



RAY~Link is published for the benefit of all members of the Network. It is posted to all controllers who are requested to assist in ensuring a wide membership circulation.

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Chairman's Report

Ron Cowan, GM4SRL

I am just out of hospital, following a rather sudden admission at the beginning of January. It is an experience which I would not recommend to anyone, especially at this time of year! I am pleased to say that I am on the mend, and hopefully it will not be too long before I am out and about again. Thank you to all who sent get well cards. They were greatly appreciated!

My thanks go to all the members of the Committee of Management who ran the ship in the way I, and you, hope that they would have. It is, of course, no more than we should expect, however! The Committee really works as a team, and it is at times like this that we see how well it all comes together! As well as having responsibility for their own zone, most Zonal Co-ordinators are either team leaders, or are members of a specialist team. e.g., Training, Emergency Planning etc., etc. In this way, ZCs have a good overall knowledge of what is happening nationally, as well as in their own area. ZCs regularly telephone each other as well as generate (and therefore receive) a large volume of correspondence, both paper and electronic. I would have been disappointed if one person's illness had caused the National Organisation to grind to a halt, and I am pleased to say that it did not. Team meetings continued to be held, the 80m net continued with the weekly news bulletins, GB7NRC and the telephone BBS continued to operate, publicity continued to be generated, the new membership database came into operation, the emergency telephone line continued to be manned, and there was even a Committee of Management Meeting!

If the current structure had not been in place, it would not all have flowed as it did. My hospital stay, although not something I would have wished at any time, has proved that the Network's overall structure does work. We are, however, not complacent, and will continue to tune, and fine tune, the operation. Once again, to all who contributed to the running of the Network during the past month, thank you!

Counties and Groups should, of course, run on similar lines, so that the non-availability of any particular member, although perhaps inconvenient, should not prevent the rest of the organisation from carrying on with its stated aims. At your next meeting, ask the question, if G_____ was to disappear for a month or so, would the County/Group, still operate, and if the quartermaster was suddenly unavailable, could we get the equipment at short notice?

All correspondence and membership registrations should be sent to:-

"Hunter's Moon", Newton-le-Willows, BEDALE, North Yorks, DL8 1SX

Emergency 24 hour contact line:-
(0141) 621 2121

CHAIRMAN: Ron Cowan, GM4SRL
(0141) 620 1000

ZONES:

- Z1:** Frank McLoughlin, G1GAD
(0191) 285 0391
- Z2:** Contact Meantime Brian
Tindill, (01677) 450387
- Z3:** Dave Hocking, G4FSS
(0116) 239 3803
- Z4:** Dave Seabrook, G6HPY
(01638) 750571
- Z5:** David Whiteman, G1ADW
(0956) 299784
- Z6:** Cathy Clark, G1GQJ
(01844) 351461
- Z7:** Chris Hampson, G8RXA
(01425) 672002
- Z8:** Contact meantime via ZC 10
(01244) 336639
- Z9:** Madeley Smith, G8KVU
(01203) 579411
- Z10:** David Hicks, G6IFA
(01244) 336639
- Z11:** Contact Meantime via ZC 12
(01290) 421298
- Z12:** Tom Stewart, GM0BKX
(01290) 421298
- Z18:** Contact meantime via ZC 10
(01244) 336639
- Z22:** Iain Strachan, GM4FLP
(01382) 580356

SPECIALIST TEAMS

Emergency Planning:

Dave Seabrook, G6HPY

Publicity:

David Hicks, G6IFA

Registrations:

David Whiteman, G1ADW

Sales:

Frank McLoughlin, G1GAD

Technical:

Madeley Smith, G3KVU

Training:

Cathy Clark, G1GQJ

Talk through applications:

Ian Jackson, G8RWH,
5 Vivien Ct, Chessington,
Surrey, KT9 2DE

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National:**RAYNET News
Broadcasts**

A news script is prepared every week of the year for transmission for the information of all RAYNET members in the UK.

The standard news transmission contains items of topical news together with an extract from the National Diary of Events covering the coming two or three week period.

Items for consideration for inclusion in the script should be submitted to Ron Cowan, GM4SRL by 18:00 hrs. on the Wednesday before the transmission date. Items received after this time will be held for the following week's news unless the content is urgent, in which case every effort will be made to include it as a late item the same week.

