

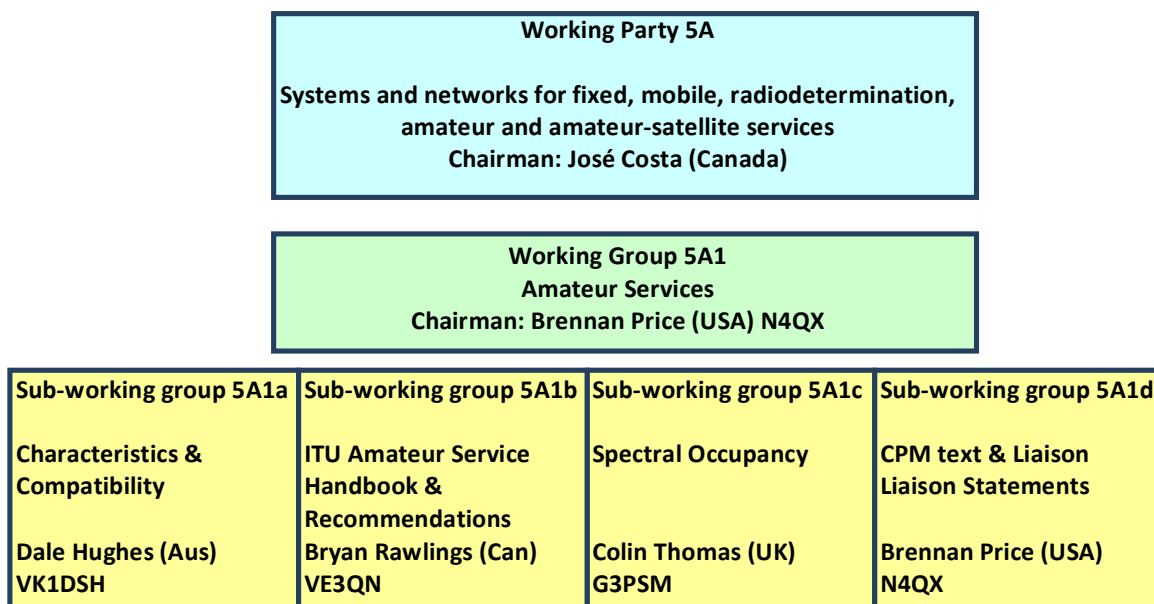
*The ITU Working Party meetings concerned with the Amateur Service have concluded, and Dale Hughes (VK1DSH) is heading home from Geneva. This is a summary of Dale's final report to the WIA from a very busy and difficult series of meetings.*

This round of ITU Working Party meetings started on 5 November 2012 and ended on 15 November 2012. The meetings were held in the Geneva offices of the International Telecommunications Union.

ITU members are either sovereign states or interested organisations e.g. the International Amateur Radio Union, although only sovereign states sign the final WRC treaty document.

The tasks undertaken by the working and sub-working groups are to consider input contributions related the next World Radiocommunications Conference in 2015, and the ongoing work of maintaining current ITU reports and recommendations.

The structure for the Amateur Service working groups was, (all groups have a similar structure):



The chairman of each group manages the discussions on the various topics and presents their work to the next higher level working group/party at various plenary sessions, where it is again reviewed and modified if required.

Depending upon the stage of developments of the various documents they are then passed to the higher level group: Study Group 5 in this case, where they either become ITU reports, ITU recommendations, formal liaison statements to other working parties, or they are carried forward to the next round of working party meetings for more work.

Each sub-working group met as often as necessary to progress their assigned tasks. As most of the working group members had interests in all of the sub-working group topics it was necessary to carefully schedule meetings to allow all interested parties to attend.

### **Proposed Secondary Amateur Service at 5.3MHz**

It was expected that SWG5A1a would be the most difficult group as this is where most of the discussions about a possible secondary amateur allocation around 5.3 MHz was to occur. There were input contribution from Russia, Canada, USA and the IARU which covered various aspects of characteristics of amateur stations and transmissions. This information is necessary information for *sharing studies*.

Over a couple of days there was also extensive email communications with knowledgeable amateurs who had had experience with the propagation modelling software, which proved very useful.

