

Attendees: AF2K, K1PY, K2CS, K2MTH, K2TER, KC2VHS, N2BEG, N8KH, W2BSN, W3OAB

Report order per meeting topic outline. Some add'l post-meeting thoughts added as they came to mind while typing the report.

TRANSPORT (before FD)

Transport seen as OK. Observations indicate a lot is on the shoulders of a few. Try to expand transport to a few others

- Check on previously available trailers to offload some of the burden
- Thanks to Tom KV2X for taking on generator transport in full this year

On-site storage

- Appreciate use of Zee's trailer. We should hold off on requesting it again as FD occurs during his peak work season. This was demonstrated as the trailer he loaned us this year unexpectedly became needed immediately after Sunday takedown.
- N2JQR trailer actively used in business so availability never ensured
- Recheck use of commissary for storage; John reports that it was in fact no more "full" than last year. Can we rent storage space in the commissary (if it's not offered after request)?

SETUP (other than antennas)

Mil-masts

- Payback from attaching a second Yagi deemed not worth the effort
- Need to ensure guy points accurately located.
- Still need to develop easier guy point installation; Tom checking on a possible idea
 - The Scouts were a big help in Mil-mast guy take-down
 - Can we get them back?
 - Can they come on Friday?
- Phone: Develop better fixture for 20-foot mast at top
 - Could a modified K2SSS Boom-to-Mil-mast plate be used to support a gin pole to assist in installing the 20-foot mast?
 - See if Zee can fabricate whatever design we can come up with
 - Lynn may have a sleeve to better fit the current top fixture that also holds the Yagi
- Mark suggested we should investigate and perform Mil-mast maintenance while it's in our hands
 - Lynn to research what's needed

Power

- Flawless; turn off Friday night – not used and waste of fuel; what was this year's fuel expense?

Shelters

- Setup delayed (see ANTENNAS, Setup)
- Shelters should be done before Friday pizza (or soon after)

- Goal is 3 main HF stations on-air Friday evening
- Provides time to identify and obtain missing items, fix set-up issues, and address problems
- Need to address noise in station area
 - Better acoustic separation, shelter orientation, etc.
 - Orient speakers away from other stations
 - Multiple station headphone availability
 - use of the 4-port headphone boxes at all 3 HF stations
 - GOTA Bluetooth audio interface to wireless headphones!
 - Perhaps greater separation for GOTA (without losing ability to inter-coordinate with other stations)

ANTENNAS

Setup

- Shelter set-up delay this year is attributed to extended time with Yagi assembly
 - Consider two Yagi teams
 - TA-33 assembly issues were resolved during this year's setup (so should go well next year)
- GOTA: John suggested moving GOTA TA-33 and other GOTA antenna assembly and installation until after "all 3 HF stations are GO"
- 40-2CD tuning issues remain a mystery; dimensions per manual double checked and were as indicated, but still needed modification to achieve tuning
 - Pre-check all antennas one month prior to FD
- It was reported that all available coax on site was used this year!
 - It has never come close to this previously!
 - Delays in final Phone remote coax switch setup resulted in 4 coax runs to the station instead of a single one to the switch at the base of the Mil-mast.
 - However, that doesn't explain the coax depletion
 - K1PY brought all available; check if K2MP brought as much as usual
- Above point notwithstanding, it was agreed we should investigate any available methods to locate antennas (tx, rx) to utilize the full 1000 foot rules limit
 - We can run feedlines along the roads
 - There are Google Earth views that suggest possibly open areas within the 1000 foot range
 - Long lengths of RG-6 are often available
- At some point it was suggested we inquire if the county tower might again be available

Measurements

- Brian KA2CGB has been contacted and will be preparing a report on his measurements
 - Suggest a small meeting of interested team members to hear and discuss his report when Brian is available

STATIONS/EQUIPMENT

- Agreed to further research obtaining and using single-band filters (to reduce other-band interference)
 - KOSM has suggested that these are “not hard to make.” Vic will pursue
- An extensive discussion in response to likely ongoing poor band conditions resulted in general agreement that we should
 - Make PH and GOTA CW capable as a fall-back
 - Definitely include PSK31 in next year’s plans – perhaps at multiple stations (minimally GOTA and PH)
 - PSK31 as a separate “band” would allow 3 stations to be active on any band (with PSK unlikely to create interference to the others)
 - Signalinks (for digital interface) appear to be available for all stations
- Quite positive results (“it was great!”) at this year’s FD indicate the potential of local spotting. This led to a goal of implementing a minimum of two spotting stations next year
 - Locating rx antennas at greater distances were suggested
 - Magnetic Loop antennas are planned to be researched by N8KH and KA2CGB
 - Spotting allows S&P-preferred ops to meaningfully contribute in increasing QSO count
 - Will require more night ops
- The Monitor station was a victim of setup delays this year, but there is general agreement that we need this next year
 - Mark’s KX-3 with Panadapter has been volunteered – TU Mark
 - Mon will act in a dual role as a spotting station
 - Use for local interference monitoring
 - Consider running line-out audio from all 4 HF stations to the Mon position with ability to listen to any two via a 4-channel mixer (to be provided by K1PY)
 - We should have a designated and scheduled band/mode monitoring and management team, both tactically and for interference resolution

COMPUTERS/NETWORK

- Wireless router required relocation from commissary to station area, but was FB after that
- Agreed that internet access is potentially helpful,
 - but lowest level priority
 - should be entirely separate from the station network
- With on-site tweaks, the N1MM+ configuration on each FD computer is quite likely to now be OK
 - That said, it would be prudent to have a multi-multi configuration checklist developed and run prior to FD by one or more ops familiar with what’s needed (such as at Jeff’s)

ALL REMAINING ITEMS

At this point, most of the remaining items elicited minimal discussion as summarized here

- Operating

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7/20/16 @ N2BEG work QTH

- Schedules OK, but some ops didn't show. Need some way to juggle people around the schedule
- Some ops filled in for more hours than desired, but others would have liked more
- Agreed we like spots, and will need to find and assign spotters just like operators
- Performance – covered during previous discussions
- Food
 - Well received by all in all respects
 - Might have another catering source – John to pursue
 - Joe has offered to return next year
- Takedown
 - Enough people stayed – maybe because of the Post-Takedown get-together
 - But not all contributed equally – need better personnel management
 - Because of above, takedown completion ran much too late. Will be corrected
- Other
 - Suggested that over the year we have events and training where members can develop skills with N1MM+ spotting and PSK31 operating