

SHORTWAVE BULLETIN

Nummer: 1546. 19 september 2004.

Deadline nästa nr: 1/10 2004 (E mail 3/10 kl. 0900 SNT)

Så är det söndag förmiddag igen och dags att ställa samman ännu en SWB bulletin. Endast 3 bidragsgivare har visat viss form av aktivitet. Därför kommer en del annan information som samlats på hög och kanske kan intressera nån i gänget.

I övrigt så har jag nu avvecklat ortosen och nästan helt också kryckorna. Bilen får åter göra tjänst. Taxi-resorna till jobbet är förhoppningsvis ett minne blott. Men, det kommer att ta tid att mjuka upp knäet – fy sjutton vad det tar emot att böja mer än 110 grader!

Artikeln längre fram om dxtuners.com är ju egentligen mer lämpad för MV lyssnaren, men konceptet gäller ju även för KV, så jag tar mig friheten att gå över gränserna lite. Håll till godo.

Keep on

Redaktion:

Thomas Nilsson
Mardalsv. 372
262 93 Ängelholm

Tel: 0431-27054

E-mail:

thomas.nilsson@ sverige.net
thomas@mafa.se

SWB-info

SWB online på HCDX: <http://www.hard-core-dx.com/swb>
Dateline Bogotá: <http://homepage.sverige.net/~a-0901/Dateline.htm>
SWB hot stuff: <http://homepage.sverige.net/~a-0901/> (på denna sajt ligger alltid senaste SWB).
SWB member information: <http://www.hard-core-dx.com/swb/member.htm>
Jubileumstidskriften: <http://homepage.sverige.net/~a-0901/> (html- + pdf-version).

QSL, kommentarer, mm.

Jan Edh: NA - bara sug på ordet. Det är klart man blir tänd och vill försöka vara med. Även ute i Fredriksfors hade Rolf Larsson hört några NA-signaler på fredagsmorgonen, och nu skulle det bli ännu bättre...

När jag kom ut efter jobb den 10/9, alldeles för sent för att kolla om något fanns från Asien, hade Rolf och Dan dukat fram ost, kex, druvor och vin! Californiskt vin! Det var ju lika bra att sikta på Västkust... Det var bara det att vi hörde inte en enda NA-signal i Fredriksfors! Jan Alvestad hade –good- mot NA och –poor- söderut i sin översikt. "Siffrorna" var bra... Visserligen är som tidigare nämnts inte den riktiga östkustantennen i bruk för närvarande, men CA-antennen brukar vara bra både vad gäller NL, kusten ner, FL etc. Men gav alltså inte en enda NA. Inte ens 1510, 1520 etc, som gått morgonen innan. Inte heller Grönland på 650.

Däremot hade vi mycket bra styrkor på en del Puerto Rico och Venezuela, men vid 03.15 UTC började det snabbt bli sämre. Sedan en stund efter 04 UTC gick det litet sydligare stationer, men då började tyvärr spraket bli för starkt och signalerna för svaga. Helt klart rörde det sig dock en del om Argentina/Uruguay och kanske Paraguay, och så någon brasse (740). Kortvågen gav inga australier eller indoneser på tropikbanden. Och Sydamerika var också helt under isen.

14/9: Min suveräna känsla för brist på timing ter sig nu oöverträffad... Efter att ha blivit utan NA senast så var det två nätter i Fredriksfors med gott om NA, men utan mig. Nu var det den sista innan en väntad störning, och jag tog chansen. Vad hände? Jo, det var naturligtvis stört som... (ja just det!). Det blev med andra ord jag men inga NA i stället... Ett par högeffekterade koreaner letade sig igenom på kvällen, sedan blev det dött och jag gav upp redan vid 21 UTC. Kollade på nytt 01 - bara sprak, inte ens 1470 gick. 1400 och 820 undantagna. Kollade på nytt 03.30 till fram mot 05 UTC. Då gick några av de vanligaste PR- och Venezuela-frekvenserna (som 1290, 1390, 1470, 1480, 1500, 1520). Inget på X-band mer än WDHP. Hade jag kollat nätet på måndagskvällen hade jag nog aldrig åkt ut. Högt K-index, A-index på väg uppåt om än inte alarmerande mycket, till och med protonerna (inte så känsliga här nere väl, men inte utan betydelse) har rakat rejält i höjden. Behöver jag tillägga att kortvågen inte var något kul den heller.

Leif Råhäll: Hoppas det är något så när med benet. Har lyckats att höra några stationer ffg på em, alltid något.

