

# The W.A.COM HAM



August 1996

Editor: Kevin Smith

Washington, PA

## Write Now!

*Reprinted from "It Seems to Us, July 1996 QST"*

*(Editor's Note: If you are a member of the ARRL then this article is old news to you. However the greater portion of WACOM members do not belong to ARRL and may not appreciate the threat that is posed to the 2 meter and 70cm bands from commercial interests. It is reprinted here in the hope of not only acquainting you to what is going on, but to act as well. It is not too late to write to the FCC. The matter is by no means settled and we have to be involved over the long haul. KJS)*

Get out a pen and paper, or boot up your computer. There's work to be done! Your help is needed to defend two meters and 70 cm. Yes, that's right--the two most popular and most 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 for such conferences by responding to FCC Notices of Inquiry. In March, the FCC announced a streamlining of its International Bureau's preparatory processes 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 has 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 US 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...." A pre-press version of this editorial, circulated far and wide by e-mail and packet radio, caused so much input to be generated--more than 1,000 comments in less than a week--that the FCC had to modify its procedures to cope with the deluge!

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

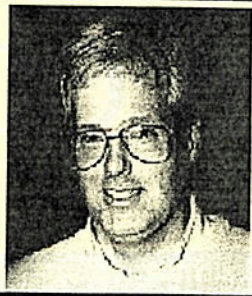
One of the WRC-97 agenda items includes consideration of possible additional frequency allocations for the mobile-satellite service. So-called "little LEOs," low-earth orbit satellites below 1 GHz, already have allocations. Their proponents claim these are inadequate and are trying for more. The needs 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 presented a list of "candidate bands" for little

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# Speaking Out

by Kevin Smith, N3HKQ  
Newsletter Editor



Hopefully by now every member of WACOM is aware of the threat to Amateur spectrum in the VHF and UHF bands. If you haven't taken the time to read the lead article of this newsletter, please do so. It is as important as can be for amateurs, particularly Technician class amateurs, to assist the ARRL how they can.

First and foremost is to write or email the FCC to the addresses given in the lead article. I have followed ARRL's assessment of the response of US amateurs to

the FCC. The ARRL is pleased with the response, saying that between one or two thousand letters and e-mail messages have been sent to the FCC. The response should be tens or hundreds of thousands. ARRL membership is around 170,000 and the total number of licensed US amateurs is probably 3 or 4 times that number. I would call the response to date of one or two thousand amateurs mediocre.

Secondly, you can help the ARRL by becoming a member.

There is no other US amateur radio organization that has the respect and clout in Washington to protect our interests like the ARRL. To put it another way, our interests will not be protected without the ARRL. Consider the dues paid to ARRL an insurance premium. The commercial interests that the ARRL is fighting have millions of dollars to spend in pursuit of Amateur bands. Yet the ARRL, with a fraction of that amount to spend, can be successful.

There is another way to stake our claim to our allocated spectrum. That is to use it! On another page of this newsletter are all the bands allocated to US amateurs. If you take the trouble to add up all that spectrum you would come up with almost 8800 Mhz (I hope I added that right, it gets confusing when you get above 100 Ghz.) That's a lot of frequency that is mostly unused (albeit there isn't much off the shelf radio equipment one can buy to use most of it).

What WACOM and other clubs should do is adopt a band and experiment with ways to use it. We just might learn something along the way about radio. Lets get off our duffs and do something interesting for a change.

## WACOM Committee Phone Directory

A.R.E.S.	Walt Piroth, N3BKW	746-2327
RACES	Bob Ketzell, KB3IN	228-0425
EMA	Dave Smith, N3LIK	225-0346
President	Bob Ketzell, KB3IN	228-0425
Vice President	Joe Musante, WB3GTE	223-0897
Secretary	Jarred Stanko, N3TKR	746-2156
Treasurer	Cheryl McGrevin, N3PYC	225-9545
Education	Jim Burtoft, KC3HW	228-0546
2mtr Net Mgr.	Dave DeMotte, N3IDH	228-8178
10mtr Net Mgr.	Joe Musante, WB3GTE	223-0897
Newsletter	Kevin Smith, N3HKQ	258-4153
Repeater	Sam Mayberry, W3CYO	222-0367
VE Testing	Stan Cole III, NX3P	223-0104

Some people make things happen, some people watch things happen, while others wonder what has happened.

