



RAY ~ Link

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The Regular Newsletter of The Radio Amateurs' Emergency Network

RAY~Link is published for the benefit of all members of the Network. It is posted to all current members' registered addresses.

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Chairman's Annual Report Presented at the AGM on 4th. November 2000

Ladies and Gentlemen

I have pleasure in presenting my Chairman's report for the last twelve months, which have passed very quickly, although with a lot being achieved.

I start by reluctantly reporting that our membership has fallen during the past year. While it is not at a critical level, the drop does concern me, as having a healthy membership is essential for our success as a Service organisation.

I am also concerned at the number of unfilled vacancies which we have for Zonal Co-ordinators who form the Committee of Management. While zones may run satisfactorily with caretaker ZCs, the Committee of Management requires members from all areas, firstly to represent their own area, but equally importantly to help share the national workload. I would ask that all areas which do not have a full ZC make the election of a zonal co-ordinator one of their first priorities.

In July this year the network was invited to a meeting with the Radiocommunications Agency, which was also attended by the Radio Society of Great Britain and UKRS. We were represented by Cathy Clark, Martin Green and me. We were really well prepared for the meeting, having previously submitted a paper with our recommendations for the revision of BR68. The RA also presented submissions, although there were none from the RSGB or UKRS. We were delighted that our paper was well received by all, and that it was accepted almost in entirety. Our one major disappointment was the vetoing of our application for a GB2 callsign by the RSGB. This was particularly unfortunate as we had been previously actively supported by Ian Kyle when he was president. Following the RSGB's interjection at the meeting, the matter is now completely dead, and there is no chance of the application being resurrected.

The RAYNET manual has been revised, and exchange updated CDroms are available here today, or from RAYNET Supplies in Dunoon.

Owing to the fuel crisis, the September Committee of Management Meeting was cancelled at short notice, as several Committee members found it would be impossible to travel to the meeting and be assured of being able to return home. One casualty of the cancellation of this meeting was the selection of a recipient of the RAYNET Trophy.

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It was generally felt that there was no nomination of such merit that the award could be made by telephone or email discussion, and consequently no award has been made this year.

The Committee of Management responsibilities have generally remained unchanged this year, owing to the Committee itself being mainly unaltered, with Cathy Clark continuing to be an active, and efficient Vice chairman. David Hicks has continued with the PR portfolio, Martin Green looking after finance and fundraising, Tom Hanratty leading the Training Team and Chris Hampson looking after the widely scattered technical group. Jim Andrews has maintained innovations while leading the IT Team, with David Whiteman looking after the Web Site, and Mike Barker continuing to look after registrations.

Ian Jackson, our Company Secretary, completes all our legal requirements and obligations efficiently and timeously, as well as issuing Talkthrough permits on behalf of the Radiocommunications Agency.

Ray Webb, who has given his apologies for not being able to attend today, continues as our efficient Treasurer. Brian Tindill, the name behind Hunters Moon, does a superb job acting as our Postman and general back-up for many positions.

Eric Walton has continued to organise the 80m net team, and Brian Shearer and Moira put a lot of time and effort into running RAYNET Supplies.

Last year I paid tribute to my wife Katie for sharing me with RAYNET. To enable me to participate during the next twelve months, I again mention her understanding!

One issue which appears with increasing regularity is that of charges and expenses while out on events. There is no doubt that members financially subsidise the service that they provide and, the more service they provide, the more it costs them. There is no easy answer to the problem, and I would welcome hearing your views during the informal session which follows.

I hope to see many of you at tonight's dinner, and I would also welcome the opportunity to talk with your User Services during any presentation opportunities in the forthcoming twelve months.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Thank you for being active RAYNET members. I hope that you get a lot of satisfaction and enjoyment out of providing a vital emergency radio service for our User Services.

