



International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

Europe, Middle East, Africa and Northern Asia

Founded 1950

Committee C4 (HF Matters) Interim Meeting 19-21 February 2010 InterCity Hotel, Vienna

SUBJECT	Committee C4 Minutes		
Society	IARU R1	Country:	HF Committee
Committee:	C4	Paper number:	VIE10_C4_Minutes
Contact:	Ian Greenshields, G4FSU	e-mail:	ian.greenshields@gmail.com

Chairman: Ulrich Mueller DK4VW

Secretary: Ian Greenshields G4FSU

1. Opening of the HF Committee meeting

Meeting opened at 09:05 by Ulrich Mueller, DK4VW, Chairman HF Committee C4 and a welcome given by Mike OE3MZC, President of OeVSV.

2. Introduction of Delegates and Observers

Tom LA4LN, NRRL. Elvira IV3FSG, ARI. Ulrich DK4VW. Ian G4FSU, IARU. John G3WKL RSGB. Dieter OE8KDK, OeVSV. Juan EA9IE, URE. Rune SM5COP, SSA. Bram PB0AOK, VERON. Sjoerd PA0SHY, VERON. Mike OE3MZC, OeVSV. Colin G3PSM, IARU. Braco E77DX, ARABIH. Carine ON7LX UBA. Jiri OK1RI, CRC. Kresimir 9A5K, HRS. Tony OM3LU, SARA. Christian DL8MDW, DARC. Lothar DL3TD, DARC. Laszlo HA5EA, MRASZ, Stefan HB9TTQ, USKA.

3. Agreement of the Agenda

Proposed to bring RSGB Paper 10 earlier in the meeting to allow time for the working group to convene.

4. Internet Gateways & Remote Linking for HF Operation

RSGB 02

Paper presented by G3WKL.

VERON asked for the reason why the recommendation stops at 29MHz, answered that it preserves compatibility with 29MHz existing Internet gateways. MRASZ also agreed that 29MHz is appropriate and the existing gateways cause no problems.

ARABIH stated that gateways should not be banned completely as it allows operators in cities to make contacts that would not otherwise be possible. Noted that license conditions are not always clear on the matter.

URE advised that remote operation is forbidden in Spain at the moment.

DARC stated that the callsign must be associated with the transmitter and noted that the CEPT regulation's wording states it applies to operators actually in the visiting country, therefore operators using gateways under the CEPT agreement may be in violation of the agreement.

SSA stated that award and contest organisers should make the rules, not IARU. CRC noted that there are really two issues: legal and ethical.

Proposed to form a working group led by RSGB to reword the recommendation. The working group reported back on Sunday and the following recommendation was proposed.

It was noted that IARU should not encourage remote operation if it is in violation of CEPT T/R 61-01.

OeVSV agreed to part a) of the rewording that was done in the working group, but did not see a need to point out the notes concerning CEPT T/R 61-01.

A vote was made on the recommendation: carried, with OeVSV opposing and SARA abstaining.

Recommendation VIE10_C4_01

IARU Region 1 recommends:

- a) that below 29MHz Internet Gateways and remote TX operation should be encouraged to follow the guidelines:
 1. the callsign of the station operating uses a callsign appropriate for the DXCC country where the TX is located;
 2. where a remote RX is not located in the same DXCC entity as the TX, efforts should be made to indicate its DXCC entity (e.g. QTH RX DL for a receiver in Germany).
- b) under CEPT T/R 61-01 terms it should be noted that one needs to be physically in the country from where the transmission occurs.

5. Vandalism on our HF Bands

RSGB

10

Paper presented by G3WKL.

UBA stated that the problem could be due to frustration with novice license holders not being able to work the big DXpeditions. RSGB stated they have evidence that some high power long established stations are responsible. USKA stated that an appropriate handbook should be distributed to all amateurs. Also noted that this had already been done with ON4UN/ON4WW's operating guidelines.

CRC noted that Europe is absolutely the worst region for offenders. URE stated that the Spanish PTT are unwilling to take action against known offenders and that education of new members is important. VERON said that it is not only a Region 1 problem, there are also problems in Region 2 & 3 although it was agreed that Region 1 is the worst.

