



International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

Europe, Middle East, Africa and Northern Asia

Founded 1950



General Conference, Davos, 11 to 16 September 2005

SUBJECT	A Dynamic HF Bandplan for IARU Region 1		
Society	NRRL	Country:	Norway
Committee:	C4	Paper number:	25
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A Dynamic HF Bandplan for IARU Region 1 During the Largest international Phone and Digital Contests

Introduction

Some radio amateurs operate out of the assigned phone and digital segments in the IARU Region 1 HF bandplan during the largest international phone and digital contests, respectively; because of lack of available bandplan space for their modes on 160 and 40 m in such contests. Possible solutions to this problem should be discussed at the conference, and the decision reached should be included in the IARU Region 1 HF Manager's Handbook.

Background

At the last three IARU Region 1 conferences this problem has been discussed, based on proposals by EDR and NRRL, with no solution found by the IARU Region 1 so far. The problem has during these years risen in magnitude, and it creates a lot of unnecessary indignation and friction between contesting and non-contesting radio amateurs.

Ignoring the problem, and just telling our fellow radio amateurs to always adhere to the HF bandplan, has not solved the problem; when there is simply not enough space for the contesting stations within the relevant mode segment of the narrowest bands.

It is now necessary at the IARU Region 1 Conference to seriously discuss the situation, and to find solutions to this problem, which annoys many radio amateurs.

Key points and proposal

- A. There is need to demonstrate the usage of the radio amateur bands vs. our authorities, in order to have a better chance of keeping our bands ("use them, or lose them").
- B. Contests are among the most effective ways of showing usage of the bands, and to document such use (by lists of contest results).
- C. Hence contests are extremely beneficial for amateur radio.
- D. The phone segments and digital segments are too narrow during the largest international phone and digital contests, respectively. This is especially manifested in the 160 and 40 m bands.
- E. The reason is that many countries have narrow high-power phone segments in the 160 and 40 m bands, and that the digital segments in the IARU Region 1 HF bandplan are too narrow to fit the number of contesting stations in the largest international contests.

- F. CW operators are complaining that phone and digital operators are operating in the CW-only segments of the IARU Region 1 HF bandplan during these contests.
- G. In practise the IARU Region 1 HF bandplan is invalidated during the largest international phone and digital contests, especially in such phone contests.
- H. Encouraging our radio amateurs to adhere to the bandplan has not helped, when some few radio amateurs ignore the bandplan, and thereby create a lot of unnecessary indignation and friction between contesting and non-contesting radio amateurs.
- I. This situation is growing worse year by year, because of increased activity combined with not enough room in the appropriate mode segments, especially in the 160 and 40 m bands.
- J. The bandplans are ideally made to reflect the actual usage of the bands, in order to let all users share a proportional part of the bands.
- K. The bandplans are made to suit the ordinary day-to-day situation on the bands. The bandplans are not made to reflect the situation during the largest international contests.
- L. The challenge is if we can allow adjustments to band segment borders during the largest international contests; in this way make the band plans *dynamic*, to adjust to a band load different from the day-to-day situation.
- M. It is expected that the 40 m situation will be considerably improved after 29 March 2009, when most Region 1 countries are expected to make 7.1 - 7.2 MHz available to the radio amateurs.
- N. But ignoring the situation today (and for the next 4 years in case of the 40 m band), without finding solutions to this increasing problem, is no longer acceptable. A recommendation leading to a relief of the problem must be found.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the C4 discusses possible solutions to the problem, and decides on recommendations to be included in the IARU Region 1 HF Manager's Handbook. Here are some possibilities for a *dynamic HF bandplan*, to be considered as a starting point for the discussion:

1. Non-contesting radio amateurs are recommended to use the contest-free HF bands (30, 17, and 12 m) during the largest international contests.
2. It may be accepted that the lower bandplan phone/digital border be shifted 10 kHz down on 160 and 40 m during the largest international phone contests, if there is no available room for stations in the ordinary phone segment.
3. It may be accepted that the lower bandplan digital/CW border be shifted 5 kHz down, and the digital/phone border be shifted 5 kHz up, on 160 and 40 m during the largest international digital contests, if there is no available room for stations in the ordinary digital segment.
4. Other possible solutions should be discussed.
5. The discussion should lead to a decision on an IARU Region 1 recommendation, on how to solve the bandplan problems in the 160 and 40 m bands during the largest international phone and digital contests for the next few years to come. This can serve as a provisional effort until the next IARU Region 1 Conference 2008, when the effort should be evaluated.