



RAY~Link

Issue Five - May 1992

Controllers -
please ensure all
your members see this issue.

Adapting for the 21st Century

RAYNET is still organised in the same way as it was in 1953. Over the past few years the activity level has soared. The nature of the work has altered considerably with the addition of many new User Services. We now enjoy much the same recognition as many other well known voluntary organisations. Members will be aware of the frequent compliments that RAYNET now receives.

User Services now have a high expectation of our abilities to provide a nationwide 'professional' service. In truth, many of RAYNET's achievements often owe more to the extraordinary efforts of individuals than the collective strength of the organisation. Too frequently, we have managed by the skin of our teeth! Better organisation and training is needed at all levels. To achieve this, the original structure needs to be updated. These proposals should help us all to achieve just that.

With your help at the last year's roadshows, we took the opportunity to take a fresh look at the organisation. We found that groups and counties work well but the zonal and national structures were in need of an overhaul.

Why your group needs a national organisation:

- Standard, universally recognised, ID card.
- A common recognised RAYNET identity. The name and logo are strongly linked with our long (39 year) history of excellence.
- Standing of groups in the eyes of our User Services is greatly enhanced by belonging to the national organisation.
- Common procedures ensure the ability to co-operate with any other group.
 - Strength in numbers. Large resources are needed to tackle the large jobs such as Lockerbie, Special Olympics, Brighton Bike ride, etc etc.
 - The co-ordination to make this possible.
 - The economies of scale possible through the central provision of services - insurance, supplies, registrations...
 - The ability to learn from others both far and near.
 - National level publicity gives the organisation a strong voice.
 - Liaison with national User Services is *only* practicable by a national organisation.
 - To help ensure that international activities and representation are possible.

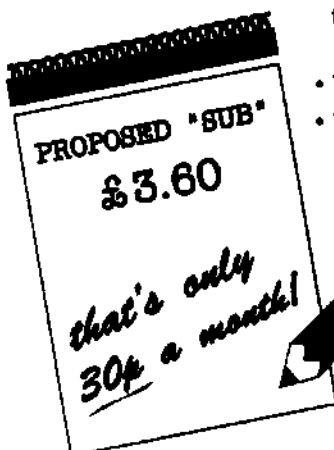
... in short -**VIABILITY!**

**"RAYNET run
by members
of RAYNET
for members
of RAYNET"**

This is Issue 5 in a continuing series. All controllers have been sent copies of previous editions which were:

- 1 UMIST report (5 pages)
- 2 Response to Council questionnaire (12 pages)
- 3 News (2 pages)
- 4 Proposed 'constitution' (6 pages)

If you have not seen these, please contact your controller.

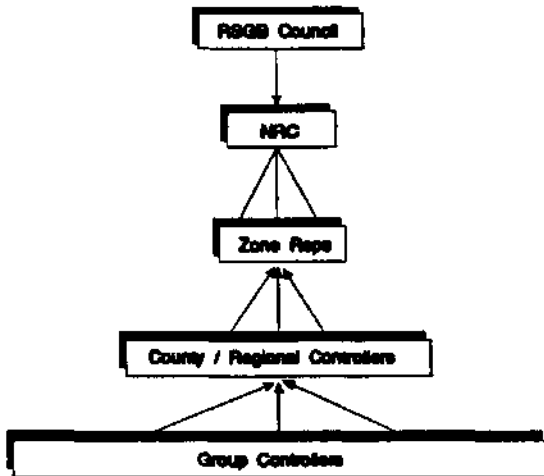


Having agreed that a national organisation is needed, the available options are:

1) RAYNET run by an RSGB committee.

This is the present situation in which NRC is controlled by RSGB Council. The organisation is open to non-RSGB members - currently about 50%.

