



*Problems of Unauthorized or
Unlicensed Operators and
Interference from Jammers
“Universal Suffering”*



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Preface:

This document has been adapted from the original article by the "RSGB" which appeared in the June 1997 article of RADIO COMMUNICATION magazine entitled "Repeater Abuse: A guide for Repeater Users in the UK", this has since been amended to suit our local environment and situation in general and refers to the spectrum in general and in not limited to problems associated with repeaters only.

The Issue:

This document has been put together as some guidelines to our members concerning commonly faced problems of confrontations with illegal an/or unauthorized operators and jammers. In the case of jammers it is sad to not e the sad but true fact that these are sometimes caused not by illegal stations but by licensed radio amateurs who derived strange pleasure from such abnormal behavior.

We would advise amateurs here that involving yourself in jamming activities or carrying out conversation with illegal unlicensed stations does in fact infringe upon your licence conditions.

Jamming and illegal operation within the ham bands particularly on 2m some on 70cm and to a lesser extent on 6m is quite a problem in Hong Kong and in serious cases such activities should be reported to the Radio Monitoring Unit (RMU) of the Office Of The Telecommunications Authority here in Hong Kong.

However you should note that the RMU has to observe priorities – to attend first to interference to safety of life services (such as air-traffic control, port control, police, fire and ambulance services); second to business users; third to other radio users including domestic radio, TV interference and Amateur Radio.

The RMU will take action where there is evidence of serious abuse and interference caused by illegal users, intruders and deliberate jamming.

Therefore, if we are to make the best use of the services offered by the RMU, we have to help as much as possible.

These illegal stations and deliberate jammers take pleasure from their ego-trip only when they get a response from the victim concerned so the best policy is always to ignore them and they will lose interest and move on. Once the psychology of these hooligans is appreciated it follows that the best way to deal with them is to completely ignore them, whatever the provocation, and to carry out as normal a conversation as possible, making absolutely no direct or indirect references to the problems being experienced.

It has been shown time and time again that when legitimate users do not respond and are strong enough to over-ride the interference, the abuser will lose interest and soon go away as he is no longer succeeding in his "wind-up"! If on the other hand, the abuser is stronger than the amateur's only option is for the station being blocked to sign off as soon as possible. At this stage other amateur's



who are stronger than the jamming station should take up the frequency and carry on a QSO without any reference to the interference. The abuser will soon realize that he is being ignored and is not making any headway and probably move on somewhere else and look for a new victim.

If the abuser is not ignored and the interference continues and is allowed to fester over a period of time then more abusers will be attracted. It is in this situation that amateurs will have to take action in

logging all precise details of the interference and making no reference or indication to the interfering parties report the matter to the RMU for further action.

So What Can You Do?

We hope that you have noted all that we have said so far, remember it is illegal for you to confront and communicate with unlicensed individuals and you should also refrain from provoking such individuals. If you are being victimized on a frequency, please do not aggravate matters further by entering into heated and abusive dispute.

Remember record down the following information if the interference persists and is cause for concern or known to be deliberate:-

1. Dates, times and frequencies of interference;
2. Mode of operation;
3. Duration of interference;
4. Nature of interference;
5. Signal strengths of interference;
6. Recordings of interference;
7. Beam headings of interference;
8. Any other useful information.

Remember to record the following when you make your complaint by telephone or letter to the Radio Monitoring Unit:-

- a. Date of telephone call or letter sent to RMU;
- b. If letter, keep a copy of your complaint letter;
- c. If letter, it should preferably be sent by registered post so you have a postal record;
- d. Make a copy to your society, club or association so that they are also aware;
- e. If you are making a telephone call, preferably tape your telephone conversation;
- f. Note time of commencement and completion of telephone call and date;
- g. Note who (Full name and title) you spoke to at the RMU;
- h. Ask for a file no. on your case;
- i. Follow the same procedure as listed above for any subsequent follow up or replies received from the RMU;
- j. If you experience no joy with submission of your complaints to RMU, forward all details of your cases to your society, club or association for consideration of raising up possible complaints of any suspected mal-administration with the Office of the Ombudsman;
- k. Do not act as a frequency policeman and carry out your own detective work or try your own citizens' arrest as you will put yourself in harms way.

Once a case is an established problem and has been reported to the RMU, the RMU will try to gather their own evidence and although this is time consuming, it does usually avoid amateur radio licensees having to appear in court as prosecution witnesses. Where amateurs can greatly assist the RMU is by pointing its officers in the right direction and so assisting them to make use of their valuable time.



Remember it is important not to take direct action or encourage anyone else to take action against alleged offenders other than to collect useful evidence.

Golden Rules:

Do:

- *Operate as normally as possible in the face of any interference from unauthorized stations;*
- *Take triangulation bearings of a persistent offending station i.e. yagi bearings from at least 3 or more stations, the more the better;*
- *Make formal written and audio records of what you find and hear;*
- *Pass on all such details in your formal complaint to the Radio Monitoring Unit;*
- *Keep away from known problem frequencies within the ham bands or known problem abusers, do not confront such stations.*

Do Not:-

- *Respond in any way at any time to interference on the air – not even when someone seems to be blocking your transmissions;*
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- *Confront alleged offenders;*
- *Take the law into your own hands;*

Further Information:

- 1. Check the Office Of The Telecommunications Authority website;*
 - 2. Refer RSGB call book which has information also on handling of such problems;*
 - 3. Further Reading: "Amateur Radio Direction Finding", edited by G. Whenham, G3TFA, published by RSGB ;*
 - 4. The above data may be changed from time to time by HARDXA without prior notice.*
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