The transmission schedule is: Sunday 0830 Local time on 3.663Mhz LSB Thereafter Packet Bulletin addressed RAYNET@GBR, often in two parts. Copies of the current and recent news bulls are also stored in files area of GB7NRC. Thereafter E:Mail to Compuserve and Internet distribution list.

The scripts for the current month appear in the BBS in Files area No 2, and abridged versions of current and recent appear in the News area. Groups are encouraged to use the items of news in their own local nets and newsletters.

The duty News Readers and their stand-by readers for the next few weeks are as follows:-

The duty rota is prepared and managed by Eric Walton G4FSN, and volunteers to join that rota should contact Eric at:- 44 St Leonards Avenue, Lostock, Bolton, BL6 4JE. Tel: 01204 691536.

For those with News items, contact details for GM4SRL is as follows:-Ron Cowan, GM4SRL, 85 Eastwoodmains Road, Clarkston, Glasgow, G76 7HG.

Home Tel:- 0141-620 1000. Fax:- 0141-638-0732. Packet @ GB7SRL.

Items for the National Diary should be sent to Geoff Griffiths, G3STG, 11, The Grove, Asfordby, Melton Mowbray, LE14 3UF

Home Tel: 01664 812020 (FAX - call first please)

Packet:@GB7NRC

E:Mail: 100072.2021@compuserve.com

Assistance: What do You Do?

Every so often, the Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network requires the services of a professional. It could be a lawyer, a journalist, an accountant, an insurance broker, a travel agent, etc. etc. One thing, however, is that when we need their services, it is usually immediately, rather than in the next few months!

If you would be willing to act on our behalf, please drop a brief note to Ron Cowan, the Chairman, The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network, 85 Eastwoodmains Road, Clarkston, GLASGOW G76 7HG stating where your expertise lies. This list will be kept confidential, and details will not be released either to the membership or to outside bodies.

Emergency:**Operation
RAYWATER**

Three RAYNET Groups, Ayrshire, Clyde Coast and Renfrewshire, took part in this unusual operation for five days at the beginning of January.

The thaw which followed the big Christmas freeze, brought many problems of its own, including burst water mains which caused supplies to houses to be cut off. The Social Work Department of Strathclyde Regional Council was inundated with requests for water from vulnerable members of the public. In some cases, the water was off for up to a week, and owing to the risk of freezing, bowsers could not, as would normally be the case, be used in the streets. Members of the public were encouraged to collect their own water from nominated centres throughout the region, but there were, of course, many who were unable to do so, including old age pensioners, the sick, single parent families with young children. Where possible, neighbours helped a lot, but never-the-less, "Operation Raywater" proved both necessary, and successful.

Calls were taken by the Social Work Standby Unit and the requests were immediately faxed to the RAYNET Control Room who dispatched the nearest vehicle to the house in question. Depending upon the circumstances, householders were each given between five and twenty five litres of water in plastic containers.

Mr. Neil McIntosh, Chief Executive of Strathclyde Region, thanked all the RAYNET members who, over the five day period, gave their time to help those who had to make use of the service in what was, at the time, a major crisis in their daily lives

Telephone**Geoff
Griffiths,
G3STG****BBS:**

The Telephone BBS is attracting more users, especially now that the new modem is up and running, as this table

	W/C 20 Nov.	W/C 4 Dec	W/C 1 Jan
Contacts	67	94	85
Individuals	16	20	18
V34 28,800 bps with error correction	-	4	1
V32, 14,400 bps with error correction	-	10	12
2400 bps	15	4	5
1200 bps	1	2	-

shows:-

Messages generally have said things like "now we can sensibly make use of the material in an effective way".

If you have not tried the telephone BBS yet, give it a phone on 01296 39 37 37.