The 'Characteristics' input documents were examined and a synthesis document created describing the modes of communications, antenna types, transmitter power, receiver sensitivity etc. It took quite a lot of work to get a document which all parties were happy with. That the 'Characteristics' document may become a new draft ITU report after passing through Study Group 5 plenary in the coming weeks and would then be carried forward to the next round of Working Party 5A meetings in May 2013.

However, despite all this activity there remains significant opposition to a new secondary amateur allocation around 5.3 MHz and quite a lot of work needs to be done for us to be successful. The current position of the IARU is that 150 kHz is necessary; however a possible outcome is a lot less than 150 kHz.

### **Updated ITU Handbook for the Amateur Service**

Another group (SWG5A1b) had the task of reviewing updates to existing ITU texts related to the Amateur Service.

There was a Russian contribution to the ITU Amateur Service Handbook which updated the table of allocated amateur frequency bands, modes and descriptions of band activities. It was a good document and provided an excellent basis for the Sub-working group who refined the text for inclusion in the updated ITU handbook.

Although a seemingly simple task, it was very time consuming as there were many things to be checked and cross referenced.

### **PSK-31 Mode Signalling Characteristics**

A 'Varicode' document was developed describing the characteristics of the signalling method used in the popular PSK-31 mode and its variants. This document should become an ITU recommendation in due course and it has taken several years to reach this stage.

## **Emergency Communications**

SWG5A1d concentrated on developing the Conference Preparatory Meeting text for WRC-15 which deals with emergency communications (emcoms).

## **Extension to the Earth Exploration Satellite Service**

Liaison statements were developed for the groups who are working on WRC-15 Agenda Items for a 600MHz extension to the Earth Exploration Satellite Service (EESS). The EESS would then cover the 10.0 – 10.5 GHz frequency band and might cause intermittent interference to amateur operation in our 3 cm secondary allocation.

## **Vehicle Radar Systems**

A proposed additional allocation for vehicle radar systems in the 77.5 to 78 GHz frequency band where the Amateur Service has an existing primary allocation should not cause serious compatibility issues, however the issue still needs to be watched.

## **Cable Based Communications Systems**

A significant issue is the potential for interference from cable based communications systems (PLT, BPL, DSL etc.). The problem hasn't gone away and may well get much worse as there are now proposals to extend the upper frequency limit of such systems from 80 MHz to 470 MHz! Naturally there is significant resistance to this from all users of the radio spectrum and there will be much discussion about the issue at the ITU and in all the other forums where radio communications is discussed.

## **Conclusion**

It has been a very busy few weeks and good progress has been made in the amateur related WRC-15 agenda items, although significant opposition to the proposal for a 5.3MHz allocation is still very likely.

At various times, for all of the amateur related meetings, there were representative from a number administrations to observe and presumably report on proceedings. In particular, contact was made with representatives of the Administration of Ghana who are very interested in building up the Amateur Service in their country. They were given a tour of the ITU radio club station 4U1ITU and they had many questions about how amateur radio can be administered and developed in their country.

They were particularly interested in information about the Australian regulatory and examination arrangements. I showed them the WIA website and pointed them to the appropriate pages where the licence structure and syllabus information is given.

I would like to acknowledge all of the other amateurs at this meeting; for their enthusiasm, support and company. Amateur radio is truly an international bond. The assistance of a number of expert amateurs who communicated by way of email and telephone during the last two weeks was critical.

I also thank the WIA president and board members for the opportunity to undertake this work and for their financial support for my meeting attendance. Finally, the ACMA should be thanked for Australian process through which Australian amateurs have opportunity to influence Australian amateur service policy and objectives at both a domestic and international level.

Dale Hughes VK1DSH

Geneva

15 November 2012

*Note: The current WG5A1 chairman (Brennan Price N4QX) has stepped down and Dale has been nominated by the Australian Administration, supported by both the IARU and WIA, to take over as WG5A1 chairman. This was accepted by the ITU WP5A plenary meeting, and consequently Dale will chair the WG5A1 meetings until at least WRC-15.*