

ECHO IRELAND

IRISH RADIO TRANSMITTERS SOCIETY

March 2016 - 84 YEARS



Limerick Radio Club - Harry EI3KL, John EI5HGB, and John EI1694 repair the 2m Repeater - Photo EI7ALB



At the Coolmine Rally, 14 February - Aidan EI5HW, Aoife (SWL), Anthony EI2KC, Brian EI8EJB, Aidan EI7JC, Pat EI2HX

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Pat O'Connor EI9HX

News from around the Clubs

Shannon Basin Radio Club

Brian Canning EI8IU

The Club AGM was held in Roscommon in December and was well attended. The following officers were elected:

Chairman: Pat EI9HX
Secretary: Brian EI8IU
PRO: Anthony EI6GGB
Treasurer: Fergus EI6IB
QSL Manager: Anthony EI6GGB
Contest Manager: Mark EI6JK

Many thanks to the outgoing officers.

Since our last report Club members also had the opportunity to use some special call signs. Pat EI9HX operated as EI90IARU, Mark EI6JK operated as EI150ITU and Brian EI8IU and Junior Op James operated as EI0YOTA. Pile ups were had by all, and several thousand QSOs logged.

Club members also took part in the IRTS 80m Counties Contest on the 1st January.

February 5th saw another club meeting in Roscommon in which the plans for 2016 contesting and other club activities were discussed.

The next meeting will be in May, see www.shannonbasinradioclub.com for details.



Club members Richard EI5GUB, Fergus EI6IB, Brian EI8IU, Owen EI4GGB, Enda EI2II, Pat EI9HX, Mark EI6JK, Paul EI170I, Anthony EI6GGB



Tipperary Amateur Radio Group

Hugh O'Donnell EI2HI

Members of the Tipperary Amateur Radio Group met at the Park Hotel in Clonmel for their AGM on Tuesday 12th January 2016. This was a well-attended meeting with group members travelling from counties Kilkenny, Waterford, Cork joining their Tipperary-based colleagues.

Hugh EI2HI chaired the meeting with John EI7IG reading the minutes from last year's AGM. The group treasurer Thomas EI2IT reported a healthy financial situation for the group which was formed in October 1994. A review of the year and the group activities were then discussed at length.

Particular praise was given to Eddie EI3FFB for reading the weekly IRTS news every Sunday evening at 8.30pm on 145.450MHz FM and his efforts were much appreciated. The new incoming committee was then elected. Group meetings in 2016 will continue to be held at the Park Hotel. The AGM concluded at 11.30pm when Hugh EI2HI thanked all for their input and efforts in attending this most important event of the calendar year for TARG.

The new committee was elected as follows:-

Chairman: Hugh O'Donnell EI2HI
Vice Chairman: Eddie Kavanagh EI3FFB
Secretary: John Ronan EI7IG
Treasurer: Thomas Hallinan EI2IT
Group PRO: Paul Norris EI3ENB

Dundalk Amateur Radio Society

Brian Whelan EI8EJB

The Dundalk Amateur Radio Society is pleased to announce that their 2m repeater, EI2CCR, is now back on air from its elevated location on Clermont Cairn, County Louth. It transmits on 145.675 MHz, with a CTCSS access tone of 110.9 Hz.

Reception reports are always welcome and can be made directly to any member of the Dundalk Amateur Radio Society, through the EI7DAR Facebook page or by email to repeaterkeeper@ei7dar.com. The IRTS radio news is read via the repeater EI2CCR on Mondays at 8pm.

The Dundalk Amateur Radio Society would like to sincerely thank all those who have contributed in any way to the re-birth of EI2CCR and we look forward to providing wide area 2m coverage to the North East for many years to come.

Our cover photograph shows Harry EI3KL, John EI5HGB, and John EI1694 making repairs to the **Limerick Radio Club** 2m repeater - story on Page 6.

Avondhu Radio Club

Gerard Scannell EI5KF

Classes at the Avondhu Radio Club commenced in late September and continue into the spring. There are eight participants (*see photo below*) and we wish them success in obtaining an amateur radio licence in the coming months and many years of enjoyment of our hobby.



Back row: Seoirse Neilan, Patricia Neilan, Kevin Murphy, Joe Cherry, John Cuthbert. Front row seated: Kenny Oates, Dawid Zielinski, Luke Heffernan (not present)

Kerry Amateur Radio Group

Declan Horan EI9FVB

KARG is preparing a series of events for 2016 which will be announced shortly, including local public events, IRTS contests, ILLW 2016, field days and topics for presentations.

Members of KARG will once again participate as an award station in International Marconi Day 2016, from Coláiste Bhréanainn in Ballybunnion by kind permission of the Coláiste committee. The event runs on Saturday 23rd April for 24 hrs from 0000 UTC.

The Coláiste is located on the site of the original Marconi Radio Station in Ballybunon Co. Kerry, from where the first east to west transatlantic wireless telephonic communication was made in March 1919, using the callsign YXQ.

Communication was attempted in one direction only with the sending apparatus located at Ballybunon and the receiving apparatus at Louisburg, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

After a successful participation last year, we plan to have two stations on the air again this time. Last year we had two stations running for the full 24 hours, with lots of DX worked, including VK, ZL, VP9, VU, VE and west coast US.

KARG will be very pleased to work other EI stations in the event. Further details will be posted on our website, QRZ page and Facebook page, closer to the event.

www.kerryamateurradiogroup.com/marconi-station

Cork Radio Club

Dave Moore EI4BZ

At our February club meeting plans were made for annual outdoor activities including International Marconi Day on 23rd April and the IRTS Field Days on the first weekends of June, July and September.

The club would like to wish Dave EI9FBB the best of luck with his presentations on his recent DXpeditions at the IOTA Bash in Texas on February 26th and 27th and at the GMDX Convention on April 9th.

Dave and Jeremy EI7GM will be travelling to Bahrain to activate another new IOTA, Hawar Island, OC-202 from April 27th to May 1st

Following on from his recent well received talk at Cork Radio Club, Sean EI3GS will continue his review of marine radio in times past on Wednesday March 4th at Carrigtwohill Community Centre, starting at 2000.

In his presentation, he will talk about his experiences on the famous tug 'Turmoil' and the truth about the Flying Enterprise.

Cork Radio Club meets on the first Wednesday each month and visitors and new members are always very welcome.

Enquiries to ei4bz@eircom.net or 087-6290574



Sean EI3GS and Dave EI9FBB assembling a hex beam at the Cork Radio Club SSB Field Day site.

Return of Cups and Trophies

The 2016 IRTS AGM will be held on the weekend of 9th and 10th April. Jim Holohan EI4HH Awards Manager requests that the 2015 Cup and Trophy award holders return their awards as soon as possible; this makes it much easier for the Awards Committee to prepare them for the new recipients. Cups and Trophies can be returned to any IRTS Committee Member. Anyone intending to enter a project for the Folan Shield (home constructed equipment) should familiarise themselves with the rules and requirements in order to avoid embarrassment to all parties on the day.

Limerick Radio Club

Simon Kenny EI7ALB

There was a good attendance at the Limerick Radio Club AGM on Thursday the 11th February 2016. Dermot EI2GT has stepped down from the committee, and the following were elected to the new committee.

Chairman: Simon Kenny EI7ALB

Secretary: Ger McNamara EI4GXB

Treasurer: Tony Condon EI2AW

Committee Members:

Michael Kingston EI2IX

Alan Cronin EI8EM

Liam Rainford EI7DSB

Trustees:

Tom O'Sullivan EI3AL

Dermot Gleeson EI2GT

John O'Brien EI5HDB

2 Metre Mast Failure

On December 6th 2015 the Limerick Radio Club 2m repeater developed a problem. It was feared that the antenna had failed, due to storm conditions on that weekend, and that the newly acquired Yaesu DR-1 repeater transmitter would be

damaged. Eventually, through various means, it was possible to switch off the repeater transmitter.

Liam EI4GB with his XYL Patricia EI9GY braved the elements and darkness to send mobile phone images - giving the first indication of the problem. The lattice mast consists of 8ft sections and there was a welding failure on the base plate of the 2nd highest section.

The 18 foot x 2 inch steel pole extension to the mast was bent, almost at right angles. Luckily, the LMR600 cable was undamaged. The site was secured until more time could be given to repairing the mast. The repeater was restored to service on New Years eve, less one 8ft section and the 2 inch steel pole extension. A new Procomm 2m antenna was installed. Thanks to Liam EI4GB, Patricia EI9GY, Harry EI2KL, John EI5HDB, Liam EI7DSB, Ger EI4GXB, John EI6IW, John EI1694 and Simon EI7ALB who gave of their time and effort during very challenging weather conditions.

Thanks again to Mike EI2IX, Harry EI2KL, Ronan EI5HRB, Alan EI8EM and John EI1694 who provided test reports. The IRTS news is now read on the 2m repeater on Monday evenings at the usual time of 8pm.



Photo EI4GB



John EI6IW, Simon EI7ALB, Liam EI7DSB, John EI5DSB

IRTS Regional Representatives

Regional Representatives act as liaison between members/clubs in their respective regions and the IRTS Committee. Feel free to contact them if you have any issue to raise or suggestion to make about IRTS or its activities.

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Mayo Radio Experimenters Network

Padraic Baynes EI5IX

80m Counties Contest 1st January 2016

The club takes part in this contest every year, but usually enters the portable section from the usual location IO53JW where an 80m dipole is erected on a pole and the van is used as the shack for the contest.

But this year the day was windy and wet, so we took advantage of Jimmy's EI2GCB's QTH where the club's radio and equipment was setup for the contest. We entered the SSB/CW Fixed section with the callsign EI0M, and ended the day with 86 contacts and 25 counties in the log, achieving third place in our section.

The club members taking part were: Jimmy EI2GCB, Pat EI5IX, Padraic EI9JA and Dominic EI9JS.

80m Evening Counties Contest 9th February 2016

The club operated EI7MRE for the new IRTS 80m evening Counties contest. In the one hour we had 32 contacts and worked 17 counties. The station was operated by Dominic EI9JS from his QTH.

Meetings

January

The clubs first meeting of 2016 was held on the 13th January in the Welcome Inn Hotel, Castlebar. There was a good attendance on the night, some field days and outdoor activities for the coming year were discussed, plans will be made nearer the dates. It was agreed that the clubs next meeting would be a practical one! As some members wished to try out digital modes, they had interfaces to connect their radio to their PCs and would like to see how it all works.

February

The club's February meeting was at Jimmy's EI2GCB QTH on Wednesday 3rd. with the club's radio and laptop setup for PSK. Brendan EI6IZ, Dominic EI9JS, John EI8GIB and Padraic EI9JA demonstrated various digital modes.

A variety of commercial interfaces were demonstrated and the problems and pitfalls of different computer operating systems with these interfaces were reviewed. There was also interest shown in some of the homebrew interfaces that can be built, hopefully there may be further demonstrations on the construction of simple interfaces at future meetings.



John EI6IR, John EI3JM, Padraic EI9JA, Gerry EI4GD

Rallies and Events

Lagan Valley Amateur Radio Rally

Saturday **5th March** - the Lagan Valley Amateur Radio Rally at The Village Centre, 7 Ballynahinch Road, Hillsborough BT26 6AR. Doors open at 11am. Contact Jim GI0DVU on 028 (048 from RoI) 9266 2270 or email jim.henry@ntlworld.com

www.radioclubs.net/lvargi4gty/

Causeway Coast & Glens ARC Rally

Sunday **20th March** - the Causeway Coast & Glens ARC Rally at the Community Centre, 14 Dunluce Road, Bushmills, County Antrim, BT57 8QG. Doors open at 11am and admission is £3. Disabled access. Free Bring and Buy, Traders stalls. Donations welcome. Light refreshments available along with free parking.

causewaycoastandglens.wix.com/home

Lough Erne Amateur Radio Club Rally

Saturday **8th May** - the LEARC 35th Annual Rally at the SHARE Centre, near Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh BT92 0EQ. Take Bus Éireann service 30 to/from Derrylin. SHARE bus connects. Tables are free. Contact Mark EI4HDB on 087 657 4668 or email mtmullaney@eircom.net

www.learc.eu

International Mills Day 2016

14/15th May

Mills on the Air is an event which originated in the UK in 1999 and is known as National Mills Weekend. This is the 15th year of the event, held on the second weekend in May. Mills stations look for contacts with other radio amateurs and, in particular, with other mills and pumping stations. In the UK there are usually 60 or more mills operating as Special Event Stations. It is possible to work on all bands but most activity is on 40 and 2m.

In the Netherlands it has been promoted from 2009 by Jelle PD5JFK and Bernard PD7BZ. Bernard has a website (www.pd6mill.com) where everyone participating, whether in the Netherlands or elsewhere, can register their mills or pumping stations.

St Patrick's Day Award

Radio Amateurs worldwide are encouraged to get on the air and go green for St Patrick's Day 17th March with the third annual St Patrick's Day Award. This award is organised by RSGB Region 8 (Northern Ireland) and its aim is to enjoy the festivities and connect with other stations across the world.



Why not register and get on the air on 17th March. stpatrickaward.webs.com

Club Log Leaderboards – Majority of EIs don't want them!

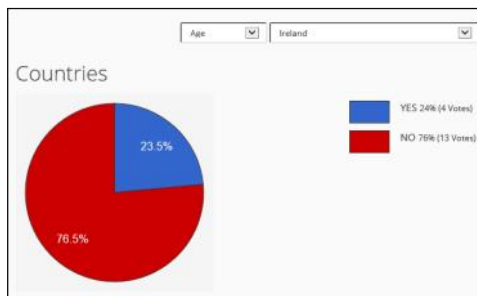
Anthony Murphy EI2KC

DX-world.net recently ran a poll to find out whether hams thought the Club Log Leaderboards feature should be disabled during DXpeditions.

For those of you unfamiliar with Club Log DXpedition uploads, the "Leaderboards" option lets others check who has the most QSOs with the the DXpedition. There would be a feeling among many hams that leaving the Leaderboards feature enabled encourages the bigger stations and the more active DX chasers to fill as many slots as possible, often at the expense of those who are using dipoles and 100 watts. Sometimes the big guns try so hard to outdo each other that every new slot that becomes available becomes a battleground.

Of course, there are two sides to the story. As I've said in these pages before, time and money need to be invested in a station to make it capable and competitive. The reality of modern DX chasing is that there are big pile-ups and some unruly behaviour at times. Your best chance to make it through the pile is a combination of skill, experience and a good station. You cannot expect to be consistently working the far distant DX entities using a simple dipole and 50 watts, for instance. While it certainly is possible, it's not easy! However, even with a modestly equipped station, with, say, a two-element beam and 400 watts, you will still struggle with the rare ones unless you are very dedicated.

