



MARL



Magazine by MARL

For Maltese and Gozitan

Radio Amateurs

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Smoking is Prohibited



at the Centre

From the Editor

Friends,

I welcome you to another edition of this magazine and the first one for 2006.

The yearly meeting where members meet together for a small party during the festive season was held on Sunday 8 January.

Although I wished to be present, I had other things that prevented me from attending, although I called at the centre when it was being closed. I hope that everyone would come to the Centre more often like they came for this party.

As you could see the Committee is making its utmost to make the Centre better so that it could be enjoyed by the members.

It is therefore important not only that members pay their fees, but also to be present at the Centre and make use of both the Centre and the equipment that we have.

The more members that come the more will the Committee be encouraged to work for them and for our Society.

New Danger

In the first issue of this magazine we had warned you that a new danger for radio amateurs had been created by a new internet system.

As you know, we had told you that there were developments on how the internet is distributed to homes. One of these methods is by the use of electricity cables.

In a few words, the internet service to and from homes used frequencies less than 2Mhz to about 80Mhz that are sent over

the electricity cables instead of the telephone cables.

As everyone who has the least idea about radio can understand, this system causes strong interference to all services on all the frequencies used by the system, among them on radio amateur frequencies.

The commercial interests in this method are not interested in the interference caused to others, and it appears that in certain countries like the United States of America and now also in European countries there are some who are pushing to introduce these systems.

Where they were introduced in America they caused string interference in spite of trying to notch out amateur radio frequencies.

Although trials that were also held in European countries caused strong interference, it now appears that the commercial inetrests have arrived up to the European Commission, where they want to make amendments to the Electro Magnetic Compatibility Directive about the electromagnetic compatibility to allow such internet methods.

There has already been great opposition for these methods and also to the trials that were being held because of the interference they caused, but it appears that commercial interests continued.

These are creating great concern to European radio amateur organisations, so much so that we have a letter where we were asked by the secretary of the RSGB to make the appeal that can be found further down.

We remind you that if the European Union Directive is changed it will also be applicable here in Malta, and someone may dream of introducing a similar system.

Don't forget that there has already been someone who has shown that he agrees with it because he said that he wanted more people to have a faster internet system, although it has been shown that it is not true that it has the speed claimed by its proponents apart from the interference that it causes.

Apart from this, on Tuesday 17 January 2006, there was an article about services among them internet.

This article quoted from a report by the Malta Communications Authority where it was stated that Enemalta showed interest in utilising power lines for internet and for automated meter reading.

This article appeared in The Malta Independent and can be downloaded from <http://217.145.4.56/ind/news2.asp?artid=26808>

This is not the first time that similar articles appeared in the local media, including The Times of Malta, copies of which are at the Centre.

If this system is introduced in Malta it will be the end of our amateur radio hobby.

It is crystal clear that everyone who could help should make his utmost to help foreign radio amateur organisations as well as collecting all information about it so as to be prepared against it.

At the Centre we have evidence about the interference that this system causes, among which are recordings made by the BBC and others, as well as other documents.

Whoever wants to can come to the Centre and listen to signals from stations using hundreds of kilowatts if not megawatts, being literally cut to pieces by this system interference. You can imagine what it does to radio amateur signals.

If you look at the internet pages of the RSGB, ARRL, and other organisations you will find pages with lots of information about the problems caused by this system.

Inform yourselves well and be ready so that if it becomes necessary we can send e-mails to to the European Commission that we do to want this system to be introduced or to make the proposed changes in the Directive.

Be ready.

Lawrence

9H1AV / 9H9MHR

RSGB Appeal

The World of Amateur Radio is increasingly threatened by unwanted emissions from PLT systems and Home Plug devices. There are no appropriate emissions standards; these are being formulated NOW.

*As an example of the dangers we face – your country has recently voted **YES** without comment to a proposed Euro Norm on Power line emission. All of the larger European Nations voted **NO** – but they only form a minority of the community.*

Our combined efforts can prevent this from happening, and ensure the standard is appropriate to the needs of radio users.