*(Write Now! continued from page 1)*

LEOs. The list included a number of bands that would negatively impact existing services, and does not include others that would appear to 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. We have asked for, but to date have been given no explanation of why some bands were included and not others.

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 uses is a long one, and of future uses is 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 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! According to the Commission's new procedures, comments by e-mail should be sent to: [wrc97@fcc.gov](mailto:wrc97@fcc.gov). Written comments, with an original plus one copy, should be sent to: **Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554**. Each comment should include at the top, "Reference No. ISP-96-005" and "Advisory Committee Informal Working Group 2A." FCC staff assures us that comments will be given prompt consideration, and asks that parties refrain from filing comments in accordance with previous instructions.

Do comment. But be civil. Don't abuse people who are simply doing their jobs. We have to get across that casting covetous eyes on amateur bands is counterproductive, and contrary to the public interest. To accomplish this we need a lot of comments, including yours. But remember that the objective is to educate and persuade, not to intimidate. We don't need to. The facts are on our side.

For the latest news on this particular issue, check the ARRL Home page at <http://www.arrl.org/> and click on "Band Threat News." Then write. Right now!--David Sumner, K1ZZ

A final note ... many new licensees have not joined the ARRL. This spectrum threat hits them right where they live ... on 2 meters and 440 Mhz. Now is the time for them to support the organization that is fighting for their home on the ham bands. Encourage members of your club to join the ARRL now!

### Western Pennsylvania VE Test Opportunities

Date	Location	ZIP	Telephone	Contact
8/3/96	Pittsburgh	15237	412-366-5207	Emerson Wasser
8/10/96	Butler	16001	412-282-6777	Gerald Wetzel
8/10/96	N Huntington	15022	412-483-7135	Ricardo Morales
8/10/96	New Castle	16102	412-667-1166	Gary Pirkkala
8/17/96	Elco	15483	412-751-4373	Charles Furlong
8/22/96	New Castle	16112	412-667-9451	Fred Van Natten
8/31/96	Pittsburgh	15326	412-885-8073	Dennis Tanner
9/12/96	Ambridge	15010	412-846-2667	Mike Emerling
9/14/96	N Huntington	15022	412-483-7135	Ricardo Morales
9/14/96	New Castle	16102	412-667-1166	Gary Pirkkala
9/15/96	Uniontown	15401	412-246-2870	John Cermak
9/16/96	Oakdale	15071	412-833-6049	Mark Strayer
9/21/96	Elco	15483	412-751-4373	Charles Furlong
9/26/96	New Castle	16112	412-667-9451	Fred Van Natten
9/28/96	Greensburg	15601	412-523-4261	Richard Beaver
9/28/96	Pittsburgh	15326	412-885-8073	Dennis Tanner

## TWA FLIGHT 800: LONG ISLAND ARES PITCHES IN

*(reprinted from the ARRL Atlantic Division Newsletter)*

Amateur Radio operations are expected to continue indefinitely to support recovery efforts in the wake of the TWA Flight 800 disaster off the Long Island, New York, shoreline. Mario Maltese, WF2T, of ARES, said that when the plane exploded and crashed, "beepers at our Skywarn class went off in concert, and Nassau and Suffolk counties Red Cross went Alert 1 at the headquarters, with no clear initial mission."

Maltese said New York City Red Cross requested communication to Suffolk, which was arranged on UHF, linking Nassau and Suffolk counties and New York City. A call also went out to Sid Wolen, K2LJH, of Azden in New Hyde Park, New York, to supply additional radios, which the company was able to do.

"As the situation developed, the Red Cross mission became to feed the 2000 to 3000 rescue workers at the 'crash site' (US Coast Guard Station) and to provide mental health support for the workers and the victims' families," Maltese said. The local telephone company, NYNEX, donated cell phones, but WF2T reports that these initially were useless, with 3000 rescue workers and thousands of members of the press severely overloading the local cell. NYNEX set up a high-capacity site the second day, but that had its limitations also.

Ham radio worked, however. WF2T reports that ARES provided vital communications links among American Red Cross HQ in Yaphank, New York, the lead Red Cross official at the site, and the Red Cross official at the morgue. "This was expanded later with shadows for other officials," he said. The American Red Cross plans to operate 12-hour shifts, and DEC Andy Feldman, WB2FXN, was asking for ARES mutual aid teams. WF2T said hams and Red Cross personnel are working well together. "The chemistry between ARES operators and agency officials couldn't be more positive or professional," he said.

