

AGM 2018 – Minutes

1. Quick opening by G4LRG passing over immediately to M0OIC as new VP.
2. Vice-President

Good morning to all and good to see a number of new, and not so new members with us today. I hope all your bargains will be good ones.

I was very surprised and honoured to be invited to become the Society Vice-President. Totally unexpected, but as said, I am honoured to be so and many thanks to Council for electing me. I will, as always, do my best for our Society and its members.

May I firstly thank Jim G3WGM from whom I have taken over. Thanks Jim for all you have done for us, and of course continue to do as our IT manager. Jim is the Email Group owner and has added me as moderator for day to day problems. For those not signed up to Group, it should be considered. It is an ideal way of keeping up to date with sudden RSARS changes and happenings.

Again Jim, many thanks for setting this up and keeping it going.

As to my new position as your VP, this will not have any effect on my bureau manager duties, nor will it cause problems with my Tuesday PM net, other outside departments are already doing this ☺

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all net controllers, and those who step in when needed, for keeping at it. Yes, conditions are poor but not impossible and a valiant group of regulars are keeping them going. However, there is space for more to call in, and they will be most welcome.

There will be no changes in communications. First point of contact if we have a problem within RSARS is of course our Non-Serving members Rep, Ray GW4PUC. If Ray cannot sort it, it will be passed to Council and/or our General Secretary for discussion. I will be contacted by our General Secretary only if extra support is needed. I would be surprised if it was ☺

Sadly, like other such organisations our membership is falling. Many of us are doing our best to recruit eligible members and I am aware that as soon as SNADARC members obtain their licence David 2E0DAO grabs them for a chat to try and identify any past army involvement. Well done David and we wish you good hunting. Maybe a good idea for us all? Poor band conditions are having an adverse effect on contests. Any ideas to generate a greater member involvement will be welcomed.

We managed to get a mention a few times in RADCOM last year, also a couple of times in ARRL QST. Both magazines have more than enough large articles, but small newsy snippets would be most welcome. I am now known to both editors so please pass any items of interest to me for action.

I will leave it to our General Secretary to cover what is known of the RSigs Centenary. I have been in contact with our President, Col Gunning ADC, (reporting in as VP) and he supports our wish to be involved. The Corps nominated officer is already in contact John G4LRG. I am sure John is still open to thoughts and suggestions from members. However, to avoid any mishaps ***“all 2020 matters must be direct to our General Secretary”***

I look forward to hopefully serving you all for a few years to come.

M00IC/VP

3. Gen Sec requested a 1 minute silence for those members who have become Silent key in the past year.
4. Gen Sec requested apologies for members not attending:-
 - a: Council Members unable to attend: GW0WEE, G0SWY, M0GKD, MM0DKQ, GW4PUC, G3RGE
 - b: Members unable to attend: M1CCF, G1LKJ, G4BXQ, EA7JVZ, G8JAC, G0ZEP, M0VNG, G3SZS, GW3KJW, G4ICC, GM4EMX, G3YSK, G4FUT, G13KVD, G0NVY, G6UUR, G0HBA, G8NWU, G6JMX, G4AWJ, G3YNT
 - c: Council Members in attendance – M00IC, G4LRG, Maj Phil Tonks, G4ETG, MMONJC
 - d: Members in attendance G0CWP, M0JH0, M0TLX, G4JVJ, G1HIJ, G3W0V, G4BZI, G14JTF, G0TBI, M3TBI(NM), G7PNG, G8OFZ, G3LZR, G6NHY, G4SJY, G6JMX, 2E0ERC
5. Gen Sec requested proposer/seconder for 59th AGM Minutes as published in Mercury 178 G4SJY/G6NHY
6. Gen Sec requested proposer/seconder for Treasurers Report as published in Mercury 178 G0TBI/G6JMX
7. Reports from Council members:
8. GENERAL SECRETARY – G4LRG

Thanks once again to everyone for supporting me in my roles as General Secretary and Webmaster over the past year.

It has been an interesting year with conditions continuing to get worse but we still manage to keep things going with activity on the Morning nets, Monday evening Overseas Net, Tuesday afternoon net, Tuesday and Thursday evening nets, Chatterbox net on Sunday morning, CW, RTTY and PSK nets throughout the week so thanks to everyone who takes part as a controller or just to join in and have a natter. Its never easy but the activity is still there so come on in and join the party to help keep things running.