Taking the Leaderboards feature away means that some of the competition for "top spot" is removed, and perhaps results in the pile-ups not being so intense. That's the belief anyhow, but I'd like to see some hard evidence for that before making a final judgement. Certainly, I have been guilty of chasing slots in the past, and on a few occasions I have kept up with the big guns in EI in the Leaderboards. Perhaps some operators are driven by their ego, but I know certainly others are not. Some chase slots for the fun of it, and for the reward of making QSOs as a result of hard slog. Where does one draw the line? Some want to work a DXpedition on every slot possible, other are happy with just a few or even a single contact.



The survey showed that the older age groups preferred the Leaderboards feature to be activated, while the younger hams were against it. As you can see from the pie chart, 17 EIs voted in the poll, with 76.5% voting against. Interestingly, VP8STI and VP8SGI did not use the feature. Did anyone think the pile-ups and the QRM were less severe as a result?

Comments welcome.

5KJ rekindles his interest in HF

Keith Crittenden EI5KJ

A couple of years ago my interest in ham radio was re-ignited by a desire to "Chase the Birds" (No, not those sorts of birds! Satellite operation I mean.) However, I thought I might as well put up some sort of antenna for HF as well, so being rather short of funds, after buying the VHF /UHF equipment, I opted for a meagre 40 metres of wire, joined in the middle with some old RG59 running down to an ATU and thence, the rig. A quick visit to my local Woodies furnished me with 20 metres of two-core 5amp mains lead which, when split, gave me the 40 meters I was looking for.

I have to say that for the past couple of years this "lash up" antenna worked well enough, (for what it was.) Never pulled in anything that might be called exceptional DX but it got me across the pond, and into Asia, and even one very tenuous ZL (359 both ways Grey line on 80).

So now, as the bank account is replenished, the time had come to replace the old mains lead with some Flex Weave, the old RG59 with some new RG58, and instead of connecting the coax directly to the antenna, a new 1:1 HF balun was introduced. (I've never used one before, but a change is as good as a rest they say.) Add to that a new 20ft ali' pole strapped to a convenient chimney and at last I had a "proper" HF antenna system.

The new setup is actually a 3.5Mhz dipole plus a 7Mhz dipole joined at the centre to the single balun, making a dual dipole, or "Fan Antenna" the middle of which is around 34ft high, and the ends some 10ft above the ground.

My "Other Half" wondered why shortwave antennas have to be so big. Her logic was that short wave antennas should be short. My instinct was to mock her understanding of the matter but then I remembered the old adage that, "Laughing at your own mistakes can lengthen your life, laughing at your wife's can shorten it.".....I simply told her that it didn't work like that.

It's only been up for a month or so but reports are better than the old antenna and according to the RBN (Reverse Beacon Network) I'm getting into areas that I didn't before. So all bodes well for the future. If nothing else the new antenna has rekindled my interest in matters HF!

See you down the log.



Keith EI5KJ



ComReg Matters

Seán Nolan EI7CD

Summary of IRTS Response to ComReg Draft Radio Spectrum Management Strategy Consultation for 2016 to 2018

In January 2016 IRTS responded to a wide-ranging consultation on spectrum management issues published in mid December 2015 as Document ComReg 15/131 by the Irish telecommunications regulator, the Commission for Communications Regulation. The closing date for submissions was 1st February 2016.

IRTS prepared its submission in order to address the global concerns and objectives of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) of which IRTS is the Irish member society:

Ensure an adequate supply of suitable spectrum is allocated and is available to the amateur service and amateur-satellite service in the range 0 kHz to 3THz,

Ensure the overall noise floor in all current frequency bands does not increase to a level where small signal reception is not feasible in a typical domestic environment, which would make the hobby unattractive to many persons, and

Make every effort to encourage young people to take an interest in radiocommunications and other ICT subjects through amateur radio, thus facilitating a motivated and knowledgeable nucleus of people who are likely to be employed in the ICT sector in later years.

During the period of the Draft ComReg Strategy, IRTS proposed that the following initiatives should be implemented:

Release the new frequency band secured at last year's World Radiocommunication Conference, 5351.5 - 5366.5 kHz at as early a date as possible together with alignment with any other frequency allocations that may eventually be made to the amateur service in the UK in the band 5250 - 5450 kHz,

Initially allow daylight only operation in the band segment 7200 - 7300 kHz with the long term objective of alignment with ITU Region 2. This initiative would help alleviate congestion, especially at weekends, in one of the most popular amateur allocations,

An increase in power to the standard 26 dBW (400 watts) in the band 10.100 - 10.150 MHz,

Upgrade the status of the amateur service to national primary in 50 - 51 MHz to align with the UK,

Extension of the 70 MHz band from 69.9 or 70.0 MHz to 70.5 MHz to align with the CEPT European common frequency allocation table ECA, and

Initiate discussion at an early date on the introduction of a Novice Licence on the basis of a submission already made by the IRTS.

The remaining items on the 'Spectrum Wish-List' in Table 1 opposite could be progressed over time. All submissions to the consultation will eventually be included in the ComReg submissions document for electronic publication.

Committee Notes

Committee meetings were held in Portlaoise and Athlone in January and February.

Seán EI7CD expressed a desire to move aside from his role as the Society's IARU Representative after lengthy service. All present thanked Seán for his unparalleled service in that role.

It was agreed to appoint Dave Court EI3IO as the Society's IARU Representative and also to the position of HF Manager. Dave is a member of the Executive Committee of IARU Region 1.

Seán EI7CD continues as ComReg Liaison and in his role on the Licence Examination Board.

Ger McNamara EI4GXB has stepped down as Youth Officer. Many thanks to Ger for his work in organising and administering the YOTA programme. The Society is

reviewing its youth programme and future participation in Youth on The Air.

John Owen-Jones EI1EM has been appointed to the position of Minutes Secretary.

Micheal Foertig EI3GYB is the new IARUMS Coordinator. The purpose of the IARU Monitoring Service is to defend the amateur bands against non-authorized use and reports of intruders to Michael are encouraged.

Peter Grant EI4HX has indicated has stepped down as Awards Curator. Peter has ensured that all cups and trophies are cleaned and engraved for the AGM each year. Thanks to Peter for his contribution to the Society over many years.

Larry McGriskin EI9CN has been appointed as Awards Curator.

Band	Frequency Range	Reason for Proposal	Priority High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
1	1800 – 1810 kHz	To align with ITU R2	L
2	3800 – 3850 kHz	To provide more overlap with R2 and R3 allocations	L
3	5250 – 5351.5 kHz	Seek alignment with any UK allocation made to the amateur service in this range. This would provide more flexibility to avoid primary services.	M
4	5351.5 – 5366.5 kHz	WRC-15's award of a new secondary allocation to the amateur service	H
5	5366.5 – 5450 kHz	Seek alignment with any UK allocation made to the amateur service in this range. This would provide additional flexibility to avoid primary services.	M
6	7200 – 7300 kHz	To align with R2 following the gradual decline in HF broadcasting. Could be a timed daylight only allocation initially, which would help alleviate congestion, especially at weekends in one of the most popular amateur allocations.	H
7	10100 – 10200 kHz	Extending band by 50 kHz to provide additional capacity for intra Irish voice communications in this congested and popular band plus an increase of power.	M
8	30 – 49 MHz	Sub-band allocation circa ISM band at 40.68 MHz and/or provision of assignments to propagation beacons to facilitate research as suggested by CEPT in the 1990s	M
9	50 – 52 MHz	Upgrade status of amateur service to national primary in 50 – 51 MHz to align with UK. NOC to 51 – 52 MHz	H
10	52 – 54 MHz	To harmonise 50 MHz allocation with Regions 2 and 3. See also Agenda Item 1.1 of WRC-19	M
11	54 – 69.9 MHz	Sub-band allocations or individual assignments to propagation beacons (suggested by CEPT) and digital amateur television repeater outputs (downlinks).	M
12	69.9 – 70.125 MHz	To align with ECA lower 70 MHz band limit to facilitate the implementation of spectrum designated for propagation beacons in the IARU-R1 plan * L for 69.9 – 70 MHz	H*
13	70.45 – 70.50 MHz	To align with ECA upper 70 MHz band limit to facilitate the implementation of spectrum designated for FM voice communications in the IARU-R1 plan	H
14	70.5 – 71.5 MHz	To align with UK NRA's offer to facilitate digital experimentation. Similar licensing conditions to UK are suggested, which may also ease UK access to the band in Northern Ireland.	L
15	146 – 147 MHz	To align with UK NRA's offer to facilitate experimentation with wide-band digital modes (including television) and to partially align with R2 band limits. Similar licensing conditions to UK are suggested, which may also ease UK access to the band in Northern Ireland.	M
16	3 400 – 3 410 MHz	To align with EU17 of the ECA – use of guard-band to improve efficient and effective utilisation of spectrum.	M

Table 1 – IRTS Current and Future Spectrum Wish-List



IARU Matters

Dave Court EI3IO

Before, During and After the 2015 ITU World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-15)

Introduction

The frequency bands available to radio amateurs and, indeed, all users of the RF spectrum are contained in the Radio Regulations, a treaty instrument of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), a United Nations specialised agency. The Radio Regulations also include the international regulatory framework to facilitate the coexistence of radiocommunications and the avoidance of interference.

Variations to the Radio Regulations may be implemented to meet regional requirements, provided that harmful interference will not result. In Ireland's case, the relevant Regional Telecommunications Organisation (RTO) is the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT), probably best known in amateur circles for the CEPT Amateur Radio Licence and the HAREC (licence exam) process.

Changes to the Radio Regulations can be made at World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRC) which take place every four years, provided that a relevant agenda item is included. The most recent (WRC-15) was held in November 2015, so the next one will be in 2019. Preparation for WRC-19 is already under way, the first preparatory meeting having taken place three days after the close of WRC-15.

At a global and regional level, the interests of radio amateurs are represented by the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU). IRTS is a member of IARU and the Society is represented on the IARU's regional committees that look after spectrum related activities, including preparation for the WRCs and other decision-making forums that have a direct impact on the amateur service. In the paragraphs below the key issues for radio amateurs dealt with at WRC-15 are addressed, as well as agenda items for WRC-19 that are likely to be of interest.

WRC Preparations

At the regional level, IARU Region 1 (Europe, Middle East and Africa) has Observer status in CEPT's Electronic Communications Committee (ECC), and IARU representatives are generally present when amateur radio issues are on the agenda of the Committee or its Working Groups. IARU R1 delegates are also present in the ECC Conference Preparatory Group (CPG), a semi-autonomous body established principally to prepare for WRCs and develop European Common Proposals (ECPs). At the CPG and its Project Teams IARU R1 advise on the positions to be taken by CEPT countries on WRC agenda items which impact amateur radio.

The technical bases for WRCs are prepared in several sessions of the Conference Preparatory Meeting, with technical input from ITU Radiocommunication Study Groups. Study Group 5 deals with terrestrial communications, including amateur radio. IARU fields a multi-national team in SG5 and Working Party 5A to promote and support the quest

for new frequency allocations and to preserve and protect spectrum already supporting amateur radio.

WRC-15 – Individual Agenda Items relevant to Amateur Service

This section gives a short summary of the decisions made by WRC-15 that are of relevance to amateur radio.

5250 – 5450 kHz

The most important item on the WRC-15 agenda for the Amateur Service was item 1.4, the 5 MHz (60 metre) item - "to consider possible new allocation to the Amateur Service on a secondary basis within the band 5250 - 5450 kHz." This proved to be a contentious issue both outside and within the amateur movement. After some intense discussions and negotiations, the Amateur Service was granted a 15 kHz secondary allocation from 5351.5 to 5366.5 kHz, where in European countries a maximum radiated power of 15 W (eirp) shall not be exceeded. An ITU press release states that the band will maintain stable communications over various distances, especially for use when providing communications in disaster situations and for relief operations.

How CEPT and other countries will interpret or treat this provision, as well as the spectrum already granted at 5 MHz has yet to be seen. On precisely these issues there were differing views within amateur circles at the WRC, some delegates proposed not to accept the 15 kHz, 15 W solution since it might prejudice the spectrum already in use with considerably higher power levels. Those supporting acceptance of what was on offer argued that any spectrum internationally agreed was better than nothing at all since it was unlikely that after two attempts at a WRC allocation, there would be little possibility of a third chance arising in the foreseeable future, whereas with an allocation already in place it might be easier to improve the situation latterly. This latter view prevailed, providing the Amateur Service with its first new internationally agreed HF band since 1979.

3400 MHz

Arguably the most important agenda item for many WRC participants involved the search for a large amount of additional spectrum for mobile broadband. This was a possible threat to a number of amateur bands above 1 GHz. However it is only the 3400 – 3500 MHz band that is allocated to the Amateur Service in Regions 2 and 3 that was directly impacted. Those countries which decide to use the band for mobile broadband may impose some restrictions on amateur use of the band. The band has never been widely available in Region 1 (with the exception of Germany, Israel and United Kingdom) although CEPT administrations in the ECA are requested to provide the segment 3400 - 3410 MHz for amateur applications and several countries have made this segment available. In many countries this 10 MHz acts as a guard-band between radar and radiolocation below 3400 MHz, and fixed and mobile services above 3400 MHz. IRTS is in communication with ComReg concerning the release of this band in Ireland.



IARU Delegation WRC-15

Sitting from left to right: Bryan Rawlings VE3QN (Canada), IARU Region 3 Secretary Ken Yamamoto JA1CJP (JARL), Hans Blondeel Timmerman PB2T (Netherlands), Colin Thomas G3PSM (UK).

Standing from left to right: IARU Vice-President Ole Garpestad LA2RR (Norway), IARU Region 2 President Reinaldo Leandro YV5AM, Ulrich Muller DK4VW (DARC), ARRL Chief Technology Officer Brennan Price N4QX (USA) and IARU Region 3 Director Don Wallace ZL2TLL (New Zealand).

Not pictured was Flavio Archangelo PY2ZX (Brazil) who worked tirelessly with the CITEL group and Dale Hughes VK1DSH (Australia) the sub-working group Chairman who successfully steered the 5 MHz agenda item through to a successful conclusion, IARU President Tim Ellam VE6SH and IARU Region 1 Vice-President Faisal Alajmi 9K2RR (Kuwait/ASMG) .