Subject: Olympics

This may be off topic for some e-groups, but I have my sister in Bracknell to thank for this information. PAUL DAVID, Wembley Park, United Kingdom Sent: Thursday, September 16, 2004 8:39 PM

Here are the top nine comments made by NBC sports commentators during the Summer Olympics that they'd like to take back:

9. Dressage commentator: "This is really a lovely horse and I speak from personal experience since I once mounted her mother."
8. Paul Hamm, Gymnast: "I owe a lot to my parents, especially my mother and father."
7. Boxing Analyst: "Sure there have been injuries and even some deaths in boxing, but none of them really that serious."
6. Softball announcer: "If history repeats itself, I should think we can expect the same thing again."
5. Basketball analyst: "He dribbles a lot and the opposition doesn't like it. In fact you can see it all over their faces."
4. At the rowing medal ceremony: "Ah, isn't that nice, the wife of the IOC president is hugging the cox of the British crew."
3. Soccer commentator: "Julian Dicks is everywhere. It's like they've got eleven Dicks on the field."
2. Tennis commentator: "One of the reasons Andy is playing so well is that, before the final round, his wife takes out his balls and kisses them. Oh my God, what have I just said?" and without doubt the very best of all.....
1. Weightlifting commentator: "This is Gregoriava from Bulgaria. I saw her snatch this morning during her warm up and it was amazing." (via HCDX)

LOGGEN - ALL TIMES ARE UTC

2310	6.9	1725	AUS ABC Alice Springs med cw-mx //2325 och 2485 2-3 LRH
3266,4	6.9	2112	INS RRI Gorontalo med musl. mx 2 LRH
3976	6.9	1555	INS RRI Pontianak med sång och gamelaninstrument. Slutade 1600 (ffg i höst på em) 2 LRH
4052,5	11.9	0430	Radio Verdad musik och anrop. QSA 2 men ren och fin signal den här gången. JE
4750	7.9	1528	INS RRI Makassar med lagu populer (ffg i höst på em) 2 LRH
4790	6.9	2102	INS RRI Fak Fak med nx 2 LRH
4874,82	12/9	0407	UNID Brazilian S/OFF, maybe the one of Radio Dif.Roraima ? 3 GAL
5014,65	12/9	0409	Radio Altura, S/OFF with full ID " Radio Altura, 4200 metros sobre el nivèl del mar, Cerro de Pasco, techo del mundo" 3-4 GAL
5025	11.9	0440	Radio Rebelde musik och nyheter (orkaninfo). QSA 3-4. Har inte hörts på ett tag. Reaktiverad för orkanvarning eller bara tillbaka? JE
5025	14.9	0250	Radio Rebelde brydde sig inte om konditionerna. QSA 4+ skulle man kunna kalla det. Pratade inte oväntat om stormens härjningar och rundade av med några melodisnuttar. JE
6000	6.9	0445	Radio Habana Cuba med jazz. Äntligen tillbaka efter orkanen Charleys härjningar på ön. 2 CB
6035	14.9	0235	La Voz de Guaviare med nyhetsprogram. QSA 2 och en del splatter. JE
9620,20	17/9	2052	SODRE, Montevideo, nice Milonga music selection, regular with the K9AY these days, USB better 2-3 GAL



Bandscan from BM, Quito, Ecuador

Björn Malm, c/o Susana Garcés de Malm,
Avenida la Prensa 4408 y Vaca, Quito, Ecuador.

tel.: (+ 593 2) 2598 470

email: bjornmalm2003@yahoo.com

Rx: JRC-535, Loewe HF-150, Sangean AT5-808 Antenn: 12 m lw Ö/V, 24 m lw N/S + Lw Magnetic Balun + MFJ1025 phaser

The following stations have been uploaded during the last 14 days at <http://www.malm-ecuador.com>

4845.04 Radio Municipal, La Paz area (Bolivia). This Thursday morning (Sept 09) with regular transmissions for the first time, probably in Aymara. Name: Radio Municipal. What I heard yesterday "Luciseis (?) tu radio" perhaps jingle or name of their FM transmitter. QTH: La Paz area, perhaps Provincia de Caranavi-La Paz. Frequencies: 4845 kHz and FM. Later on I will listen to my recordings and put it on my ID-homepage.

1550 // 6195 Radio Cosmopolita, Ambato (Ecuador). 178kb. 1984. Recording made by Henrik Klemetz year 1984. As Henrik writes: this is great stuff! I have never heard before of this Ecuadorian station on shortwave. The recording is from 1984, today there is a station listed for Ambato on 1550 kHz called HCEI6 Radio Montalvo. If this is Radio Cosmopolita with new name I do not know.

Henrik Klemetz: "Arguably the first Radio Cosmopolita on shortwave was a station in Ambato operating on shortwave 6195 kHz and 1550 kHz mediumwave. In 1984, when I was in Ambato, the shortwave operation was already off the air. The station used to carry uninterrupted son and rumba selections between 6 and 7 am, local time, much needed as the mornings were chilly. Announced temperature at 7 am was 8 degrees centigrade. Great stuff but muffled audio".

Thanks Henrik for a very interesting recording!



Saludos Cordiales desde "La Mitad del Mundo"!

