



International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

Europe, Middle East, Africa and Northern Asia

Founded 1950

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

SUBJECT	Internet Gateways & Remote linking for HF Operation		
Society	RSGB	Country:	United Kingdom
Committee:	C4	Paper number:	VIE10/C4/02
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Internet Gateways & Remote linking for HF Operation

RSGB

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The RSGB has been supportive of experimental HF Internet Gateways, partly on the grounds of technical interest and also for their possible use as part of a regional emergency communications response. Like other Societies it has also been influential with its Administration (Ofcom) in allowing improvements in respect of remote operation in the UK Amateur Licence.

The advent of the CQ Magazine's decision to create an "extreme" category in its CQWW contests, whereby remote transmitters in other countries or indeed continents can be used to complete a QSO is seen by the RSGB as a possible warning that this technological advance might bring some unexpected and undesirable changes to the operating habits in the hobby.

Recommendation

That IARU Region 1 recommends that its National Societies discourage all operation for awards and contests whereby remote receivers or transmitters are outside the call area for the callsign in use. With the following exceptions

- a) Where the radio bearer is operating at 29MHz or above; and
- b) When the usage is associated with an emergency communications response or exercise.

Discussion

In the case of Internet Gateways, the normal operation is to use the Internet as the long-distant bearer, with 29MHz FM, VHF or μ W being used for local access/broadcast. HF is not the ideal medium for this latter role and contends with Rec 4.3 De Haan, 1993. The exception would be whereby internet linking was lost from a wide region and HF might then be the only long-range bearer, as was for example the case of the emergency response for the Andaman & Nicobar Islands following the Indonesian Tsunami, 2004.

In the case of remote operation, receiver and/or transmitter, as the CQ Magazine is unlikely to be influenced by IARU recommendations, so the demand to experiment with such “extreme” options should be satisfied. Curbing migration of this type of operation is therefore seen as a necessity if we are not to de-stabilise award and contest operation.