Photo courtesy of LA2RR and IARU-R1

10.4 – 10.45 GHz

Agenda Item 1.12 posed a threat to part of the 10 GHz secondary allocation in the segment 10.4 – 10.45 GHz. The Earth Exploration Satellite Service has a primary allocation in the frequency band 10.0 – 10.4 GHz which they were seeking to extend. For this item the WRC took no decisions that would impact the Amateur Service.

77.5 – 78.0 GHz

The Radiolocation Service was given primary status in this band; however radiolocation usage is to be restricted to radars for automotive applications.

Miscellaneous

Some countries improved the status of amateur radio in some frequency bands by deleting their country names from various regulatory provisions e.g. Uruguay (1850 – 2000 kHz and 3750 – 4000 kHz), Honduras (3500 – 3750 kHz), Kenya (7000 – 7050 kHz) and Tanzania (430 – 440 MHz).

Prior to WRC-15 the following agenda items were considered to have some concern for amateur radio, but during the WRC it transpired that for the moment the focus was on frequency bands not allocated to the Amateur Service:

Agenda Item 1.6.1 – to consider possible additional primary allocations to the Fixed-Satellite Service (Earth-to space and space-to-Earth) of 250 MHz in the range between 10 GHz and 17 GHz in Region 1; and

Agenda Item 1.10 – to consider spectrum requirements and possible additional spectrum allocations for the Mobile-Satellite Service in the Earth-to-space and space- to-Earth directions, including the satellite component for

broadband applications, including International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT), within the frequency range from 22 GHz to 26 GHz.

WRC-19 Agenda

A WRC is charged with establishing the agenda for the next WRC as well as a provisional agenda for subsequent conferences. A proposed IARU agenda item to align the 160m allocation in Region 1 with the rest of the world was not successful; the IARU team therefore focused its efforts on obtaining a 50 MHz (6 metre) agenda item. As a result, WRC-19 agenda Item 1.1 will consider 50 – 54 MHz harmonisation in Region 1.

Another notable success for the IARU team concerns WRC-19 agenda item 1.7 regarding spectrum studies for short-mission satellites where IARU argued forcibly for the removal of the amateur satellite allocations at 144 – 148 MHz (2 metres in Region 2) and 420 – 450 MHz (70 centimetres in Region 2) from further consideration by specifying that the frequency ranges 150.05 – 174 MHz and 400.15 – 420 MHz may be considered for possible new allocations.

One factor the conference considered in deciding on those particular frequency ranges was that, contrary to the provisions of the ITU Radio Regulations defining the amateur and amateur-satellite services, some non-amateur satellites have used frequencies for telemetry, tracking, and command in the frequency bands 144 – 146 MHz and 435 – 438 MHz which are exclusive to the Amateur-Satellite Service.

Post WRC-15

WRC-15 concluded its business Friday, 27 November 2015 and the first ITU Conference Preparatory Meeting (CPM-1) for WRC-19 met Monday, 30 November 2015, closing on

1 December 2015. CPM-1 organised the preparatory studies for WRC-19 and proposed a structure for its report to WRC-19. With one exception, all the preparatory work will be performed within the framework of the foreseen work programme and organisation of the ITU Study Groups. However, ITU-R Study Group 5 (terrestrial radiocommunications) has been invited to establish a dedicated Task Group to consider additional allocations to the Mobile Service on a primary basis to be identified for the future development of International Mobile (broadband) Telecommunications (IMT). This agenda item may have some implications for the Amateur Service.

But the main focus for IARU R1 will be on Agenda Item 1.1 and the global harmonisation of 6 metres in the band 50 – 54 MHz. The CPM report to WRC-19 will have to address sharing between the Amateur Service and the mobile, fixed, radiolocation and broadcasting services, in order to ensure protection for these services. IARU Region 1 will be leading the IARU team on this agenda item since the band is already allocated to the Amateur Service in Regions 2 and 3. CEPT and other RTOs will shortly be establishing their Conference Preparatory Groups to formulate CEPT's WRC-19 input to the ITU bodies. On behalf of its Member Societies and their members, IARU will be tracking most of the preparations in the RTOs and ITU to ensure that the amateur community has the best possible chance of securing a good result for 6 metres and preserving current allocations to the Amateur Service and Amateur-Satellite Service.

CEPT, other RTOs and national regulators will also be addressing any implications arising from WRC-15 with a view to implementing the decisions of that Conference.

Summary

This article attempts to demonstrate that IARU regulatory work is a continuous activity within a four-year cycle of ITU conference preparation at both regional and international levels. When one conference finishes, preparation for the next WRC starts immediately. It is hoped that securing new spectrum allocations and protecting existing frequency bands provides IRTS members with worthwhile benefits and good value for money.

It should also be mentioned that ITU WRC work is not the only regulatory work in which IARU is involved. EMC issues, standardisation activities and non-ionising radiation matters are equally important and IARU is also involved with the work of CENELEC, CISPR, ETSI, EU, ICNIRP and IEC.

IRTS would also like to take this opportunity to thank the radio amateurs from around the World who were in the IARU delegation at WRC-15, as well as those amateurs representing their IARU Member Society in national delegations, for their magnificent effort to promote and support the goals and objectives of IARU in Geneva last November.

Note: While the author was not physically present at WRC-15 he has been involved in ITU and CEPT activities since 1975 and has tracked WRC-15 progress before and during the Conference. Following retirement in early 2014, appointment as an IRTS Committee member and IARU-R1 expert and thereafter election to the IARU-R1 Executive Committee, Dave will be taking a more active role in WRC-19 preparations and other spectrum management initiatives.

World First for Amateur Radio

Daniel Cussen EI9FHB

On February 4th there was a world first for Amateur Radio. For the last 15 years there have been voice contacts between the International Space Station and schools on the ground. Last week the first every amateur video downlink with a school took place. This allowed the school children to see as well as talk to the astronaut on board. This is the completion of a long term project involving many volunteers from across the globe.

The Irish HAMTV ground station in Elfordstown near Middleton in Cork took part in the contact receiving live video on 2395Mhz along with other European ground stations.

Hopefully live video will become part of routine school contacts in the future.



Daniel EI9FHB at the console



Tom EI7HT watching the internet transmission from the UK on his phone and listening to the audio directly from the ISS on his handheld as it happened at Elfordstown, East Cork.



More on 5MHz Seán Nolan EI7CD

Just days after delegates to the World Radiocommunications Conference 2015 (WRC-15) reached a consensus on a new global 15 kHz allocation at 5 MHz to the amateur service the Netherlands opened a 100 kHz band for amateur radio use. Amateur stations in the Netherlands have been authorised to use 5350-5450 kHz at up to 100 W PEP.

WRC-15 laid the foundation for a global secondary allocation to the amateur service of 5351.5 to 5366.5 kHz at up to 15 W effective isotropic radiated power (some Region 2 countries will be permitted to use up to 25 W EIRP). The new allocation is to take effect from 1 January 2017 although the band has effectively been already released by Spain and the Netherlands. The smaller-than-hoped-for allocation, the unusual band edges and the modest power limits reflect the difficult compromise and the protracted negotiations that were required to reach a decision on the matter. Given that the US and Russia, along with a couple dozen other countries, were committed to “no change”, the outcome though modest was against the odds and at least opens the door to this band.

Amateur use of the band 5250-5450 kHz is relatively recent and was first introduced about the year 2000. Currently more than 50 countries, including Ireland, allow amateur use of the band either in full or in part. These licences, issued by national telecommunications administrations in accordance with Article 4.4 of the ITU Radio Regulations, have not led to harmful interference to radiocommunications services operating in this frequency band.

Article 4.4 of the ITU Radio Regulations allows countries authorise frequency assignments that are contrary to the international table of *Frequency Allocations*. It states:

4.4 Administrations of the Member states shall not assign to a station any Frequency in derogation of either the Table of Frequency Allocations in this Chapter or the other provisions of these Regulations, except on the express Condition that such a station when using such a frequency assignment, shall not cause harmful interference to, and shall not claim protection from harmful interference caused by a station operating in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the Convention and these Regulations.

Using this provision, other countries may hopefully follow the lead of the Netherlands administration.

In its response to the Consultation on ComReg’s Radio Spectrum Management Strategy 2016 to 2018 (ComReg Document 15/131), IRTS indicated that it is grateful that active consideration will be given by ComReg to the release of the 15 kHz band at 5 MHz. The view was expressed by the Society that, given the minimal possibilities of harmful interference and already a proposed entry in the 2016 European Common allocations table, the 15 kHz band could be released without delay.

The Society also expressed the view that it seems likely that some administrations may retain their existing 5 MHz channel arrangements for the amateur service to meet disaster relief and general operational requirements. It was pointed out that prior to WRC-15 UK amateurs negotiated a considerable amount of additional spectrum over and above their original five assigned 3 kHz channels. IRTS expressed the wish to secure facilities which are the same or similar to any solution eventually provided in the UK, in the range 5250-5450 kHz. The question of expanded 5 MHz facilities was raised by IRTS in response to the previous spectrum strategy consultation for the period 2011-2013.

Radio News Bulletins and Readers

Sunday

National	1100	7.123	SSB	Sean EI7CD, Ger EI4GXB, Paul EI2CA
National	1130	7.128	SSB	(as Gaeilge) Paddy EI7GK, Danny EI6GS
Dublin	1145	145.525	FM	Tony EI5EM, John EI7JG, Frank EI6EF, Liam EI3HK
National	1200	3.650	SSB	Ger EI4GXB, Sean EI7CD, Eddie EI3FFB
Mayo	2100	145.600	FM	Padraic EI9JA, John EI7FAB, Mike EI2EO, John EI3JM, Dominic EI9JS
Tipperary	2030	145.450	FM	Tommy EI2IT, Eddie EI3FFB

Monday

Cork	2000	145.750	FM	Vincent EI7HN
Limerick	2000	145.725	FM	Brian EI9AL, Simon EI7ALB, Ger EI4GXB, Liam EI7DSB, Tony EI2AW
Louth	2000	145.675	FM	Tony EI4DIB, Thos EI2JD, Anthony EI2KC, Jim EI2HJB

Tuesday

Waterford	2130	145.650	FM	David EI6GVB
North Cork	2030	430.925	FM	Lisa EI9GSB, Robbie EI3GGB



AMATEUR RADIO LICENSING

Brian Whelan EI8EJB

A History of Everything and More...

In the last two months of 1926, the Department of Posts & Telegraphs was most certainly a flurry of civil servant pre-processor activity. The Minister at the time, J. J. Walsh, presented a new Bill to the Dáil on the 17th November, which he then presented to the Seanad on the 15th December.

During his presentation to the members of the Seanad, the Minister explained that (quote) *“The Bill is practically entirely concerned with the collection of licence fees. The existing law is not sufficient to enable us to proceed and get people, ‘by the neck,’ so to speak, to pay their money”*.

The Minister requested that the Seanad should hurry the new Bill through their House, stating that *“I should be grateful if the Seanad facilitated its passage within the next few days”*. He got his wish; on Christmas Eve, 1926, the new Bill was signed into law.

And the name of that new Bill?

It was and still is the *Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1926 (No. 45/1926)*.

This is the primary legislation from which all things relating to the legality of wireless telegraphy in the Irish Republic is based upon. Since the creation of that original Act ninety years ago, while the fundamentals have basically remained unchanged to the present day, there have been many Statutory Instruments (S.I.s) enacted over the years allowing for subtle changes to be made to the everyday workings of the Act.

The original act was extremely well drafted and pretty much intended to be future-proof. By this I mean that provision was made to control the use of wireless telegraphy apparatus in aircraft and ships, as well as foreseeing the possibility of transmitting images and pictures! Pretty sharp! Our civil servants must have had good 4G reception on their crystal balls back then...

Rolling on the years now to 1937, the then Minister, Oscar Traynor, signed into law a certain Wireless Telegraphy (Experimenter's Licence) Regulations 1937 (No. 330/1937) which made “Experimenters” out of all those individuals who tinkered about with wireless telegraphy apparatus as a hobby.

As an aside, these Experimenter's Licence Regulations were signed into law on 28th December 1937; it would appear that the Christmas period was always very fruitful and productive at the Department of Post & Telegraphs in those days, but I'd say that their Christmas office parties would have just been the pits!

Time moved on and after many more S.I.s, (mostly concerning changes to the Experimenters Licence fees instigated by the Department of Finance's greedy little hands), we finally get to the bit of legislation that concerns

the current day Amateur Radio operator in Ireland; *the Wireless Telegraphy (Amateur Station Licence) Regulations 2009 (No.192/2009)*

This S.I. brought Amateur Radio licensing in this country up to speed in modern Ireland. Mostly.

I will clarify that statement later.

The first and foremost thing to remember when you think about your Amateur Station licence is that (thanks to the 1926 Act) it is your *wireless telegraphy apparatus, i.e. your radio, that is licensed*, not the operator or individual. I am not EI8EJB. My radio equipment at the location specified in the appropriate licence is EI8EJB. Not me.

Yes, I know. It is a pretty hard thing to accept. All the Amateur Radio operators walking around with their baseball caps and tee-shirts emblazoned with an EI or EJ callsign are just simply advertising their actual station's assigned callsign, not themselves. Every Amateur Radio operator licensed in the State is a *licensee*, defined in the Regulations as just a mere “holder of a licence”.

It's a bit unfair. Was it your fancy Elecraft/Yaesu/Icom/Kenwood/Ten-Tec radio that spent all that time studying and fretting the night before sitting the Amateur Station Licence exam? Was it your fancy radio that paid out the dosh for the licence in the first instance?

Of course not! It was the *licensee* who did all that, while the apparatus gets the glory of obtaining the fancy new callsign. In most other countries, operators get licensed as well as their station. One of the only other countries that I can think of that solely licenses the apparatus is Ethiopia.

So... It's your *equipment* that has “your” licence. You've gotten over that bombshell.

Next, what if you want to take your radio for a little spin in your car/lorry/lunar rover/canoe/Kon Tiki raft... Will the very fact that your equipment is no longer at its licensed location make your Amateur Radio operation in breach of the licence conditions?

No. You're catered for. Under the *Amateur Radio Guidelines (ComReg 09/45R1)*, which are the, er... guidelines for those applying for an Amateur Station Licence (on behalf of your radio equipment, which, according to the 1926 Act you should *not possess before* the licence is in place... feel the headache coming on yet?), well anyway, under the Modes of Operation section, Section 8.1 and 8.2 allow for the use of /M for mobile operation and /MM for maritime operation respectively.

And that's it.

Hands up everyone who has used their EI or EJ (radio's) callsign with /P appended as a suffix? Technically, it's not provided for under the Guidelines. I'm just saying...
If you use your hand portable radio when you are out and about braving our beautiful Irish inclement weather, what callsign do you use?