Ron Cowan, GM4SRL
Chairman

Aylesbury RAYNET Group

Exercise Julian 12th November 2000

Introduction

For some time, Peter Willdridge, Buckinghamshire's County Emergency Planning Officer, has fostered relations between certain key voluntary organisations, namely RAYNET, the Bucks Volunteer Rescue (BVR) and local groups of 4x4 enthusiasts. The philosophy behind this has been to get the three groups working together to form "teams" consisting of a 4x4 vehicle and driver, a RAYNET operator (for communications) and a team trained in search and rescue techniques.

This thinking was first tested in April 1999, with Exercise Leyton Orient. This involved the "search" part and teams were despatched on a scenario of lost walkers on an orienteering event in worsening weather. This worked well, but did not actually cover the "rescue" of casualties.

In the scenario of Exercise Julian, various stances were set up within the site to test the recovery of casualties using the rescue teams and return them to base over rough terrain, using the 4x4 vehicles. RAYNET's role was to provide communications from the various stances back to a central control, reporting on the progress of the activities to the exercise directing staff.

Exercise Objectives

- To observe first-hand the capabilities of various volunteer organisations to participate and assist at major incidents, both individually and in conjunction with each other.
- To provide an opportunity for the participating volunteer organisations to work alongside each other in a realistic environment.

The Exercise site

The exercise site had been selected to offer a wide range of technical challenges to all participating organisations. It was a disused sandpit with varied terrain including high soft dunes, steep sandstone cliffs and boggy quicksand. There was also an abandoned sand-loading tower of steel construction supported on a concrete pier.

All areas of the site that were used for the exercise had been examined and deemed safe for what is required. Some known danger areas were marked with barrier tape and identified to the teams during the initial briefing.

For reasons of safety, the tower was only be used during daylight (though it was used for a short time during the first hour of darkness.) The number of rescue volunteers on the tower at any one time was carefully monitored.

The exercise comprised of a number of 'set piece' stances that were typical of any major incident. There was no overall exercise theme to link the stances. Each stance was run individually and, in some cases, multiple times. This enabled all those taking part the opportunity to practice a variety of skills with increased participation and involvement.

The WRVS set up a feeding post for the other teams and DS personnel. This required assistance from the rescue and 4WD units, in the form of erection of a large tent and air shelter.

The 4WD group set up their own set piece stances where their members could practice specific skills. The wide variety of site terrain was ideally suited for this purpose. In addition, there were several burned-out vehicles on the site that were used as obstacles.

The initial callout and setting up.

In this instance, RAYNET did not perform a callout, as our role within the exercise was one of support and not a test of our capabilities. The other two voluntary organisations did, with the first participants arriving on site within 45 minutes. Everyone was required to sign in at the BVR vehicle upon arrival.

Because of the relatively small exercise area, RAYNET had decided to trial a purpose-built 70cm in-band talk-through, crystallised for a 7.6MHz split on the frequencies designated by the RSGB's Repeater Management Committee within the low-power repeater section of the band-plan. This was manned at all times and operated under a standard TTU permit.

Handheld radios could then be used, as operators were without vehicles and messages could be heard by all on the net.

The TTU was installed in the boot of a car, with the aerial sited at the top of a sandy mound. A small mast was used with a co-linear aerial and a portable generator was sited nearby to provide the power both to the TTU and to lighting to assist with the dismantling of the mast after dark.

Upon completion of the site tests, the power on the hand-helds was increased to 1W, and the aerial changed for one with slightly higher gain. This improved the coverage, particularly to the difficult location at the far end of the pit near the cliff stances.

The setting up of the TTU was completed within an hour, and the initial briefing of DS staff and RAYNET took place at 1330hrs.

Following the briefing, the air shelter and tent were erected and equipment assembled for each of the stances. 4x4 vehicles were identified for each team, as well as those for the transportation of RAYNET operators and SEBEV observers to each location.

The Exercise itself

Another briefing for all exercise participants took place within the air shelter at 1520hrs. RAYNET operators and SEBEV observers were despatched to the various stances whilst the BVR team

leaders briefed their teams, assembled equipment and carried it to the awaiting 4x4s.

RAYNET Control was sited in the BVR vehicle initially, but then moved portable outside. This was for a variety of operational reasons, mainly because the operator was required to find the appropriate member of the Exercise staff in order to answer queries, and they were not co-sited.