I would like to advise you that we received 2 donations recently, one was a bequest from the estate of Dennis/GW4XKE-SK of £100 and it has been agreed to use this for

a new award which will be called "GW4XKE Chatterbox Award" and will be issued annually to the member who checks into the Sunday morning Chatterbox net the most times on a yearly basis. Full details of this new award will be published in the next issue of Mercury and detail will be added to the website.

The second donation, also of £100, was received from Kit-GM4EMX. Our thanks must go to Kit for this generous donation. I would like to ask the membership if they have any ideas of what Kit's donation could be used for? Please let me or any of the Council members know if you have a suitable suggestion.

It really is time for everyone to get their thinking caps on and come up with suggestions on activities for the forthcoming 100-year celebration of the formation of the Royal Corps of Signals.

I am more than happy to continue as General Secretary for the next year.

Thank You.

9. SERVING MEMBERS REPORT – Maj. Phil Tonks

A time of change for myself and the Corps. Firstly, I have moved on from my job at Northwood and am now seeing out a 7-month posting at Upavon. This would have been my final posting in the Army, but the gods have seen to it that I promote to the rank of Lt Col in Jan 2019 and then move on to my final posting which will be at Corsham. In fighting through the red tape of military housing we have managed to bag a nice house on the outskirts of Devizes which suits for both postings.

Now on to the Corps. On the 27 July 2018 The Master of Signals delivered his intent for the future direction of the Corps and its trade structure. The key tenets (in part directly from his video post) are:

Key roles:

- Deliver an agile and rich digital data services to the Army.
- We will be the Army's cyber experts.
- We will be recognised as information experts at the right hands of Land and Joint Force Commanders.

We (the Corps) must think as ourselves as the Army's 'Digital Engineers'. There are four main principles:

Culture: We must adapt our culture to one of technical first and soldier always. We must create and foster a technical identity we must never forget and always maintain our robust military skills.

Training: We need to adopt technical by default career structures in which we will all progressively develop skills across applications, networks and infrastructure throughout our careers. All this with professional accreditation at its heart.

Leadership: We look to our leaders and managers to learn from the best, modern technical practice. We must inculcate an innovative spirit and empower our people, respecting technical ability in any rank.

People. Our vision is bedded in the whole force approach; it applies equally to regulars, reserves and to civil servants alike and it is inextricably linked to our partnerships with industry and academia.

This has been a quite year in correspondence with serving members, but I have continued to proffer advice to and give my full support to council.

Maj. P.R.G. Tonks – Serving Members Rep

10. Treasurers Report

The accounts for the year 2017/2018, incidentally my 12th year as Treasurer, show that we have an excess of income over expenditure again this year, roughly £600 more than last year. This fortunately is a continuing trend over the last couple of accounting periods.

Voluntary donations and membership subscriptions are both down this year compared to last year's figures.

Several members who pay by direct debit have still not updated their bank mandate from £8 to £10. This causes considerable work, and inconvenience, for the Membership Secretary who has to chase individuals for the extra £2. I mentioned this last year and it still continues.

Postage and administrative costs are not shown as they fall into the next accounting period.

Mercury are down but this again is due to the March Mercury bill appearing late..

Sale of stores continues and most of this income derives from the Hamfest at Newark

The miscellaneous expenses are for the refund of a membership subscription that was paid twice and the transfer of the Awards Manager from G0SWY to GW3KJW.

The deposit account has gained a very small amount of interest (17p less than last year).

I intend to transfer £5000 into the deposit account where at least it will earn some interest.

I see no need to increase membership fees at present.

I would like to thank Jim G3WGM for inspecting the accounts.

I am willing to continue as treasurer for another year.

D.B.Humphries

Dave Humphries

G4ETG

RSARS0963

Treasurer

11. AGM NOTES - AWARDS MANAGER

Since taking over the Awards and Contest Manager role in April it has been a steady time for me getting to grips with all the admin involved. It has been more work than I was expecting to bring myself up to speed, and I must thank Mike for his help with several of my queries.