You can't use just the callsign because you are not at the specified location; you can't use /P, it's technically not available; you can't use /M, because you are not specifically in a vehicle; nor can you use /MM, especially if your current location is on top of Carrauntoohil!

What do you use? If you go by the book, then you can't use the radio at all. You might as well just stick it back in your pocket and casually wait to be prosecuted under Section 3.3 of the Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1926 for having possession of unlicensed wireless apparatus. Remember the Amateur Station licence only covers the said apparatus at the specified location in the licence. Unless, that is, if you are located in a car or a ship or, the best of both worlds, in your car on the car ferry ship.

How's that headache now? I'm only just getting warmed up...

Having said all that about operating outside of your licensed fixed location and getting prosecuted under Section blah blah blah..., there is always the loophole.

Ireland is a country full of myths, legends, potholes and loopholes. But I am not going to reveal it.

OK then, I will. I believe that "sharing is caring" and all that Barney the Dinosaur preaches.

Without looking it up, who can honestly state what details should be included in their logbook?

It is a condition of the Amateur Station Licence that, according to the Guidelines, "a detailed logbook should be kept and maintained at the Amateur Station". The Guidelines go on to detail that each logbook should record the following information:

- Dates of transmission
- The times (in GMT standard time) during each day of the first and last transmissions from the Station and changes made to the frequency band, mode of emission or power.
- Frequency band of transmission
- Mode of transmission
- Power level (dBW or W)
- Initial calls ("CQ" calls) whether or not they are answered
- The call-sign of the licensed Amateur Stations with which communications have been established and
- Location when the station is operated other than at the main Amateur Station Address

I am absolutely sure that everyone abides by this licence condition of accurate logbook keeping, especially Time and Mode.

But let me draw your attention to Location, m'lud. I put it to you, does this requirement allow you to just note in your logbook that your location of operation at a certain time was not, in fact, at your station's warm and cosy licensed location, but rather on a craggy outcrop sheltering from Storm Theresa on Carrauntoohil? Maybe this Location requirement was more directed towards mobile or maritime operation, but it's not exactly specified as such. Loophole (sort of) dealt with. I rest my case...

A few "Did You Know's" now from both the Regulations and the Guidelines:

- Possession of any unlicensed wireless apparatus is instantly punishable by death. I just slipped that in to see if anyone was still paying attention or reading this article... Actually, if you are in possession of any wireless telegraphy apparatus, be it in your handbag, your pocket, on your property, under the bed, wherever, regardless of whether it's powered on or off and you don't have a licence to cover that piece of apparatus, then you most certainly can be **put to death** prosecuted! Only in 2005 were GPS *receivers* exempted from a requirement to be licensed under S.I. 197 of 2005. This particular S.I. also exempts all receivers in general from requiring a licence; scanner owners, give a big cheer now...
- The holder of an Amateur Station Licence must be a legal entity that is legally capable of holding a licence (*Guidelines 4.1.11*)
- Coded messaging to obscure meaning not allowed. So no scramblers, gentlemen (*2009 Regulations 7.(1)(r)*)

There are some other little errors or faux pas in the Guidelines that I won't bother going into detail here but perhaps they could possibly be amended /edited/ changed/ thrown out in the next revision of the Guidelines (which should be Amateur Station Guidelines Revision 3: *Rise of The Regulator*).

The actual 2009 Regulations seem sound enough, so leave well enough alone. It's the Guidelines that is the thing that Joe Public the Ham goes to. It's the document that should be read and studied *BEFORE* making your licence application and should be consulted and followed religiously from the time you get to operate using your newly licensed wireless apparatus.

I started this fascinating, scintillating, journalistically wonderful article as a sort of a history of where our current Irish Amateur Radio licensing framework all began, but I ended up discovering some little errors in the current Guidelines document which I have brought to the attention of the Society. I do not mean to be critical of the Regulator in any way whatsoever; I, for one, know the pressures that the staff are under in there.

So, how's that headache now, then....?

73s

Brian Whelan
Official legal entity licensee for the EISEJB licence

WORKSHOP TALKS

We have a stimulating and interesting programme of talks for Saturday 9th April. Admission is free. The programme starts at 1400 and finishes around 1700, followed by practical demonstrations.

WARC 2015 has granted a new amateur allocation at 5MHz. The allocation should be available from January 2017. Now is the time to prepare. Above our heads aircraft and man-made satellites are whizzing by. Our nearest planet silhouettes the night sky. Learn how we can use these objects to communicate.

And for the home birds there will be plenty to explore under the topic of Radio Sport. Lots to talk about over dinner.



Radio Sport with a focus on Shorter Contests" - Joe Ryan EI7GY

Joe has been contesting since the 1980s and now prefers short events. He was appointed IRTS Contest Manager in 2015, having served as the society's Membership Records Officer from 1991 to 2014. His myriad of contributions to IRTS include the most recent redesign of the society's website.

Using Aircraft Scatter on VHF/UHF/SHF - Andreas Imse DJ5AR



First licensed in 1975, Andreas was always interested in unusual propagation modes including meteor scatter, sporadic E and Moonbounce on 23 and 13cm. After a break he returned to the hobby in 2011 and started experimenting with 23cm EME using a 3m dish. He had a successful International Space Station (ISS)-bounce in 2013 and continues with experiments in aircraft scatter and satellite bounce.

A member of IRTS, Andreas holds the call EI8HH. His article *Aircraft Scatter and ISS Bounce* in the society's journal *Echo Ireland* has received international attention.

NVIS Propagation—Theory and Practice - Steve Wright EI5DD



Steve holds a major interest in exploiting NVIS propagation for local and national use on 160m through 60m. He uses weak signal modes to correlate propagation with ionogram data. A member of Galway VHF Group he also takes an interest in 6m operation. His involvement with AREN since the 1980s exposed him to planning communication from HF to UHF taking into account the varying terrain around Galway, Connemara and the Burren.



Experimental Amateur Radio using the Radiotelescope in Dwingeloo - Andreas Imse DJ5AR

Since 2009 the Dwingeloo Radio Telescope in the Netherlands has been designated as a National Monument. The 25m dish is available to radio amateurs to experiment with EME. Andreas describes how anyone can work EME with only a simple antenna at one end - and the telescope at the other.

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Simon Kenny EI7ALB kenmare32@eircom.net

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HF Happenings February 2016

Anthony Murphy EI2KC

Spring is upon us and the lengthening of days is starting to become really noticeable. The past winter has been an interesting one on the bands, and one of mixed conditions. As usual, there was a preponderance of DXpeditions over the winter time, following from the dearth of rare ones last summer.

The other thing that was notable about the winter was the number of storms. Unfortunately, my Hexbeam suffered damage during three of them and, as I write this, three of the wires are snapped and dangling down until such time as I can get a couple of volunteers in good weather to come up and help me repair it.

I know that several others suffered damage to their antenna systems too. I hope that you have been able to carry out repairs without incurring too much hassle or cost. I can certainly see the advantage of a wind-up, tilt-over mast, to allow an antenna to be lowered down in the wind, and perhaps to enable more convenient access to it when it's damaged.

Recent DX

There were a few fairly major activations of rare entities over the course of the winter, along with the usual smaller activations and one-man holiday-style efforts. I will discuss a few of these. The most notable of the big ones for me were those that provided an All-Time New One (ATNO).

VK9WA Willis Island

At the time of writing the last HF Happenings, VK9WA Willis Island was coming on the air. I managed a QSO with them on November 16th on 17m CW, and was delighted to get the brand new DXCC – number 316 for me – into the log. However, with regular log updates online, I was able to check for my call and it wasn't in their log. After a short search, I found that ES2KC was in their log instead. This is something that happens from time to time, a “busted” call. An extra dit was heard, perhaps, although I certainly didn't send it, and EI became ES in the ears and mind of the guy working the pile-up. It would be another four days before I would get into the log properly – again on 17m CW, except this time I made

sure he had it 100% right! I followed this over the next couple of days with a QSO on 17m SSB and then 15m CW.

While VK9WA did use Club Log, they disabled the Leaderboards feature (some would say this is a good idea!) so I cannot easily tell who made the most QSOs from EI. What I can see from the propagation tool is that nobody in Ireland worked Willis on 10m. There were nine QSOs on 12m, 17 on 15m, 24 on 17m (which was the best band for EI), 19 on 20m, 10 on 30m, nine on 40m, and I have to congratulate the five EIs who made it on 80m. By manually searching their call signs, I could ascertain four of the five - EI9KC, EI5JQ, EI3KG and EI2CN.

S79C Coetivy Island (Seychelles) – IOTA AF-119

There was a very nice activation of Coetivy Island in the Seychelles by a team which included our own Dave Deane EI9FBB during November. Although not a new DXCC, it was a new IOTA for me and I enjoyed putting them in my log on a number of different bands and modes. I managed to have a quick chat with Dave EI9FBB who was on the mic on 10m SSB. Congratulations to all 50 EIs who made it into the log. Top of the pile were EI9KC, EI7BA and EI6FR with 10 QSOs each, EI6IL with nine, EI2KC with eight (yippee!), EI9FVB with seven, and EI9HC, EI5GM and EI8IU on five apiece. The log is here www.clublog.org/charts/?c=S79C#

K5P Palmyra

The activation of Palmyra in January caused great excitement because it was such a rare one – the ninth most-wanted DX entity and the second most-wanted in Europe. However, the excitement soon gave way to frustration. Their signals could not be heard very well in Europe, especially by anyone who didn't have a three or four-element beam. This was partly due to propagation conditions, which weren't good, and partly due to the fact that K5P were using vertical antennas. Indeed, the team reported that a lot of the European signals were “surprisingly weak and fluttery”. The frustration spilled over on to the DX clusters and into website commentaries and reflectors. I won't repeat any of it here, but suffice to say that there were some extremely derogatory remarks which failed to take account of such things as poor propagation plus the restrictions which had been placed on K5P in terms of the type of antennas they could use. I will quote the comments of K5P team member Lou Dietrich N2TU on DX-World.net:

Thank you for all your comments! Especially from EU. Propagation during the first week, coupled with polar paths made QSOs with EU quite a chore. We were aware of the openings and stood by for EU but the solar gods were just not with us. Happily, the second week was a bit better and we raised our EU worked to over 11%.

As for the rest of the world, I have to thank each and every one of you! Thanks for your patience and courtesy! At times, we had excellent propagation to NA, SA, AS and OC and we asked you to standby for EU openings. You were extremely courteous and professional. The Ham Spirit is alive!



Anthony EI2KC First Place on 10 Metres

Many have asked why we didn't use yagis. Part of the permission requirement prohibited the use of yagis due to the possibility of bird strikes. We would have loved to use yagi but alas, it was not permitted.

Please also remember, all our heavy equipment had to be shipped to Palmyra in April 2015, a full 8 months before the operation. We had to anticipate conditions on the atoll, propagation and severe antenna placements well before we stepped onto the Atoll.

So to all that criticized us, I feel bad you didn't make the log. We even had a HB9 5 watt QRPer complain he didn't make a QSO from over 10,000 miles away, across the poles, break the pile-ups during extremely short openings and make the log. Take a minute and think about that one!

As for the complaints about remote operation, the Team on the atoll cannot police the policy. We can simply log what we hear and move on.

To those that spent countless hours trying to work that ATNO, congratulations! You are among the Deserving! To those that patiently stood by, Thank you from the Team!

I only heard them twice during the whole activation. During a two-minute fluttery opening on January 15th I managed a QSO with them on 20m CW. It was a real edge-of-the-seat experience. They were so low as to be barely audible, and although I thought I heard my call sign coming back, with the flutter so bad I had to repeat several times to be sure. But I was delighted, because this was an ATNO for me, and getting even one QSO is a tremendous achievement, especially under the circumstances. That was DXCC #317 in my log!

I have to congratulate in particular my fellow Louth-based DXer, Don EI6IL, who was top of the pile with three QSOs. There are twenty eight EIs in the log. Eleven of you managed two QSOs – the rest of us have to be content with one! The log is here - www.clublog.org/charts/?c=K5P#.

VP8STI and VP8SGI South Sandwich and South Georgia

Further excitement was stirred by the coming on air of VP8STI and VP8SGI, South Sandwich and South Georgia, by the Intrepid team. South Sandwich was the third most-wanted DX entity, while South Georgia was the eighth. They were both in the top ten most-wanted list! As it happens, I did not need South Georgia as a new one, having worked VP8DOZ in March of last year. However, that did not stop me from trying to work VP8SGI on a few bands.

I had a particular interest in this DXpedition because I had been impressed by the Microlite DXpedition to these two entities back in 2002, which featured our very own Declan Craig EI6FR. Some time ago I watched the documentaries about these activations on DVD (and also ZL8R Kermadec and ZL9CI Campbell DXpeditions which Declan had also been on). These documentaries are now available to watch online, on the Vimeo channel of James 9V1YC who made these brilliant films - <https://vimeo.com/user36455730>

When VP8STI started operations from Thule in South Sandwich, there were, as expected, significant pile-ups. However, it wasn't too long before the EI stations were working them. This is partly due to a bit of an advantage we have in terms of the evening paths. A few days before VP8STI came on air, I had been monitoring RI1ANR, the Novo Runway Airbase in Antarctica. On January 14th I was able to work RI1ANR on 40m CW at 23:24UT, while a 20m CW QSO a couple of days later was remarkably easy with just 100 watts. After 20 and 17m have closed down for eastern Europe, we still have a pop at the likes of South America and VP8. Effectively, depending on the time of evening, we are not competing against all of Germany and Italy for a QSO.

I ended up working VP8STI on eight band slots, including 10m and 40m. I failed to make it on 80m, which was slightly disappointing, but sure you have to leave something for the future! The best single day I had was January 20th, when I nabbed a four slots – 20m CW, 20m SSB, 30m CW and then 40m CW at 00:39UT on the 21st. I was particularly delighted with the 40m CW slot. It was tough going in a large EU pile, with no particularly discernible pattern of operation. Several others struggled to get a 40m QSO, including Declan EI6FR who sent me the following blow-by-blow account of his epic battle:

Well after a disappointing night last night fruitlessly calling VP8STI on 40m SSB despite his very loud, genuine S-9 signal, I was hoping that I would have more success on CW as they seemed to be doing alternate mode nights, and with no work to get up for on Saturday I could stay a little late. So there they are on 40m CW with a nice rate going and I start into it around 8pm. Soon I hear EI6 and my heart gives a little flutter, but its Don 6IL (nice one bud) and my confidence gets a boost. True, my dipole probably going to have to work a bit harder but "I'll keep at it as long as is needed", I say to myself, after all it's not yet dark on Thule so signals can only improve. Then there's a QRX for a change of operator – it's Dima and he's a train on CW, so operator is better but conditions have not improved, but I still feel good about things.

