



RAY~Link

Issue Two - November 1991

RSGB Council Questionnaire

The Council questionnaire came as a surprise to you. It also came as a surprise to us! We have been told subsequently that it was the result of a lengthy discussion by Council on Saturday 9th November and has been sent out at their instigation. Judging by the comments already received, it is widely construed as being a vote of no confidence in the RAYNET organisation. It is therefore with considerable regret that we feel obliged to present you with the full background to the present situation. This will enable you to make an informed decision before responding to Council's questionnaire.

We can confirm that there was absolutely no consultation, discussion, or even advance notification of the questionnaire from either Council, or its Presidential Working Group on the future of RAYNET (PWG). The two RAYNET representatives (G3STG and G3KWU) on the PWG were not made aware of Council's intentions nor any final PWG report. They did not even request from us an up-to-date set of address labels!

The direction which they now propose is at complete odds with their stated policy as set out in their letter to RAYNET of 20 January 1991.

If there was a problem, why did they not talk to us? Why have they taken 12 months to put forward any proposals, let alone such radical and unworkable suggestions? Would it not have been better for their proposals to have been incorporated in the Green Paper for debate at UMIST?

We regret that this particular episode has, of necessity, consumed time, money, and resources which would have been better used on more productive matters. Indeed this is not the first time this year that such diversion has been forced upon us by Council.

The Council-created fiasco of April this year was only corrected by your spontaneous and overwhelming demonstration of support for RAYNET. Immediately following the emergency Council meeting at NEC, Council and the NRC mutually agreed a formula of co-operation and understanding so that there should be no precipitous action by either side. We regard Council's recent action as violating this agreement.

Following the agreement, and to safeguard the interests of both RAYNET and RSGB, we have gone out of our way

not to create adverse publicity. We now feel released from this constraint, and whilst we wish the Society no ill-will, it is a matter of preservation of the whole RAYNET movement that members are made aware of the full facts.

History

The following is a brief resume of the pertinent history. It is obviously not exhaustive but shows the main points as they affect the current situation.

- 1) RAYNET formed - any person may join whether or not they are an RSGB member. 1953
- 2) The rules were last updated in 1984 to cater for increased involvement with User Services. The RSGB Council approved them.

The disputes procedure in the rules allows NRC to seek advice from Council but the RAYNET Committee has the final decision:

"... the dispute may be referred to the Committee ultimately, who may then call upon the assistance of the RSGB Council. The Committee's decision in the matters shall be final."

The NRC was deliberately made responsible for all RAYNET members, both RSGB and non-RSGB, as Council can only represent the interests of RSGB members.

- 3) Recognising the rapidly increasing activities of RAYNET the need for a training package became self-evident. Application was made to Council in 84/85 for a £2,000 grant to fund a training package for distribution to all groups. This application was refused.
- 4) An Emergency Planning working group was formed in January 1989 after the Mexico City Earthquake and the Jamaican hurricane. It reported the need for updating the organisation, particularly with regard to its response to large scale national and international emergencies. The experience of Lockerbie validated the underlying principles of the report.

5) In view of the unavailability of training funds, an investigation into the possibilities provided by charity status was suggested by the President of the RSGB and welcomed by the RAYNET Committee. There were seen to be a number of tax advantages for the Society in this arrangement. RAYNET autonomy is implicit in any application for Charity Status and this was accepted, in principle, by Council. The Society then commissioned a solicitor to perform work towards the setting up of a RAYNET charity.

6) After investigation of complaints, a county controller's appointment was terminated on 23 November 1989 in accordance with the RAYNET Rules. He was nevertheless encouraged to remain a member.

The individual appeal id over the heads of NRC to Council. Although it is not a requirement of RAYNET Rules, NRC willingly agreed to assist with a Council investigation chaired by the President Elect for 1991. In NRC's opinion there was nothing to hide and the facts were self evident. Neither the complainants, nor the NRC, are satisfied with the quality of the ensuing investigation.

Council required the re-instatement of the individual as a member (despite the fact that his membership was never in question. Indeed, we had encouraged him to remain a member.) In addition NRC was itself further required to conduct an election for the post of County Controller- yet this is not a Raynet Committee function and never has been.

NRC expressed concern to Council that their investigation was inadequate and that their recommendations were contrary to the RAYNET Rules.