The committee split into 3 groups each doing their own analysis of the stated undesirable effect "EU zoo". The outcome of a Fishbone cause / effect analysis was found using Delphi voting, and this outcome was then taken further using the 5 Why root-cause analysis method. The outcomes below need to be treated with caution for several reasons. Firstly, techniques were new to all three groups and the time for doing the work was much shorter than is normally required. Secondly, taking the 'EU zoo' as the starting point placed a wider scope than would normally be the case. The outcomes were:

- Some DXpedition operators do not realise the procedures need?
- Licence too easy to obtain?
- Lack of self-regulation?
- Lack of moral education?
- Lack of education, training and experience?
- No legal enforcement?

Recommendation VIE_C4_02

That an analysis of the "me – me / Intentional" aspects of the problem be undertaken by groups from 3 or 4 member societies using a "continuous improvement" process. RSGB would provide the necessary support in terms of training material and facilitation in approach and use of the tools. A dedicated "closed" discussion group would be provided on the Region 1 website, which all C4 members could elect to join or nominate members.

An informal meeting would be arranged for Friedrichshafen and the groups would report back with initial findings to the HF Manager's reflector in 9 months time (end 2010).

Contests

6.1 Multi OP / Single TX

DARC 03

Presented by DL3TD.

MRASZ asked whether single TX meant only one transmitter at the station, or only one signal on the air. SSA stated that the situation of allowing multiple signals from one station on a single band could eventually destroy the contest.

VERON stated that there could be a separate section in the contest for such operation. RSGB stated it should be up to the contest organisers to determine the rules.

NRRL stated that the main problem is space on the bands and that if many stations are allowed to transmit multiple signals on one band it further decreases the space for non-contesters. RSGB supported NRRL in that the IARU had a responsibility to protect spectrum for the smaller operators and non-contesters.

DL3TD agreed to re-word the recommendation for Sunday.

Carried unanimously.

Recommendation VIE10_C4_03

That within the 'Guidelines for HF Contests chapter of the IARU Region 1 HF Manager's Handbook, the category MOST be reworded: 'MOST – Multi Operator Single Transmitter'. A MOST station is a multi-operator station transmitting no more than one signal and one running frequency at any time.

6.2 Disqualification Policy in HF Contests

DARC 04

Presented by DL3TD.

USKA said the one-year disqualification policy is too harsh and they do not support it. URE and MRASZ agreed with USKA's position.

RSGB stated that while the large contest organisers have not previously asked the IARU for a position, it would be an opportunity for the IARU to ask the contest organisers to respect non-contest band segments in the rules.

The Chairman stated it was up to the member societies to create and implement contest rules and not for the IARU to dictate them.

6.3 Contest-Free Segments on HF Bands

DARC 05

Paper presented by DL3TD.

Noted that the Cavtat decision to allocate 7000-7025 as a contest-preferred segment excluded all but Extra-class operators in the US.

RSGB expressed support for the principle of contests having rules for where operation should take place, and advised that contest rules should specifically state the contest operating ranges and not rely on people having to consult the band plans, or become confused with contest free segments being included as an alternative.

SSA also stated that their members had requested contest-free segments.

RSGB noted that some HQ stations had operated outside the preferred segments, citing this as an example of the importance of stating the operating segments clearly within the rules.

Carried unanimously.

Recommendation VIE10_C4_04

That the HF Committee encourage member societies to publish contest operating segments clearly in the rules of the contest and that those segments are considered with due respect to the IARU band plans.

Presented by DL3TD.

NRRL asked whether the IARU should give privilege to certain nationally organized contests, noted that JOTA was started in 1958, and that the third weekend in October was chosen as it had no scheduled contests at that time. NRRL also stated that an earlier IARU recommendation (CT08_C3_Rec 24) had encouraged member societies to assist boy scouts and girl guides on that weekend, and to use this opportunity to present recruiting possibilities for amateur radio to the scouts/guides. NRRL recommended that DARC consider that an alternative weekend be found for the WAG contest.

DK4VW noted that WAG is an activity of an IARU Region 1 member society, whereas an external international group organizes JOTA.

DARC noted that the ex-GDR Radio Club became member of IARU Region 1 in 1972 and its WADM (work all DM, later work all Y2, now WAG) became an accepted and listed contest.

UBA supported NRRL's position and said that activities that encourage young people to enter the hobby should be encouraged. VERON also supported NRRL's position.

DARC noted that only 32 JOTA stations were in operation in Germany and over a thousand entries into the WAG contest were received and that the contest-free segment worked without problem. RSGB stated that if contest-free segments were respected, there should be no conflict and supported DARC's paper. OeVSV stated that contest organisers should respect contest-free segments in the rules and enforce them.