Two BVR teams were despatched to deal with recoveries from the loading tower and two to recoveries on the cliffs at the far end of the site. The first was made more difficult by the access gate to the tower being welded shut; the latter involved crossing an area of water which had become deeper during the recent wet weather.

Each stance was given a 45-minute time limit, and most achieved this. The stances were then reset and each ran again with different teams.

Darkness fell and at 1730, all participants were recalled for a hot meal provided by the WRVS. For RAYNET, this also meant a change of operators - something which we often do not have the opportunity to practise. We arranged this to coincide with the meal break, so that time could be taken briefing the arriving operator and debriefing the departing one, as well as providing both with a hot meal.

After the meal, RAYNET operators and SEBEV personnel was despatched to different locations, shortly followed by the BVR teams. The tower was not used again, being replaced by others on the far side of the quarry, though the cliff-site scenarios ran a further twice.

Endex was at 2100hrs, with all scenarios were finished, and the participants re-assembled back at the air-shelter for sandwiches, hot drinks and a short debrief.

Conclusion

It became apparent in a short space of time that the exercise objectives had been achieved. It was the third time that RAYNET and Bucks Volunteer Rescue have worked together on an exercise, the last one being Exercise Leyton Orient in 1999 which saw the integration of the 4x4 group.

Though RAYNET's role in this instance was one of support, it was however vital - the site had a number of potential dangers, and these were further heightened after dark. The written brief to all exercise participants included instructions following a genuine emergency or accident, and this was again highlighted at the briefing. It gave the group a chance to try the newly-built 70cm talk-through unit in a relatively "relaxed" exercise, and certainly operators remarked on it being "something different" from standing on street corners watching cyclists.

One was even heard to mention that it was not every day on a RAYNET exercise you got the choice between a scene of crime or a grenade!

From the BVR and 4x4 groups' points of view, some useful lessons were learnt, and SEBEV gave brief outlines for future training requirements during the debrief. (

September 2000

Things have been very busy with all Groups in the Zone participating in various Events, some old and some new.

West of Scotland Area: -

West of Scotland Area RAYNET Group's were asked at very short notice to provide Communications at the Great Scottish Run in Glasgow, which this year returned to a Full Marathon, for the last few years it had been a half marathon.

The event was organised by the Renfrewshire Group Controller Derek GM4LCZ who did a marvellous job preparing for the event. All but one Group in Zone 12 provided assistance. It was nice to hear members from Lothian's RAYNET and East Dumbarton Group who are a Non Network Group.

The Event went very well on the day with just a few minor hitches, well done to the thirty odd members who assisted on the day.

This was also a new venture for our Novice Members with us taking advantage of the recent relaxation in the Novice License.

Cowal Group: -

The Group have participated in five events this year, Brian is concerned at the advanced age of some of his members, this seems to be a common problem with other Group's in the Zone.

Supplies

Supplies are coming along fine and a Donation has been forwarded to the Treasurer for the Committee of Management account.

Can I request the assistance of Controllers to take on and look after a Supplies table at local Rallies (a) to make supplies as widely available to the membership as possible and (b) reduce the expense of me travelling great distances. Postage costs will be met. Supplies would be sent on a sales invoice basis with unsold items being returned along with a cheque for the sold items, to be credited against the invoice.

Regards, Brian 2M1HMV Cowal Raynet

North Argyll Group: -

No Report Received

South Argyll Group: -

Reported that the Group had recently covered a small 10km Road Race.

Liam also reports that the Group's days may be numbered; I will give more details at the meeting on 16th September.

Clyde Coast Group: -

Only three registered members at present, assisted at the Glasgow Marathon, will cover Greenock Marathon on Sunday 10th September with assistance from the Ayrshire Group.

Lothian's Group: -

No Report Received

Ayshire Group: -

Have attended a number of events over the Summer Months including the Glasgow Marathon.