Council failed to respond to our concerns and merely insisted that the CC was to be reinstated. NRC would be replaced if we did not reinstate the controller.

7) Budget cut to £800 for financial year 90/91 from previous year's figure of approximately £2,000. This is below subsistence level for running the organisation. The sum was intended to cover all 12 ZRs and committee. (The insurance and registrations were funded separately by HQ at this time).

8) A presentation was given to Council on 22 November 1990 by the RAYNET Committee. This presented our plans for a new style organisation. Specific permission was sought, and granted, for open discussions with the membership.

9) The same presentation as that given to Council was taken to a series of 'roadshows' carried out almost entirely at the personal expense of NRC members. See table.

10) The membership records were finally transferred (as from the 17th April 1991) to volunteers in the RAYNET Committee. This saves the Society a significant amount of money every year:

- no staff costs
- cheaper materials
- better card
- the estimated saving to the Society was around £2,000/ year by the then General Manager's reckoning.

The RAYNET Committee had assembled a budget for the costs of purchasing a small computer and associated items. The total cost of hardware, commercial development software and consumables came to around £1700 at discount prices. In the event, the computer was supplied direct by RSGB HQ. It turned out to be rather elderly and broken. (It had been used for the Hemel Hempstead packet bulletin board.) Our budget was stung for £800 for this second user machine and we then had to spend about £200 fixing it - a total of £1000 debited from our budget for a machine that could be purchased new for only £650. Inevitably we could then no longer afford to buy some of the software that we needed as we were exceeding our budget - without having had any control over the expenditure!

Fortunately, Philip Smith, the new General Manager, resolved this difficulty speedily as one of his very first actions on taking over. Thank you Philip!

11) The RAYNET Committee received a letter, dated January 20th 1991, from G3RZP on behalf of Council agreeing to the formation of an independent RAYNET, provided that it remained affiliated, that liaison with the Radiocommunications Agency was via the RSGB and that the RAYNET Committee was elected. Since these conditions were what the RAYNET Committee was itself suggesting, it seemed to us that we should consider our activities to have been endorsed by Council. G3YAC wrote back, for the NRC, explaining the ongoing discussion process (the 'roadshows' were then under way) and that we would be able to offer more concrete ideas when that discussion process was complete. We also asked for any guidance on a suggested timescale as nothing had been suggested.

'Roadshows'

| | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Durham | Zone 1 | Jan 5th |
| Northallerton | Zone 2 | Jan 6th |
| Kettering | Zone 3 | Jan 12th |
| E Dereham | Zone 4 | December 16th |
| London | Zone 5 | November 22nd |
| Guildford | Zone 6 | November 24th |
| Exeter | Zone 7 | December 6th |
| Cornwall ¹ | Zone 7 | Jan 19th |
| Bristol ¹ | Zone 7 | Jan 19th |
| Gloucester | Zone 7 | March 17th |
| Cardiff | Zone 8 | March 16th |
| Shrewsbury | Zone 9 | January 12th |
| Preston | Zone 10 | January 13th |
| N Ireland ² | Zone 11 | March 22 + 4 others |
| Inverness | Zone 12 | April 6th |
| Paisley | Zone 12 | April 7th |

¹ These meetings were conducted by the ZR from notes provided by the NRC.

² A video tape of the Z10 meeting was supplied to ZR 11 for these meetings.

