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Informal Working Group 6

PRELIMINARY VIEW ON WRC-03

WRC-2003 Agenda Item 1.23: *to consider realignment of the allocations to the amateur, amateur-satellite and broadcasting services around 7 MHz on a worldwide basis, taking into account Recommendation 718 (WARC-92);*

ISSUE: The need for a worldwide exclusive spectrum allocation for the amateur and amateur-satellite services in the three ITU Regions.

BACKGROUND:

Before 1938 the amateur service was allocated 300 kHz, 7000-7300 kHz, on a worldwide basis. At the 1938 Cairo Conference, the 300 kHz was reduced to 150 kHz for Regions 1 and 3 by the insistence of the Europeans. The allocation was further reduced to 100 kHz for Regions 1 and 3 at the 1947 Atlantic City Conference. The 200 kHz from 7100-7300 kHz was reallocated to the broadcasting service on a primary basis for Regions 1 and 3 for broadcasting within those regions.

Although the amateurs in Region 2 retained a 300 kHz exclusive allocation, 7000-7300 kHz, they have to protect the broadcasting service in Regions 1 and 3 that were broadcasting to areas within Regions 1 and 3 (RR Footnote S5.142). In addition, certain national footnotes further limited the amateurs' allocation by assigning 7000-7050 kHz to the fixed service on a primary basis (RR Footnotes S5.140 & S5.141).

At WARC-92, the United States proposed a worldwide amateur allocation in band 6900-7200 kHz as a consequence of proposed additional allocations for the broadcasting service above 7 MHz. That proposal failed because the modification of broadcasting service allocations was insufficient to cause a consequential change in the amateur allocation. WARC-92 agreed to Recommendation 718 (WARC-92) to consider realignment of the bands around 7 MHz at a future conference. A CEPT position was presented at WRC-97 that supported action at WRC-99 to carry out a realignment of the bands around 7 MHz and set out a number of facts and principles on which the realignment should be based. The proposed agenda item was eventually agreed to for inclusion on the provisional agenda for WRC-03.

As the only primary allocation to the amateur service between 4 and 14 MHz, the 7 MHz

band is in heavy use 24 hours each day. During daylight hours, the band carries the bulk of amateur sky wave communication over distances of less than 1300 km. During the winter and during periods of low solar activity, and at other times when the maximum usable frequency (MUF) falls below 10 MHz, it must support the bulk of amateur intercontinental communication during the hours of darkness. As such, the Amateur Service is heavily dependent upon the 7 MHz band during natural disasters, when communications provided by radio amateurs may be the only means of maintaining critical communications links.

The requirement for at least a 300 kHz allocation is even greater today than in the past, owing to the increasing number of amateur stations and the expanding diversity of modes of emission used in the amateur service. However, the requirement is being met only in Region 2 and in certain countries in Regions 1 and 3 that permit their amateur stations to operate in the band 7100-7300 kHz under the provisions of Radio Regulation S4.4, and then only at those times (mostly during daylight hours) when broadcasting interference does not preclude full use of the band by amateur stations. In most countries in Regions 1 and 3, amateurs are limited to the portion of the band that is exclusively amateur, worldwide: 7000-7100 kHz.

Congestion in the amateur service is a significant problem and a return to the previous allocation of 300 kHz, worldwide, in the vicinity of 7 MHz is *strongly* indicated (RES 641, Rev.HFBC-87).

PRELIMINARY VIEW:

The U.S. supports the alignment of the bands around 7 MHz to eliminate the Regional differences between the allocations to the broadcasting service and the amateur services. The U.S. supports the allocation of a contiguous 300 kHz of spectrum around 7 MHz on a worldwide primary basis to the amateur services. The spectrum allocated on an exclusive basis to the maritime mobile, aeronautical mobile (OR), and aeronautical mobile (R) services should not be considered for any reallocation (July 11, 2001)