

## **Coordinators' Report - May 2017**

There have been significant changes that have affected coordination in the past year. The changes in communications technology is driving changes in Amateur Radio. Most significant is the expanded use of digital communication in the VHF and UHF bands.

As you know, inexpensive, multi-mode, dual-band repeaters are now available and many Hams think that they ought to own one. We have had many requests to coordinate new repeaters both on VHF as well as UHF, but enthusiasm still exceeds reality and many good intentions to put a repeater on the air fail to materialize. This puts extra pressure on BCARCC, to find more and still more available frequencies, to monitor the operator's progress and follow up if the repeater goes on air while releasing the frequency if it does not.

This year, with the help of Linda Metcalfe, we contacted a large number of repeater operators who had not updated their files in the last five years. This required many database updates while still dealing with new requests for digital systems.

The total number of entries in our database has dropped slightly as we deleted inactive systems, but the total number of repeaters is up slightly. See the table at the end of this report for comparative figures.

The ARRL still publishes its annual Repeater Directory but the compilation of repeater data has been transferred to RFinder. BCARCC submitted its database to RFinder, and we received our usual royalty cheque directly from ARRL. Hopefully this revenue stream will continue.

We recently received the new 2017/2018 Directory which reveals some interesting problems. The new Directory includes our database as well as their original listings, many of which are incorrect or possibly submitted directly by others. How this is cleaned up is uncertain.

Updating RFinder will result in new challenges as their requirements are somewhat different from the information we generally make available. One concern is that repeater operators may choose to provide their information directly to RFinder and bypass BCARCC. We ask that all repeater operators and clubs continue to keep us informed of any changes in their repeater's operation. All updates will be passed on to RFinder at year-end.

We are looking for additional area coordinators - Hams knowledgeable about repeaters in various areas of the Province - who can represent BCARCC to local Hams, assist if needed and communicate with BCARCC so that accurate databases can be maintained. New coordinators are needed for Vancouver Island and the B.C. Interior.

The changing technology in Ham Radio, the need for additional reporting to RFinder, the need for better documentation and the development of a "standard system" for repeater coordination has prompted a discussion regarding the development of new or additional software.

At present, our web hosting costs are driven by the software that our host provides. We have discussed reducing the cost of hosting, but changing the hosting service would deprive us of the software we use. Therefore, changing the hosting service would need to be pre-empted by the development of custom software.

Most importantly, we need to keep in touch with our repeater operators and ensure that they have the desire and means to keep our database up to date. This is currently being done by our contract with Linda Metcalfe, and we hope to keep this program operating.

I would like to thank Rob Kuse VE7BKU, coordinator for the Lower Mainland for his support and help and particularly for his monitoring of the 220 MHz band.

George Merchant VE7QH

Chief Coordinator BCARCC

## **REPEATER STATISTICS FOR BC/YT**

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Total number of entries	654	638
All repeaters	442	447
Simplex notes registered	162	164
52 MHz repeaters	7	7
144-148 MHz repeaters	246	250
220 MHz repeaters	22	19
440 MHz repeaters	157	163
Fraser Valley repeaters	31	33
Greater Vancouver	98	100
North Coast	11	11
North Interior	33	33
Peace River	7	7
BC Interior	113	114
BC South East	16	17
Central Vancouver Island	42	44
Northern Vancouver Isl.	17	17
Southern Vancouver Isl.	49	52
Yukon Territory	20	20