The time ticks by. I'm tired. I'll grab a 30-minute nap. This turns to an hour and I get back to the radio about 2300. Signals have not improved ... much. I set myself a 1am cut-off. Dima is flying, working mainly USA with the odd EU. The QRG is very clear. I'm hearing solid but obviously not so Stateside, as he's having to do many repeats and there's comments of "police" and "DQRM" on the cluster. I spot the odd station he's working, but prop to NA and the speed he's moving make it difficult. My 1am self-made deadline gets shoved out to 2am and I'm now getting worried and thinking 2.30ish. I have noticed that he seems to be liking the 7030-7033 range a lot, so I set my stall on 7.031.73 (the 73 is for luck) and hit the button on the memory keyer. So I'm doing this a lot ... and I guess I make a sorry sight HI. Head down on the operating bench and just the finger on the magic button. I'm almost of that point of hoping for that self-imposed cut-off point to tick over so I can go do the duvet

when EI6FR 5NN. I almost miss it, but wallop, and he's in the log at 01:36, almost five and a half hours after Don

But it feels great and suddenly I don't feel tired at all and am working a ragchew with SA. And that, friends, is why I LOVE DXing!

A quick look at the propagation statistics for VP8STI is interesting. It appears that the best band for EI was 17m, with 59 QSOs. Next best was 45 QSOs on 15m, followed by 40 on 20m. Fourteen of us made it on 10m. My own QSO was nothing short of a fluke. I had given up on hearing them at all. I was in the shack doing other things, and was parked on their 10m CW QRG. For two or three hours I could hear nothing. I was beaming about 220 degrees – where their signals seemed to be a bit better from this QTH, possibly due to nearby terrain. Suddenly at 16:06UT, I heard them CQing. They just came up out of the blue, strong enough to hear clearly . . . “VP8STI UP”. I put in a 2kHz split and called them and instantly I heard “EI2KC 5NN”. I went back with “RR EI2KC 5NN 5NN TU” and they gave “TU”.

I never heard them again after that. So naturally I thought it might have been a pirate. It was so strange. I heard them, worked them, and they disappeared.

But then they had to leave the island abruptly that evening, because the bay where their boat, the Braveheart, had entered, was filling up with ice. They evacuated, leaving all their equipment – radios, antennas, generators, computers (and logs!) behind. I might never find out if that 10m QSO was a good one! However, they were soon able to return to the island, and the final log upload for VP8STI was done when they arrived on South Georgia some days later. And guess what? I was in the log! Nice one.

In all, there were 231 QSOs between Ireland and South Sandwich. This is fantastic. Well done in particular to the nine who made it on 80m, and the three on top band.

The VP8SGI activation followed. I'm not able to comment on this one quite as much, mainly due to the fact that I came down with a severe flu just after it got under way, and was unable to sit at the radio. I did, however, manage five QSOs – two of them before I really hit the floor and another three as I began to feel a little bit better. The statistics for VP8SGI are very interesting. There were 230 QSOs between Ireland and South Georgia – just one fewer than with South Sandwich. The best band for VP8SGI was 20m with 54 QSOs, while 17m and 15m each had 41.

The Leaderboards feature on Club Log was disabled for these DXpeditions (see separate piece on the online poll about this), so without entering in all the call signs manually (which is quite time consuming) I am unable to easily ascertain who had the most QSOs. Well done all. I'm sure these activations will be spoken about for years to come.

7P8C Lesotho

As I write, there is a team of French, Belgian and German ops activating Lesotho as 7P8C. This is not a new one for me, but



EI2KM Team

I've enjoyed making a few QSOs with them. I will endeavour to give a full update in the next issue.

ARRL Contest Win

I was surprised and delighted to receive a certificate from the ARRL recently for the 2014 ARRL 10m contest. I had entered the contest on a casual basis, working a total of 341 QSOs over that weekend when time allowed. I used maximum 100 watts and the antenna was my Antron 99 vertical. It transpired also that I now hold the record in EI for Single Operator Unlimited Mixed Mode. It just goes to show what even a bit of casual contest activity can result in. However, I must stress that it is likely that I was the only entrant in that section, so if the win demonstrates anything, perhaps it's the sparsity of entries in some contests from EI.

EI2KM in the CQWW CW contest

On the subject of contesting, I had the pleasure of taking part in the CQWW CW contest in late November with an international team using the call sign EI2KM. We operated from the QTH of Doug EI2CN and team operators included Alain F8FUA (EI2KM), Stephane F5UOW, Doug EI2CN, Declan EI6FR, Don EI6IL and me. Our best band was 40m, where we made over 1,000 QSOs. We also made 919 contacts on 80m, and 938 on 15m. Using a four-square receive antenna on 160m, we managed 452 QSOs. It was nice to be part of such an illustrious group of operators, and it wasn't all serious contesting – there was a nice social aspect to the weekend too, and indeed there were visits from some of the other local hams, including Brian EI8EJB and Adrian



Brendan EI6IZ EI0R

EI2KJ. The one thing I had to get used to was not sending my own call sign when using the key – EI2KC and EI2KM are very alike!

EI0R team in Top Band Contest

At the end of January, I was invited to participate in the CQWW 160m contest as part of a team of four using the new contest call sign of the WestNet DX Group – EI0R. The operators were Doug EI2CN, Declan EI6FR, Brendan EI6IZ and me. The four-square previously used in CQWW with EI2KM had been improved and was now a Hi-Z 113ft diameter eight circle RX antenna. Thanks to some setup by Brendan EI6IZ, we were able to use diversity receive, with the TX antenna (an inverted L on 2km of radials) in one ear and the eight circle in the other. This proved a great joy to use. It came in very handy when trying to listen in particular for US stations. Using the eight circle, we could significantly lower the big EU signals and enhance the US signals. We operated for 34 hours, working 1,359 QSOs and 72 DXCC with a claimed score of 895,992. Our location on the western fringe of Europe meant we struggled with the far eastern stations, and we therefore had no QSOs with the likes of Japan, China, Korea, etc. I did hear B1V towards the end of the contest and tried repeatedly to work them but to no avail. Declan EI6FR pulled in the longest-haul western station when he put KY7M in Arizona in the log. Both he and Brendan put in some long stints at the radio. Many thanks to Doug EI2CN and his wonderful XYL Anne for their hospitality. Seasoned contesteer Thos EI2JD popped in towards the end of the weekend and was very impressed with our efforts.

Forthcoming DX

XW Laos

Makoto, JA7FGI will be active from Vientiane, Laos as XW7FG between March 29 and April 4, 2016. QRV 80-6m, SSB/RTTY and maybe PSK31. Focus on higher bands. QSL via H/c, eQSL.

PJ7 Sint Maarten

Joel HB9EYA will be active from St Maarten as PJ7/HB9EYA between March 27 and 31, 2016. QRV holiday-style on 10-15-20-40m (local evenings). QSL via home call.

VK9/N Norfolk

Paul, VK5PAS will be active from Norfolk Island as VK9PAS between May 23 and 30, 2016. QRV on HF bands. QSL via M0OXO. Note: This is NOT a DXpedition, but rather a holiday and subsequent attendance at the WIA AGM, so air time will be dependent upon other commitments.

FS & PJ7 Saint Martin and Sint Maarten

Laurent, FM5BH, will be active from both Saint Martin & Sint Maarten between May 1-8, 2016. QRV on 40-10m, mainly CW. QSL via home call.

RI1AND Antarctica

Mike, RW1AI will be working at the Novolazarevskaya base, Antarctica starting April 2016 for one year. Activity as RI1AND during spare time on all bands CW/SSB/digi.

VP8/F Falklands

Gerry, G3WIP (ex-VK0GB) will be active from the Falkland Islands as VP8PDP between February 15 to April 1, 2016. QRV when time permits due to work commitments. QSL via G3ZQQ.

E51AQA – South Cook Islands

Don, VE7AQA will be active from Rarotonga, South Cooks, as E51AQA between March 4 and 19, 2016. QRV on HF bands, holiday-style; SSB. QSL via home call.

VQ5E Turks & Caicos

Clint (W9AV) and Quent (W6RI) will be operating using the contest call VQ5E during the CQ WW WPX Contest on March 26-27, 2016 and for a few days before and after the contest as VP5/W9AV and VP5/W6RI. All QSOs will be uploaded to LoTW. Requests for paper cards should go to W6RI and should include an SASE or IRC. Note that Turks and Caicos does not have a QSL bureau and that cards sent there will be discarded.

T88 Palau (IOTA OC-009)

Yuji, JF1DIR will be active from Koror OC-009 as T88IR between March 20 and 25, 2016. QRV on 40, 30, 20, 15, 10m CW and digi. QSL via home call – OQRS, LOTW and eQSL.

VK9L Lord Howe Island

Michael G7VJR will be visiting Lord Howe island between April 15 and 20, 2016. QRV as VK9L/G7VJR on HF bands, CW only using verticals and 100w. North-facing QTH for QSOs with Europe.

VK0EK Heard Island

An international team of operators will activate the remote Heard Island in the deep southern Indian Ocean near Antarctica from March 18th into April. Heard Island is currently the fifth most wanted DX entity on Club Log. The scale of operation is impressive. They hope to be on air from March 18th to April 10th, with two stations on either end of the island, to ensure maximum coverage of the globe. Their target is to make 150,000 QSOs. This would be an ATNO for me if I can log them, as I'm sure it will be for many of you. <http://vk0ek.org/>

FT4JA Juan de Nova

As mentioned last time, Juan de Nova, the 6th most wanted DX entity, will be activated around the same time as VK0EK will be on air. It will be a busy time for DX chasers! The Juan de Nova activation, with the call sign FT4JA, will run from March 29th to April 11th. The team will consist of mainly French operators, four of whom were part of the FT4TA DXpedition to Tromelin in 2014.

That's it for now. Remember that your contributions and comments are always welcome, and you can email me at hamradioireland@gmail.com.

Until next time, see (hear) you in the pile-ups!

Slán go fóil,
Anthony EI2KC



Activation of Coetivy Island AF-119 NEW Dave Deane EI9FBB

Editor's note - this is an abridged version of the article first published in the CDXC Digest, January 2016.

Coetivy Island AF-119 was one of eleven new IOTA groups announced in Windsor at IOTA's 50th Convention, July 2014. After our activation, only three of these new Groups remain un-activated.

Coetivy Island is 180 miles South East of Mahe, the main Island Seychelles, and is strictly controlled by the Islands Development Committee (IDC). This committee consists of several 'high profile' local individuals including the local Lord Mayor, Minister of Tourism, Secretary of Defence etc... In the 1990's, Coetivy was used intensively for prawn farming, the biggest farm in the world at that time, with up to 1300 people once living there. Today, coconut oil and charcoal is produced, although the island is better known as an active prison and rehabilitation centre for drug abusers.

After our initial correspondence with the IDC, we learned that a permit might be possible and, although expensive due to the access restrictions, it did seem doable! Next, we needed to educate them a little bit on what exactly Amateur Radio was all about and needed to be certain that all our antenna plans would be allowed so there would be no confusion at a later date. Information was limited and it was difficult to get to speak to the right people. The initial quotes were outrageous and would have killed the project.

After a lot of negotiations we agreed on a figure. If we were going to do this we needed to book everything through the IDC. We needed to charter their approved registered aircraft and fly the last 180 miles to Coetivy - the only practical means of getting to the island.

There is a guesthouse for visiting IDC staff, subject to limited interaction with the inmates/prisoners. Due to flight and accommodation restrictions only a six man team would be allowed. A bigger team would have helped offset our expenses but this was not possible.

Now that we had an exact budget we needed another four operators to join Col MMONDX and myself, Dave EI9FBB.



Six experienced operators were needed; familiar with the hardships of intense operating with little or no sleep. Pile-ups always come first, and one has to sleep around times of poor propagation or if/when bands are closed. After sending invitations to twenty of the most recognised names in IOTA DXpeditioning, the four available places were filled within a few hours. The team was now complete - EA3NT, EI9FBB, MMONDX, PA3EWP, SP5APW & VK5CE - with combined experience of more than 160 DXpeditions!

So now we had a budget, a complete team and all necessary permissions. We had chosen a November timeframe for a number of reasons: weather, scheduled annual leave, budgeting - but mainly for best propagation possibilities worldwide. Now there was a risk that some other group might get there first. The only way we could be 100% certain, was to ask the IDC if any other amateur radio group had been in touch. They would not say. We agreed to a definite booking and a sizeable deposit to be given exclusive rights until the end of 2015. Selfish perhaps, but that's the way it worked!

We began a large sponsorship appeal, and are thankful to all those who kindly made donations before the DXpedition. This is the time when donations are really needed as deposits, fares, equipment all need to be paid for up front. We offered a 'Free QSL' to those who donated in advance. We felt that if we got as many DX Clubs and Foundations on board too, it would also help secure our position. Once we were sure that everything had been booked and secured, we announced our intentions.

Expressions of interest from the IOTA community were huge. Each team member basically had his own following, having gained respect from their past operations. Despite several operations from regular S7 earlier on in the year, we still knew that this was going to be totally different - a first activation from Coetivy.

Most operations from S7 are from apartment or hotel balconies, few ever have a full beachfront at their disposal. We intended to put a special emphasis on working North America. S7 is #55 most wanted on the West Coast and an incredible #17 on 10m! To work North America we needed to beam right over Europe, as FL to TX is exactly the same beam heading as EA, CT and IT9. This was not just an IOTA activation - DX hunters would be looking for us too.

We needed the capability of two stations on each band during peak times. Prediction charts showed only one or two bands being open for several hours during daytime hours. Using Google maps, we got to understand the local terrain and had an extensive antenna plan. A few years ago, a well-known Scottish duo did a great operation from S7 and fulfilled the demand for many needing S7 on the low band and therefore we concentrated on 40m through 6m. Using a combination of VDAs right at the water's edge and SP7IDX Technology Hexbeams, along with verticals for 30m and 40m, we completed our antenna farm - 11 antennas in total.

Many of the larger recognised DX Clubs and Foundations gave us funding. Despite our efforts to ship extra antennas, equipment etc. for our North American plans, every North American club declined our requests. We decided to go down the DX route, not just IOTA, and request funding to activate Seychelles - S7. A few weeks later we were delighted when the Western Washington DX Club offered a most welcome donation, the only North American club to have supported us. What was reassuring though was the number of individual DXers / IOTA chasers whose encouragement and support kept us motivated.