- 12) We received a committee budget figure on 12 March 1991 for year 91/92 of £zero assumes RAYNET now an affiliated group and no longer a committee, on, or before, 1/7/91'.
- 13) Without any prior warning or consultation, the RAYNET Committee received the letter dated 19 March 1991 informing RAYNET that it must leave the Society on May 1st. (Not as stated in G3GJW's letter of 1st April). The letter, as you can see, left no room for discussion or argument. The ridiculously short length of time allowed left RAYNET with no option but to take immediate steps to go on alone - there was neither time nor the funds to waste in arguing the case.
- Members will remember the letter sent to all controllers dated 25th March in which we outlined the emergency measures forced upon us by this extraordinary action of Council. Not surprisingly, the reaction from members was significant. It should be very clearly obvious from the correspondence that this unsatisfactory situation was neither engineered nor desired by the NRC.
- 14) On the 19th of April 1991, G3 Y AC received a telephone call, at his employers, announcing that he was suspended as Chairman of the RSGB RAYNET Committee. This was followed up by a fax letter, signed Geoffrey Smith G4 AJJ, Zone A Council member, confirming the facts but giving no reasons.
- To date, no reasons have ever been offered. This suspension is in blatant disregard of the Societies own rules.
- 15) The CC who was the subject of the previous Presidential Working Group investigation was appointed as Caretaker Chairman - demonstrating an extraordinary lack of sensitivity by the Council members responsible.
- 16) The reaction from RAYNET members was widespread, vociferous and unanimous in its condemnation of Council's action. An emergency Council meeting was held at the NEC exhibition. This resulted in the immediate re-instatement of G3YAC as chairman. G4AJJ immediately resigned from the RSGB Council. The 1991 President of the Society offered an appropriate verbal apology which was accepted. The edict from Council that RAYNET should separate on May 1st was withdrawn by Council.
- It was agreed that RAYNET should carry on as before, consulting its members, and that neither RAYNET, nor the RSGB Council, would do anything precipitous, issue damaging documents or statements or otherwise do anything without consultation. There was much discussion about drastically improving the lines of communication between RAYNET and Council which was enthusiastically encouraged by the RAYNET Committee. The Hon. Treasurer of Council offered to provide a small working budget. All these signs were taken as indicating a new and greatly improved relationship between Council and the RAYNET Committee.
- 17) The President insisted, however, on forming a Working Group to investigate the best way forward for RAYNET. G3YAC, as Chairman of the NRC was specifically excluded. This was accepted as a gesture of good faith on the part of RAYNET and an appeasement to Council. It was agreed that the past chairman of the NRC, G3STG, together with our present secretary, G3KWU would represent the interests of RAYNET on this Working Group. The other members would be the Executive Vice President G13USS (an ex RAYNET member), Mr John Hall, G3KVA, the RSGB Company Secretary and, after a short delay, GW4YKL a Council member and also an active RAYNET member.
- 18) The RAYNET Committee, following the spirit of cooperation and consultation which was agreed, invited this Working Group to four RAYNET Committee meetings. The best attended was at Cambridge on July 6th when 4 of the 5 members were present (G3KVA having sent his apologies). At this meeting the procedure for analysing the feedback from the 'roadshows', the timescales and the general way forward were discussed in some depth. All the plans were considered satisfactory by everybody present.
- Following this meeting GW4 YKL, was asked to act as a Council Liaison Officer to report back to Council on the work of the RAYNET Committee. He would be able to offer advice and guidance to the RAYNET Committee by representing the Council viewpoint.
- 19) Council representative, GW4YKL, joined NRC in July 1991 as a liaison officer.
- 20) NRC submitted a very detailed budget for £10,300. The Finance and Staff Committee granted £2,300 which was to include the registrations activity. The RSGB agreed to pay the insurance (approximately £700) in addition to this figure. No reasons for the shortfall was given other than that the budget was now the largest of any of the RSGB Committees.
- It is instructive to compare this figure with the previous year when the RAYNET Committee received a total of about £1,300 (made up of the original £800 plus an extra £500 given to us after the NEC debacle). To make a direct comparison you must first subtract the entire cost of running the registrations activity (for which we budgeted a figure of £1,250) from the £2,300 grant. This leaves a figure of £1,050. This figure represents a reduction of nearly 20% on the previous year. Fortunately, we have made some considerable savings on the registrations activity - largely by groups' cooperation in saving our postage bill by the provision of SAEs.
- Despite every possible economy, the increased workload, particularly the welcome increase in the activities of ZRs, has consumed almost all of the budget in the first 5 months of the year. We are now forced to rely on charity to pay our copying and postage bills for such items as this newsletter.
- 21) The Green Paper was produced with the active involvement of all the NRC members. It included all

the considerable feedback received from Groups and individual members as a result of the 'roadshows'. The Council representative actively supported the NRC proposals and made it clear that he saw no reason why Council should be unhappy with the proposals. The Green Paper was sent to all Controllers for discussion locally and at a specially convened controllers meeting at UMIST (Manchester). All Council members were sent a copy of the Green Paper together with an invitation to attend the UMIST meeting.

