

MARITIME RADIO DAY – Historic Review

In 2006 David Barlow organised an event to mark the centenary of 500kcs becoming the official distress and calling frequency for the maritime service. This was the date that the Berlin Wireless Telegraph Convention came into operation and David contacted former Radio Officers in Germany, Italy and the USA who agreed to join in with a 24hour celebration of the centenary.

GB500KCS was put on air by the Radio Officers Association with DL500KHZ and IY1SP/500KCS in Italy. The event proved highly successful with the three European stations all run by former Radio Officers making over 4000 QSO's.

The CW event was so popular and brought to light so many former Radio Officers, Wireless Operators, Marconists who had served in the merchant service or in Coast Stations that David received e-mails from Alfredo de Cristofaro IK6IJF and Guiliano Sandal I1SAF - later joined by Rolf Marchner DL9CM and as a result Maritime Radio Day was inaugurated for 24 hours from 1200z on 14th April 2007.

Initially David suggested and drew up rules for a contest style event which included the observation of silence periods. Points would be awarded for contacts with former coast station call signs (3 points) and between individual call signs (1 point). It would be all CW and coast stations were limited to 300w output and individual stations to 100w. The completed QSO would include QSA and QRK report and the call sign of the last ship on which the operator served.

The contest part of the plan was dropped but the Silence Periods, QSA , QRK and last ships call sign was retained.

In recent years a 'Certificate of Participation' (CoP) was created and distributed via internet on reporting MRD activities for self printout.

Present homepage of MRD is <http://www.doese-apprt.de/mrd/index.html>

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