Obtaining an S7 licence is straightforward although we knew it would take some time. We needed authorisation to import and operate our equipment. This meant making, models and serial numbers of all our equipment. If anything, this helped our planning as we now needed a complete packing list and weights to calculate excess baggage charges for the final flight to Coetivy. After almost four months and several follow up phone calls we got approval also confirmation of our requested callsign S79C. The licence was valid only for specific dates and only for Coetivy. Two days before departure, we finally had the licence – phew!

Pelican cases are ideal for keeping equipment secure and damage-free. They are heavy, however, and so we wrapped everything in-between personal clothing carried in our suitcases. In total over \$3,000 was paid in excess baggage fees.

Right from the start the IDC made us aware that all our combined weights, both body and baggage must not exceed 925kg. Just before our departure we got notification that the normal aircraft was not available and our limit was now 800KGs. This had the potential to jeopardise our project - we needed all six operators and equipment on Coetivy.

As all six team members were travelling different routes and via different airports each made their own way to Mahe, Main Island Seychelles. Four hours before Col's departure, the ISIS attacks in Paris happened, and French borders were closed. Col was moments before departing for his flight from Edinburgh to Paris. Charles-de-Gaulle airport remained closed as Col's departure time passed, so Coetivy was not going to happen for him.

We had more bad news. Ron, PA3EWP was flying via Nairobi, a 3-hour flight from Mahe. Moments after take-off, the landing gear from his aircraft malfunctioned, and the aircraft had to return. After disembarking they learned that the next flight would be a full 24 hours later, with arrival in Mahe one hour after our scheduled flight to Coetivy. It looked like Ron would not be joining us either.

Luckily word came from Col that he had booked an alternative flight via Abu Dhabi and would arrive in time for the Coetivy flight. However, we were still a man down. We weighed up the pros and cons on which option was best: a six man team for five days or a five man team for six days. Each time the six man team came out on top. We had to reschedule this final flight no matter what. .

A decision was made to shorten our DXpedition by one day and go with the original six-man team. This was an easy

choice in the end. No one was getting left behind. So, swallowing our pride, we requested that our flight be rescheduled to the following day. Our representative in the IDC thankfully obliged.

I don't think any of us slept that night in anticipation that everything would go well. At 05:30 Chris EA3NT drove to the airport in our hire van to collect Col. He had made it. Five of the team were now together. After breakfast, the following hours were spent repacking all luggage and shopping to gather the last few supplies that needed to be sourced locally. After a short tour of Mahe, it was now time to collect Ron from the airport. Finally, all team members were together for the first time. A celebratory drink was called for. It was all coming together at last. We had a nice group 'departure dinner' that evening which we all enjoyed, all six of us!

At daylight, after a quick breakfast, we loaded as much of the baggage into the van as possible to make the first trip to the IDC hangar. Several trips would be needed. Each piece of baggage had to be weighed and labelled. Each person had to be weighed also. We were still restricted in our weights but not quite as much as we thought. By delaying the flight a day, a different aircraft was now available which had a slightly higher capacity. Our combined weights of baggage and persons exceeded the aircraft limit though.

What or who would we leave behind? Some of us had doubled up on necessities. Our water and drinks were left behind too. In total, 70kg of excess was shaved off in minutes. This was still not enough as the IDC insisted that we were still 80kg overweight. Suddenly a thought came to mind. This new aircraft was a ten-seat airplane. There were six of us. We suggested they remove the last two rows of seats to comply with the weight restrictions. Remarkably, they obliged!

This was to be a short flight, taking just one hour flying time. One could feel the excitement when we got the first glimpse of Coetivy. It seemed bigger than we expected having an area of 10 square kilometres. Within minutes we touched down on the short airstrip and the adventure began.

We had only spoken to Michael, the island manager, once during our planning stages. He seemed friendly and helpful. He needed to brief us on the security and on our welfare. We were advised to keep within the exclusion zone. Sure, it's OK to walk around the island but just not during hours of darkness, don't ask why - you'll soon find out! We needed access to another building close to the beach to reduce the amount of stations operating from the guesthouse. About 500 metres away, a suitable building was made available. We set up two shacks: one there and the other back in the Guesthouse. Whoever was in the other shack after dark had to stay there until sunrise as anyone caught moving around the island during darkness was likely to be shot! Michael was very obliging. We needed our coax to pass over a frequently used road. No problem - 20 minutes and four inmates later the road had been dug and a 4" pipe buried to enable us to pass our coax cables through. Likewise, the second shack needed to run their coax through dense vegetation. Not an issue - two inmates and a machete later, a channel had been cut to run coax lengths directly to the beach. All VDAs were placed right at the water's edge. During high tide, the bases of these fiberpoles would be submerged in salt water.

These rocked! Our Hexbeams were further inland, close to the shacks. These were on 10m masts and were our only directional antennas. These worked a treat and were brilliant performers - one hour set up from box to mast. It's no wonder why these antennas are becoming so popular with DXpeditions.

That evening, we agreed on what bands/modes would be used. Initial tests showed everything to be set up correctly and we had absolutely no inter-station interference. The indoor set up was completed and, as arranged, at 22:00 local (18:00 UTC), all six stations CQed at the same time. S79C hit the DX clusters and skimmers and immediately the pile-ups began. Each of the six operators had this strange, weird look of content on their faces and the bigger their pile-up the weirder they looked! This is when we remember why we do DXpeditions! Clive 3B8CW was the first station into our log on 17m SSB. Propagation was on our side - the bands were alive. Within the first 15 QSOs, six continents were worked. Running six stations at the same time clocks up the QSO count pretty quickly and in little under 2 hours, the required 1,000 QSOs (for IOTA) had been worked as had all 7 continents. The pile-ups continued throughout the night and we only slept when our band closed.

Each day would bring something new and after breakfast we always began to improve our stations. Antennas were tweaked, coax runs shortened, stations perfected and new strategies adopted. We set up our 6m antenna and got our beacon running. According to Club Log, it had been 13 years since the last 6m QSO from S7. With 6m one never knows when the band is going to open - that's why it's called the magic band!

Ultra-low loss coax was brought and even 6m EME was attempted; much more difficult these days without an internet connection. We've all become so dependent on chatrooms/skeds for this. Despite our efforts, no one heard our CQs off the moon. Chris, EA3NT and Ron PA3EWP were our 6m enthusiasts. Many hours were spent CQing during likely times beaming in different directions. They tried for South EU, JA, AS and even for local African stations. The best they managed was to copy a '4X' beacon for a few minutes. No 6m QSOs were made, however the beacon remained operational for the entire duration of our stay. It was not for the want of trying that's for sure - these two gave it their best.

Due to the distance between our stations, our laptops were not networked. During the daytime lull, logs were collected from each computer and analysed. We could see the areas that needed attention for the next 24 hours. This dictated our operating plan and which operator would do which band/mode. This was looked at daily and really helped to maximise our overall total. All geographical areas got a fair chance to work us and often we would call specifically for each area. All six stations were QRV as much as possible and no band went unattended.

It was evident that a number of band-slots chasers are still trying to work each DXpedition on every possible band/mode slot so we deliberately disabled this feature on Clublog as an experiment. This is an area that has got much debate in recent times and I can honestly tell you it made no difference. A few days after our return, we enabled the Leader Board feature to get better statistics and were amazed by the number who had worked us on multiple bands.

We knew we would have no internet on the island and it was made clear that our logs would be uploaded after the DXpedition. To maximise the number of uniques, we kept at least one station QRV 24/7. The only band we worked RTTY was on 15m. We limited our operating to twelve available band/mode slots and scrapped the idea of 40m as this would just open a whole new window and would be unlikely to log anyone new.

Life was comfortable. We had a cook who kept us well-nourished and refreshed and a maid who kept our surroundings clean and tidy. It was the first time that many of the team had operated from an air-conditioned shack! In the humid 35 degree environment a cold shower was most welcome. On the downside, daily electricity outages were common. We had to go QRT occasionally due to interaction with the prisoners and inmates.

The inmates were friendly but complete opportunists! Once they thought that the island manager was not around, they would try to interact with us, looking for things. Michael used a motorbike, and the inmates often left in mid sentence once they heard the faint sound of his engine, terrified of being caught. One evening we invited Michael to have dinner with us but this was cut short as some of the inmates had learned how to make alcohol! For this they would be punished - put into an open cell without food, water, insect repellent or air-con. Here they would be kept overnight on a bed of concrete until daylight when they would leave for work

All operators noticed excellent pile-up behaviour from all continents. Everyone respected our requests and we noticed no signs of DQRM. We stayed focused, as we had a clear vision on our goals. We were amazed with the amount of South American stations worked and by having a VK operator on the team, seemed to keep Oceania happy too!

All too soon, it was time to begin our departure plan. We went QRT at 02:19 on 22nd November with AA4BQ being the last in the log. At daylight, we skipped breakfast and dismantled the stations. Within a few hours all equipment had been removed. All that was left were our footprints in the sand! The bags now needed to be collected, inspected, weighed and labelled. Excess or unnecessary equipment was left behind to reduce weight. After an early lunch, the truck arrived to take us to the airfield.

However, we had achieved what we set out to do and that was to activate this New IOTA for the first time. Despite having one day less on the island, we beat our estimate of 20,000 QSOs and logged almost 22,000 QSOs in 146 DXCCs. From these, there were 9,808 unique call signs with 6,606 North Americans netting 32% of all QSOs. West Coast stations were logged from 30m through to 10m. We hope we gave many a new band / mode point in addition to the new IOTA. After our return flight to Mahe, we sent our complete log to Charles MOOXO our QSL manager. He uploaded it immediately to Club Log and opened our OQRS pages. The following hours were spent reading emails of support and notes of thanks from the DX / IOTA community.

We would like to thank IRTS, and all our individual and corporate sponsors - it would not have been possible without you. Thanks also to those who gave us discounts when purchasing our equipment, and to LZ3HI for our QSL Cards. Logs have been uploaded to LoTW, and the IOTA committee has approved and validated this operation. AF119/p is not provisional anymore! See af119new.com/news for latest news.

Coolmine Rally - 14 February 2016

Photos EI2JD EI2JZ



Mark EI6JK Declan EI6FR



Sean EI7CD Noel EI4IQ



Thos EI2JD Jeremy EI5GM Mark EI6JK



Hugh EI9KF



Tony EI4DIB Seamus EI3KE



Anthony EI2KC Pete EI5JQ



Bernard Mothersil



Steve EI5DD Dave EI3IO



John EI1EM



Don EI6IL Ark EI9KC



Ronnie EI9ED



Raymond EI9DM - Long Communications



Excerpts from the HX files

with Pat Fitzpatrick EI2HX - Excerpt 034

Hello and welcome to Xtract 034 of the HX Files.

This project was made to replace a unit that I sold a while ago; it is a 15 watt 23cms transceiver.

One never seems to have the right case. I had started this project over the Christmas holidays and was about to start drilling and cutting (butchering would be more like it) a different case that was being made to take the components. As you know it is hard to get an enclosure that is just right and the price of good quality project boxes and cases has gone sky high over the last year so you have to do with the one to hand and make it do the job.

I was at a club meeting when I was given a few bits and pieces from Richard; one of the items is the case (seen without its lid) on the top of photo 1. It would turn out to be tailor made for the job in hand. Also in photo 1 is a collection of parts. Some of these parts will be used and the rest returned to the store room. Items not in the photo and to be added to the mix are some other coaxial leads



Photo 1

and phono leads, a small mains power supply and a kettle lead.

The project case was a rack power supply that was almost stripped bare before I received it, but there were a few components still in it. Those parts were destined to be placed into deep storage (number two shed). The unit would be powered by 12 volts. But after more time was spent looking at the case and doing a rough fit of some of the parts the decision was made to use a small mains power supply similar to a laptop power supply. There was a fan mounted on the side of the project case that still had its dc lead attached. 12 volts was applied to the fan and it worked! While the fan is designed to work from 24 volts it is shifting plenty of air on 12 volts so it will be left in place until a 12 volt one is bought.



Photo 2

There was a kettle type mains socket still installed in the back panel of the case; also on the back panel is an area that has many holes in it (175 to be exact) to help with the cooling, so that will save me some work not having to drill them, as more than likely there would be know #*\$%”&# way I would drill that many. One large hole would have been made and a grill put over it. As for the front there is a large main on - off switch on the front panel on the left and this will be used as is, and another switch will be added to work the transceiver

Spoil for choice.

Installing a small monitor into the front panel was to be my first choice but the only one in stock was just to big as it would protrude above and below the unit, so plan “B” was used. As you can see from photo 2 (above), I am not exactly stuck for small monitors. They are all worked off 12v dc so a lead from the monitor to a 12v source will be used and some sticky back Velcro will be used to attach it to the case as a proper monitor will be purchased and fitted into the front panel.

In photo 3 you can see a rough layout of some of the parts to be used - a chassis will be made from some acrylic sheet that will be raised from the bottom by some 50mm columns to allow some of the cables and leads be routed out of the way. Not having the same type of switch on the front panel was not the end of the world, but when the main components were fitted into place I had to fit the switches, sockets and LEDs where they would fit and not were I wanted them. The fitting of the 3 LEDs on the bottom right was because the case had 3 holes there for the units original LEDs. As luck would have it I had some that fitted perfectly, and they would be eventually held in



Photo 3

place by a drop of glue from a hot glue gun. These are all 12 volt operated.

Hammer time.

And now for some hammering and drilling. The front panel was first covered with some masking tape and then a pencil was used and some marking out done and when I was happy with that, out came the hammer, a steel nail, (I could not find my punch) and the spots marked for drilling. With the drilling finished some filing was done so the various bits would fit into place with only a small bit of wiggle room.

As mentioned earlier, the 3 LEDs used fitted the already existing drilled holes on the bottom right of the front panel, so holes were drilled for a mains power on light, a TX light, TX/RX switch, an aerial socket and lastly a hole big enough to take the phono socket panel. That panel is held in place by some sealer and not by the 4 holes you can see in photo 4. This was done just to allow me some room to place the new monitor. The 3 LEDs used on the right are green, blue and red - green for receive, blue for 12 volts on and red for the relay being on TX mode. There was no light to let you know that the mains power was on other than the writing either side of the switch, but there is no harm having a flashing light catching your eye and reminding you, so one was put under the mains on/off switch. I thought that it was needed as a safety feature as it is good be warned that you are using some dangerous power. As written earlier the power supply was removed from its own enclosure and attached to the metal case and extra earths added.

In use.

The unit has been in use for over a month now, with a couple of overnights with a dummy load and the temperature for the RF amp staying under manufactures spec, and the mains power supply only warm.