22) The UMIST discussions were wide ranging and chaired by a wholly independent chairman who is a prominent and widely respected member of a major User Service. Contrary to some rumours, the meeting was not orchestrated in any way - talk to the meeting chairman or anyone there, if you have doubts. The meeting strongly supported the underlying principles of the Green Paper, despite the expected lively discussions on a number of important issues. These matters are to be ironed out over the next few months, mainly through Ray~Link. *None of the Council's proposals have been raised in the 'roadshow' discussions, the -written feedback from the 'roadshows', the feedback from the Green Paper, or even in the discussion at Manchester.*

23) The questionnaire of 12 November 1991 was issued by Council to RAYNET controllers without any prior consultation with your RAYNET Committee. We understand that Council spent perhaps two hours discussing RAYNET before issuing their letter and questionnaire. We hope that you agree that RAYNET is worthy of a great deal more discussion - by *informed* parties, than is evidenced by these ill-considered suggestions and actions. G3STG, the immediate past chairman of the RAYNET Committee, volunteered to attend the Council meeting to provide specialist advice - however the offer was not taken up.

By way of contrast, the National RAYNET Committee has met over 17 times already this year - either as full meetings or as less formal gatherings with not everyone present Obviously not all of those meetings, by any means, were entirely devoted to discussing the future of RAYNET. These meetings are additional to the many thousands of miles travelled to the 'roadshows' and other public meetings related to them. Neither does that figure include all the attendance at User Service meetings and seminars, giving talks to various bodies and attending local meetings. Nor does it include our taking part in the normal RAYNET exercises and events run by our local groups, nor even the time spent on the telephone, or on correspondence. There has never been any reason to keep a record but the most elementary sum reveals that the NRC has spent many hundreds of man-hours working on the future of RAYNET.

24) A letter received by the NRC from Council, almost simultaneously with their questionnaire, and dated 11th November requires us to re-instate two individuals. One of them is the subject of an on-going inquiry as

outlined in the Green Paper. Therefore any action is premature.

Regarding the second case, no dispute or correspondence has been lodged with the NRC. Indeed it appears that there is no issue at all concerning this member - let alone suspended or dismissed! (A quick look at the membership records showed us that he used to be a member, but his card expired in June and we have not, at the time of writing this, received a renewal request.)

25) The same letter from Council 'reminds' the Chairman of NRC that his appointment is only in an acting capacity. This is news to the entire Committee as the appointment was confirmed two years ago and is for a period of three years. Indeed, Council, in their letter accompanying the questionnaire, state that they have confirmed the RAYNET Chairman (page 1 bottom paragraph). The instruction and 'reminder' taken together in the same letter suggests that the NRC must do as it is told or else we will get the sack - yet another instance of unwarranted and uninformed interference by RSGB Council in the internal affairs of RAYNET and a demonstration that they cannot even agree on the simplest of facts among themselves.

Comments on Letter

You may find it helpful to read this section in conjunction with the letter from Council.

UMIST

'Motion irrelevant'

The meeting wanted voting on individual topics, not one vote at the end on the original motion. This was discussed early in the meeting, however three topics were put to a formal vote. It was agreed:

- To separate but to seek strong affiliation. (Incidentally, Council were charged with the formation of proposals for a strong affiliation. We still look forward to receiving these proposals.)
- That NRC should investigate charitable status.
- That RAYNET members should fund core costs of RAYNET.

These were the major principles which were expressed in the Green Paper. When taken together, does this not constitute the substance of the original motion, but with the added benefit of discussion and agreement on individual points?

Having agreed what most people believe to be the major principles, we accept that there is a lot of work still to be done on the detail. This was the reason for launching Ray-Link. Surely as adults we can arrive at an acceptable compromise?

Society's viewpoint

The Society has attempted to assist RAYNET by pursuing a benign hands-off policy.

We find this difficult to reconcile with the facts as demonstrated.

'It (RSGB) has financed RAY NET to a considerable degree: some £15,000-£20,000 during the past financial year (1/7/90 - 30/6/91) if you include staff time at headquarters.'