(When using my information give credit to: Bjorn Malm, Quito, Ecuador, SWB América Latina)

Stationsnyheter

AUSTRALIA. 5050, ARDS --- After not hearing them, I sent Dale Chesson an email and got this reply:

We have been off the air since the beginning of May as we found we were in breach of licence conditions regarding our allowable bandwidth of the transmitted signal. We will be placing a filter in the system to allow us to meet our licence conditions next week and so anticipate being back on air by Sat 18 Sept.

As well as this we will be increasing our transmitter power from the 200 W we were operating at up to the maximum permissible under our licence which is 1 kW. So I will be interested to hear from anyone after the 18th to know if they are able to receive our signal. Cheers

(Dale (Chesson) Radio Service Manager, via Hans Johnson, WY, Sept 5, Cumbre DX via DXLD)

Seems friendly enough. I again suspect Steve Waldee, who has vanished from the DX scene, greatly over-reacted to ARDS legalese boilerplate (Glenn Hauser, OK, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

BOLIVIA. 4845.06, R. Municipal. Thanks Björn for the tip!! Heard at 0929 10 Sept. with live M announcer at tune-in giving frequency "...4,845 kilocyclos amplitud modulada, banda de 60 metros...", mention of Provincia and "la voz ??", and ending with nice ID!! Instrumental Andean band song. 0933-0936 canned ads mainly by same W and M. First ad mentioned Santa Cruz and then La Paz Bolivia at end. Back to live M announcer with long talk from 0936-0939. More music at 0939 with two songs. 0944 live M again TC and ID, continuous talk, and another nice ID at 0946. Gave SW frequency again at 0948. Sounded like some announcements were in Ayamara, similar to Pio Doce. Fair strength but horrible intermittent utes (more on than off) right on top!! Glad to ID this new one!! 73's (Dave Valko, Dunlo PA, Cumbredx mailing list via DXLD)

According to Mark Mohrmann's LA-DX, R. Fides has not been active recently, but it appears in his separate archive as last reported four years ago in Conexión Digital: 4845.09 BOLIVIA * R Fides, La Paz [2252-0358*/1048-1250] Sep 00 X // 6155, 9625 0159*

Note the frequency then was also slightly high .09 versus .06 just reported for R. Municipal. It looks likely they acquired the Fides transmitter after a long period of inactivity, but that does not explain how a Fides ID was heard the other day (Glenn Hauser, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

CONGO DR: Hmm, as I earlier predicted, **RTNC Goma** shortwave is not yet on the air. Quoting my source in Goma on 9 Sep 2004: "You are right, RTNC Goma got one shortwave transmitter from Kinshasa (gouvernement) like RTNC Bukavu. On Monday I was with RTNC Goma director and he told me they will use their new transmitter when they will finish to build their radio studio. I think the problem is political one. Maybe after our election it will be possible RTNC stations which are at the East will begin to work properly with our capital city." 73 Jari Savolainen Kuusankoski Finland via HCDX

DENMARK: Very weak reception noted here in Turku SW of Finland at 22 UT. Is **WMR Denmark 5815** kHz on the air? I can't believe it. "Reception" is so poor! They're told to be on the air on 5815 kHz from Friday 16 UTC to the next Monday morning 06 UTC. 5815 kHz used to be like a local FM station..... not any more. (73's Jouko Huuskonen Turku FINLAND via HCDX)

INDONESIA. 4749.96, 1423-, RRI Makassar, Sep 4. Besides Malaysia on 4895, this is the strongest station on the band at this time. S5 to S6 signal with modern Indonesian music. Cleaner audio than I'm used to for Indos (Walt Salmaniw, Victoria BC, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

INDONESIA. 3385, RRI Kupang [Timor]. Reactivated, Western pops 1002 with "The Final Countdown", under co-channel PNG, but Indonesian language clearly recognisable. Re-tune 1310 after PNG off, local programming, ID 1316. Good strength, 12/9 (Craig Seager, NSW, ARDXC via DXLD)

LAOS. 7145, 1351-, Radio Nationale Lao, Sep 7. Weak audio (?in English) presumed with talk by YL. Should be reasonably understandable as the accent is OK. This station should improve during the winter to useable levels. Worth keeping an eye on (English is listed in ILG as 1330 to 1400 (Walter (Volodya) Salmaniw, DXing the world from Victoria, BC, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

NEW ZEALAND. 1ZM AUCKLAND JOINS THE MOSQUITO NETWORK, APRIL 1944 (Radio New Zealand International Mailbox)

In the first of a new series about radio heritage in the Pacific, David Ricquish takes listeners back to 1944 during the Mailbox program this coming week.

In April 1944, 1ZM Auckland joined the Mosquito Network of the American [sic] Forces Radio Service. You'll hear the original opening announcements, the speeches, the DJ's and some of the great 'big band' music of the era in this unique radio documentary using long forgotten recordings from the RNZ Sound Archives and original research from the Radio Heritage Foundation.

These 60 year old recordings are the only known example of a WWII American Expeditionary Service (AES) station signing on their daily broadcast, and were cut live in the studio as the broadcast took place.