That it for now and I hope to see you at the rallies.

May your signals be P5.
73 Pat.



Photo 4



Contest News

Joe Ryan EI7GY

contestmanager@irts.ie

IRTS Contest Results

The IRTS Contest Calendar starts the year with the very popular New Year's Day 80 Metres Counties Contest. This contest has fixed and portable sections, with SSB only and mixed mode SSB / CW options, also a section for Shortwave Listeners. This year, in order to encourage more CW operation in the mixed mode sections, we introduced a final score bonus of 1,000 points for any entry that includes at least 10 valid CW QSOs with EI or GI stations, and we also suggested a CW "centre of activity" of 3522 kHz.

With reasonable band conditions on the day, the 2016 contest was well supported. Almost all EI and GI counties were active on the day, only Carlow and Cavan recorded no QSOs. 51 station logs were submitted, allowing 70% of QSOs to be cross-checked. The incentive aimed at encouraging more activity in the CW end of the band seems to have worked: 21 stations were active on CW, with 14 of them securing the valuable 1,000 points final score bonus.

Section winners are shown in the table on the following page.

Our new Contest Results table on the web site, pictured below, has links to the results for all recent IRTS contests (plus the EI/GI station results for IOTA contests).

Contest Results										
Contest	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
80m Co. January	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
80m Evening Co. SSB										
2m Co. Spring		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
40m Co. May		+	+							
CW Field Day		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
80m Co. June		+	+	+	+	+	+			
VHF/UHF Field Day		+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+
2m Co. August		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SSB Field Day		+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+
40m Co. October										
80m Evening Co. CW										
IOTA - EI/GI Stations		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Results list updated 17 January 2016

Contest Adjudication

I'm often asked about the cross-checking and adjudication process for counties contests, so I'll describe it briefly: QSO data is loaded into a database, following which the software checks for dupes, for mismatches between sent and received data, and for NIL ("not in log") QSOs. The mismatches and other anomalies noted by this checking process are then reviewed manually to determine where the error lies. Unless a pattern of incorrect sending is identified, it is assumed that the data sent has been correctly logged by the sender, and that a mismatch is more likely to be due to an error in recording the data received. We also review all uniques (call signs appearing only once in the contest) to establish if an apparent unique is actually an incorrectly logged call sign.

The contest rules acknowledge that the assumptions behind the adjudication process may not deliver a completely accurate result in all circumstances. Rule 4.8 of the General Contest Rules addresses this issue:

Sometimes a contact may be penalised because the station contacted made an error, e.g. sending the wrong serial number. In these and similar cases, entrants accept that this is part of the luck inherent in any contest, and even if they are satisfied that they were not in the wrong, it is not always possible for the adjudication process to determine who might be at fault.

We send an individual email to each contester when the results are published, listing any QSOs disallowed in the contester's log.

Contest Rules

The contest rules have been amended to deal specifically with the question of **Remote Operation** and the use of the **DX Cluster**. Prior to these changes being considered by the IRTS committee, draft proposals on the two topics were circulated to almost 100 IRTS members who participate in contests. Responses were received from 21 of them, a welcome response rate. Some of the responses were quite detailed; it is clear that many members feel passionate about these topics. In the light of the responses, the original draft proposals were updated: given the divergence of views expressed, it was not of course possible to incorporate everyone's viewpoint in the revised proposals.

Remote Operation

Remote stations were permitted under the previous contest rules, however there were no guidelines as to acceptable use. The latest amendments to the rules stipulate a number of limitations on remote operation in our contests, including the fact that the operator must be physically in the same DXCC entity as the remote station, also remote transmitters or receivers outside the station location are not permitted.

The rule dealing with Remote Operation (General Contest Rules, 5.10) is as follows:

Remote operation is not permitted in any Field Day contest, or in the portable sections of any contest. Otherwise, remote operation is permitted if all transmitters, receivers and antennas of the remote operation are at one station location and the operator is physically in the same DXCC entity as the remote station. In this context, station location is a single location in which all transmitters, receivers and antennas used by the entrant are positioned within a single 500 metre diameter circle. Remote transmitters or receivers outside the station location are not permitted.

The operator must use the call sign assigned to the remote station and not their personal call sign, if different. For Counties Contests or other contests involving the inclusion of the

remote station location information in the exchange, the county / location information to be given in the exchange is to be determined by the location of the remote station.

DX Cluster

Under the previous rules, the DX Cluster could not be used in any IRTS contest. Recognising that the cluster is generally accepted and used in VHF/UHF contests, the Rules now permit the use of the cluster in VHF/UHF Field Day, however the cluster may not be used for posting messages or arranging skeds, nor is self-spotting or asking to be spotted permitted. The prohibition on cluster use for other contests remains.

The regulations for the use of the DX Cluster in VHF/UHF Field Day (Rule 8.1) are as follows:

The use of the DX Cluster or other spotting networks to obtain call sign and frequency information of potential new contacts is permitted. Only facilities that are demonstrably part of a more general system, and in common use by contesters in different locations, may be used. These facilities may not be used for posting messages or arranging skeds, nor is self-spotting or asking to be spotted permitted.

Other Contests

In the Contest News column we often feature achievements by EI stations in international contests, particularly when new Irish records are set. I am not aware of any new EI records being set in recent months, but I'll repeat the invitation mentioned in the December 2015 Echo Ireland, which is to let me know when new records have been set, so that they can be highlighted here.

The one-hour 80m evening contests run by the United Kingdom and Ireland Contest Club (UKEICC) have been well supported by EI stations, one of the attractions of these contests being that results are available within an hour after the close of log submission i.e within two hours of the end of the contest.

In recent months UKEICC added **24-hour DX Contests** to their calendar, an SSB event in December 2015, and a CW contest in January 2016. IRTS offered to sponsor a plaque for the leading EI station in the single-operator low power unassisted 12-hour section of both of these DX contests. Peter Ball EI7CC was the winner of this plaque on both occasions. East Cork Amateur Radio Group EI7M (operators EI4BZ, EI6BT, EI5GM) were the winners of the UK/EI Multi-Op section of the CW contest.



Paul EI5DI, on behalf of UKEICC, presents Peter EI7CC with the plaque for the leading EI station in the single-operator low power unassisted 12-hour section of the inaugural UKEICC SSB DX Contest

Forthcoming IRTS Contests

The first counties contests organised by IRTS were on 2 Metres and the format has proved to be very popular both with individual operators and clubs. The next **2 Metres Counties Contest** is on **Easter Monday, 28th March**. There are separate sections in this contest for portable and fixed stations, low power and high power, as well as an FM Only section for single ops and an SWL section. This contest provides a good opportunity to gain advantage by "taking to the hills".

Then on **Sunday 8th May**, we have the 40 Metres Counties Contest, also with both fixed and portable sections, plus a choice of SSB Only or mixed-mode SSB/CW.

Links

Contest rules & calendar: www.irts.ie/contests
 Contest results: www.irts.ie/results
 UKEICC contests: www.ukeicc.com



The 2 Metres contest provides a good opportunity to gain advantage by "taking to the hills"

80 Metres Counties Contest, 1st January 2016 : Section Winners

SSB Only Fixed (EI/GI)	EI9HX, Pat O'Connor
SSB Only Fixed (Outside EI/GI)	G6MC, Neil Clarke
SSB Only Portable (EI/GI)	EI9FVB/P, Declan Horan
SSB/CW Fixed (EI/GI)	EI2CA, Paul Martin
SSB/CW Fixed (Outside EI/GI)	M0DDT, Colin Potter

EI's on EQSL (as at January 6th 2016)
Enquiries to Thos EI2JD - thoscaffrey@hotmail.com

DGCC Confirmed	100	EI5HRB (New)	38	EI3GDB
253 EI7BA (+1)	99	EI6GF (+1)	31	EI3FFB
233 EI9O (+6)	99	EI9GTB(+3)	31	EI7GZB
228 EI7CC (+7)	96	EI9CF (+25)	35	EI2HEB (+6)
223 EI9JU (+7)	94	EI0PL	28	EI8GGB
217 EI0CZ (+11)	93	EI9GWB (+9)	28	EI9GNB (+3)
217 EI9FBB (+6)	92	EI4GAB (+2)	24	EI1627
216 EI4CF (+1)	92	EI6CPB (+1)	24	EI8GNB
212 EI6IL (+21)	92	EI7GUB (+5)		
205 EI3IO (+8)	92	EI9CBB (+13)		
200 EI2KC (+3)	91	EI7BFB (+6)		
198 EI6JK (+7)	88	EI5IX (+14)	1,910	EI6JK (+191)
197 EI9KC (+5)	88	EI3IS	1,824	EI7CC (+151)
197 EI4GJB (+6)	88	EI8JK (+5)	1,806	EI9E (+120)
194 EI8IU (+12)	87	EI2KK (+3)	1,795	EI4CF (+46)
192 EI2JD	87	EI6ARB (+8)	1,709	EI9JU (+131)
191 EI7JN (+3)	87	EI8EJB (New)	1,527	EI8GS (+83)
190 EI2GLB (+4)	86	EI4IS (+2)	1,468	EI0CZ (+136)
189 EI3KG (+5)	86	EI9GGB (New)	1,439	EI3KG (+104)
185 EI8FH (+7)	85	EI9EW (+5)	1,390	EI7JN (+27)
183 EI3GYB (+4)	84	EI9FV (+1)	1,364	EI9FBB (+68)
182 EI1DG (+3)	84	EI9GGB	1,357	EI2JD (+13)
181 EI9FVB (+7)	81	EI6GGB (+2)	1,351	EI1DG (+82)
179 EI8GS (+4)	80	EI3HGB (+2)	1,304	EI2KC (+54)
178 EI7JZ (+11)	77	EI4CN (+13)	1,294	EI7JK (+130)
177 EI4GXB	77	EI9JM (+2)	1,293	EI9KC (+67)
171 EI8IQ (+7)	76	EI4IR	1,286	EI0W (+27)
168 EI6AL (+3)	76	EI6IF (+1)	1,277	EI4GXB (+64)
165 EI3GRB (+6)	76	EI8DL	1,206	EI8FH (+108)
164 EI5KF (New)	74	EI4HLB (+4)	1,201	EI3GC (New)
163 EI8BLB (+22)	73	EI5GN (+13)	1,156	EI2GLB (+38)
159 EI9E (+3)	73	EI8GP	1,147	EI7JZ (+148)
157 EI4HH (+4)	73	EI9KF (+5)	1,140	EI8BLB (+200)
157 EI5GM (+4)	70	EI4EQB (New)	1,105	EI4GNB (+111)
153 EI0W (+4)	69	EI5KG (New)	1,086	EI7GSB (+80)
153 EI3GC (New)	69	EI3HVB (+4)	1,073	EI3IO (+61)
153 EI9GLB (+9)	68	EI2IV (+4)	1,019	EI7BA (+24)
151 EI3KE (+18)	68	EI5DD (+3)	1,065	EI3KI (+183)
151 EI5JQ (+5)	68	EI8JB	1,064	EI9FVB (+70)
150 EI4II	67	EI1571	1,060	EI5HV (+138)
148 EI9HX	67	EI7BMB (+1)	1,050	EI8IU (+104)
147 EI6IZ	66	EI5HE (+1)	1,040	EI2II (+51)
145 EI3KI (+11)	65	EI4IN (+4)	960	EI6AL (+37)
145 EI5IF	65	EI8DD	925	EI3KE (+203)
144 EI6HB (+1)	65	EI3HBB	898	EI4BZ (+14)
144 EI6GHB (+4)	62	EI5ASB (+2)	896	EI3HDB (+43)
142 EI2II (+9)	61	EI4GD (+2)	886	EI3JB (+115)
140 EI7JK (+4)	60	EI5GB	881	EI4GAB (+21)
139 EI3HA (+11)	59	EI7IS (+1)	873	EI3GYB (+97)
137 EI4GNB (+3)	58	EI1509 (+1)	861	EI5JQ (+46)
134 EI5HV (+6)	57	EI2HRB	830	EI3GAB (+14)
129 EI4BZ (+1)	57	EI7GEB (+3)	814	EI8IQ (+45)
128 EI3JB (+8)	56	EI8H (+1)	787	EI9O (+25)
128 EI4GZB (New)	55	EI8JW	765	EI8HL (+102)
127 EI5GSB (+1)	55	EI6GGB	753	EI5IF (+10)
125 EI5EV (+7)	53	EI1429	716	EI5GSB (+22)
125 EI8JB	53	EI9KG (+6)	714	EI9GLB (+99)
124 EI8HL (+12)	53	EI7CHB	696	EI5GM (+22)
124 EI6FM (New)	52	EI3EBB	691	EI9GSB (+36)
123 EI7GSB (+4)	52	EI4GMB (+1)	682	EI3HA (+123)
122 EI3GAB (+2)	52	EI7CEB (+3)	679	EI8JB (+11)
115 EI7IX (+2)	51	EI2BWB (+1)	654	EI9JM (+72)
114 EI3HDB (+1)	51	EI9GRB (+1)	646	EI4KE (+25)
113 EI4KE	49	EI7GGB (+4)	636	EI4GZB (New)
112 EI4HQ	48	EI7GM (+1)	593	EI5GJB (+5)
111 EI7M	47	EI1665 (+1)	574	EI2HW (+123)
106 EI9KB	44	EI3GGB (+4)	558	EI4HH (+30)
106 EI5GUB	44	EI2HZB (+6)	515	EI3IS (+8)
106 EI5GJB (+1)	44	EI4DIB	506	EI9GTB (+19)
105 EI8JR (+4)	43	EI5HT (+2)	499	EI7IX (+15)
104 EI9CN (+32)	42	EI4FOB (NEW)	482	EI0PL (+68)
104 EI2HW (+21)	41	EI2FS	479	EI2KK (+162)
104 EI9GSB (+1)	41	EI1666 (+1)	450	EI6ARB (+100)
102 EI3GD	41	EI7CSB (+1)	445	EI8GP (+8)
102 EI6AK (+7)	39	EI4HX	395	EI3HVB (+59)
101 EI9ES	38	EI8JA (+3)	373	EI4HLB (+26)