Does the chairman of the RSGB Finance and Staff Committee not know the exact sum? We are glad of his confirmation that it costs £15,000 - £20,000 to run the organisation - but please take a look what better value our Green Paper proposals offer! We have tried to analyse the Council figure:

| | | |
|---|---|-------|
| NRC budget | = | £800 |
| Additional budget made available after NEC | = | £500 |
| One off 'payment' for PC system (for registrations) etc. | = | £1700 |
| (£800 of this budget was deducted as a charge for the donation of the second hand computer) | | |
| Insurance | = | £850 |

Subtracting all these from the £15,000 to £20,000 figure we arrive at an unexplained remainder of £11,000 - £16,000 which must have been spent on the circulation of minutes, registrations (for 10 months) and residual solicitor's costs relating to the charity application. We would welcome a detailed break down of these costs as they seem so unlikely. During this current year, the costs at HQ must be considerably less than last year as *all* the work of registrations has been done by volunteers. Staff effort at HQ has been cut to the point that letters to Committees are merely redirected to the relevant volunteer, often without any acknowledgment by HQ.

The sale of RAYNET goods has also been taken into volunteers' hands, so the Society has no staff time involved there. The only remaining staff activities that we can identify are the copying and circulation of the RAYNET Committee minutes and the processing of expense claims, many of which have been heavily subsidised by the Committee members themselves.

It attempted to finalise this change from the 1st of April 1991 -unsuccessfully (In fact the date quoted in Council's letter was 1 May - ed).

The letter from Council, dated 19th March, was unambiguous in requiring RAYNET to be independent giving less than 6 weeks notice. This is a patently ridiculous length of time to set up an independent organisation of some 5,000 members while we were still in the early stages of discussions with them. The NRC was prepared to make a valiant attempt, as you will recall from our letter to all controllers of 25th March 1991. We find Council's statement to be a grossly optimistic view.

Society's suggestions

- 1) *The RSGB RAYNET Committee will be disbanded as soon as possible if there is a majority demand for such a change.*

This appears to be a vote of no confidence in the RAYNET Committee and the PWG, but we suspect

that it is, in truth, the exposure of their real motives to maintain control of RAYNET.

The natural conclusion of the Green Paper is that a new organisation is to be formed, by the mutual agreement of RAYNET members, to replace the RSGB RAYNET Committee. This could then be formally wound-up by Council. There seems to be an element of undue haste about the Council suggestion which is unpleasantly reminiscent of their edict of 19th March 1991.

- 2) *RAYNET Groups, Counties and Regions (Scottish Regions? - ed) will be independent from the RSGB, existing zonal or national RAYNET officials or committees or any other bodies or organisations.*

Under this proposal the biggest RAYNET entity would be a County with no zonal or national organisation of any form. There is no provision for liaison of any description for any zonal, national or international emergencies or activities. User Services at zonal, national or international level would be unable to call upon RAYNET. This is crucial to RAYNET being incorporated into User Services' emergency plans.

Experience over the past few years now indicates that this facility is essential. You will be aware of the increased reliance on RAYNET services by large bodies which are organised into areas much bigger than Counties. For example the National Rivers Authority is the latest body to have had RAYNET demonstrated to them. This resulted in a recommendation that RAYNET be included in their national plans.

The last thing that any User Service wants is a fragmented collection of local groups. You don't have to take our word for this - we are sure that you have already spoken with your User Services! The credibility of a strong national body with many national and even international links (remember our involvement in a number of international activities in recent years) should be self evident. It is certainly obvious whenever we attend meetings with other voluntary organisations. They are always very impressed with RAYNET-often to the point of embarrassment. RAYNET cannot hope to maintain that credibility and stature if it degenerates into small parts.

- 3) *RAYNET Groups may be affiliated to the RSGB, paying the current Affiliated Society annual subscription.*

Groups have always been free to do this, but none are currently affiliated (see Call-book). Our original concept was for a strong affiliation for the national organisation -a concept which received strong support at Manchester and elsewhere. The Council representatives at Manchester were charged with the duty of asking Council to suggest an appropriate form for that affiliation.

4) The RSGB will maintain a register of RAYNET members on a national basis, issuing RAYNET ID cards to RSGB members free of charge (SAE to be provided please). Non-RSGB members will pay a fee for registration, ID card and public indemnity insurance. It is suggested that ID cards can be issued with a validity period of up to 5 years on request

The main reasons why RAYNET offered to take registrations out of HQ was to remove the burden of staff time and costs. Our new system offers a turnaround time measured in days not weeks and a significant reduction in the error rate as those carrying out the registrations are personally committed to RAYNET. Taking the job back into HQ with its long history of delays and errors seems to be a retrograde step. The volunteer system is now working well, although we are still finding a large number of problems with the membership data. This was taken from the Society computer system in April and seems to have a very large number of errors and inconsistencies.