You'll hear excerpts from GI Journal, Command Performance and the 290th Army Band, the Hon. Peter Fraser (NZ Prime Minister), as well as each of the 'hipcat' announcers who brought a taste of American home town radio to the South Pacific, and a complete listing of Mosquito Network stations.

These recordings have not been heard for over 60 years, and are played exactly as they were heard on 1ZM Auckland, 1260 kc at a time when the island hopping campaign towards Japan was about to get underway.

Great music, a unique historical event, and wonderful listening for everyone interested in radio heritage. A Real Audio version of the program will be available on-line at <http://www.rnzi.com> in the audio- on-demand section for Mailbox.

Warm regards (David Ricquish, Radio Heritage Foundation, PO Box 14339 Wellington, New Zealand, Sept 11, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Glad to note that RNZI's new 11820 inbooms just as well as ex-9615 did, checked Sept 11 around 0500 UT Sat --- unfortunately, wasted on a silly ballgame (Glenn Hauser, OK, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

URUGUAY. Country time will change from UTC-3 to UTC-2 from 0300 Sun Sept. 19, in benefit of power saving. This measure hadn't been taken for several years, but energy crisis has forced the government to take this decision.

The decree hasn't been signed as of today. The normal UTC will come back probably at the end of the summer, March, so should it would span all the spring and summer. Restaurant owners, mainly in Punta del Este, the main seaside resort, are protesting since they will lose clients. When I have the change back date I will inform. This Daylight Saving Time is an extraordinary measure. It doesn't mean that next year we will have DST again. It all depends on the price of petrol and local rains.(Nigro, Uruguay, Sept. 13 via DXLD)

UT -3 will shift to UT -2 from 0300 Sep 19, 2004 to 0300 Mar 14, 2005. Decree has been signed (Horacio A. Nigro, Montevideo - Uruguay, Sept 16, dxldyg via DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Övriga radionyheter

dxtuners.com: A RESEARCH TOOL FOR THE MW DXER with Mark Connelly, WA1ION

The web site <http://www.dxtuners.com> allows PC control of remotely- sited receivers in a number of locations throughout the world. DXers in Sweden have set up the control structure for this. A standardized Java-based interface lets you control critical receiver parameters such as operating frequency, mode (AM, FM, CW, LSB, USB), and IF bandwidth. Audio is piped to the PC's sound card and the interface provides an S-meter to show signal strength. It is advisable to have a higher speed Internet service (e.g. cable or DSL) for this. Recent issues of Popular Communications and Monitoring Times have had articles on the service with more general detail. My main DX listening interest is international medium wave, so that will be the emphasis here.

After you set up an account and password, a few receivers may be accessed at the "guest" (free) privilege level. Additional receivers may be used if you institute a paid subscription. I signed up for a three month trial for \$15. With already over 10 pages of bandscan notes in my logbook after just a week of use, I've already got my money's worth. Many of the users are VHF/UHF utility enthusiasts so most of the receivers are of the "all band" type such as the ICOM PCR- 1000.

Antennas are often wideband non-directional discones. These are not the most sensitive set-ups for medium wave, but if a given site is either near salt water or at high altitude above average terrain, reception sensitivity is reasonable. There are receivers located in several western European countries, the US, Canada, Japan, Venezuela, and in a few other far-flung places including UAE, Australia, and Nepal.

As a medium wave DXer located on the Atlantic coast of the US, the receivers in western Europe, Venezuela, and eastern North America are most relevant to DX that I would be likely to hear in my area. The Japanese, Australian, and western US/Canada sites would be of greater value to the Grayland, WA DXpedition crew.

Over a few evenings I've logged into many of the sites. You have to defer to others who also want to use the receivers. Some sites go down from time to time for maintenance, thunderstorm avoidance, or because a ham owner wants to transmit. There's one site in Sweden that has eight Ewe antennas. Since this one gets many users, I haven't had a shot at it yet. Of the Swedish receivers I did tune, the Oresund one seemed best.

In the UK, I found better results on the Folkestone (English Channel) and South London (Gatwick Airport) sites than on some others that were too urban and, as a result, spur or noise heavy. Waterford, Ireland has a fairly sensitive receiver: since it's all seapath from there to Spain, the RNE, COPE, etc. outlets really pound in (dominating the Germans and even some of the UK stations: it's quite similar to local coastal sites here in that respect).

So far the Ireland site is the only one that gave me a hint of North America to Europe Transatlantic reception with a little bit of WWZN- 1510 showing up. Unfortunately there are no receiver sites (yet) on the west coasts of Ireland and Portugal where US and Canadian stations would have the best chance of reception.

Of the numerous North American sites, I found the Florida, Washington DC, and Moosonee ON Canada locations fairly useful. It was fun hearing my local WBZ-1030 booming in at all three of these locations as well as making a good appearance on a receiver in Chicago as well. Nobody has set up anything on Cape Cod or in Maine, Nova Scotia, or Newfoundland yet. My "winninglottery-ticket dream" would be to set up one of these receivers in Cappahayden or Renew's, Newfoundland and another one in the Azores. These would be Beverage-equipped of course. None of the existing US or Canadian sites showed any TA DX (but, then again, it's still July).

