

# SEASONS GREETING FROM THE RIDGEWAY REPEATER GROUP



Dear Member

Once again we are nearing the end of 2004 and what a busy year it has been for the group.

- New antennas for GB3TD
- New cavity filters and repeater for GB3WH
- Echo link implemented on GB3TD
- Single Antenna change to GB3WH
- Sales of Ascom 4m Radios
- New Web site
- Membership drive

All this whilst the usual group activities keep the repeaters going. So a big thanks to the committee and members who have supported.

I did expect to get the news letter out a little sooner but work and group activities took a lot of time up. However, I will be issuing another news letter early in the year so articles welcome.

This year we managed to raise some extra funds by the sales of the 4m radios to which some of you proudly own. The funds allowed the group to purchase not only the cavity filters which meant we could go single antenna working but also complete new repeater.

The AGM this year was held at the Nationwide HQ, thanks to Hugh G4JTO. It was well supported and apart from the constitutional requirements it enabled members to meet up and contribute ideas so do come along next time.

Have a good holiday!!

73

Paul G8YMM

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## GB3TD Update November 2004 by Rob, G4XUT

The repeater is operating normally again after the aerial change back in the autumn. The 4 stack dipole aerial replaced a faulty one, which was allowing moisture to enter the short length of coaxial cable to the connector.

The Storno radio has been giving us good service with no problems – fingers crossed! A replacement Storno 9000 will eventually be used together with a new logic unit.

The current repeater logic (G0VNP) gives the following tones.

\*These may change from time to time.

Beacon ID every 6mins	de GB3TD J	J is at a lower tone freq.		
End of over with CTCSS	K			
End of over no CTCSS	E E			
After time out of 3.5 mins	J	118.8Hz CTCSS only	Short time before drop	Reset with 1750Hz
Emergency power CTCSS	P	Different beacon tones		
Emergency power no CTCSS	T T	Different beacon tones		

Timing of the logic commences from the end of the K or the end of second pip, this means that if this is ignored, the time remaining before timeout will be from the previous "over".

Echolink is now available on GB3TD in the evening and at weekends. This is being provided by Andy, M1EFY. It has had the effect of increasing the usage of the repeater and provided the radio users with some interesting links worldwide.

73  
Rob G4XUT

## **GB3TD Echolink by Andy M1EFY**

As of 28<sup>th</sup> August 2004 GB3TD has been connected to the Echolink Voice Over IP (VoIP) system. The connection is made via the M1EFY (Andy) station in North Swindon. When active, the M1EFY morse ident will be heard every 5 minutes.

The Echolink gateway consists of an Internet connected PC which in turn is connected to the transceiver (SMC 2546L8) tuned to GB3TD. This allows an RF operator to converse with operators all over the world via other links, repeaters and conference servers. The Echolink service will normally be available from 18:30 until 23:00 weekdays and 09:00 until 23:00 weekends. These times are subject to change.

DTMF tones (Dual Tone Multi-Frequency - as used on telephone keypads) are used to select different nodes and to control the link. A list of available commands is shown below:

### **DTMF Function**

00	Connect to Random Node
01	Connect to Random Link
02	Connect to Random Conference
03	Connect to Random User
07	Node Status (Short)
08	Node Status (Long)
123*	Current Time
99*	Current Weather
44*	Seven Day Weather Forecast
*60*	RSGB News Headlines
*99*	WWV Reports
#	Disconnect
##	Disconnect All
*	Gateway Information

For more information visit the M1EFY website, [www.m1efy.com](http://www.m1efy.com) or the RRG website, [www.rrg.org.uk](http://www.rrg.org.uk)

73  
Andy M1EFY

## **"Music for firemen" by Richard G4MUF**

"Hi chaps"

This is Richard MUF with his anorak on, but instead of Km posts or Schlagermusik (German music) I will talk about O.I.R.T. Radio. What, I hear you say, is that? Well, a little history.....when hi-fi VHF radio was planned in the late 1940s the world agreed on 88 to 108 MHz for what became known as Band 2 broadcasting. Except that the Soviet Union wanted a separate band for themselves and the Iron Curtain countries in Eastern Europe, so that they would be unable to pick up the wicked West.

xThe result was they got 65.36 to 73.01 MHz under the auspices of the French group "Organisation International de Radio et TV" or O.I.R.T. These countries were peppered with transmitters in a similar pattern to the 88-108 band in the West, i.e. a line-of-sight idea where main transmitters pushing out 30-120 Kw covered say up to 100 Km with fillers at lower power. With sporadic-E or Es conditions these powerful VHF signals can go up to 2250 Km away, including UK, sometimes with very enhanced in-phase multipath or focussing effects. No-one knew much about Es then, and the UK allocated AM and narrow FM channels for local water boards, taxis and fire brigades in the same band. You can guess from my title that UK firemen often hear these stations on their appliance 2-way nets, perhaps playing Slav pop music at times!

Luckily Es is only in the summer mainly, and not all the time, and not always focussed on East Europe. Propagation usually works in reverse, so this leads me to wonder if O.I.R.T listeners ever heard the UK fire brigades etc breaking in. Perhaps there's someone in East Europe who has "heard all brigades" and might hope they QSL!! June 2004 was an incredible month for DXing lo-VHF and amateur 6 metre and I heard plenty of O.I.R.T. I heard Poland and Romania, but it's quite hard to make meaningful logs because of various factors. You need a good SWL's ear for foreign languages, but the stations are often local ones with accents to match and maybe without easy station idents on the hour.

If you are lucky and match with an HF or MW simulcast you're OK, but more often not. Also, Wide FM covers up to 150 KHz so it's hard to fix the frequency. The World Radio TV Handbook lists the stations, and that was always my bible when trying to guess what I had heard. The O.I.R.T. bandplan has a 0.03 MHz channel spacing, starting from 65.00 MHz, and frequencies are quoted to 2 decimal places. Final note: The U.S.S.R. wasn't the only one: Japan uses 76-90 MHz for its VHF-FM broadcasting. Quite a few radios made in Japan go down to 76 instead of starting at 88 or 87.5 MHz. Happy DXing, you might get multi-hop Es or hi-sunspot sigs from Japan."

73

Richard G4MUF