Existing Structure



This arrangement has a number of disadvantages:

- Finance drastically limited -1991/2 RSGB RAYNET budget only £2,800 plus £1,000 on special application to cover *all* activities - roughly one third of the estimated minimum running costs for a viable RAYNET. This level of funding by the RSGB is unlikely to improve given the many competing pressures on Society funds and interests. (The balance, this year, has been found by the volunteers involved, but members cannot reasonably expect this to continue.)
- The organisation is presently controlled by non-RAYNET members.
- Non-RSGB members of RAYNET are formally debarred from electing Council and hence influencing the organisation.
- RSGB members subsidise non-RSGB members of RAYNET.

The Committee is appointed - the members are not consulted.

2) Stay as a committee of RSGB Council, but members pay a subscription.

As above, but the members pay - taxation *without* representation! Recent RSGB Council suggestions have included:

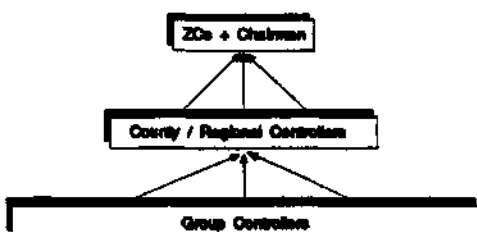
- The possibility of surcharging non-RSGB members, or perhaps even compulsory RSGB membership.
- Lower level of standard insurance cover
- Additional charges to top up the insurance cover to present levels.
- No guarantee that the additional income will be applied to benefit RAYNET directly.

3) NRC Recommendations.

The RAYNET organisation controlled by members of RAYNET for members of RAYNET.

- Separate body *strongly* affiliated with the RSGB.
- A clear RAYNET identity.
- ZCs will form NRC - 3 management tiers not 5 as at present.
- Organisation controlled by members through elected committee. - RAYNET will have its own AGM!

Proposed Structure



- Additional zones for Wales and Scotland.
- Proper constitution in the form of a limited company. This will open the door to charity status which will help finances.
- Work load devolved to small volunteer teams so providing the resources to serve the members.
- Development of organisation carried out by committed RAYNET members unhindered by conflicting interests.

Relationship with RSGB:

We intend to maintain a strong affiliation with RSGB - the umbrella organisation for amateur radio in UK. In return we would welcome RSGB affiliating to RAYNET.

RAYNET will represent emergency communications interests on RSGB's Licensing Advisory Committee - the main channel of negotiation with the DTI's Radiocommunications Agency.

A welcome suggestion has been made that RAYNET invites a prominent member of the Society to become a RAYNET patron.

"We intend to maintain a strong affiliation with RSGB"

Limited Company:

Registering RAYNET as a company limited by guarantee (like the RSGB) provides:

- A framework for the organisation so that it can register as a charity.
- Legal safeguards for members.
- Longevity - organisation continues after the involvement of any individual.
- Assures accounts are externally audited.
- Credibility.

Charity benefits:

We see the benefits of registering as a national charity as:

- Enhancing the standing of the organisation
- Official 'stamp of approval'
- Opens the door to obtain funds or other benefits which will help to reduce everyone's subscription.
- Provides expertise to groups so that they too can benefit by gaining charity status themselves.

Teams:

Teams are groups of volunteers, seconded for their expertise and commitment, to assist the national organisation with particular tasks.

Teams are co-ordinated by Team Leaders who are also non-voting members of the National Committee. This offers these advantages:

- Extension of long-standing practice, formalised and improved.
- Workload and expertise shared - not overburdening any one volunteer.
- More productive. More hands - so fewer delays.
- Greater continuity. Not reliant on any one individual.

NATIONAL RAYNET COMMITTEE

Registrations

Finance

Emergency
Planning

Publicity

Training

The Teams

Registrations
Fast turn around. Better records for controllers. Improved quality of card. Higher security

Talk Through
Always been done by NRC since it was introduced in the mid 70s.

Publicity
Ray-link - 5 issues in 7 months
New display photos and material.
Committee members give many User Service talks and presentations.

