

❖ The CVFMA Newsletter ❖

Volume 1 Issue 2

July 1996

CVFMA Alert to Membership

The CVFMA has requested that an interim newsletter be published for its members so that several relevant pieces of news can be brought to the attention of the membership.

Conrad, WB1GXM, and Carl, N1JRA, have asked that this issue be devoted to soliciting membership support and action to protect the 2-meter and 70 cm bands.

Please read on...

SPECIAL NOTICE

2 Meter and 70 cm Bands Threatened

ARRL has learned that in preparation for the World Radio Conference in 1997, Representatives of the Low Earth Orbit (LEO) industry proposed a list of candidate frequency bands for reallocation and exclusive use of the mobile satellite service. This list includes 144-148 MHz (the current amateur 2 meter band) and 420-450 MHz (the current amateur 70 cm band)!

IF THIS EFFORT WERE TO BE SUCCESSFUL, IT WOULD MEAN THE END OF AMATEUR OPERATIONS ON THESE TWO MOST HEAVILY UTILIZED AMATEUR VHF/UHF BANDS!

The following is Dave Sumner's editorial from the July 1996 QST:

WRITE NOW!!!!

Get out a pen and paper, or boot up your computer. There's work to be done! Your help is needed to defend two me-

ters and 70 cm. Yes, that's right - the two most popular and crowded amateur VHF/UHF bands! But don't panic and don't "go ballistic."

Here's what's happening, and what you can do about it.

The United States is preparing for the 1997 ITU World Radiocommunication Conference, WRC-97. In the past, the public has been able to participate in the preparations of such conferences by responding to preparatory processes for WRCs. In March, the FCC announced a streamlining of its Internal Bureau's preparatory process for WRCs. Under the new scheme, the NOIs have been eliminated in favor of increased emphasis on WRC Advisory Committees.

For WRC-97, a series of Informal Working Groups (IWGs) of the Advisory Committee had been created to address specific agenda items. The output of each IWG will go directly to a joint FCC-NTIA-Department of State Steering Committee of the Advisory Committee. There, draft proposals as received from the IWGs will be reviewed and forwarded to the FCC for possible release as preliminary U. S. proposals for public comment.

In announcing the streamlined WRC preparatory process, the FCC tried to reassure those who might be concerned about reduced opportunities for public participation: "Interested parties should note that input to the Advisory Committee may be sent at any time directly to the Chair of the WRC-97 Advisory Committee; the Chairs of the Advisory Committee's Informal Working Groups; Cecil C. Holiday, the federal officer of

the WRC-97 Advisory Committee, or to Damon C. Ladson, the alternate federal officer."

Hold that thought while we shift gears to the substance of the issue.

On the the WRC-97 agenda items includes consideration of possible additional frequency allocations for the mobile-satellite service. So-called "little LEOs" low-earth satellites below 1 GHz, already have allocations. Their proponents claim that these are inadequate and are trying for more. The needs of little LEOs are being addressed in IWG-2A, chaired by Warren Richards of the Department of State. The ARRL technical relations staff participates in IWG-2A to represent Amateur Radio interests.

At the May 7 IWG-2A meeting, an industry representative proposed a list of "candidate bands" for little LEOs. The list includes a number of bands that would negatively impact existing services, and does not include others that would be technically more feasible but to which strong objection from incumbents could be expected - the point being that some political, rather than purely technical, judgment already has influenced the list.

Incredibly, 144-148 and 420-450 MHz were included on the list! This is the first time in memory that another service has been proposed for the two-meter amateur band. We must make sure it is also the last time.

We do not need to explain to ARRL members the extensive use that is made of these bands by amateurs. The two bands provide the backbone of our local public service communications effort. Voice and data, mobile and fixed, even television—the list of present amateur

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uses is a long one, and of future uses even longer. Both are already used for satellite services and for moonbounce and extended-range terrestrial operations requiring extremely sensitive receivers and high levels of effective radiated power.

Apparently we did need to explain all this to the little LEO industry representatives, so we did just that—both at the meeting and in a follow-up letter on May 15. We also explained that we had to regard the matter as extremely serious. No one with the slightest background in radiocommunication could possibly believe that a mobile-satellite service could be introduced into either band without disrupting existing and future amateur operations. Therefore, we said, if we did not receive assurance that they would be taken off the list of candidate bands by the deadline for this issue of QST, we would have no choice but to bring the matter to the full attention of the entire membership.

The response we received was unsatisfactory. In effect, we were told the little LEO industry would consider our views but that until their spectrum needs are satisfied, all bands must remain under consideration.

So, this is a call to action. We must get across to the industry and government participants in IWG-2A that the 144-148 MHz and 420-450 MHz bands cannot be considered as candidates for mobile-satellite services. We need to drive the point home so forcefully, with so many grassroots responses, that no one is ever tempted to try this again.

Which brings us back to that invitation for “interested parties” to send input “at any time”. There’s no time like the present! Here are the key addresses:

e-mail: wrc97fcc.gov

written (plus one copy): Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC 20554.

Each comment should include at the top:

“Reference No. ISP-96-005” and “Advisory Committee Informal Working Group 2A”

—end of editorial—

All written and electronic comments from Amateur Radio operators received at the Commission have been included as part of the public record on WRC-97.

The ARRL Web Site has complete information on the band threat situation at:

<http://www.arrl.org/>

and will update the information to reflect further developments.

