

RADIO SOCIETY

of Great Britain_

DRAFT/UNCONFIRMED

PROPAGATION STUDIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Propagation Studies Committee held in Leicester on Saturday 2nd April 2011, commencing at 1300hrs local.

1. Members Present

| | | |
|--------------------|-------|-----------|
| Prof. M. Harrison | G3USF | Chairman |
| Mr S. Nichols | G0KYA | Secretary |
| Mr R. Smith | G3SVW | |
| Mr G. Williams | G4FKH | |
| Mr L. Butterfields | G0CIB | |
| Dr J. Worsnop | G4BAO | |
| Prof. B. Chambers | G8AGN | |

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A. Melia G3NYK.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Gwyn G4FKH reported that page 3, section 5.4 of the last minutes said "copies of some of the chapters" have been sent to RSGB. It should have read "a copy of **the** chapter has been sent to RSGB."

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Steve G0KYA updated the committee on progress on the propagation presentation for Bletchley Park. Don GB3BJ has written a very simple explanation of propagation and Steve checked this for him, offering a couple of suggestions. Nothing else has been heard. It is expected that this will form part of an exhibit at Bletchley Park in due course.

4. PSC Membership

None

5. Topics for discussion

5.1 _____ RSGB General Manager

Leslie G0CIB updated the PSC on matters surrounding the dismissal of the RSGB General Manager.

5.2 _____ PSC involvement in Newark Hamfest/RSGB Convention

This year's Newark Hamfest will be held on Friday 30th September 2011 and Saturday 1st October 2011. G0KYA appealed for help over the two days, but is not looking for firm commitments just yet. The format will remain pretty much the same as the previous two years.

The HF Convention will be held on Friday 7 October to Sunday 9 October 2011. Steve G0KYA has been booked to give a talk on interpreting digisonde data as part of the Icom Contest University. Carl K9LA is also coming over from the USA. It is hoped that Dr Lucie Green will attend again and talk about her work as a solar physicist.

John G4BAO talked about the upcoming EME conference in August 2012 and wondered if PSC should have some sort of presence. It is being held at Churchill College, Cambridge – see eme2012.com.

5.3 RSGB Handbook/Yearbook

Gwyn G4FKH said that the chapter has been rewritten and submitted. He added that the chapter has been rewritten so many times that he is not completely happy with the content and layout. Next time around Gwyn suggests that it should be completely rewritten from scratch.

Steve G0KYA asked if the committee were happy if he wrote the HF propagation prediction pages for the 2012 RSGB Yearbook once again, which they were.

5.4 PSC web page

Gwyn G4FKH should get complete control of the propagation pages on the RSGB web site on or around 15th April 2011. We had been promised this from November 2010. There have been many delays, but hopefully the new deadline will be met.

If we don't get full control of the pages we may have to look at moving the site elsewhere.

The committee thought the new site design is definitely a step forward, but we must be able to update it. The PSC web page gets around 2,000-2,500 hits a month.

Gwyn's propagation pages get around 9,000 hits a month.

5.5 Board matters (G0CIB)

Leslie G0CIB said that the Board had discussed succession planning. At the end of the year Leslie will step down from the board and has produced a PowerPoint presentation on the PSC's activities for his successor.

6. Projects

6.1 Six and Ten Report (G3USF)

G3USF has now completed the January 2011 Report (there are still earlier gaps). Martin had been held back by an operation on his hand.

6.2 LF Propagation (G3NYK)

Nothing to report

6.3 GB2RS (Propagation bulletins, G3USF)

Martin reported that he was hoping to arrange for the Saturday update to be available via G0CAS as well as (at present) via Keele and the mailing list. At least there is now something to say with the increasing solar activity.

7 Reports

7.1 Chairman's report (G3USF)

Not much to report. The annual report was distributed and will appear in an upcoming RadCom.

A report has to be prepared for the forthcoming Region 1 IARU conference in Sun City, South Africa. G3USF is not planning to attend due to the current financial situation.

7.2 John (G4BAO)

John gave a talk at BT Martlesham Roundtable on "patio moonbounce".

There has been a recorded meteor burst contact on 1296MHz between OK1DFC Czech Republic and a station in Sweden. A 10 metre dish and around 400W was used at one end.

There is no update on news of a 4m beacon from WA1ZMS. Reports had been received from Europe when it was last used.

The 3.4GHz beacon for Bath is still being tested, but there are no further reports on licensing. Additional UHF beacons are not being licensed at present. It is thought unlikely there will be any approvals until after the Olympics.

The 13GHz beacon planned for Bristol is in G4BAO's loft and there have been no developments in terms of licensing.

7.3 Barry (G8AGN)

With no permanent antennas Barry's VHF work tends to take place in the summer. In the winter, Barry has been looking at optical contacts using lasers. This is difficult over longer distances due to optical scintillation.

There has been a lot of work on cloud bounce and other paths using LEDs, Contacts around 300km have been made (the line of sight record is around 250km, mountain top to mountain top). The UK record using lasers is about 70-75km.

Experimentation has also revolved around using high-power LEDs rather than lasers.

With LEDs there is work going on to look at better optical "antennas". Wider beamwidths also helps get over the scintillation problems. In January Barry managed to work around 87km. Colder, drier nights work best.

These experiments have to have good weather and be done at night. Lots of work needs to be done around the design of equipment. Recordings of speech and Morse have been made – for more details see the recent RadCom feature.

7.4 Gwyn G4KFH

Gwyn has been on holiday so did not have much to report beyond what is elsewhere in this report. He will be returning to Mauritius with a radio later in the year. He was also responsible for the HF propagation prediction pages of the new “Computers in Amateur Radio” book from the RSGB.

7.5 Ron G3SW

Ron has been doing a lot of work with WSPR and plans to demonstrate it at the Blackpool Rally.

7.6 Leslie G0CIB

Leslie runs the RSGB Tech Yahoo Group and reports that it gets a lot of use.

7.7 Steve G0KYA

Steve's monthly podcast is now being rebroadcast on the UK's “ICQ” podcast as well as “This week in amateur radio” in the US. He is also now producing a monthly set of propagation charts using HamCap.

He recently gave a talk to the Norfolk Amateur Radio Club on “Using Digisonde Data”, which was well received. As a result many hams in the area are now using the Chilton digisonde.

8. Any other business

G3USF reported that he had received an email from the French beacon coordinator. He said that a group had approached them about setting up a 10m beacon in Brittany. He is trying to divert them towards producing a 6m beacon, perhaps beaming towards the USA.

G3USF suggested that a 6m beacon pointing south might help with TEP studies, being just above the usual notional TEP zone. There aren't many amateurs on ZD7 and ZD8, but there are beacons there. A corresponding beacon in Brittany could be useful.

G4BAO suggested that JT65 modes could be used.

G3USF plans to retire as committee chairman with his last meeting to be in autumn 2011. The committee/PSC needs to look at the process for succession. The committee expressed their thanks to Martin for all his hard work.

9. Closure

The next meeting was provisionally booked for Saturday 15 October 2011. The meeting closed at 1610hrs.

Steve Nichols G0KYA, PSC Secretary