One New Event this year and worthy of mention was the BHF Charity Cycle Ride on the Island of Cumbrae. The Island of Cumbrae is only 12 Miles in diameter, but it is 4 miles from Cumbrae Slip to the town of Millport where the event started and finished.

Most of the Cyclist's hired their bikes from one of the Hire Shops in Millport.

Laura my daughter and I at least once a year cycle around the Island, so this year we decided to act as sweepers for the Event and be in a position to let Control know at all times where the last Group of Cyclist's were. (I always go to Cumbrae prepared with puncture repair kit, Tyre Pump and an assortment of Tools) Just as well!!!

After the first mile we met a lady who complained about her hired bike being hard to pedal, on examination it was found that the back brake was locked on, a quick adjustment and she was on her way. After four miles, a couple that had two soft tyres stopped us, we blew up their tyres and they were on their way. (It appeared that I was the only person on the Island with tools.)

About three miles from the finish we met three ladies who were finishing a picnic, when the last lady started pedalling her chain came off, and she had no idea how to put it back on.

After putting the chain on Laura gave me a wipe to clean my oily hands, and we followed the ladies back to the finish, where they thanked me for my assistance thinking I was employed by the BHF as a bicycle mechanic. I assured them that it was all in a day's work for RAYNET.

They offered me a Bacardi Breezer from the remains of their picnic, but I declined explaining that I am bad enough without alcohol.

The organisers were delighted with the service provided by RAYNET and have asked us back next year.

Laura enjoyed her 20 mile ride but suggests we hire a tandem to sweep the Event next year, I wonder who will be on the front?? Sadly we have lost a couple of long standing events this year.

Renfrewshire Group: -

No Report Received.

ZONE 10 REPORT

**David Hicks
G6IFA**

PUBLICITY REPORT

**DECEMBER
2000**

A General Zone meeting took place on Sunday 22nd. October 2000 at the Lancashire Emergency Planning HQ, Westleigh, Preston. As well as the General Zone business, reports etc. there was a major forum on recruitment which was a lively and interesting exchange of views. An informal demonstration of PSK31 using the Digipan software package was also of interest to members. The main item on the agenda was a Talk and Live demonstration of Radio-Internet linking by Graham Eckersall G4HFG and Ian McPherson G4ZPZ.

The live demonstration used a CPC VOXlink attached to a laptop via the BT line. Subsequent conversations took place live, with radio amateurs in the UK (Dumfries, Nottingham, Macclesfield, Dukinfield etc.), Florida, Connecticut, Ontario, Michigan, & Sydney. In total over 30 stations were worked in 65 minutes internet-linking via repeaters on various frequencies and bands. This could be a useful tool for RAYNET even within the UK.

An election was also held for ZC10, and David Hicks G6IFA was re-elected unopposed for a third term of three years from January 2001. All counties in the Zone are in the quiet spell, following a very busy summer through to October. Greater Manchester and Merseyside were put on standby whilst Cheshire were called out to assist Staffordshire at the Floods in Burton-on-Trent. 6 operators responded but were stood down almost immediately because the crisis expected did not occur. This all happened on Tuesday 7th November, Staffordshire having been called out at 03.00 on Monday the 6th. Also on Monday the 6th. November Cheshire were called out to assist at floods in Tattenhall in West Cheshire. The call came at 12.00 and 3 members of West Cheshire RAYNET responded and set up a radiolink between Chester EP HQ and the site by 13.00. RAYNET were stood down at 16.10 as the rest centre had closed and priority was given to potential flooding at Bangor-on-Dee & Northwich.

The next Zone 10 NWRA meeting is scheduled for 4th. March 2001. (

Radio Today Magazine has now been killed off by the RSGB following a cost of around £100,000 over the three years they have been involved with the publication. Steve Telenious-Lowe former editor of RT is now the Editor of RadCom and the GB2RS news.

The publicity team has been successful in getting items for the recent Flood coverage was mentioned on the GB2RS news on both 19th & 26th November bulletins.

We are aware that many groups were put on standby during the flooding problems but we have little in the form of reports from these groups. In fact the only reports we have received have been from Staffordshire and Cheshire on callouts and standby situations during the floods.