If you are actively involved in Standards work, or in the application and enforcement of the European EMC Directive, we need your help. Even if you know somebody in the field we would like to hear from you.

This work is voluntary; it will cost nothing more than your time. We will provide a technical briefing. It will however, help to protect the Radio Spectrum for years to come.

Please send an email indicating your interests and contacts to John Pink G8MM, Secretary for the RSGB EMC Committee via rsgb.emc@rsgb.org.uk.

Comment

I think that anyone who has contact with a Member of Parliament or Member of the European Parliament should take up this subject with them.

We should show them that we do not agree with the European Commission proposal and show by information acquired from other countries the interference and damage caused to radio amateurs and also professionals if such systems are introduced and the changes which the European Commission wants are made.

We should also show our disapproval on how our country voted in favour of the changes in the Directive that the European Commission wants to make when other countries that have more capacities, studies and information voted against.

Do not forget that our hobby is threatened by the changes that the European Commission wants to make.

Holidaying with your Radio

Hams are often tempted by the idea of taking their radio and operating when they go abroad. This requires some planning and here are a few practical hints that might be useful.

- Ensure that everyone you will be with on your trip is aware of your project and supports you.
- Check the regulations in your destination country(ies) and apply to the authorities in plenty of time if you have to obtain a visitors licence (see information below).
- Decide if you will take equipment with you or if you can rent it on arrival. Some hams even rent out complete holiday homes fully equipped with radio.
- Taking equipment (including antennas) with you requires checking the customs regulations. Although much easier these days, depending on the country, you may still need to have specific documents, in order to avoid paying a (recoverable?) deposit when you want to get your equipment out again. Be prepared for intensive security controls (on both checked and hand luggage) at airports, as well as for detailed searches at frontiers.
- Do not forget to check your insurance coverage. Electronic equipment is usually not covered by regular travel insurance.

You can contact the national amateur radio club in your destination country for advice, but my experience shows that they may not be fully aware of the current regulations for foreign visitors to operate and may simply refer you to government administrative offices.

To ensure that you don't waste too much time on this, I have extracted the latest information from the European Radiocommunications Office website:

CEPT Recommendation 61-02 HAREC

According to CEPT (European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations), last year Malta implemented the recommendation 61-02, affirming that the Maltese licence Class A and Class B are equivalent to the HAREC (Harmonised Amateur Radio Examination Certificate).

This means that for Maltese amateurs no other technical examination is required for licences when visiting or residing in countries recognizing the CEPT HAREC.

This implies all Europe and also Israel and New Zealand.

CEPT Recommendation 61-01 CEPT Radio Amateur Licence

Malta informed the CEPT last year that they (as well as 10 other CEPT members) have not yet implemented local legislation according to recommendation 61-01.

So all visitors to Malta must obtain a visitor's licence.

However, Maltese licence holders may use their Class A or Class B call signs, prefixed by the relevant host country code, in those countries (both CEPT and non-CEPT) which have implemented 61-01 legislation.

A full list of the allowed countries/regions prefixes (as of Sept. 2005) is on the website www.ero.dk

Those 11 CEPT countries which do **NOT** implement 61-01 are:

Albania, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Malta, Moldova, Russia, San Marino, Serbis & Montenegro, Macedonia and Vatican.

Maltese amateurs in the above countries must obtain a local call sign from the administration.

Non-CEPT countries which **HAVE** implemented 61-01 are:

Canada, Israel, Netherland Antilles, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa and the USA.

So Maltese Amateurs can visit the above countries and use their own call sign with the correct prefix. Eg. W6/9Hxxx when in California.

Robin
9H1ZZ.

News

You should know that the secretary had written to the Communications Authority about our demands for some frequencies.

We are sorry that the answer which the Authority gave us on 25 October 2005 was not so good, and Maltese radio amateurs cannot be on the forefront of international developments.

136 khz

About this frequency, the answer was that that this is a new frequency which is going to be discussed at the World Radio Conference in 2007.

It was also stated that this frequency is being used by other applications.

We already knew these things, as we also know that this is also the same situation in other countries.