The best South American site so far is Caracas, Venezuela. For an urban site, the receiver had little in the way of man-made noise or spurs. WDHP-1620 from USVI really slams in there at night. One TA was noted: a het from Saudi Arabia on 1521. There was a hint of the 1650 Virginia station but not much else from "stateside".

The DXtuners web site is a very useful resource to see how well certain signals propagate into different areas. Like the European Medium Wave Guide, the NRC Log, World Radio-TV Handbook, and club bulletins, it can help to clear up unID's from DXpeditions and home listening.

Conceivably it could be used for live corroboration of DX being heard. There is a delay of several seconds but at least if the same songs are being played over a period of time, you'll have a pretty good confidence level.

The service is also a great source of entertainment since you don't have to go to dozens of different web sites to hear programming from BBC locals, RTE, Virgin Radio, TalkSport, college FM's, and other broadcasters. Hey sometimes you just want to pour out a beer and listen to one of the UK gold stations playing Helen Shapiro or Rolf Harris or some other nearly-forgotten (at least by Americans) star of the early 1960's. You'll be listening to what "the locals" are hearing, not something massaged for Internet consumption. That includes all the phone-in shows and advertisements in their goofy home-grown glory: all the unofficial accents, dialects, and expressions that give a region its spice. The worldwide fan base of Manchester United can follow their progress wherever they may be. US baseball games can be heard in places where the actual radio signals won't reach (and you don't have to pay MLB for the web feed).

Besides MW DX, I enjoy this for ham radio. I can check how my buddies on 75-meter AM are getting out to various places. In the old days, you would have had to do a lot of driving or flying to accomplish this kind of thing. Hams can use the remote receivers to check their different antenna configurations for "get-out-ability" and "pile-up busting" attributes on useful paths such as eastern US to Europe. It would have been slick if I could have had this capability back in the '60s and early '70s when I had my antenna farm at Menotomy Rocks Park.

Evaluations of your transmitted signal are better with your own ears than when going by someone else's word. Some hams give everybody a "5 by 9" report. You would never know if the yagi beam, the rhombic, the sloper, or the quad was pumping the best signal down the main street of some little snow-covered town in the Swiss Alps. The DXtuners site changes all of this. Loggings made on remote receivers should be fine for submission to club bulletins as long as the DXer accurately represents where the receptions actually occurred.

Postings of the greatest value are ones that are out of the ordinary for the site, ones that clear up members' "unID" questions, or ones that provide useful information about significant changes: format, network, call, schedule, power increase/decrease, jamming, new stations on the air, old stations gone dark.

As in the use of stations' streaming web feeds, audio piped over phone lines, things heard on trips, etc. there is, I suppose, the potential for misrepresentation in loggings by less than totally scrupulous DXers. In the long run, of course, these people are only cheating themselves. A QSL acquired for no effort or for a badly-misrepresented one cannot bring much satisfaction.

The DXtuners service does offer a valuable tool to guide one's own honest DX efforts towards potential new catches. Sometimes you can infer that if a European signal is poorly heard within Europe, it probably isn't going to be worth chasing 3000 miles farther away. On the other hand, something that is unexpectedly strong at a remote receiver might give you the idea to look for it, even though you may have previously dismissed it as impossible. Perhaps it is running more power than it claims it does. I can see that, during next winter, playing with this will be a whole lot of fun when weather prevents me from sitting out at seashore DXpedition sites to hear choice DX coming out of my own receiver. Among other things, I'll try "reverse TA DX": trying to get US and Canadian stations on European receivers.

As more DXers try this service it is quite likely that more receivers will come online, some inevitably in super locations by the seashore and on mountaintops. I know of a Beverage-equipped Swedish site that is in the planning stage. Now THAT will be fun! (Medium Wave News 50/04 14 September 2004 via DXLD)

(This article was originally intended for MW but dxtuners.com is of course also just as good for SW. /ed)

The ultimate DXing system??

I stumbled across this while researching Codem Systems for a project totally unrelated to DXing. . . . I'd love to see their customer list for this! <http://www.codem.com/products/sigint/systems/nighthawk.asp> (Harry Helms, W5HLH, Wimberley, TX EM00, DX LISTENING DIGEST)

Viz.: HF SIGNAL ACQUISITION SYSTEM [links:] QUOTE / DATASHEET PDF

The Nighthawk System is a turnkey automated Signals Intelligence System designed to rapidly detect, analyze, locate and record narrow and wideband signals across the HF spectrum with minimum operator intervention. Designed for the networking of multiple remote collection sites, the system is controlled by workstations located at a central operations facility.