As a follow-on, the following correspondence has been received on this subject:

From: N6VZT

“While it is premature to panic, industry is once again trying to get its hands on part of the Amateur spectrum, in this case, taking some 2 m and 70 cm band space for digital satellite communications. Several bulletins are already out on the issue so I won’t repeat the details...”

The point of my message is to get public safety involved in the lobby effort to protect these bands. While the degree of amateur participation in public safety varies from region to region, there are a number of affiliations which exist which can lend some clout to our arguments.

If you are an EC or a participant in an amateur support unit of any public safety agency, Red Cross, etc., the agency which you deal with should be familiar of the importance of available spectrum during major emergencies and disasters. 2 m and 70 cm are the bands most heavily used during such times and we can argue an important public safety issue.

I can assure you that letters will be forthcoming from public safety officials in my area (local agencies, the county Office of Emergency Services, etc.) and I urge you to encourage officials in your area to do the same. A broad based,

thoughtful and well presented show of support should aid those decision makers who are not knowledgeable of the details and unique characteristics of the Amateur Radio Service.”

and from Willis Lamm, Fire Captain, Communications Officer:

“Cecily C. Holiday, International Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, DC 20554

Dear Ms. Holiday:

Re: Little LEO/Amateur Radio Band Reallocation

I am writing to you to express my deepest concerns regarding a proposal to reallocate portions of radio spectrum presently allocated to the amateur radio service to commercial digital satellite service (IWG-2A: little LEO industry). The 144-148 MHz and 420-450 MHz bands cannot be considered as candidates for mobile-satellite services.

Band space for public safety is both rigid and limited. Therefore, a number of agencies rely heavily on the dynamic capabilities of amateur radio, and the voluntary participation of amateur radio operators, during major emergencies and disasters.

Locally amateur radio and amateur radio operators have been used extensively during major incidents such as the Loma Prieta earthquake and Oakland firestorm. More often these same operators have been quite useful in support of complex law enforcement operations, search and rescue operations, floods, hazardous materials incidents, and other emergencies where intense communications and logistic support is needed.

The radio bands being targeted by the little LEO industry are at the heart of the frequencies most practical for use by amateurs to support public safety operations. It is essential to the public interest that these frequencies remain available to amateur radio operators for their lawful pursuit of their radio interests

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during "peacetime" so that they will be available when needed during times of emergency."

From Conrad Ekstrom, WB1GXM:

"Dear Fellow Amateurs,

Please read the [above] material. What is happening here is real! Letters and factual comments are needed. Please write to the above addresses.

The more letters the better!

Multiple letters to your government representatives will also help.

LOST

KA1PXF reports that he lost an antenna for a TH-79A at the BARC hamfest in Charlotte on August 3. He is offering a reward for its return.

If you have any information, please contact Bob, KA1PXF, at:

9 Corey Lane
Bennington, VT 05201

CVFMA REPEATER OFFERED TO MEMBERS

In the October 1995 General Membership meeting, the membership voted to sell the 70 cm repeater owned by the CVFMA. As a result, the Association is offering the repeater and associated equipment to members of the Association first. If no offers meet the criteria established by the CVFMA Board then the repeater and associated equipment will be offered to the public.

Below is a list of the equipment being offered:

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Part Number</u>
Yaesu	Repeater, including Duplexer	FTR5410
Yaesu	CW ID Unit	
Yaesu	Microphone	YM31
Yaesu	Crystals	
Hustler	430-450 MHz Collinear	G6-440
Cushcraft	450 MHz Ringo Ranger II	ARX-450B

Sealed bids must be submitted to:

Conrad Ekstrom, WB1GXM
c/o CVFMA
POB 1628
Claremont, NH 03743-1628

The cut-off date for the final bid is three (3) weeks after the postmark date on this newsletter. The CVFMA Board has established a minimum bid of \$1200 for all of the above equipment. Only bids that meet or exceed the minimum bid should be submitted to WB1GXM.

Editorials

Amateur radio serves as both a hobby and as a service to our community and to the nation at large. This service is expressed in many ways: through local participation in walks, races and rides; supporting communications during local disasters; participation in the local ARES training sessions; participation in national field day exercises and mobile communications support to disaster-stricken areas throughout the country and the world. This is an avocation that is both fun and rewarding.

Not everyone in the public and private sectors recognizes our worth and our potential. The attempts of the little LEO industry to secure parts of the 2 m and 70 cm bands is indication that our services are not recognized or not valued. Let's hope that it is the former. We must help educate industry and government as to our worth and dedication.

We must rally to protect these endangered bands if we are to have a 2 m and 70 cm future.

The Board of the CVFMA has commissioned a Repeater Steering Committee to review the repeater needs of the CVFMA community and to develop a Master Plan for repeater use, placement and maintenance of repeaters for the CVFMA. Comments about repeater use, availability, quality, access, etc. should be directed to Conrad, WB1GXM, Jim, N1PZP or the undersigned as soon as possible for inclusion in a report to the Board in October 1996.

James, N0JSR

CVFMA

An ARRL Affiliated Club

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Valley FM Association

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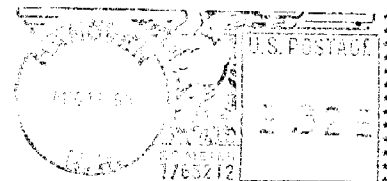
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