Conditions have been very poor over the last year which has not only lead to a decrease in award claims, 18 in 2017 compared with the 57 from 2016, but also low scores in the both the 559 and May Anniversary Contests. I imagine this will continue for at least the next couple of years until we see conditions starting to improve again with the new sun spot cycle.

Looking forward to the future I would like to see if I can modernise the way awards are processed. At the moment I have to compare claim sheets with the membership database to check for correct numbers and whether the callsign belongs to a current paid up member, then go through all the previous claim sheets to check for duplicate entries. I recently processed a claim for a member who had 78 previous sheets, obviously this takes a very long time to go through each line on every sheet. Over this winter this year I hope to explore the possibility of creating a database where I can slowly migrate all previous claim sheets into an electronic format. This will allow me to quickly and easily poll the data base for dupes of callsigns and numbers, speeding up the process massively, and instantly check on a member's progress. Due to GDPR reasons members personal details will have to still be checked manually as the membership database has to remain separate. Once this is up and running I may also explore the possibility of submitting claims electronically, but the current hard copy postal method would always be available for members who wish to continue in this way.

Nick Cunnington MMONJC- Awards Manager

12. QSL Bureau Manager

Bureau activity is very much aligned to member activity. It does not need me to explain that band conditions are poor. Our nets are still active, subject to priority changes, and net controllers still turn up and do their best to keep an RSARS presence on the bands. Net participants do not vary, and it is the same few that turn up for an enjoyable chat each time.

With a shortage of new and old members appearing on nets, and with maybe a lowered interest in award chasing, exchanges for points are quite rare.

M0OIC ran GB6NFF F449 for a period of 28 days to remember the Chilwell Shell Filling Factory explosion which occurred on July 1st, 1918. Members making contact with GB6NFF numbered 41, but of these a few had multi-contacts in SSB, CW, RTTY, PSK31 and even on 6m using FT8 so a number of contacts were made.

Cards are no longer required to support claims. Whilst I am a supporter of this as a chaser always struggling to get cards from some members, it has sadly, done me out of a job. As mentioned before, during our RSARS 50th Anniversary many months had receipt levels of near 1000. 2E1SIS and I were busy daily with bureau receipts and dispatches. 2E1SIS is now redundant and I save all receipts and work one day each week, if I am lucky. Since, and including cards received at the Hamfest last year, the bureau has received a grand total of 373 cards for members. 56 of these were received from the RSGB sub bureau manager looking after special calls such as GR3ABC, GO3ABC, GV3ABC celebrating Olympics, Royal Weddings etc. 30 plus were from GB6NFF so effectively, less than 300 cards in one year from members.

Will things improve when bands improve? Will the Royal Signals Centenary have an effect? Maybe QSL cards have had their time.

Stamps and Cash are held secure. No interest is given but no charge is made for storage. For those with many stamps in the bureau please just ask and they will be returned if cards are no longer wanted. All penny blacks/reds and two penny blues have been used.

I am happy to continue as your bureau manager.

M0OIC

13. From the Membership Secretary's Desk

RSARS membership numbers have fallen again this year, at the cut-off date the number of active members on the database is 558, a fall of 33 from pre cut-off.

Members who take Mercury electronically has risen to 55.

The RSARS Database software is functioning with "TLC" under Windows 10.

New & Rejoined members (2017-18): 32.

Members are reminded that membership renewal is 1st Jan annually; the Treasurer and I are receiving payments as late as April which is inconvenient. Those who pay by Standing Order should review the payment date instruction at their bank.

I am happy to continue as your Membership Secretary for the next twelve months.

George G3VBE (Membership Secretary)
10th Aug 2018

14. G4RS Station Managers Report – August 2018.

Meetings continue at Cole Block on a regular basis and we join the Tuesday and Thursday nets whenever possible. On Tuesdays we try to meet with Ken G3RGE on VHF SSB. We also continue with our FUNCUBE monitoring and Data uploading.

With the 4G Internet Facility we are able to listen to either Hack Green or Stafford (or both) while we are engaged with the nets and we thank RSARS for the contribution to the Monthly Cost.

We recruited a new member, David who now regularly takes the microphone on G4RS. David came to us via Poole ARS while studying for his Advanced Exam and insists I add a “thank you” into the Station Report for all the assistance members here provided to enable him to achieve a very good pass in the Exam.