Featuring system tasking, the Nighthawk system responds to specific mission or user requirements by establishing configuration parameters for signals of interest and by giving mission-specific instructions to operating personnel. The system can be configured to operate in automatic mode, manual mode or a hybrid of both. . . (via DXLD)

RRI Serui, Indonesia MP3 file

I've posted an RRI Serui, Indonesia MP3 file that may be of interest to rec.radio.shortwave readers. The file is about 120 kB, and streams from this URL (or you can right-click and "save as..."): http://www.guyatkins.com/files/RRI_Serui_4604.9.mp3 Specifics of this DX recording: Logged & recorded on 9/4/2004 at 1330 UTC, 4604.9 kHz. Note the "RRI Serui" ID at 54 seconds into this 1-minute long recording. There is also a mention of the Indonesian city of Palangkaraya before this. Best DX, Guy Atkins Puyallup, WA USA (via HC DX)

New FM list on HCDX

Everyone, We're happy to announce a new list from Hard-Core-DX.com --- fm@hard-core-dx.com. This list will be a list dedicated to all FMDXers. Logs, news, equipment reviews and everything else related to FMDXing is very welcome. The focus will be mostly for European FMDXers but everyone else will be welcome to join, too.

You can join the list by going to <http://www.hard-core-dx.com/mailman/listinfo/fm> (73! Risto Kotalampi HCDX)

``Intruder Signal`` on 40 Meters Remains a Mystery for Now <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2004/09/09/103/?nc=1>
NEWINGTON, CT, Sep 9, 2004 --- An unidentified signal that's been showing up on the 40-meter phone band on or about 7238 kHz has mystified amateurs in the western US and Canada, where it's been heard frequently for the past few weeks. Although it resembles a steady carrier, a closer inspection suggests that the intruding signal actually is a series of closely spaced signals. Don Moman, VE6JY, in Edmonton, Alberta, says he's been hearing the signal quite loud at his QTH.

``This signal looks a lot more interesting than it would sound --- just a broad tone/hum/buzz, depending on where you tune,`` he said. One spectrogram from VE6JY showed perhaps a half-dozen or more discrete signals. ``It's certainly loud enough out here, peaking broadly south-southwest from Edmonton,`` he said. Moman was using a 5-element Yagi and was hearing the signal at 10 dB over S9.

That conforms with observations reported by Bob Gonsett, W6VR, at Communications General Corp (CGC). He says engineers at the CGC lab in Fallbrook, California took a quick look at the intruder September 6 at around 2120 UTC and found ``several close-spaced CW carriers --- perhaps from one specially modulated transmitter, perhaps from transmitters at different locations,`` he reported. CGC reported the signals appeared on 7238.063, 7238.150, 7238.237 and 7238.412 kHz, with the 7238.237 kHz signal being ``the strongest of the group.``

...to hear an audio clip of the ``mystery`` signal in the vicinity of 7238 kHz as heard at the QTH of VE6JY in Alberta [MP3, 00:20] [go to above URL and click link]

While no one's sure what it is, the FCC HF Direction Finding Facility has been able to determine that it's coming from somewhere east of Prescott, Arizona. FCC monitoring indicates the ``buzz`` is centered on 7238.1 kHz with a bandwidth of about 1 kHz and spikes spaced at about 90 Hz apart.

Reports to the International Amateur Radio Union Region 2 Monitoring System indicate the signal has been heard from about 1700 to 2130 UTC, although Moman reported hearing it at around 0300 UTC and said the signal even went off the air for a few seconds while he was listening to it. Jack Roland, KE0VH, in Colorado also heard the signals for a couple of evenings this week. ``Something is not right there,`` he remarked.

High Noon Net Manager Bill Savage, N5FLD, in Albuquerque, New Mexico said several net participants --- in Nebraska, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, Minnesota and Arizona --- were able to hear the mystery signal.

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According to Bob Gonsett, W6VR, for the past three weeks, hams in the southwestern U.S. have been reporting a mysterious signal in the 40-meter band. One party described it as a ``mechanical sound.`` Another speculated that it was ``data.``

Engineers at Communications General Corporation in Fallbrook California took a quick look at the situation on September 6th. And at 3:20 P-M Pacific Daylight Savings Time the company found several close-spaced CW carriers. The four strongest signals at CGC's lab were on 7238.063, 7238.150, 7238.237 and 7238.412 kHz. The signal on .237 was the strongest of the group and the frequencies reported should each be accurate to better than plus or minus 30 Hz.

Communications General says it is not sure if the signal was coming from one specially modulated transmitter or from transmitters at different locations. Bob Gonsett adds that it will be interesting to learn the source or sources of these transmissions. (W6VR, CGC via ARNewline(tm) September 10 via John Norfolk, dxldyahoogroup, via HCDX)

Grayland, WA DXpedition - August 20th to 22nd INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Some DXers "hang up the headphones" in the Summer, figuring that there is no DX worth pursuing. My experience, though, says otherwise. Especially from a quiet DXpedition location, every month of the year offers opportunity for interesting targets.