Training
This newly formed team has already made structured plans. These will assist members and controllers to develop the multitude of relevant skills so that we can all be more professional.

Emergency Planning
Developing and enhancing links with User Services, international organisations and our emergency responses to them:
New user services. Existing links with User Services are constantly being renewed and strengthened. An excellent working relationship has been developed with the DTI and Foreign Office.

International
International relations have been developed, notably with: Eire, France, Romania, Belgium, Sweden, Gibraltar, USA. An international team is now established with the necessary hf links.

RAYNET stations
GB7NRC - RAYNET packet BBS.
G4NRC - Long standing weekly UK HF net for controllers.

Sales
Greater range of products than ever before. More modern RAYNET supplies stocked. Realistic non-profit prices. Good service, attendance at rallies.

Financing RAYNET

Like all organisations, it costs money to run RAYNET - unfortunately! It is only reasonable that these significant costs are spread across the whole membership rather than falling to a few individuals - especially as members receive much direct benefit.

We propose a system whereby groups are charged a very modest sum when registering each member - £3.60 per member per year.

**It costs
money
to run
RAYNET -
unfortunately**

Annual subscription

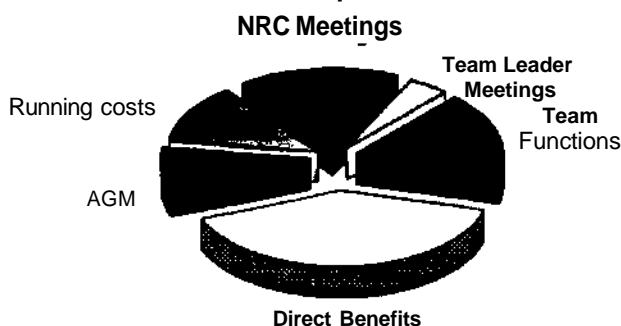
This is a simple system with minimal paperwork. It will be cheap to collect - one transaction per group, not one per member.

It gives Groups flexibility:

- The choice about how to raise the money eg.
 - donations from User Services.
 - raffles, junk sales etc.
 - directly from the members, possibly at different rates depending on the circumstances of individual members or any combination of these

Where does the money go?

Obviously the costs of a large national organisation are greater than a local one. This is simply due to the numbers and distances involved eg. petrol and 'phone bills.



Indirect benefits

There are some essential activities necessary to the long term well being of the organisation:

- AGM - long been asked for, but does involve a large meeting room and the travel costs of all those obliged to be present.
- Running costs - affiliation & auditors fees, company returns, registration consumables, Data Protection Registration...
- NRC, Team Leader meetings - travel, minutes etc.
- Team activities - where the work gets done, telephone, postage etc.

Direct benefits

A very large proportion of the income is directly returned to members as:

- Good insurance cover, even better than at present - about double!
- RAY~Link - keeping us all informed.
- the present securely laminated ID card.
- national training programme now being constructed to assist and support groups.
- availability of RAYNET supplies at non-profit making prices.

... All this adds up to exceptional value for money - a low subscription with generous direct benefits. You get your own organisation controlled by elected RAYNET members with only RAYNET interests at heart and a structure appropriate for the 21st century.

Come to the NEC at 1330 on Saturday 30th May, if you can, and help make all this possible.

RAY-Link is published by the National Committee of the Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network for the benefit of all members of RAYNET. It is posted to all Controllers, Zonal Representatives and National Committee members who are requested to assist in ensuring a wide circulation amongst the membership of RAYNET.

News for inclusion in RAY "Link should be sent to Ron Cowan, GM4SRL, 516 Clarkston Road, Netherlee, Glasgow, G44 3RT, or faxed to 041 -633 5353. Please include an evening and, if possible, a daytime telephone number.

Any constructive comments on the issues raised should be sent to the Secretary: Trevor Emery. G3KWU, 75 Haig Road, Bishopstoke, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO5 6JF.