The investment in time and energy to get the new system operational is considerable. The commercial value of the custom software alone - generously donated by a member of the NRC - runs to a substantial five figure sum. Should all this be abandoned and membership registration brought back to RSGB HQ? We think not! We all know that such work is regarded as a low priority item, which is squeezed in at odd moments when time permits.

Some have already commented that the distinction between RSGB member and non-member would cause friction. The non-RSGB member will, inevitably feel like a second class citizen. How will a controller know which of his RAYNET members are current RSGB members so as to send the correct amount. Will it be necessary to show your 'status' on the ID card? What happens if a member lets his RSGB membership lapse during the 5 year validity of his card? Will there be RSGB member only groups? Will RSGB members be subjected to the same rules as non-members? This looks like a political minefield and we have far too much politics as it is.

The five year card has a superficial plausibility which needs careful thought. How can groups effectively review their 'dead wood' with a 5 year card? Difficulties have already been experienced with User Services in persuading them to accept a 2 year validity on cards. Problems will be experienced by former RAYNET members retaining a card still valid for potentially 4/5 years, together with the inevitable problems of the misuse of lost and stolen cards (unhappily already experienced, albeit at a low level).

5) The RSGB will continue to issue talkthrough permits and will liaise as necessary on behalf of RAYNET groups with the RA and other pertinent national bodies or organisations.

We assume that the specific omission of User Service liaison was accidental - but what an omission! Liaison with our User Services at all levels of the organisation is vital for the continuing existence of RAYNET. Who

within RSGB is going to do this liaison? What will their qualifications be? Will they even be RAYNET members? Is the Society going to appoint a new national committee/working group or other quango to carry out this liaison? Will anyone apart from RSGB Council determine who carries out this important work?... and RSGB HQ has never issued talk-through permits - the RAYNET committee has always done this job.

6) The RSGB will not fund RAYNET. RAYNET Groups, Counties and Regions will manage and fund their own activities.

The first sentence says it all! RSGB will not pay for any national organisation, yet will expect to receive a substantial income from Group affiliation fees, non-RSGB RAYNET membership registrations and voluntary additional insurance contributions. The Society would therefore receive more money yet provide less service. Does RSGB really value RAYNET?

7) The RSGB will provide Public Indemnity insurance for RAYNET members only. Additionally insurance coverage can be negotiated to cover personal accident, vehicles, equipment, loss of earnings and etc. at different levels, the additional premiums to be paid by the individual members - always providing that there is no conflict with existing insurance held by those members.

The current £1m cover Public Indemnity Insurance only costs about £100. The greatly improved cover of £5m, as budgeted for in the NRC Green Paper, would only cost about £200 for all 5,000 existing members.

Much of the additional cover mentioned is already provided under the existing policies, yet every RAYNET member, be they an RSGB member or not, would now have to pay for this cover. This is going to be an expensive bureaucratic nightmare for groups and members.

We concur with Council that the suggestions seem simplistic. We believe the above comments adequately demonstrate that fact.

The concept of County/Regional Associations is not particularly new. The ever increasing level of activity and User Service confidence in RAYNET as a reliable and organised body should make it obvious that the Council suggestions are poorly founded and inappropriate.

RAYNET Committee Recommendations

You must reply to the questionnaire - otherwise Council may assume that you are not interested or that you approve their ideas. You need not reply to the individual questions as they are clearly unanswerable in many cases. If you have already replied without having had the benefit of this paper then we recommend that you consider an additional reply. The letter from Council requests that your reply is returned by December 16th. On the GB2RS news broadcast on Sunday November 17th, replies were requested by the much earlier date of the end of November.

In your reply you should make it clear that there is an agreed discussion process continuing in a manner which has received widespread support. This discussion process should be permitted and encouraged, not prematurely terminated as suggested in the Council questionnaire. Your support for the democratic consultation process by the NRC should be clearly stated (even if you don't entirely agree with all the contents of the Green Paper - at least we are listening to your ideas for an improved RAYNET, not winding it up!)