NRRL noted that the international JOTA had over 500,000 members with operation from more than 120 countries. CRC asked how many JOTA stations were really active over the weekend.

OeVSV asked if there had been any complaints from the JOTA stations about lack of space on the bands. NRRL stated that JOTA stations in other countries had complained about lack of spectrum. OeVSV asked whether any entrants to the WAG had been disqualified by not observing the contest segments; DARC answered no, that it had not so far been necessary.

DARC withdrew the proposed recommendation since it was agreed that this is covered by other recommendations concerning contest free segments and it was noted that DARC wish to promote the use of such segments.

6.5 IARU HF World Championship Contest Rules

DARC

07,08

Presented by DL3TD.

The Chairman read a paper from K1ZZ that said the 1/3/5 point weighting system is not optimum. CRC said it should probably be left as it is. NRRL advised the rules should be kept simple to keep it fun, and that countries should be able to work there own HQ stations.

URE read a statement from ARRL that, due to a scoring error, the results had to be recalculated, reversing the position of AO8N and DA0HQ in the final results, and that the rescoring was predominantly due to 3600 unique calls logged by DA0HQ. URE expressed dismay at the quantity of unique QSOs made by DA0HQ compared to the number of uniques by the Spanish HQ station. URE said they had been unfairly penalised by logs of known non-contesters being deleted.

DARC stated they had very actively marketed the contest to their members to encourage them to come on & make contacts and also said that a similar marketing exercise in Poland had also resulted in much higher activity from their members. DARC also stated that the rescoring was due to a software error, and not the elimination of UBN calls. OeVSV commented that in Austria they had also marketed the contest to promote activity and that this had resulted in an increase of uniques in the logs.

HRS also expressed support for changing the scoring system. RSGB preference was for a zero score for own country QSOs, but agreed that the scoring system may need review as well as an addressing of the lack of useful UBN files for all entrants.

It was proposed to form a sub-group within the discussion forum, which should also include the HQ leaders, to review the scoring and rules for the contest and make a proposal back to C4.

6.6 HQ contest team meeting

DARC

09

Presented by DL3TD.

DARC noted that it was not the intention to ask for money from the IARU to fund meetings; all the proposed meetings should be self funded.

UBA stated that Friedrichshafen would be a good opportunity for the IARU HQ teams to meet.

It was decided to withdraw the recommendation and leave a record in the minutes that C4 is in favour of supporting the principle of team meetings, containing an element of socializing, technical development and to see how participation could be increased from those new to the hobby or contesting, to be organized by the HQ teams as they fit, but not to be funded by the IARU.

7. Status for Amateur Radio at 5 MHz

NRRL

12,13

The paper was presented by LA4LN.

RSGB commended the work of NRRL to gain access to a large segment of 5 MHz, noting that the UK operation is tightly controlled in nets. The RSGB questioned the choice of 5403.5 kHz as the international calling channel, noting that other frequencies were available to more countries. RSGB also advised that the UK activity is supposed to be used for NVIS propagation experiments and that DX activity is not encouraged.

NRRL responded that there is a common practice to use the band edges for DXing purposes, and therefore the uppermost channel 5403.5 kHz was the natural choice. Besides, this frequency had already been established by a large majority of users as a DX calling frequency, and NRRL asked for this practice to be acknowledged.

The Chairman stated that it was too early to have the band plan adopted by Region 1 as there were too few member societies having access to the band and that the plan should be treated as an information paper. It was also proposed the plan be renamed as 'Usage Guidelines' so as not to appear as a frequency grab by the IARU from other users of the frequencies.

8. Norway 500 kHz Usage Guidelines

NRRL

14

The paper was presented by LA4LN as an information paper and Usage Guidelines.

RSGB stated that activity on 500 kHz was extremely sensitive and recommended not publishing information regarding planning on 500 kHz as it may jeopardise ongoing work with administrations. RSGB recommended discouraging other than heritage site activation on 500 kHz +/-1 kHz.

The Chairman recommended that NRRL publish the information as for NRRL national usage and not as a guideline recommended by IARU.

VERON also noted that they had received allocations at 500 kHz from their administrations.

SARA noted that their administration promised to allocate frequencies near 500 kHz to the amateur radio service in the near future.

