

Emercomms/Radio Communications Voluntary Services **Spectrum Forum Report**

The swift implementation of WRC2003 in the UK thanks to cooperation between the (then) RA and the Society provided RAYNET/Emercomms Groups with a welcome increase in the number of its members with a wider frequency access than previously. This was reflected both in the RAYNET HF Team and in Groups utilising HF as part of major undertakings in hilly rural terrain involving both local, wide area and in one case, specialist area communications. This also included 5 MHz in one instance – for the second year running.

Because of an increase in wider-area coverage there was also a corresponding increase in demand for usage of the 6m and 4m emercomms allocations, together with requests for linking these into the RAYNET Talkthrough Permit system. The latter provides a temporary cross-band or in-band linking facility to relay traffic across or to specific areas involved with the emergency, exercise or event as the case may be.

Through the Spectrum Forum it was possible to address a problem South Coast RAYNET/Emercomms Groups were having in their 144.625/650/675 allocation due to French datamode stations (believed to be BBSs) which had not yet moved to the IARU recommended 144.8 – 145 (approx) area. Information was passed to the VHF Manager, who was able to liaise and pass this on to his French counterpart for resolution.

With respect to Talkthrough, Emercomms/RAYNET Groups had been particularly in need of a UHF wide-spaced 7.6 MHz channel pair, as previous assignments to Emercomms Groups had been superseded by usage as permanent wide-spaced repeater channels. The RCVS National Coordinator identified a single channel in between data and repeater allocations and set about a consultation exercise with the relevant Society committees. Around this time, the Spectrum Forum came into existence and was able to coordinate the agreement of this channel allocation.

At the upper end of the frequency spectrum commonly used for emercomms, it is exceptionally pleasing to report that use of 23cm FM appears to have triumphed in the problem of rail tunnel communication that has been a problem facing User Services for a number of years and that this can be developed further. It raises hope that GSM – R may be effective in this respect when it is eventually introduced into the UK rail system

The Emercomms fraternity feels that the Spectrum Forum concept offers a most pragmatic and democratic consultation vehicle for moderating the Amateur Radio Spectrum which both reflects the wide demands and allows for representation of the same. It would also like to re-iterate that almost every area of amateur radio can in some way assist emercomms and this is why consultation and cooperation at many levels is fruitful for all.

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