

Propagation Studies Committee

Spectrum Forum 2008

Most of PSC's activities are continuing/recurrent and familiar and call for no particular comment, except perhaps to note the difficulty of providing interesting commentary on solar during this prolonged period of solar minimum. G4FKH will present a paper on cycle 24 at HFC which, among other things, will surely set current speculation about the present and future course of solar activity in an informed perspective. G0KYA will also talk about propagation at the Contest University.

PSC has followed with interest and admiration the arrival of the new generation of technically advanced UK beacons at VHF and UHF (not forgetting the 5MHz cluster at HF). Other projects of which we are aware include the new Cape Verde 50MHz beacon, D4C, which has already shed useful light on propagation to Europe, a proposed group of synchronised HF beacons in Antarctica, and a CT proposal for a trans-Atlantic beacon at 144MHz. More generally, interest in beacons has grown despite depressed HF conditions. Aims here are to encourage high technical standards including more synchronisation; to discourage wasteful duplication that would increase QRM levels at solar maximum; and to foster beacon-related propagation research, particularly by employing automated monitoring. There is plenty more to be done here.

Telenius-Lowe's article in the current RadCom raises some interesting questions which I expect we will be discussing at our autumn meeting. One of the issues he addresses is that much-misused term, 'greyline propagation', on which we already have an established project.

Much propagation investigation involves working with weak signals. Consequently, PSC is particularly supportive of the EMC Committee's work to combat devices that threaten to increase the noise floor.

We have been asked to supply material for a new edition of the Handbook. The Editor calls for a substantial amount of new material, rather than the 'tweak' we might have hoped would do so soon after the latest edition. Suggestions about what direction we might take would be received with interest.

Finally, I note the passing of Ray Flavell, G3LTP, a former chairman of PSC, who brought his professional expertise as a meteorologist to the discussion of VHF tropospheric propagation, and Ray Cracknell, G2AHU, a long-serving member of PSC, and a pioneer explorer of trans-equatorial propagation,

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