This weekend's 3-night DXpedition at Grayland with John Bryant produced trans-Pacific MW DX from both hemispheres. The geographic regions that were "in" at any given moment toggled from one to the other within a minute or two. It would be fascinating to know what propagational mechanism causes DX to begin the evening "Down Under", flip suddenly to Japan/China/Asia for much of the night, and then finish with a sudden return to Aussie/Kiwi mediumwave DX just past local sunrise! Please see John's DXpedition report for an interesting and detailed account of these fluctuating conditions.

Sunday, August 22nd provided a totally different mediumwave reception pattern compared to the previous evenings. Once the grayline had shifted far enough to the west, both Southern and Northern hemispheres propagated signals to our receivers. On frequencies such as 594 and 828, Australian/New Zealand and Japanese/Korean/Chinese stations were fighting for our attention at the same time. Overall signal levels were lower on the 22nd, often making it difficult to identify anything more than the languages and potential countries on the frequency.

My DXpedition highlights on mediumwave were the 1 kw Kosrae, Micronesia station V6AJ on 1503 (a new MW country for me) and catching an elusive local ID of JOTB Matsue, Japan on 1593.

I spent little time on the tropical bands as mediumwave was so productive. Most interesting catch on shortwave was an unidentified NHK feeder on 3970 USB, which is likely the 600 watt Sapporo station rather than the weaker, further south Nagoya outlet. The usual Indonesians on 90 meters such as RRI Palangkaraya and RRI Ternate provided excellent listening with their strong, clear signals. I also found Radio East New Britain (3385 kHz) on late past 1200 with an excellent quality broadcast of the "New Guinea Top Ten Countdown" of Melanesian pop music, sponsored by Coca-Cola. A number of advertisements, promos, and PSAs added to the local flavor. MP3 recordings of this intercept can be streamed or downloaded from: http://www.guyatkins.com/files/RENB_3385_long.mp3 (26 minutes, 3.05 Mb) or just the first half: http://www.guyatkins.com/files/RENB_3385_short.mp3 (13 minutes, 1.54 Mb). The MP3 files are analog copies of my original minidisc recorded on the ICOM R-75.

John and I set up our usual three Beverage antennas on this DXpedition: 750 ft. terminated wires running southwest and west, and 950 ft. in the northwest direction. We also experimented with a remotely-adjusted termination for another western Beverage.

The orientation of the Grayland DXpedition site limits our antenna lengths. In the past we've extended the wires a few hundred feet further over the beach during the night but found no worthwhile improvement; the risk of the wires being caught by passing vehicles on the beach is too great.

My ICOM R-75 was my favorite receiver during the DXpedition, and it proved to be more flexible in tough DX situations than the Racal RA6790GM. The ICOM clearly was better with split frequency MW signals thanks to the INRAD crystal filters in the 1st & 2nd IFs which improve the R-75 twin PBT control's performance over stock. On the trans-Pacific MW catches in particular, once again I found myself wishing for PBT on the Racal. The RA6790GM has great selectivity, but it cannot compete with the audio recovery and signal readability of the R-75 with its PBT adjusted precisely. The PBT's superiority is due to its ability to peak crucial voice frequencies for best intelligibility, when signals are severely overlapping (often the case with foreign mediumwave stations close to domestic MW channels). The R-75 is also easier and quicker to tune than the RA6790GM, with the ICOM's keypad buttons providing a tactile feedback compared to the membrane keys on the Racal. In addition, if I want to use the full selection of voice bandwidth crystal filters in the RA6790GM I need to be in CW mode, adjust the BFO to 1200-1500 kHz, and offset-tune by an appropriate amount for clear audio. On signals without co-channel interference however, the Racal is my first choice for cleaner audio. Particularly with very weak signals having at least one sideband in the clear, the RA6790GM reveals more nuances of the audio for better intelligibility. The Racal is also my first choice for pleasant program listening to moderate and strong signals.