Some of our members assisted the Poole Radio Society again with their support of JOTA in October 2017, providing a Rig including the KPA500 and operators for HF/SSB.

We were active for RSA Day in June – with a few QSOs with members and non-members via the Repeaters but very little activity on HF although one Member who had come along to Cole Block was able to have a good QSO (using the FT1000/FL7000 on our Doublet) with his local club back in Gloucester.

July of course we were focussed on Mast Inspections and I am pleased to report that both Masts have been cleared for another year and are once again at full height.

In August Stuart GOTBI (of VMARS fame) made what has become his customary annual visit with his XYL Anne (M3TBI). Full advantage was taken of the range of equipment situated in the HQ Station Shack. During the seven day visit in excess of 60 stations were worked, not least that of the Monday evening Net, and he was even heard this time. This visit is timed to coincide with the Flight Refuelling ARS (FRARS) Hamfest which some of the Blandford Members also attend.

Recently we have heard some Members via the Repeaters – GB3DT operating on UHF and supporting ECHOLINK (Node Number 364539), and GB7CM on VHF supporting WIRES X. WIRES X has a Room called G4RS (41662) or use CQ UK. RSARS Member M0SGS (RSARS 4221) is known to have a hand in this System.

My thanks again to Phil G3XBZ who provides unerring support for Maintenance tasks far too numerous to mention

Alan Mockford M0GKD G4RS Station Manager

15: Ray GW4PUC. Non-Serving Members rep.

Not having been in post very long I can't say that I have a lot to contribute to my report. I was surprised to be asked to join the committee, but it was very nice to be considered. My thanks to the other committee members for the privilege.

My one positive contribution so far has been to assist a long-lapsed member to re-join the society. Mind you I have yet to hear him on the nets so Ken if you are reading this please get on parade. Your number will be welcome by many members.

I have been doing my best to keep the morning nets going in what can be very challenging conditions of late. Our normal forty metre frequency has been a dead loss for inter G for a long time now and we have had to gravitate to the alternative 80 mtr QRG. Even there, things can be trying at times. (Understatement). However, the usual suspects have managed to get a net going pretty much every morning, though often only with the help of one of the SDR services.

To any new members I would ask them to listen in to 3.742 from 10am local time and make someone very happy by giving them a new point. We would all be happy to hear from you.

Lastly if I can be of any help to any of our non-serving members then please get in touch.
Ray – GW4PUC

16: Malcolm MM0DKQ. Non-Serving Members Rep

Ray, GW4PUC, is now firmly in place as NSMR, and as a net controller has excellent connections with members.

Now is thus the right time for me to step down as an NSMR. I was very flattered and surprised to be asked and enjoyed the insight into the Council affairs.

I would make two final points:

1. The Society does not need two NSMRs, the work load does not justify it and the division of responsibilities leads to confusion, mistakes and increased work.

2. Defence in depth! We must grow new net controllers by encouraging deputy or alternate controllers to work alongside or as backups for established nets.
Finally - thank you for all the excellent work as General Secretary.

Best wishes - Malcolm MM0DKQ

17: RSARS Stores Report 2018

Stores activity has been slow again this year, even with the continued "Summer Sales" order form launched at the 2014 AGM.

No new stock has been purchased this year, as we do still have a large holding of Polo Shirts, Ties and Baseball Caps. I would like to look for NEW items for the stores, but with the current financial review on all departments, I shall await guidance from the Council and Members. I shall conduct a stores condition report for the Council on all holdings in the next month to confirm that all items are still in a saleable condition

I am happy to continue as Stores Manager for the coming year.



Mervyn S Foster
G4KLE #315
Stores Manager
RSARS

18. Change of Council Members – by GenSec

With effect from 1 October 2018 there will now only be 1 NSMR (Non-Serving Members Rep). This is due to the reduced workload and Ray/GW4PUC will carry on with this role. Malcolm/MM0DKQ now stands down and we thank him for the work carried out during his spell in office.

19. Update on Centenary Celebrations.

Much of this had already been mentioned by Phil Tonks and it was added to. (hopefully John you have it in his notes) with Phil saying that he would assist GenSec in liaising with Lt Col Gary Mason, RSigs Centenary planning officer.