You should feel free to make whatever comments you feel are appropriate about the persistent interference in RAYNET affairs by Council. To ensure that Council understand, in no uncertain terms, the depth of your feeling, we suggest that each Group writes separately to every Council member. This is to avoid any possibility that a letter representing an entire Zone, or County, is mistakenly counted only once instead of many times. If your postage bill can stand it, a copy of your letter should also be sent to the RAYNET Committee Secretary:

Trevor Emery, G3KWU
75 Haig Road
Bishopstoke
Eastleigh
Hampshire SO5 6JF

Perhaps most importantly you should emphasise the essential nature of liaison with User Services at all levels. You know very well that liaison at local level is important, but you also know that it is equally important to form these bonds at zonal and national level. It is no use having a good relationship with the locals, if the head office has never heard of you! It *should* go without saying that this liaison activity can only be undertaken by people who are current active members of RAYNET. These points are essential to the continuing success of RAYNET and need to be strongly emphasised.

Many members of RAYNET are also members of the Society and will be aware that the AGM takes place at the Royal Society of Chemistry, Scientific Societies Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, off Savile Row, London W1 on Saturday 7th December at 14:00. Should you choose to attend, and we urge all RAYNET members of the RSGB to attend, we ask that you conduct yourself in a professional and businesslike manner as befits RAYNET. There are often long queues for entry, so it is advisable to arrive early. The RAYNET Chairman, Philip Howarth, G3YAC, will attend (as will many members of the NRC) and is, as usual, willing to hold proxy votes for those unable to attend

personally. Remember that your proxy forms must reach Society HQ no later than 48 hours before the meeting. There is *no* intention to turn the AGM into a fight about RAYNET. We are concerned that if there is any discussion about RAYNET then our points of view are adequately and honestly represented.

Finally

This issue of Ray-Link was assembled by the National RAYNET Committee. Every member has been actively involved in its compilation. A draft copy was sent to ten of the thirteen ZRs (limited only by fax availability) for comment prior to publication. All members of the RAYNET Committee, including those ZRs contacted, agreed to circulate this newsletter. You will recall that ZRs are democratically elected by the members.

Appended to this newsletter is a list of Council members and their addresses, together with copies of three letters which you will find particularly interesting.

We leave you with the concluding paragraph from a paper, written in 1982 and presented to Council by Smudge Lundegard, G3GJW (the author of the Council letter and questionnaire). In his paper, Smudge proposes two possible courses of action: The essence of these are: 1) Create an autonomous RAYNET Committee sponsored by RSGB but with no executive control over its formation or activities by Society. 2) Leave RAYNET to control its own destiny entirely.

'Failure to implement either of these two courses of action will inevitably lead to chaos; a proliferation of groups and organisations probably competing with each other instead of being suitably co-ordinated on a national scale to the benefit of the community at large, the national society for radio amateurs and those radio amateurs who have been motivated to the extent that they have supported the existing RAYNET organisation over the years. RAYNET has now come of age; it should now be independent and completely free to organise its own affairs at every level. -TI Lundegard, G3GJW282.82'



RSGB Council Members

The following names and addresses of Council members are provided for your information:

E J Case GW4HWR (1991 President)
2 Abbey Close
Tyrhiw Taffs Well
Mid Glamorgan CF4 7RS

J T Barnes GI3USS (Executive Vice President, 1992 President)
White Gables
95 Crawfordsburn Road
Bangor
Co Down BT191BJ

F D Hall GM88ZX (Immediate Past President)
45 Priory Cottages
Lunanhead
Forfar
Angus DD8 3NR

J C Hall, G3KVA (Company Secretary)
Corfe Lodge
Ipswich Road
Long Stratton
Norfolk NR15 2TA

P D Tucker GU4DWZ (Hon Treasurer)
Vue Cavaliere
1 New Paris Road
St Peter Port
Guernsey
Channel Islands

J Bazley G3HCT
Brooklands
Ullenhall
near Henley in Arden
Warwickshire B95 5NW

G L Benbow G3HB
81 Anglesmede Crescent
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RADIO SOCIETY

Registered No. 216431
England

OF GREAT BRITAIN

Limited by Guarantee



Patron: HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, KG. Founded 1913, Incorporated 1926
Registered Office: Lambda House, Cranborne Road, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 3JE

p. Howarth, G3YAC,
1 Clay Close Lane,
Impington,
Cambridge,
CB4 4NE

Three Oaks,
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Swindon,
Wilts-
SN5 OAD

20 Jan 91

Dear Philip,

I have been asked to write to you on behalf of Council following their meeting on 12/13 January, 1991.