<i>Emergency:</i>	Fife Flooding
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The Fife RAYNET Group was called out at 08:40 hrs. on Saturday 23rd. December by the Fife Emergency Planning Unit and asked to mobilise the EPU Communications and Support Unit Vehicle to a forward control point on Kirkcaldy esplanade where flooding had occurred in the early hours of the morning. Homes and business premises had been flooded due to a high tide and strong winds which drove the water over the two sea walls. The next high tide was due on the Saturday afternoon with an even higher tide expected on the Sunday morning at 03:45 hrs. although much would depend on the wind speed and direction at that time. Higher flooding would mean the possible evacuation of people from about 150 homes, and some of these were in a sheltered home complex housing many elderly and infirm people. RAYNET was kept busy with the Regional and EPO radio systems as well as the phones and fax in the vehicle. RAYNET radio systems were used to update those RAYNET members on standby and to request supplies of necessary items at the vehicle. Thankfully a slight change in wind direction meant that the floods at the subsequent high tides were not as high as they could have been, and evacuation was unnecessary. The Communications and Support Unit was stood down at 05:00 hrs. on the Sunday morning, with just enough time to catch some sleep before the mad last minute Christmas shopping rush! The Group received a letter of thanks from Mr. Gordon Jacobs, the Fife Regional Emergency Planning Officer.

<i>Emergency:</i>	Renfrewshire Flooding
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FLOODING CALL-OUT FOR RENFREWSHIRE. The Renfrewshire RAYNET Group, 12/SC/321, were called out to assist Renfrew District Council the day which followed the Christmas freeze on Sunday 31st. December 1995. The District Council had been operating their Direct Works control room for a couple of days, and it was obvious from the volume of calls, (between four and six calls per minute) that additional resources would be required. It was decided to open the Emergency Centre in the main Council building and open some of the lines from the Emergency Communications Network to take the overflow from the Direct Works Department. RAYNET were asked to provide a link between the Emergency Centre and the Direct Works Dept., feeding calls received in the main building into the Direct Works Control system. Group Controller Danny Madden, GM1OGZ, received the initial call at 11:30 hrs. and the link was up and running by 13:00 hrs. Calls were received from members of the public, councillors, and Strathclyde Police who had themselves been called by many residents who were unable to reach the usual points of contact owing to the extraordinarily high volume of calls. This was the first time the Renfrewshire Group had worked for the District Council in earnest, although a good working relationship had already been established over the past few years when the group covered open days for the Parks Department, as well as cycle runs and other sporting events when safety cover was provided.

<i>RAY~Link Sponsorship:</i>	
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RAY~Link is published six times per year, and posted to all registered controllers. The Committee of Management would like every member to receive every edition, but owing to the cost of postage this is not possible unless a sponsor can be found, as happened in December 1995, when Martin Dawes agreed to pay the postage to every member. The Committee are actively trying to find sponsors for individual issues, but in the meantime, if you would like to receive each edition, please send a supply of addressed A5 envelopes, stamped with one second class stamp on each. Please only use the second class stamps found in stamp books, i.e. those without a value marked, as these will still be valid if postage costs rise. If sponsorship is raised for any edition, your envelopes will not be used, and will be kept for the next ones which are not sponsored. If you know of a firm which would like to reach our membership with their enclosure in our RAY~Link envelope, please let Ron Cowan, GM4SRL, QTHR, have a note of the details so that it can be followed up. Items for the April edition should be sent to Ron Cowan, GM4SRL, by 16th. March at the latest. If you have an article ready before then, please send it as soon as you can, as this helps prevent the usual last minute rush after the closing date! If possible, contributions should be on disk to avoid them having to be re-typed!

Exercise:**Cannock Chase
Bill G8AVX**

A Different Sort Of RAYNET Duty..
Bill G8AVX (With acknowledgement to the SOLIHULL Group Newsletter, November 1995)

In recent years operations in our Group have usually been cycle rides, marathons and similar events where we provide communications in case of medical emergencies. Because medical emergencies are fortunately few most messages concern competitors passing our sites. A useful service and we were there ready had the need for our primary function arisen but not a very exciting day out. The call to the 'Cannock Chase Fire Emergency' therefore came as a breath of fresh air in more ways than one.

The duty was to patrol a designated area of The Chase, report the exact location of any fire together with the best access point for the Fire Brigade and assist their rapid arrival at the fire by opening barriers and guiding them in. A secondary duty was to check the barriers placed at all access points to exclude the public, making sure that they were secured in position and not obstructed by unattended parked cars. Because the whole area was closed to the public for safety reasons we were also required to look out for trespassers, persuade them to leave and report their position and direction to control.