SHORTWAVE LOGGINGS

- 2310 AUSTRALIA VL8A Alice Springs, Aug 20 1409 - 'ABC Radio' ID by woman announcer, and into Olympics coverage. Good level and parallel 2325 (good) and 2485 (also good). (Atkins-WA)
- 3260 PAPUA NEW GUINEA R. Madang, Aug 20 1159 - Caught this one just in time for sign-off, with log drums, ID and frequency announcements in Pidgin by male announcer. National anthem and off 1201. Very good signal. (Atkins-WA)
- 3315 PAPUA NEW GUINEA R. Manus, Aug 20 1201 - I tuned into Manus just in time to catch the final notes of the PNG national anthem, and the Bird of Paradise call. No sign of NBC relay after sign-off as noted earlier in the week. Excellent signal. (Atkins-WA)
- 3320 SOUTH AFRICA R. Sonder Grense, Aug 21 0415 - Male and female announcers in Afrikaans; poor signal but seemed to be slowly improving, at Meyerton sunrise. (Atkins-WA)
- 3325 INDONESIA RRI Palangkaraya, Aug 20 1414 - Excellent, powerful signal at 1-1/4 hours past local sunrise with male announcer and many mentions of Palangkaraya. (Atkins-WA)
- 3345 INDONESIA RRI Ternate, Aug 20 1419 - Phone interview between male announcer and caller. Very strong signal, almost as clear as Palangkaraya. Conversations seemed to be about the Greece Olympics. (Atkins-WA)
- 3365 PAPUA NEW GUINEA R. Milne Bay, Aug 20 1208 - Very strong signal with male DJ in Pidgin playing hard rockin' PNG melanesian music. Another PNG outlet on late (not parallel 4890), perhaps for the Friday night youth audience? The following PNG signals were noted earlier at 1145 on August 21: 3260, 3325, 3365, 3385, and 4890. (Atkins-WA)
- 3385 PAPUA NEW GUINEA R. East New Britain, Aug 20 1205 - On late tonight with female announcer in Pidgin, and R&B pop tune. At 1212, ad for PNG Motors 'Buy and Fly' promotion with '3000 Kina spending money' for chance to win trip to the soccer finals. Excellent signal, and not parallel 4890. On August 21 at 1215, East New Britain was at local quality level, featuring the 'New Guinea Top Ten Countdown' with the latest Melanesian pop tunes and male announcer in Pidgin, and local ads. Station promo announcement as 'R-N-B FM, one great song after another' with children's voices. Mentions of FM and shortwave outlets and PO Box at 1236, with 'good night & God bless'. (Atkins-WA)
- 3960.9 INDONESIA RRI Palu, Aug 20 1423 - Powerhouse signal with lagu popular of male vocals. Phone interview at 1437. (Atkins-WA)
- 3970 USB JAPAN NHK, unidentified outlet, Aug 20 1433 - Male announcers in Japanese with Olympics coverage and background crowd noises; sounded echoey like an indoors swimming competition. Surprisingly good signal for 300 watts at 1-1/2 hours past local sunrise. More likely this is the 600 watt Sapporo station (closer to Grayland via great circle route) than the 300 watt transmitter in Nabeta (Nagoya) further South. (Atkins-WA)
- 3976 INDONESIA RRI Pontianak, Aug 20 1450 - Female announcer with voice-over somber music, reading a poem or drama. EZL music at 1456. ID at 1500 and mention of frequency and meter band by female, followed by ad or promo. Strong signal well past sunrise. (Atkins-WA)
- 4910 ZAMBIA ZNBC, Aug 21 0422 - Poor but improving signal at Lusaka sunrise, with male announcer in unid. African language; mentions of Zambia and possibly Lusaka at 0428. (Atkins-WA)
- 7260 VANUATU R. Vanuatu, Aug 20 0945 - I was hoping for Vanuatu, but no sign of it was found on the frequency, only a low-level unid. station playing flute and orchestral music. This is possibly Mongolian National Radio, but the language at 1000 sounded Russian, not the Mongolian as listed in DBS. No sign of Vanuatu August 21 or 22, either. (Atkins-WA)
- (Guy Atkins, Puyallup, WA USA, DXing at Grayland, WA, 750 ft. SW & W Beverages, 950 ft. NW Beverage, mod. ICOM R-75 / mod. Racal RA6790GM / Timewave DSP-59+, rec.radio.shortwave)

Amateurs Handle Emergency Comms in Wake of Hurricane Ivan

As the third major hurricane in two months crossed the Caribbean Sea, radio amateurs in the region have once again been in action, providing emergency communications. The Hurricane Watch Net has been in almost continuous operation on 14325kHz for over three weeks. It coordinates its activities with WX4NHC at the American National Hurricane Centre, which gathers real-time weather data and damage reports from radio amateurs in the path of the hurricane.

In Cuba, IARU Region 2 Emergency Coordinator Arnie Coro, CO2KK, praised the Hurricane Watch Net for its outstanding efforts in collecting ground-level weather data from stations in Cuba. CO2KK was the Hurricane Watch Net liaison station. He and many other Cuban amateurs were active in providing communications as Hurricane Ivan passed over the north-western end of the island. Arnie said that nearly 800 Cuban amateurs were involved in handling emergency traffic related to Hurricane Ivan. He spent some 55 hours in continuous operation handling emergency traffic to the affected area.

In the Cayman Islands, HMS Richmond was moored off Grand Cayman but had no communications to shore to direct its humanitarian relief efforts. A member of the Hurricane Watch Net called London to get a satellite telephone number for the governor of the Cayman Islands, which was relayed to the Richmond via the net. The Hurricane Watch Net was also able to advise the Richmond that it was possible to land an aircraft on the Grand Cayman airport runway. It had been assumed the runway was unusable until the net learned from a private pilot that it was still possible to land there.

As Hurricane Ivan threatens the US Gulf Coast, the Amateur Radio Emergency Service there is being placed on standby alert. Local Emergency Coordinators are establishing VHF and UHF repeater nets and monitoring the emergency frequencies of 3965 and 7243kHz. A longer version of this news story is available on the ARRL website. <http://www.arrl.org/>