EI DXCC Single Band Status
as at 17th February 2016
Compiled by Joe Ryan EI7GY

		160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	2
10	EI2JD	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	2
10	EI3IO	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	
10	EI7BA	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	
10	EI9FBB	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	
9	EI2GLB		80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	
9	EI6IZ	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10		
8	EI6FR		80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10		
8	EI7GY		80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10		
8	EI9FVB		80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10		
7	EI1DG		40	30	20	17	15	12	10			
7	EI4BZ	80	40	30	20	17	15	10				
6	EI7JZ		40		20	17	15	12	10			
6	EI8IU			30	20	17	15	12	10			
5	EI4CF		40		20	17	15	10				
5	EI4GJB				20	17	15	12	10			
5	EI6AL				20	17	15	12	10			
5	EI6JK		40		20	15	12	10				
5	EI8GS	80	40		20	15	10					
5	EI9E	80	40		20	15	10					
5	EI9GLB				20	17	15	12	10			
5	EI9JF	40	30		20	17	15					
4	EI3GV				20	17	15	10				
3	EI3CTB				20	15	10					
3	EI4GK				20	15	10					
3	EI4GNB				20	15	10					
3	EI4HH				20	15	10					
3	EI6FM				20	15	10					
3	EI6HB				20	15	10					
3	EI7GL	40						10	6			
3	EI9HQ				20	15	10					
2	EI2II				20			10				
2	EI5IF				20	15						
2	EI7IG				20	15						
2	EI7JN				20	15						
2	EI8JX				20	15						
1	EI3EBB										6	
1	EI3HA				20							
1	EI4DQ											2
1	EI5EV								10			
1	EI5FQB				20							
1	EI5GSB				20							
1	EI6S	80										
1	EI8IQ				20							
1	EI9CJ										10	
		160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	6	2

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EI DXCC Listings - Compiled by Joe Ryan EI7GY

as at 17th February 2016

Entries in Bold Type show changes since 30th November 2015

<p>Mixed</p> <p>365 EI8H (SK) 356 EI6S 353 EI7CC 348 EI6FR 346 EI8EM 345 EI7BA 340 EI2GS (SK) 329 EI9FBB 326 EI3IO 324 EI5GM 320 EI9O 317 EI2GLB 312 EI8FH 310 EI4II 307 EI6IZ (+3) 306 EI2HY 306 EI4CF 303 EI2CR 296 EI2JD 294 EI8IU (+3) 291 EI9FVB 287 EI9JF 276 EI7JZ (+7) 275 EI9GLB (+1) 269 EI8GS 265 EI4BZ 264 EI6AL 262 EI2GX 248 EI1DG 243 EI6JK 237 EI7GY 235 EI4HH 230 EI4GXB 214 EI5IF 210 EI6IL 209 EI7JN 203 EI9E 193 EI3HA 191 EI6HB 188 EI4IR 187 EI6FM 177 EI9HQ 175 EI7IG 174 EI3CTB 165 EI5EV 160 EI4GZB 158 EI4GNB 136 EI5FQB 136 EI9CN 135 EI9CF 131 EI5GSB 129 EI5GUB 128 EI8HA 127 EI9CJ 116 EI6CPB 115 EI5JQ 104 EI9GWB 103 EI3HDB 101 EI7JQ 101 EI8JB 100 EI3GAB 100 EI4HQ 100 EI8KF</p> <p>CW</p> <p>338 EI7BA 333 EI7CC 330 EI6FR 314 EI9FBB 305 EI8FH 303 EI6IZ (+3) 293 EI4CF 279 EI2GLB 279 EI2JD 267 EI8IU (+2) 253 EI9JF 246 EI6AL</p>	<p>244 EI4BZ 231 EI5GM 230 EI7GY 211 EI1DG 196 EI8JX (+6) 171 EI9FVB 169 EI7IG 168 EI4HH 155 EI7JZ (+2) 127 EI9CF 126 EI4BK 115 EI9E 113 EI2KK 109 EI2IH 109 EI4HM (SK) 104 EI6HB 100 EI3CTB 100 EI3KE 100 EI3KG</p> <p>Phone</p> <p>353 EI6S 351 EI7CC 346 EI8EM 343 EI7BA 338 EI2GS (SK) 336 EI6FR 331 EI8AR 319 EI9FBB 309 EI3GV 300 EI4GK 300 EI8AU (SK) 284 EI9FVB 282 EI2GLB 280 EI2JD 275 EI4CF 275 EI9GLB (+1) 269 EI8GS 266 EI7JZ (+7) 264 EI9HX 259 EI8IU (+3) 241 EI6JK 225 EI9JF 222 EI8FH 213 EI7GL 212 EI4HH 209 EI4BZ 208 EI4GJB 200 EI6IL 198 EI9E 191 EI3HA 188 EI2CH 186 EI7II 185 EI6AL 184 EI6FM 177 EI5IF 177 EI9FE 171 EI9HQ 160 EI2II 160 EI6HB 143 EI3CTB 137 EI4GNB 136 EI5FQB 134 EI9CN 131 EI5GSB 116 EI6CPB 114 EI4EX (SK) 105 EI1CS 103 EI3HDB 103 EI6GGB 102 EI1DG 102 EI4DJB 101 EI3IP 100 EI3GAB</p> <p>RTTY/Digital</p> <p>301 EI7BA (+4) 224 EI1DG</p>	<p>215 EI6FR 195 EI8FH 191 EI8IU (+7) 186 EI2GLB 129 EI3CTB 121 EI6HB 108 EI5IF</p> <p>160m</p> <p>245 EI7BA (+1) 212 EI3IO 142 EI6IZ (+2) 138 EI9FBB 122 EI2JD</p> <p>80m</p> <p>310 EI6S 294 EI7BA (+1) 241 EI9FBB 166 EI2JD 158 EI6FR 142 EI3IO 137 EI6IZ (+1) 119 EI4BZ 116 EI2GLB 108 EI7GY 107 EI9E 103 EI8GS 100 EI9FVB</p> <p>40m</p> <p>316 EI7BA 254 EI9FBB 236 EI6FR 209 EI4CF 208 EI6IZ (+3) 202 EI2JD 185 EI3IO 180 EI2GLB 177 EI9JF 154 EI6JK 139 EI4BZ 134 EI9E 132 EI7JZ (+2) 129 EI8GS 120 EI7GY 118 EI9FVB 117 EI7GL 111 EI1DG</p> <p>30m</p> <p>327 EI7BA 254 EI9FBB 231 EI6FR 225 EI6IZ (+5) 223 EI3IO 167 EI9JF 156 EI7GY 135 EI2GLB 124 EI2JD 122 EI8IU (+3) 120 EI4BZ 102 EI1DG 102 EI9FVB</p> <p>20m</p> <p>339 EI7BA 333 EI6FR 321 EI9FBB 257 EI2JD 256 EI4CF 251 EI3IO 246 EI9FVB 238 EI6IZ (+9) 234 EI2GLB 223 EI8IU (+5) 217 EI9JF 211 EI8GS</p>	<p>201 EI7JZ (+3) 196 EI4BZ 186 EI1DG 173 EI9E 171 EI7JN 171 EI9GLB 161 EI6JK 161 EI7GY 152 EI8JX (New) 145 EI6HB 144 EI4GJB 135 EI4HH 133 EI5IF 130 EI3GV 130 EI6AL 126 EI3CTB 126 EI3HA 118 EI9HQ 117 EI4GNB 115 EI7IG 114 EI6FM 113 EI4GK 112 EI8IQ 106 EI5FQB 105 EI2II 102 EI5GSB</p> <p>17m</p> <p>334 EI7BA 301 EI9FBB 278 EI6FR 225 EI6IZ (+7) 219 EI8IU (+3) 200 EI2GLB 195 EI9FVB 191 EI2JD 166 EI6AL 163 EI7GY 146 EI9JF 142 EI1DG 141 EI7JZ (+4) 129 EI3IO 127 EI4GJB 120 EI9GLB 110 EI4BZ 108 EI3GV</p> <p>15m</p> <p>331 EI7BA 299 EI9FBB 297 EI6FR 251 EI4CF 237 EI2GLB 233 EI9FVB 231 EI2JD 228 EI8IU (+4) 216 EI6IZ (+8) 204 EI3IO 202 EI4BZ 193 EI6JK 181 EI8GS 179 EI9E 178 EI1DG 175 EI7JZ (+8) 162 EI6AL 151 EI7GY 148 EI4HH 138 EI9GLB 136 EI6HB 125 EI8JX (New) 122 EI3CTB 120 EI4GJB 119 EI4GNB 113 EI3GV 109 EI7JN 107 EI5IF 105 EI9JF</p>	<p>104 EI4GK 104 EI7IG 101 EI9HQ 100 EI6FM</p> <p>12m</p> <p>322 EI7BA 280 EI9FBB 195 EI8IU (+3) 185 EI9FVB 172 EI6FR 155 EI6IZ (+12) 154 EI2GLB 151 EI6AL 147 EI2JD 140 EI6JK 130 EI1DG 121 EI7JZ (+3) 117 EI7GY 106 EI3IO 100 EI4GJB 100 EI9GLB (New)</p> <p>10m</p> <p>306 EI7BA (+1) 282 EI9FBB 257 EI3IO 225 EI2GLB 217 EI6FR 199 EI4CF 197 EI2JD 194 EI9FVB 185 EI8IU (+3) 183 EI4BZ 173 EI6JK 171 EI8GS 167 EI1DG 166 EI4HH 165 EI9E 162 EI6IZ (+3) 159 EI6AL</p>	<p>151 EI7JZ (+3) 144 EI7GL 136 EI4GK 133 EI6FM 131 EI7GY 123 EI9GLB 116 EI3CTB 112 EI4GJB 111 EI4GNB 111 EI9CJ 105 EI6HB 104 EI3GV 103 EI9HQ 101 EI2II 101 EI5EV</p> <p>6m</p> <p>160 EI3IO 150 EI9FBB 112 EI7BA 111 EI7GL 108 EI2GLB 107 EI2JD 101 EI3EBB</p> <p>2m</p> <p>145 EI4DQ</p>
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DXCC Honor Roll

Mixed	Phone
340 EI6FR/348	338 EI7BA/343
340 EI7BA/345	338 EI8EM/346
338 EI7CC/353	336 EI6S/353
338 EI8EM/346	336 EI7CC/351
337 EI6S/356	
337 EI8H/365 (SK)	CW
332 EI2GS/340 (SK)	334 EI7BA/338

DXCC Challenge

2892 EI7BA (+3)	1155 EI1DG
2500 EI9FBB	1090 EI6JK
2006 EI6FR	1032 EI7JZ (+23)
1850 EI3IO	1030 EI5GM
1767 EI6IZ (+53)	1018 EI9JF
1729 EI2JD	
1720 EI7CC	
1635 EI2GLB	
1466 EI4CF	
1430 EI9FVB	
1336 EI8IU (+30)	
1160 EI7GY	
1156 EI4BZ	

Silent Key
Tony Darcy EI6AN



The death has occurred of Tony Darcy EI6AN of Lifford, Co. Donegal.

A native of Dublin, Tony was an accomplished CW enthusiast, and served for six years as a radio operator in the Irish Navy. He also served as a volunteer in Lourdes for over fifty years in succession.

Olive, Tony's wife of 54 years, pre-deceased him in February 2015.

To their children Declan, Patrick, Angela and Lorna, we extend our sincerest sympathy.

May he rest in peace



Tony EI6AN with President Mary McAleese in Lourdes



Irish Radio Transmitters Society



Annual General Meeting
April 10th 2016
Radisson Blu Hotel. Limerick

Members are hereby notified that the Annual General Meeting of the Irish Radio Transmitters Society will be held at 2pm on Sunday April 10th 2016 at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick

Committee Nominations

Rule 23.1 requires that the committee shall, at least 28 days prior to the Annual General Meeting, send to all paid-up members a list showing the nominees for the offices of President and Vice-President and eleven committee positions.

The following are the Committee's nominations;

President	Gerry Gervin	EI8CC
Vice-President	Jim Holohan	EI4HH

Committee

John Owen-Jones	EI1EM
Pat Fitzpatrick	EI2HX
Dave Court	EI3IO
Seán Donelan	EI4GK
Steve Wright	EI5DD
Paul Barlow	EI5KI
Dave O'Connor	EI6AL
Brendan Minish	EI6IZ
Anthony Dolan	EI6GGB
Larry McGriskin	EI9CN
Pat O'Connor	EI9HX

The names of other members eligible and willing to serve as President, Vice-President or as committee members shall be added to the list upon receipt of nominations in writing, by any ten members in the case of a nominee for the Presidency or Vice-Presidency or by any two members in the case of a nominee for any of the eleven committee positions. (Rule 23.2)

Silent Key
Noel Doherty EI4HXB

The death has occurred of Noel Doherty EI4HXB, Kilmore, Kilcock, Co. Meath, on Thursday 11th February 2016. Noel had a lifelong interest in amateur radio and in recent times secured his callsign. He was regular attendee at the Coolmine Rally throughout the years.

He was laid to rest in Moynalvey Church Cemetery.

May he rest in peace

Silent Key

Manus McClafferty EI7EQ



The death has occurred of Manus McClafferty EI7EQ Falcarragh, Co. Donegal.

His funeral Mass was on 22nd February, and he was laid to rest in the cemetery of St. Finian's Church.

Manus was well-known for contacting and befriending Colonel Alexei Constantin, a cosmonaut isolated for a while aboard the Mir space station during the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. Manus kept him updated with what was really going on back home. See vimeo.com/36862377

May he rest in peace

Members Ads

Wanted: Looking for a National HRO, models Senior, 5TAIA, MX. Cosmetic condition is more important than working condition. Also still looking for a Collins ART-13 TX. working or not. Jim EI2BB 087 261 2428 or 057 864 8589.

For Sale: For Sale Icom IC-7400 HF/VHF Transceiver in as-new condition. Price €750 ono. Liam EI8BLB 087 260 3023.

For Sale: Ameritron AL-811 linear amplifier with ARB-702 interface buffer €450. Both in good condition. Can email photos if interested. Malcolm EI8FH 087 838 5919. ei8fh@eircom.net

Wanted: Constant voltage transformer about 1 kVA. Contact Pierce EI4CI 087 978 4467.

Echo Ireland - June 2016

Copy deadline - 15th May

Articles to newsteam@irts.ie

Echo Ireland - the Journal of IRTS, the Irish Radio Transmitters Society, is published quarterly. The Society also publishes **EiNews** - a monthly newsletter.

Private advertisements from paid-up members are published free of charge.

Articles and event information for publication are welcomed. Send your manuscript to newsteam@irts.ie as a word-processing file attachment, **not as a PDF**. Please do not attempt to format the document to look like a printed page. Images and illustrations should be embedded in the file *for position only*. They should also be sent as separate file attachments in high resolution. Make sure to put captions for all images and illustrations at the end of the article, rather than embedded within the main text of your article. Please include the full names and call signs of people included in photos and where necessary obtain their permission.

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See you at IRTS AGM in Limerick, Sunday 10 April