An E-mail was received from LA2RR during the meeting that advised Iceland had just be granted a similar permission as Norway for 493 - 510 kHz, but with the requirement for individual applications for experimental licenses (see agenda point 10.2).

9. QSO definition

NRRL

11

The paper was presented by LA4LN.

RSGB & NRRL stated it would be desirable to have a definition of a QSO but that it would be a shame if it were not the same as the C5 definition. Most views were neutral on the need for a definition.

It was agreed that NRRL should submit a paper to the next IARU Region 1 Conference, proposing setting up an ad-hoc working group during the next conference, with members from C4 and C5, to develop a joint core definition of a QSO.

10. AOB Agenda Items

10.1 WSPR Beacon Network

DL8MDW presented 'Some early thoughts on a WSPR Beacon Network'

RSGB suggested that in light of the UK's 5MHz experiment, to consider stable aerials and to carefully define the objectives of an experiment.

OeVSV stated that this could have an impact on contests and DXpeditions if ad-hoc real time beacon networks were to be set up to check for propagation.

It was agreed that other societies should be encouraged to participate in the network.

10.2 Frequency Allocations in Iceland

LA4LN passed on information received from LA2RR that Iceland had been granted access to 70.0-70.2 MHz and 493-510 kHz with effect from the 19th February 2010 and outlined the conditions attached to the approval.

On Saturday afternoon both committees C4 and C5 had a joint meeting.

PB2T and G3PSM introduced the papers VIE10/C4/15 and VIE10/C4/16 to make committee members familiar with the ITU structure and the IARU position on agenda items of next WRC12.

Member societies are encouraged to request from ERC Chairman (G3PSM) more detailed background information on WRC12 agenda items, especially AI 1.23, which might be helpful for discussions with their national administration.

Meeting closed at 18:00 by the Chairman.

Meeting opened Sunday 21/2 at 09:05.

10.3 PSK31 Activity in the 40M Band

The Chairman noted that there was still significant operation of PSK31 below 7040 kHz in Region 1, contrary to the current band plan.

It is recommended that societies encourage their members to keep all digimode activity above 7040 kHz as given in IARU Region 1 band plan.

10.4 40M CW Contest Preferred Segment

RSGB stated that this was mostly applicable to smaller regional contests as band plans are normally not observed in major contests.

It was agreed that it should be left up to contest organisers to determine the segments to be used, giving due consideration to type of contest and expected activity.

10.5 CT08_C3_rec_27 Signal Strength Reports

MRASZ noted that it was a requirement in the national license to exchange signal reports and opposed any change that would eliminate the signal strength report.

RSGB stated that it should be up to the contest organisers and that the RSGB had some contests with different exchanges. NRRL also said that the organisers could add an exchange to the report to vary the contest.

It was agreed that contest organisers should continue to be encouraged to introduce a less predictable exchange in contests.

10.6 Promotion on RSQ Reporting System

Member societies should be encouraged to promote the use of the RSQ reporting systems for relevant digimodes.

10.7 Emergency Communications

OeVSV outlined the request received from the University of Salzburg to assist with a pan-European programme (CAST) to create a common amateur radio training module across Europe. It was noted that this would be a good way of promoting amateur radio to the general public. OeVSV distributed a survey questionnaire to collect information on activity from other member societies in the field of Emergency Communications.

10.8 External Representation

RSGB proposed setting up a spreadsheet of radio amateurs that represent the hobby in external bodies such as ITU-R, CEPT and standards organisations in view of the increasing threat to the bands from PLA and similar devices. It was agreed that this would be done via the HF Manager's reflector.

10.9 Activity by HF Managers

The Chairman encouraged use of the IARU Region 1 HF reflector and use of the IARU Region 1 website by members and asked societies to inform members of the existence of the website.

10.10 Date & Venue of Next HF Committee C4 Meeting

There will be an informal meeting at the Ham Radio Show on Friday afternoon 25th June in Friedrichshafen.

Chairman's PS: It turns out the whole Friday is already booked with other meetings on an international level, i.e. EMC WG, EUROCOM WG, IARU Region 1 Meeting of Society Representatives.

The Informal C4 Meeting will take place Saturday, 26 June, from 14h00 to 16h00.

10.11 Closing of the Interim C4 Meeting

Minutes of the meeting will be made available for comment before final publication.

The recommendations will also be made available to member societies before they are passed to the EC. This needs to be complete by the 16th of April.

The Chairman thanked OeVSV for organising the event and closed the meeting at 11:35.