RAYNET operators at the AGM at Bletchley Park stated that they wanted publicity, despite the fact that they do not give us the material for publicity or even realise that we have been proactive at National level on publicity for the last 6 years. It would appear that RAYNET members in general do not read the radio & emergency press and that Ray-Link is merely glanced at - if they receive it at all.

I was also made aware recently that the publicity material distributed at the High Wycombe AGM did not reach the Groups in at least one Zone. We are dependant on publicity at group level, and it would appear that Even on events with a captive audience nothing is done in general.

We are still awaiting the reprint of the blue threefold leaflet, held up because of the pending Gazette notice. This is now becoming urgent as Groups are requesting further supplies of the leaflet. No further progress has been made on the Poster Artist but I am now pursuing an alternative.

David Hicks G6IFA Director of Publicity (

Items For sale

Garmin GPS III handheld GPS,

4 AA cells or external 12v supply with optional lead, can also connect to PC with optional lead. Unit is boxed, is in mint condition, and is complete with the manual. £185 plus carriage. Further details from Jonathan, G4RLM on 01202 887947 or e-mail jonathan@jhiscock.screaming.net (

Dual Band Vertical Antennae

About 4 years ago I closed my amateur radio shop near Scotch Corner. Quite A few RAYNET members have contacted me since then with regard to dual band verticals I used to sell. Although I am now retired, I have 13 verticals left and taking up space. If any of your groups are interested, they originally cost me £50 each and the retail was £89. I will let them go to RAYNET groups or individuals for £35 each (+£10 carriage if necessary).

Contact Grant,
G8BAG QTHR or e-mail macaw@macaw.every1.net (

Millennium Festival Awards for All

North West Durham RAYNET Group (01/DH/205) has been successful in securing a of £4030 from the National Lottery Charities Board.

The grant has been awarded for a mobile communications trailer which will replace their existing one which is no longer roadworthy, being beyond economical repair owing to severe rust in the chassis. It was donated ten years ago by one of the Public Utilities and has served well as a mobile base, and has been used in all the group's outdoor events.

The group hopes to have the new trailer, which will be fabricated in Glass Reinforced Plastic, similar to catering trailers, completed in time for the start of the forthcoming busy season.

In the application for the grant, the group received excellent guidance from their local Authority, Derwentside District Council, this being coupled with a good supporting reference from Durham County CEPO.

If any group would like further information, they should contact the group controller of the North West Durham Group, Alan Wallis, G4YMU, who would be pleased to help.

**BBC RADIO Solent
Live Radio Interview**

**Bob Bloodworth
G4VWP**

Dave Walker G3ULL (RAYNET Group Controller-South East Hampshire) was invited to take part in a one to one live radio interview for BBC Radio Solent on the subject of RAYNET.

The group, which is developing a proactive approach, has a publicity sub-committee which made contact with The Portsmouth News, and this resulted in the subsequent publication of a short article.

Following this publication, the BBC contacted Dave and invited him to take part in the radio interview.

VNC'S DUTY ROSTER, 7TH JANUARY TO 25TH FEBRUARY 2001

Eric G4FSN

7th Jan -	Duty G0NZU,	Standby G4KUJ
14th Jan -	Duty G3STG,	Standby G0EWO
21st Jan -	Duty G4KUJ,	Standby G0BDA
28th Jan -	Duty G0EWO,	Standby G0MRH
4th Feb -	Duty G0BDA,	Standby G0NZU
11th Feb -	Duty G0MRH,	Standby G3STG
18th Feb -	Duty G0VPJ,	Standby G4KUJ
25th Feb -	Duty G3STG,	Standby G0BDA

We are pleased to welcome Eddie, G0EWO, back to the rota after an unavoidable period of absence, and look forward to hearing him once again in the hot-seat.

By contrast, however, we lose the services of John, G4AAL, who is leaving us to reduce his extremely diverse workload somewhat, and to concentrate on other issues equally as demanding of his time and talents.

We thank him for all his efforts whilst on our rota, and wish him very well for his endeavours in the future.