## US Amateur Radio Frequency Allocations VHF & Above

### 6 Meters

All Amateurs except Novices:

50.0-50.1 Mhz: CW Only

50.1-54.0 Mhz: CW, Phone, Image, MCW, RTTY/Data

### 2 Meters

All Amateurs except Novices:

144.0-144.1 Mhz: CW Only

144.1-148.0 Mhz: CW, Phone, Image, MCW, RTTY/Data

### 1.25 Meters

The FCC has allocated 219-220 Mhz to amateur use on a secondary basis. This allocation is only for fixed digital message forwarding systems operated by all licensees except Novices. Amateur operations must not cause interference to, and must accept interference from, primary services in this and adjacent bands. Amateur stations are limited to 50 watts PEP output and 100 kHz bandwidth. Automated Maritime Telecommunications Systems (AMTS) stations are the primary occupants in this band. Amateur stations within 398 miles of an AMTS station must notify the station in writing at least 30 days prior to beginning operations. Amateur stations within 50 miles of an AMTS station must get permission in writing from the AMTS station before beginning operations. ARRL Headquarters maintains a database of AMTS stations. The FCC requires that amateur operators provide written

notification including the station's geographic location to the ARRL for inclusion in a database at least 30 days before beginning operations. See Section 97.303(e) of the FCC Rules.

Novice (Novices are limited to 25 watts PEP output), Technician, Technician Plus, General, Advanced, Amateur Extra classes: 222.00-225.00 Mhz: CW, Phone, Image, MCW, RTTY/Data

### 70 Centimeters

All Amateurs except Novices:

420.0-450.0 Mhz: CW, Phone, Image, MCW, RTTY/Data

### 33 Centimeters

All Amateurs except Novices:

902.0-928.0 Mhz: CW, Phone, Image, MCW, RTTY/Data

### 23 Centimeters

Novice class:

1270-1295 Mhz: CW, phone, Image, MCW, RTTY/Data (maximum power, 5 watts PEP)

All Amateurs except Novices:

1240-1300 Mhz: CW, Phone, Image, MCW, RTTY/Data

### Higher Frequencies:

All modes and licensees (except Novices) are authorized on the following bands [FCC Rules, Part 97.301(a)]:

2300-2310 Mhz

2390-2450 Mhz

3300-3500 Mhz

5650-5925 Mhz

10.0-10.5 GHz

24.0-24.25 GHz

47.0-47.2 GHz

75.5-81.0 GHz

119.98-120.02 GHz

142-149 GHz

241-250 GHz

All above 300 GHz

## News About WACOM Members

Congratulations to Dave Smith, N3LIK, who married Kim Platt on Saturday, July 27, 1996 at the Laboratory Presbyterian Church. Fittingly, the Pancake VFD firewhistle went off as the ceremony began. There is no report indicating that Dave left the church to fight the fire or that the church was cleared out.

Congratulations are also extended to Lowell Frankenberg, husband of Fay, KA3VOM who retires from Kauffman's on July 31, 1996. Maybe now Lowell can work on getting licensed along with the rest of his family. Are you taking bets Fay?

Dave DeMotte, N3IDH reports that once again a 6 band cubical quad graces the skies above his QTH. He thanks John Moniger, Paul Plants, Frank Van Cleve, and Steve Lane for helping to get the quad back in the air.

Finally several WACOM members have assisted the American Red Cross and Randy Kroflick, AA3CI Section EC in providing communications assistance during the recent flooding emergencies in Green County.

Those stations providing assistance were N3IDH, N3LAP, N3WMV, and others. A detailed report will be provided by Walth Piroth, N3BKW in an upcoming ARES report. Nice going guys!

**The WACOM HAM**  
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 V. President: Joe Musante, WB3GTE  
 Treasurer: Cheryl McGrevin, N3PYC  
 Secretary: Jarred Stanko, N3TKR

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**2 Meter Net**

**145.49 Mhz**

**8:30 PM Local Time**

August 6 N3HKQ  
 August 13 N3IDH  
 August 20 KA3KSP  
 August 27 N3NPV  
 September 3 N3HKQ

**10 Meter Net**

**28.340 Mhz**

**9:00 PM Local Time**

August 6 WB3GTE  
 August 13 KA3KSP  
 August 20 WB3GTE  
 August 27 KA3VOM  
 September 3 KD3VX

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