Usually eight or more patrols were in simultaneous operation each with responsibility for a different area. Locations were reported by reference to a 'Fire Map' which has a reference grid used by the Fire Brigade. A much larger scale map showing every track and footpath was also provided. Each patrol comprised a four wheel drive vehicle with a driver experienced in off road driving and a radio operator. At first hand held rigs were used because the vehicles had no electrical connection points or suitable steel areas for mag mounts. This sometimes occasioned a very rapid 'off the road' trip to the top of the nearest hill to call control. A camaraderie rapidly sprang up between drivers and operators and soon many vehicles had cigar lighter sockets and steel plates for mag mount and true mobile operation was established. The duration of a patrol was seven hours during which regular radio checks were made. Failure to make a radio check would cause the adjacent patrols to be despatched to find you.

At the beginning of a patrol all access points were visited and checked, the whole area was driven over to familiarise driver and operator with the terrain and points of high ground were evaluated as observation points. The time was then divided between observing from high ground, driving off to intercept trespassers or motorists who thought that access points with barriers were for car parking and periodic patrolling of the area. I found it a most interesting and rewarding duty. I did five patrols and never spotted a fire but during every one of those periods one patrol did report a fire and because we were there it was dealt with before it became serious. I had a day in the open air in a beautiful place and got treated to some spectacular cross country

**Chemical
Incident:****North Yorks
Brian Dooks,
GORHI**

Trans-Pennine co-operation was needed when a major chemical incident occurred after seven tonnes of sulphuric acid were accidentally tipped into the tank at a factory on the western boundary of North Yorkshire. Seven fire appliances were sent to High Bentham on November 23 when a chemical reaction produced toxic fumes followed by a fire. An area around Station Road was evacuated and thirty eight people spent the night at a rest centre in Ingleton Middle School. North Yorkshire's County Controller, Brian Dooks GORHI, was asked to put RAYNET members on standby at 18:00 hrs but his nearest operators were fifty miles from the scene and help was requested from Lancashire's County Controller, Fred Charnley G4RPW.

Members of the North Lancashire and Fylde groups provided a two metre net supplying situation reports from the rest centre in the school. Initially these were sent back to North Yorkshire's County Hall in Northallerton by land line. But at 2230 an HF link was established on 80 metres over the ninety mile path from Northallerton to Morecambe where information was being gathered on the two metre net. HF remained workable until 03:30 hrs. when the County Emergency Planners decided RAYNET could stand down until 07:00 hrs. Although fire fighters remained at the scene throughout the next day while the chemical cocktail was removed from the storage tank, the rest centre was closed soon after 08:30 hrs. and North Yorkshire's Emergency Planning Officer, Duncan Harvey, stood down RAYNET with his thanks.

The incident involved members of the Nidderdale and Richmond groups from North Yorkshire. Central Lancashire, East Lancashire and Rossendale were placed on standby to assist their North Lancashire and Fylde colleagues but were not needed. Mr Harvey has written a letter of thanks to the Lancashire groups for their prompt assistance. GORHI said: "High Bentham is only 15 miles from the west coast so the incident was in the worst possible place for North Yorkshire groups. But co-operation from Lancashire maintained RAYNET's good name."

driving.

Some of the drivers regularly compete in four wheel vehicle competitions and it showed. On the last patrol there had been rain over the previous week and although the fire risk was still real some of the public decided that there was no reason to keep off The Chase and some youths thought that they would have a bit of sport with the patrols. One group of youths pursued up a track in the bottom of a very steep sided valley ran up steps cut in the valley side when they saw us coming. They were a bit surprised when the patrol dove up the steps after them! Motorcycle scramblers could easily out run a Land Rover across country but would find another patrol lying in wait ahead. Bikes are quick but radio is faster! In all, quite an experience, a very enjoyable duty, truly a different sort of RAYNET.

Exercise:**Chiltern Heights
13 November 1995**

Just before 08:00 hrs. a team of six Mid-Thames Raynet Members arrived at the Chiltern District Council Offices. They had been alerted by the District Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO). Local radio had broadcast that 'some big bangs' had been heard in the Hemel Hempstead area and it could be a plane crash. (In fact a few months earlier the DEPO had asked RAYNET to take part in a table top exercise and to deploy a few stations to add some realism.)