Council have agreed that to the formation of an independent Raynet organisation, provided that certain conditions are met. These are:-

Raynet should be affiliated to the RSGB

Liason with the Radiocommunications Agency should be through KDUD

The Raynet committee should be nationally elected.

Obviously, in order that Affiliation can take place,, it will be necessary for a suitable constitution to be drawn up, and therefor I look forward to hearing from you the proposals regarding the transfer of authority from the society. It is most important that the election of the national committee be democratic, and it was agreed by Council that some space in Radio Communication could be made available to initially facilitate this.

I look forward, on behalf of Council, to hearing from you in the near future. For your information, Council meetings will be held on Jan 26 and March 7.

Vy 73,

Peter E. Chadwick . G3RZP

RAYNET - Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network

RSGB Raynet Committee

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910204g

1991 February 4

Dear Peter,

Independent Raynet

Many thanks for your letter of 20th January. The news that Council agree with our proposals is very welcome indeed.

So far as the various conditions imposed are concerned, I think that I can safely say that we have no significant objection - since we proposed them in the first instance! Having said this though, I suppose I should point out that it is the membership of Raynet who are the final arbiter of what arrangements are suitable. So far we have had really tremendous support for the principles put forward.

In matters of detail, the suggestion that we have been offering to members and which has received much support, is that the new Committee is elected by controllers rather than individual members. Experience with the Zonal elections suggests that this actually ends up with a fairer representation. This is still entirely democratic as members elect controllers who then elect Committee. Indeed the principle of democracy is something which the present committee feel very strongly about and which is being energetically discussed with the Raynet membership. Our suggested arrangement is, I understand, a fairly common one and has a number of advantages including cost!

Raynet certainly wish to remain affiliated and see many benefits to all parties to liaise with the RA through the LAC.

The present Raynet Committee are travelling to every Zone to discuss the proposed new arrangements with the membership and to invite comment and criticism. Several good ideas have already been offered and we should shortly be in a position to draw up some more concrete ideas for the new structure.

Does Council have any idea of timescale for the transfer? End of the



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19 March 91

Dear Philip,

I have been asked to write to you on behalf of Council following their meeting on 7th March, 1991.

Council were somewhat disappointed at the lack of a positive response from you to their request for a plan of handover. It was noted that the Raynet committee have been making presentations up and down the country, and in view of the original representations made by you on behalf of the Raynet Committee, as well as your reply to my previous letter, Council are somewhat surprised that in a number of cases, the independence of Raynet has been presented as RSGB 'chucking Raynet out'.

Council wish me to inform you that they require the independent Raynet movement to exist with effect from 0001 hrs on May 1st, 1991. Stocks of applicable stationery at RSGB Hq will be given to the new Raynet, as will the computer and software currently in Raynet's possession. The stationery will need to be collected from Hq, and you should contact the General Manager, Mr. P. Smith, with regard to this. You should make the necessary arrangements for insurance: it is quite likely that individual groups will wish to do this themselves if the Raynet organisation are unable to do this for them.

I look forward, on behalf of Council, to hearing from you with the acceptance of these arrangements by the Raynet Committee.

Vy 73,

Peter E. Chadwick G3RZP
Council Member Zone D.

year; end of the financial year...?.

.In my presentation to Council I raised several points in the form of a shopping list. This included talks about the ownership of the Raynet Logo and name; ownership of the now defunct RSGB Raynet Ltd."/ continuing short term support; write-off of computer etc etc. Have any formal decisions been made on these points? In particular, it will be extremely difficult for us to raise the insurance premium due in March, I think, by alternative means. It is absolutely essential that the insurance continues (for all our sakes - the officers both of RSGB and Raynet might otherwise be personally liable).

I will write again soon, once we have some more feedback from the members and we are able to put together an outline constitution. (In fact the word from Bruce Douglas-Mann is that the Articles of Association offered to the Charity Commissioners are on the verge of being accepted and need only a small tweak to solve both problems).

On a personal note, I am sorry to see that you have given up the post of T&P committee chairman. I do hope that paid work is not going to reduce the invaluable work you do for the society by too great a margin, Peter. How about very early retirement, instead?!

Regards,

Philip Howarth
Chairman