However, there are many countries where radio amateurs have been given this frequency just the same because the authorities are not afraid to take the initiative and shoulder their responsibility.

I don't know if the Maltese authorities know, but in fact, the Working Group "Frequency Management" (WG FM)

CEPT had, in 1997, recommended that radio amateurs be given an allocation on this frequency.

This Recommendation is CEWPT/ERC Recommendation 62-01 E (Mainz 1997) and the following is the text of the Recommendation.

CEPT/ERC Recommendation 62-01 E (Mainz 1997)

THE USE OF THE BAND 135.7-137.8 kHz BY THE AMATEUR SERVICE

Recommendation adopted by the Working Group "Frequency Management" (WG FM):

The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT),

Considering

- a) that the Amateur Service is a service according to the ITU Radio Regulations for the purpose of self-training, intercommunication and technical investigations carried out by amateurs;
- b) that radio amateurs conduct experiments in radiowave propagation and radiocommunication on a regular basis;
- c) that the Low Frequency (LF) bands are of particular interest for investigating as yet little understood propagation phenomena;
- d) that no Europe-wide allocations have been made to the Amateur Service for this purpose in the LF bands;
- e) that in ITU Region 1 the band 130-148.5 kHz is allocated to the Maritime Mobile Service and the Fixed Service on a primary basis;
- f) that in general operators in the Amateur Service are used to sharing frequencies with other services which have higher category frequency allocations;
- g) that ERC Report 25 containing the European Table of Frequency Allocations and Utilisations does not yet include the LF bands,

recommends

that the band 135.7-137.8 kHz may be used with a maximum e.r.p. of 1 Watt on a secondary basis by the Amateur Service in CEPT countries.

Furthermore, this has also been the subject of a Report by the 40th WGF Meeting (Corfu) 24 – 28 September **2001**, which had a short history regarding this allocation and its implementation.

It was stated that Finland was the first country to give an allocation to radio amateurs in April 1997 followed by, at that time, 13 other CEPT countries. Up to now, many more countries have made an allocation to their radio amateurs.

We are therefore going to give a copy to the Maltese authorities so that perhaps things will start moving, although I have my doubts. Malta is a member of CEPT.

CEPT webpage is <http://www.cept.org> from where you can go to other pages.

The ERO webpage (European Radiocommunications Office) which is part of CEPT concerned with telecommunications from where you can download the recommendation is <http://www.ero.dk/documentation/docs/doc98/official/pdf/REC6201E.PDF>

As regards the power being limited to 1W erp, we have to remember that antennae used by radio amateurs at these frequencies are hardly more efficient than at least -40db when considering the 2.2km wavelength.

This means that taking the -40db level as average, which in Malta is hard to achieve considering the space required even for antennae to achieve this level and earth limitations, a 10KW transmitter would be required to produce 1W erp.

Clearly we will not be able to run this power level when we hopefully get an allocation, but contacts over thousands of miles have been made using computer programmes which are freely available free of charge.

As a starter to get you interested and since these computer programmes can also be used on other frequencies, the following link <http://www.weaksignals.com> will take you to home page of Alberto, I2PHD at

where these may be downloaded free of charge courtesy of Alberto.

Normal cw contacts have also been made over hundreds of miles. These are all great achievements considering the low erp used.

500 khz (495Khz – 517Khz)

The answer for this frequency was that it is allocated internationally for distress and calling applications by the mobile service. In other words, by ships for calling and in case they need help.

The Authority continued to state that unless there is an international decision, this frequency cannot be granted neither to radio amateurs nor to another service.

It appears that the Communications Authority does not know that this frequency is no longer used for these purposes because the Morse code service is no longer used by ships.

In fact, we have already brought to your attention that callsigns have already been issued in the United States of America to radio amateurs to be able to communicate on it, and are waiting for an answer to see if there was any opposition.

We had also told you that even requests had also been made in other countries by radio amateurs so that they will also be able to work here.

5Mhz

The same can be said about this frequency, where it was stated that it is being used by various applications and that if the 2007 World Radio Conference grants spectrum to radio amateurs on this frequency, they will give it due consideration.

