



# International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

Europe, Middle East, Africa and Northern Asia

Founded 1950

## EMC Committee – Interim Meeting 16-17 April 2016 InterCity Hotel, Vienna

Subject	Action by national administrations in interference cases		
Society	RSGB	Country:	UK
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### Introduction

It is likely that amateurs in the different countries within Region 1 will have different experiences of having interference from electromagnetic sources (that is, not from other stations or due to propagation) resolved. This will be because different countries have different provisions in their laws for controlling interference. It will also be because of the way different administrations enforce those provisions.

We believe it will be beneficial for R1 members to discuss their experience of this. Sharing such information may help R1 members when approaching their own Administration with interference problems. This paper proposes areas where information can be contributed to by members.

### Background

Within the UK the RSGB's Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Committee tries to help members with their interference problems. We give advice via our website on various sources of interference and how to cure them. We have a web-based forum through which members can discuss their interference problems with other amateurs and with members of our committee. In some cases, it is necessary for members suffering interference to call in the spectrum regulator for help. This is usually where there is no co-operation from the source of the interference and some kind of enforcement activity is required of the regulator.

In the UK there are three routes open to the regulator to assist with interference.

First, there are the EMC Regulations, which transpose the EU EMC Directive into UK law. The EMC Directive applies across all EU countries. In the UK it is applied strictly in terms of the Directive against "apparatus" when it is first placed on the market and/or taken into service – in most cases this means when it is new. The regulator has a range of sanctions it can take against non-compliant apparatus. However, these are concerned with stopping them from being placed on the market rather than directly stopping use when they cause interference.

Fixed Installations are subject to a different compliance regime under EMCD. Here the UK has also experienced difficulties, for example for domestic solar power systems (solar PVs), which the EU Commission originally confirmed were Fixed Installations, but the UK Government says the rules for "apparatus" apply. The Commission has now said it will look again at the definition in the context of the revised EMCD.

Meanwhile, the UK Government says all the powers needed to deal with interference from solar PVs as "apparatus" exist but Ofcom believes further powers are needed. Do other countries have similar problems?

Second, the power to make Regulations for a wide range of electrical apparatus under the UK Wireless Telegraphy Act. This enables the Regulator to stop the use of “apparatus” in certain circumstances if it causes interference. However, the Regulations that exist are very old and do not apply to most modern electronic apparatus. We have urged the regulator to update the regulations but this is happening only very slowly.

Third, there is provision in the UK television licence for the regulator to take action against people who allow their TV receiving apparatus to cause interference. In the UK anyone who watches TV live - direct off air, by satellite, cable or internet - must have a TV licence. Typical interference problems come from ageing plasma screen TVs.

Even though these powers exist, UK amateurs usually have great difficulty in getting action from the regulator and the RSGB often experiences frustration in trying to persuade the regulator to use its powers. While we accept that the amateur service takes a low priority and we do not expect completely noise-free spectrum, we are entitled to protection. We do not know whether the regulator does not understand the problems caused by interference to amateurs or if does not have the resources to assist.

We outline the UK situation above as an example and a starting point for debate and information gathering within R1. We continue to urge the UK regulator to use its enforcement powers.

### **Key Points / Proposals**

Shared information and experiences may lead to better approaches to administrations on interference problems. In Europe in particular it may lead to a co-ordinated approach to national administrations or an R1 approach to the EU Commission on major issues.

### **Recommendations**

1. That the first meeting of C7 has a discussion on this subject.
- 2 C7 begins a work item to collect information from R1 members on :
  - a) the enforcement powers available to their administrations in EMC interference cases
  - b) the extent to which their administrations will use these to assist amateurs suffering interference
  - c) for R1 members in the EU/EEA, whether the EMC Directive is implemented in the same way as in the UK, and the effectiveness of their administration in enforcing it.

RSGB

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