

MISSOURI REPEATER COUNCIL, Inc.

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MINUTES

May 27, 2009

Meeting was called to order by MRC President, Don, KMØR, at 1900 CDST. Other board members in attendance were, Bill, NØPNP, Roger, KØGOB, Bryon, KØBSJ and Jeff, KB3HF.

Five topics were on the agenda: 1) Coordination Guidelines for Digital Systems in the 2 meter band, 2) Procedure for de-coordinating repeaters that don't meet the MRC guidelines, 3) Annual MRC meeting date and location, 4) Election of officers whose terms are expiring and 5) Web site upgrades.

COORDINATION GUIDELINES FOR DIGITAL SYSTEMS IN THE 2 METER BAND

All available repeater pairs in the 2 meter band have been filled for many years in the populated areas of the state and in areas that border adjacent states with lots of Amateur activity. Some areas have a wait list with individuals or groups operating repeaters on the Shared Non-Protected (SNP) repeater pair frequency. This situation leaves no room for Amateurs to experiment with new technologies, such as narrow-band, digital repeaters. In 2006, the MRC coordinated one such repeater in-between two analog repeaters. This coordination has resulted in interference as the modem like "hiss" of the digital transmitter in the analog user's receiver passband renders it unusable. Other states and coordinating bodies have already addressed the issue.

A proposal has been received from the Missouri Digital Group (MDG) to coordinate five new digital only repeater pairs, with 1 MHz splits, in the simplex portion of the 2 meter band. The ARRL Band Plan permits local coordinators to use frequencies in this portion of the band for repeater pairs at their discretion. Similar pairs have been used by SERA, Colorado, Florida, Texas and TMASMA (CA).

DISCUSSION

1. Does this open the MRC up to other groups wanting additional 2 meter repeater pairs? No. These new repeater pairs can only be coordinated for narrowband, digital systems.
2. Who gets these new pairs? First come, first served. No change in the procedure from existing coordination. Application is sent to the state or local coordinator for review. If approved, a frequency pair is assigned and the construction time clock starts. When no more pairs are available in a given area; no additional repeaters can be coordinated. Key is, the existing coordination procedure remains the same.
3. What about the impact on ARES Tactical Channels? Proposed frequencies were selected to work around most of the ARES channels. By selecting specific repeater pairs in a given area, interference to channels used by the local and adjacent district ARES groups can be avoided.
4. ARES needs an emergency operations plan at the Section, District and EC level. That's outside our area of discussion, but the proposal clearly works around the issue.
5. What about coordination with Illinois, Kansas and other areas where the repeater output crosses into their jurisdiction? No change in current policy. The MRC coordinator continues to communicate with all adjacent coordinators impacted by the proposed digital repeater frequency pair.
6. Does the proposal have to go before the MRC membership? No. The procedure is that the MRC Technical Committee (read frequency coordinators) makes the proposal to the full MRC Board of Directors (BoD) and they vote to accept, reject or modify the proposal. Members have a say in the "Procedures" used to implement the

“Coordination Guidelines”. Coordination Guidelines are technical in nature while Procedures are political in nature.

7. What happens if/when an Amateur station operates in the simplex mode on a repeater input frequency? No different than current repeater/ simplex operating interference issues. The ARRL bandplan allows for “local option” repeater coordination in that portion of the band and simplex users have to respect this new coordination just as they must respect coordination in other parts of the band. The MRC does not coordinate simplex operation and cannot be drawn into the argument.
8. What if there are routine, existing Amateur operations on a newly coordinated repeater pair in the simplex portion of the band? The MRC will not knowingly coordinate a repeater on any of the proposed frequencies if it will interfere with a legitimate on-going net/group. To provide sufficient time for feedback and complaints from any existing user of the frequency, the repeater coordination in this portion of the band will be on a 180 day “conditional” use basis. That means that the MRC coordinator cannot coordinate additional repeaters in this portion of the band until the conditional use basis of the first system is removed as they may be required to change frequency to avoid a conflict with an unknown existing user.
9. Motion made and seconded to accept the proposed guidelines to coordinate five channels of digital only repeaters in the simplex portion of the 2 meter band as permitted by the ARRL band plan.
10. Roger, KØGOB, recused himself as he may have a conflict of interest.
11. Motion passed unanimously.

PROCEDURE FOR DE-COORDINATING REPEATERS

At the 2008 MRC annual meeting, the subject of “paper repeaters” came up. All agreed that the existing Coordination Guidelines provide clear rules on “Revocation & Termination” of coordinated frequencies. However, the procedure to be used in determining if a repeater is out of compliance with the guidelines has been left to the individual coordinators. De-coordination of a repeater pair is traumatic and the volunteer coordinators need to have a clear procedure, approved by the MRC membership, to support their decision. Several suggestions were kicked around at the 2008 annual MRC meeting, but the motion was tabled to allow the BoD to develop a written policy for the membership to consider.

After much discussion, such a policy was developed and is in circulation within the BoD for review and comments. The final BoD version will be sent to all members in the MRC database for their review and discussion at the 2009 MRC Annual Meeting.

ANNUAL MRC MEETING DATE AND LOCATION

The date for the 2009 annual MRC meeting was set for Saturday, August 1, 2009 in Columbia, MO. Eleven in the morning was suggested as the start time, but may be modified depending on facility availability. Don, KMØR, will secure a location and fix the start time. Approval was granted to expend MRC funds, if necessary, on a suitable size, air conditioned room.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The terms of several officers and directors are expiring in 2009. Don, KMØR, will review the minutes of past annual meetings to determine which positions are up for election. A slate of candidates will be presented to the membership at the annual meeting.

WEB SITE UPGRADES

Several existing pages on the MRC web site need to be upgraded and new material needs to be added as follows:

1. The band plan for 900 MHz needs to be upgraded to the 25 KHz spacing as approved at the 2004 MRC annual meeting.
2. The band plan for 440 MHz needs to be upgraded to the 12.5 KHz spacing for digital repeaters as approved at the 2008 MRC annual meeting.
3. The Frequency Coordination Guidelines used by the MRC need to be posted on the site.
4. The MRC By-Laws need to be posted on the site.

There being no further business, Don, KMØR, thanked the BoD members for participating in the conference call and adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Roger H Volk

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Acting Secretary