We had brought to your attention that radio amateurs from different countries had been given frequencies in this spectrum.

However, it appears that for something to be done in Malta not only must white flies come to Malta, but we have to have an invasion of white flies.¹

7Mhz

The secretary had also written so that we will be given the frequency between 7.2Mhz and 7.3Mhz.

The Communications Authority answer was that between 7Mhz and 7.1Mhz is allocated to radio amateurs and satellites, between 7.1Mhz and 7.2Mhz to radio amateurs, while between 7Mhz to 7.3Mhz is allocated to broadcasting.

It was also stated however, that should the 2007 World Radio Conference decide to increase the allocation to radio amateurs up to 7.3Mhz, this agency will give it due consideration.

It appears that the Authority does not know that this has already been allocated to radio amateurs together with mobile services that is not exclusively to radio amateurs as is between 7Mhz to 7.1Mhz, and for now together with broadcasters between 7.1Mhz and 7.2Mhz.

Therefore the Authority should not have any difficulty to give us this frequency, but it seems that we will have to wait at least another two years to possibly have it.

We remind you that as from 2009, broadcasters have to leave from between 7.1Mhz and 7.2Mhz, so that it will become exclusively for radio amateurs.

As we are talking about this frequency it is good to start using it because during the day there are no broadcast stations except perhaps on only two or three frequencies and are very weak.

We should therefore use it as much as possible. I have already started using it and if interest is shown we could make a net on an agreed day and time. We await your suggestions.

¹ This is a Maltese expression which means that it is very difficult to have something done, since it is extremely difficult to see a white fly (albino) if they exist at all

This also applies to all other frequencies. We should start using all frequencies that we have so that no one will be attracted to one or more of our frequencies.

Don't forget that Melita Cable is still causing strong interference on the R7 frequency because of signals leaking from its system.

70Mhz

Regarding this frequency, the answer was that this is given to other services and presently cannot be given to other services.

Don't forget that there is a whole list of other countries, among them those who were under the Soviet Union, where radio amateurs have been given this frequency.

This means that especially in summer when propagation on VHF is extended, radio amateurs from other countries cause interference to the services that are on this frequency.

As you can see, it appears that no one in Authority wants to shoulder the responsibility of taking a decision if an international decision had not been taken.

Therefore, as we are in Malta, we will have to wait to be given that which radio amateurs in other countries have been given years ago.

Lawrence
9H1AV/9H9MHR

Internet Webpages

It is not only male radio amateurs that exist in the world, but also female radio amateurs.

This didn't happen now, because there were females who were interested in the hobby and radio experimenting from the very beginning

We also have female radio amateurs in Malta, although it's a long time since we heard their voice. They should come on the air and let us hear their voices.

Today I am going to give you a couple of internet pages including one intended for female radio amateurs.

I hope that you find time to have a look at them and find something useful for you in them.

This is by Jackie Bosworth, M3JTO,
<http://www.ladiesontheair.proboards37.com/>

The other webpage is for those who like Morse keys who should have a look at this webpage where they will find a lot of Morse keys details and photographs.
http://www.telegraph-office.com/tel_off-page.html

Lawrence
9H1AV/9H9MHR

Foreign Radio Amateur Associations

As a service to you so that if you are overseas you would know whom you can contact, we are going to start publishing details about foreign radio amateur associations which are in Region 1. We hope that you finding them useful.

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Lawrence 9H1AV/9H9MHR

Wisdom

**Don't let your mind wander -- it's
too little to be let out alone.**

From QRZ.com

**Afternoon, n.: That part of the day
we spend worrying about how we
wasted the morning.**

Activities at MARL

Membership Fee

**Payment of 2006 membership has
started. The Financial Secretary will
be waiting for you to dig deep down
into your pockets to pay your
membership fee.**

**Remember that if you haven't paid
before the meeting you will not be able
to vote at the Annual General Meeting
if voting is required.**

Annual General Meeting

**The Committee would also like to
inform the members that the Annual
General Meeting will be held on Sunday
26th February 2006.**

See You