GOTBI added his thoughts on working with units, accommodation availabilities and experiences. He also said that we should liaise with RAFARS GB100RAFARS to ascertain their experiences/advice etc. He also recommended that GB100RS (if we have it) should be used by RSARS members and it travel the UK saying we should seek advice from RAFARS/OFCOM. It was advised in reply that this had been done very successfully with

GB50RSARS which operated from the Channel Islands/IOM etc and GB100RS would hopefully just follow previous success. G0TBI also suggested that GB100RS should be allowed to operate from overseas units. It was reminded that (a) we no longer had many overseas units and (b) no serving members in any overseas units. There was also doubts about whether, as an example, GB100RS operate from Cyprus? This will be examined in greater depth.

There was much discussion on this and GenSec requested that all members may wish to think of suitable events or activities and report these directly to GenSec for further discussion/action.

It was emphasised that all Centenary matters should be directed to GenSec only. Members, no matter how willing and enthusiastic, should not under any circumstances contact units or RSigs event organisers direct. Such actions only cause confusion and failure. **GenSec IS the RSARS RSigs Centenary officer.**

Further information was given by our serving members rep Maj. Phil Tonks regarding some key Centenary activity dates from Blandford –

1. Service of Celebration in Salisbury Cathedral Sat 29th Feb 2020
2. Corps Centenary Dinner (Officers) will take place London on 12 May 2020
3. Corps Centenary Day will be the pinnacle of the Centenary celebrations at Blandford on 27 June 2020.
4. A service of Remembrance will take place at the Corps Memorial and the National Memorial Arboretum on 5 Sept 2020.
5. Corps AT Challenge “Certa Cito 100” will consist of a series of challenging AT expeditions “taking the Jimmy around the world”
6. There is a plan that the Corps Pipes and drums will play a leading role in the Royal Military Tattoo in 2020.
7. There will be a Fovant Badges Society Drumhead Service.
8. There will be two Centenary Stamp Covers available to mark the formation of the Corps and to mark the granting of the Royal Warrant.
9. A limited edition of Centenary Whisky is to be sold in commemorative packing once produced. There will be approximately 370 Bottles with a commemorative logo in a suitable sleeve.

20. News from Rich/G0ZEP at Blandford who tells us that they have reserved the Special Call GB100RCS for the centenary. They also hope to be active on most modes including SSB, CW, HF & Digi modes including Wires X and Echolink on the Blandford Garrison repeaters GB3DT and GB7CM.

Rich also tells us that his cousin W6AJ(RSARS No4291) is a member of the Battleship IOWA Amateur Radio Association and SS Lane Victory which are both berthed in Los Angeles harbour and he is also hoping to be able to get a special call W?RCS100 from the FCC to join in the celebrations. We wish him every success.

21. It has been suggested that the 2020 AGM be held at Blandford Camp over the weekend 27/28 June 2020. This was discussed at length both positively and negatively with a show of hands requested for or against support for the change. The AGM being held at Blandford was supported by a small majority, however it was suggested by M0OIC that the wider membership should be asked and that the

cheapest/easiest way would be to add an extra slip in Mercury with our yellow renewal reminder. GenSec to liaise with MemSec on the matter.

22. AOB:

G1HIJ suggested we need to look again at advertising RSARS letting the public know we are still inviting members for all with Army connections, not just RSigs. We were reminded that a large article in the Wire had produced NIL response. Small items published in RADCOM had produced three, maybe four new members. M00IC mentioned that he already had links with editors of RADCOM and ARRL QST and would welcome any articles of interest other than a direct advert for RSARS and they would be published. Both editors would welcome such items.

M00IC mentioned that the stand had been visited by an RSGB officer who after discussing RSGB/RSARS affiliation (as a club) asked the simple question. "what has the RSGB ever done for RSARS?" In RADCOM (*maybe read by now of course*) details will be given of the new team responsible for liaising with affiliated clubs and they will be asking "what can the RSGB do for affiliated clubs?" Any ideas please to GenSec.

It was suggested by GOTBI that we could increase subs to assist in supporting future events. It was agreed that this would be passed over to the MemSec for further thoughts.

The meeting closed at 1224hrs

The next AGM will be held 1100hrs (prompt) 27th September 2019 and we look forward to seeing many members.