Subject	**HF Beacon Coordinator's Report**		
Society		**Country:**	
Committee:	C3	**Paper number:**	VA14_C3_13
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HF Beacon Coordinator's Report

Worldwide, approximately 500 beacons are active at HF. About 350 are on 28 MHz, and about 80 of those are in Region 1. These numbers have not changed much since the last conference.

Within Region 1 Western Europe has the highest density of coverage and, apart from a small number of specific locations, additional beacons would serve no useful purpose.

However, in other parts of the region more beacons could be very useful: most of Africa, the Gulf States and European Russia. This will be particularly true in the years of low solar activity ahead. During those years there will be more 28 MHz propagation than many colleagues realise. It would be regrettable if the opportunities that do occur were to be unused. Beacons operating 24/7 signal such openings, so helping to sustain interest in 28 MHz and easing the pressure on lower bands.

These comments are not intended to discourage colleagues who enjoy beacon design and construction. But their skills and enthusiasm would be better applied to establishing beacons in areas which lack them, where there is a national society that would welcome such assistance.

There is another way in which constructors could play a valuable role. Most HF beacons run a basic ten watts or less of A1A to a vertical antenna. That will remain the main pattern for the foreseeable future. But we also need to progress technically. The recent period has brought a range of interesting developments at VHF/UHF but much less at HF; apart from exceptions like the UK 60 m beacons and the OZ 'new generation' beacon on 10 m. For example, very few HF beacons as yet include a PSK identifier, which would greatly aid automatic monitoring projects, and we have no multi-beacon synchronised clusters apart from the venerable IBP network.

An important part of the beacon coordinator's job is to maintain a beacon list. I have continued to do this as I have done for nearly twenty years. It is available at www.keele.ac.uk/depts/por/28.htm and on the Region 1 web page. Beacon reception spots are checked daily and I am greatly helped by National HF Managers in ensuring the list is as accurate as possible. My thanks to them.

The IBP beacons in Region 1 continue to give excellent service on 5 bands. Sadly, 4S7B and 4U1UN had been off the air for a considerable time when this report was prepared.

Region 1 discourages beacon operation below 14 MHz, apart from approved research projects and beacons in sub-Saharan Africa. A small number of research

beacons have been agreed and seem to cause no problems. A number of proposals were not agreed and were abandoned and some beacons were persuaded to close. However, a few beacons continue to operate contrary to Region 1 policy, at times causing inconvenience to other operators. This is a small problem but I am aware of the annoyance it can cause.