Having gained access, the team split into two - the rigging team set up a talk-through and a 2m rig in the Comms. Room and the rest made contact with the DEPO. He explained that he was activating his Emergency Operational Control (EOC) and would RAYNET supply some comms. with two remote points. The first was in Chesham Town Council offices, an absolute black hole where cell phones rarely work, and the other was to accompany the Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO) to a fire in a chemical works. We were told that the scenario was that a passenger and military plane had collided and the major incident was in Berkhamsted with debris spread in various areas including Chesham. We knew that Herts were also on exercise and Herts RAYNET was being deployed.

The Emergency Operations Control was staffed with the Council Officials and there were representatives from Bucks County Council and from the Voluntary Organisations including Red Cross and the WRVS. In addition to providing an opportunity of working with a wide range of people, the exercise was a live trial of Mid Thames RAYNET's own plans and capabilities. We travelled light and represented the first wave of volunteers. As the exercise developed we put two operators (with headsets) directly into the Emergency Operations Control so that messages were received and passed on with the minimum of delay. These operators were able to make direct contact with Herts and Bucks County RAYNET. One of the mobiles was redeployed to the Bucks Silver Control situated in the local Police Station. This gave the senior staff an opportunity to hear and see RAYNET in action.

Mid Thames RAYNET's own mobile was positioned on a high spot to give back-up in case of talk-through difficulties and to provide support to the other mobiles.

Members used their new orange tabards to identify members of the Control Team. They worked very well and met with complete approval.

Immediately after the end of the Exercise, all operators joined other participants at the DEPO's debrief. This was very searching in evaluating the morning's events and was constructive and informative.

Mid Thames RAYNET's own debrief was held in the evening and we are now modifying our response plans. We have also reassessed our equipment needs and how it

A Salutory**GMSRL****Tale:**

A few years back a member of a free-fall parachute club was on holiday with his wife and two small children. Whilst his spouse and offspring sat on the sand, the husband took himself off with his parachute to a local club where he had been promised a jump on a sunny August afternoon. The conditions were ideal and at some dizzy height a band of free-fallers leapt from the aeroplane. They plunged earthward for a minute before pulling ripcords. One by one the parachutes descended to the ground, except one. Our man went through his often practised safety drills and successfully deployed his reserve.

Those who have experienced descending by a reserve 'chute will testify that it will save your life, but you have no control over where you are going to land. In fact he landed on a cow shed. As a result of the impact an internal wall collapsed resulting in two Friesians having to be destroyed by the vet. As you might expect, the farmer was very imaginative about the value of the two dead cows, the drop in milk yield amongst the remaining cows (this happened before EEC cuts in milk quotas) and the repairs to the cow shed came to a five figure sum. The parachutist was badly shaken but otherwise unhurt and he assured the farmer that his club's public liability insurance would pay for the damage and the farmer duly submitted a claim.

Back home the club secretary was also on holiday and had neglected to pay the premium for the public liability insurance policy. The insurance company repudiated the claim, so the farmer sued the parachutist for his losses. The parachutist could not afford the claim, so he had no option but to sue the entire management committee of the free-fall club as but failing to pay the premium on time, they had effectively cancelled his public liability cover.

There is, of course, as you would expect, a lesson to be learned. Unless insurance premiums are paid on time, then no cover will be provided by the insurance company in the event of a claim. If you are responsible for the membership returns of your RAYNET group, make sure that new members are registered before they take part in activities, and that existing members have their cards renewed before the expiry date. In the past I believe that there was a three month period of grace, but this is no longer the case. In your own interests, ensure that all forms are filled in in plenty of time and that they are sent to Hunters Moon together with a passport sized photograph, with the correct callsign on the back, and the correct fee, (£3.60 for one year or £7.20 for two years) for each member.

should be deployed.

The exercise underlined our philosophy of the need to remain flexible and to put in a light team first and whilst not being complacent, we feel confident that the interchanges and contacts made, will enable us to provide a more effective network when the need arises.

Len Dunn G6DOV