	465	431	583	556	478	413	353	330
1.3 UKAC	13	14	11	13	11	12	15	12	15	16	47	85	90	136	140	186	201	229	216	214	207	266	269	224	224	180	181
50 UKAC								25	43	59	169	238	237	258	348	437	454	496	435	424	391	516	470	358	314	282	244
70 UKAC							12			20	55	94	108	131	151	207	200	269	309	299	293	377	334	261	256	208	202
SHF UKAC													33	33	27	50	38	65	83	87	93	96	106	90	86	70	
144 FT8AC																							203	167	148	119	92
432 FT8AC																								114	95	82	68
70 FMAC																			67	57							
144 FMAC																			175	135	131	231	184	188	164	102	114
432 FMAC																			118	103	113	158	161	149	129	82	85
432 AFS	34	35	30	33	30	26	35	38		28	35	63	76	72	82	98	114	102	109	133	118	116	168	102	118	106	98
432 AFS Clubs	15	13	14	15	12	11	14	14		12	14	26	34	29	29	44	49	46	50	56	46	49	69	45	55	45	40
March 2/70	27	35	25		24	25	32	35	23	36	60	59	91	59	72	59	84	63	85	98	94	98	137	84	94	80	91
70 MHz Cums	24	24	20	20	18	20	19	22	29	28	38	50	74	73	76	81	87	88	102	89	83	82	79	57			
1st 70 MHz	22	13	12	18	22	22	18	19	21	23	32	35	47	46	40	41	49	58	56	44	39	56	56	47			
1st 50 MHz									36	48	39	35	48	42	53	48	49	53	61	41	49	120	73	43			
1st MGM (UK)																				53	38	47	29	48	35	21	28
May UHF	30	24	15	17	26		34		29	18	16	20	26	33	39	23	33	53	41	45	36	44	55	41	41	33	26
432 Trophy		21	15	17	20	22	28	23	28	25	28	33	35	37	48	54	37	51	57	52	57	80	90	66	57	63	54
10G Trophy	14	10		5	9	11	10	10	8	11	8	5	12	8	6	8	6	9	7	14	9	12	18	16	17	17	18
70 MHz CW												17	23	19	29	25	25	21	28	33	25	47	20	30	21	24	25
May 144	42	24		33	34	34	41	38	31	48	65	68	65	68	70	74	77	80	93	101	102	161	118	107	115	102	61
Backpackers	54	45		39	55	59	69	50	52	58	52	60	53	35	50	53	60	42	51	55	67	24	40	32	41	43	34
50 MHz Trophy	28	33	25	33	32	28	32	36	42	47	58	56	65	59	63	81	81	93	128	109	88	144	136	97	100	107	91
50 MHz CW														48	38	26	21	21	26	31	16	47	34	23	22	34	28
VHF NFD	68	73		56	59	52	53	58	49	63	76	61	69	54	80	62	58	59	61	58	54		38	43	48	34	33
VHF NFD Sweeper																34	36	36	51	53	52		63	45	54	54	64
70 MHz Trophy	31	32	16	40	31	32	27	25	27	32	35	30	45	41	49	55	59	59	65	70	62	82	66	74	45	65	47
144 Low Power	32	32	13	23	25	33	34	35	27	28	46	48	36	33	32	35	47	58	60	58	72	99	70	74	77	74	61
432 Low Power	28	23	10	17	19	23	34	18	28	28	33	38	38	31	27	39	51	42	53	47	55	68	53	60	64	51	44
144 Trophy	35	30	34	27	35	37	42	46	55	54	78	75	68	56	66	71	82	85	101	101	114	162	123	107	132	106	90
2nd 70 MHz (AFS)	22	21	16	18	27	19	16	18	15	20	28	32	28	34	25	33	39	49	35	24	66	81	62	62	55	57	64
1.3 Trophy	15	11	7	13	10	10	12	9	9	11	17	20	22	17	18	32	25	30	31	46	39	23	33	37	28		
2.3 Trophy	12	10	6	8	8	8	6	7	4	4	4	8	11	10	7	8	11	9	11	17	21	18	12	12	15	13	
Oct UHF	19	15	12	16	15	15	12	21	22	20	23	18	25	25	29	22	40	27	35	28	41	32	29	29	45	30	
50 MHz AFS		14	17	19	17	21	16	13	11	24	33	32	78	77	84	84	96	111	87	95	101	103	99	81	75	64	
50 AFS Clubs													31	34	38	40	41	49	39	42	41	45	44	37	38	31	
Marconi	17	14		13	14	13	11	12	17	9	25	22	25	23	27	28	42	32	44	32	34	54	43	37	28	35	
144 AFS	68	77	74	76	81	60	66	45	48	77	93	125	113	107	115	138	125	156	133	150	128	178	144	138	116	82	
144 AFS Clubs	18	20	19	21	21	16	17	9	12	18	25	41	40	43	49	58	56	61	61	59	57	76	60	54	49	33	
2nd MGM																				37	12	35					
Xmas Cums	25	22	24	20	17	22	28	22	28	49	56	56	61	73	62	84	105	110	80	121	102	111	128	98	80	90	
TOTAL																		4351	4422	4218	5318	5186	4461	4117			
Championship	268	265	156	219	252	268	298	294	295	333	438	438	491	427	469	506	575	576	695	695	715	956	852	726	761	708	

Appendix B – Some club level analysis of 2m UKAC entries

2m UKAC 2023 vs. 2024 vs 2025 (part year)

	2023	2024	2025 (to Sep)
Local Club	43	43	43
General Club	57	58	53
Individuals	610	486	435
Slots	3101	2618	<i>Scaled 2637</i>

	2023	2024	2025 (to Sep)
Parallel Lines	21	23	26
Hereford	35	20	19
Chesham & Northampton	14	20	21
Trowbridge	14	12	9
Northern Fells	20	20	25
807	20	7	
Wirral	12	10	13
GMDX	18	14	13
Harwell	19	24	21
Guildford	11	13	11
Spalding	12	11	7
Tall Trees	7	7	6
Coulston	5	6	5
Bolton	6	7	7
RAF Waddington	10	1	
Telford	9	5	3
Norfolk	18	19	13
Burton	9	12	13
Gower	8	10	8
BBB	9	12	13
Drowned Rats	9	8	4
	286	261	237