

# IOTA 50th ANNIVERSARY MARATHON

## ***INTRODUCTION***

THE YEAR 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the launch of the Islands On The Air (IOTA) Programme by British SWL Geoff Watts, BRS-3129. To celebrate the occasion, the RSGB IOTA Manager and Committee announce an exciting activity period in which all licensed amateurs world-wide are invited to participate.

For a two-year period during 2012 and 2013, IOTA chasers are encouraged to contact as many different IOTA groups as possible, and IOTA activators to play their part by operating from as many groups as possible, with special emphasis on the less-frequently activated ones. The points system adopted rewards 'Activators' with higher scores for activating the rarer IOTA groups. Certificates and awards will be available to both 'Chasers' and 'Activators' to reflect attainment of graduated bands of performance.

The challenge provides a level playing field for everyone, whether they are complete newcomers to IOTA or are holders of the prestigious IOTA 1000 Islands Trophy, because everyone starts with a clean slate on 1 January 2012. Furthermore, the long time scale of the challenge means that, should a participant miss a DXpedition to an island, there is a chance that he / she may be able to pick it up at a later date if the group is activated again during the 50th Anniversary Marathon period or, failing that, to replace it with another counter from the 1100 activated groups.

Prizes will be awarded to the highest-scoring individuals in both the 'Chasers' and 'Activators' sections and these will, if circumstances allow, be presented during the IOTA 50th Anniversary celebrations at the RSGB Convention in 2014. Certificates will be available to other participants who reach the specified grade levels.

## ***RULES***

### **GENERAL**

1. The IOTA 50th Anniversary Marathon takes place from 0000UTC 1 January 2012 until 2359UTC 31 December 2013.
2. Its purpose is to promote the IOTA Programme during the lead-up period to the Anniversary and to provide enjoyment and fun to participants by encouraging greater activity from IOTA island groups and in particular the less-frequently activated ones.
3. There are two sections: 'IOTA Chasers' and 'IOTA Activators'. Participants may enter both the 'IOTA Chasers' and 'IOTA Activators' sections.
4. Participants must be licensed radio amateurs and will be required to certify that they have followed licensing conditions applying in the country of operation.
5. Participants may use any band and any mode for which they are licensed.
6. Participants are urged to follow best operating practice as published in the amateur press. Instances of bad behaviour may result in disqualification.
7. All participants, and in particular IOTA 'Activators', are strongly encouraged to upload their logs to Club Log (<http://www.clublog.org>), a free web-based tool for producing league tables, log search services etc. The IOTA Committee may in cases of doubt use Club Log as a tool to confirm the accuracy of applicants' logs, so uploading to Club Log could in certain circumstances remove that doubt and secure the claimed points.
8. As the IOTA 50th Anniversary Marathon is a separate event from the normal RSGB IOTA Programme, applicants must still obtain QSL cards (or obtain confirmations during the RSGB IOTA Contest in July), in the normal way, in order to count island groups contacted during the 50th Anniversary Marathon period towards their regular IOTA score.
9. The decisions of the RSGB IOTA Committee are final.

### **'IOTA CHASERS' MARATHON**

1. There will be two categories of entry, single-operator and multi-operator / club. In the single-operator category all contacts must be made personally by the applicant using a call-sign issued personally to him / her by the licensing authority. In neither category is a combination of callsigns allowed, although mobile and portable suffixes e.g. /M, /P or /a province designator will be accepted.
2. A two-way contact with a qualifying island in a numbered IOTA group attracts one point. The same group may be contacted up to three times, each on a different band, for up to three points.
3. All contacts claimed must be made from within the same DXCC entity.

4. Except where varied here, participants should regard the rules for the Standard and Club Categories of Application in the 2011 IOTA Directory as applying.

5. QSLs are not required, but in the event of a dispute or doubt about a QSO, the RSGB IOTA Committee may take whatever measures they consider appropriate to resolve the issue, including asking the island operator to check his / her log. Uniques or near-uniques will be subject to special scrutiny.

6. Operators participating either as a single operator DXpedition or as part of a multi-operator DXpedition may claim 3 points credit towards their score in the 'IOTA Chasers' Marathon for each island group that they activate themselves, so long as they personally make a minimum of 100 contacts during the operation. However, in accordance with Rules 1 and 3 above, as an 'IOTA Chaser' they may only claim credit for other island groups worked as an 'Island Activator' when they are operating from their own DXCC country, using their normal personal call-sign and are not part of a multi-operator event.

#### **'IOTA ACTIVATORS' MARATHON**

1. There will be two categories of entry, single-operator and multi-operator / club. In the single-operator category all contacts must be made personally by the applicant using a call-sign issued personally to him / her by the licensing authority. In neither category is a combination of call-signs allowed, although mobile and portable suffixes e.g. /M, /P or /a province designator will be accepted.

2. Points are gained for activating a qualifying island in a numbered IOTA group, as follows:

For activating an 'All-Time' new IOTA	50 points
For activating an IOTA claimed by fewer than 15% of IOTA participants	25 points
For activating an IOTA claimed by 15 - 30% of IOTA participants	20 points
For activating an IOTA claimed by 30 - 45% of IOTA participants	10 points
For activating an IOTA claimed by 45 - 60% of IOTA participants	5 points
For activating an IOTA claimed by 60 - 75% of IOTA participants	2 points
For activating an IOTA claimed by more than 75% of IOTA participants	1 point

The number of points associated with each island group will be determined by the percentage of active IOTA participants who have claimed that group as of 1 December 2011. The list of IOTA groups, with the number of points to be gained for activating each, will be published on the IOTA web-site at <http://www.rsgbiota.org> during December 2011. The number of points associated with each IOTA group will remain the same throughout the entire period of the 50th Anniversary Marathon, regardless of how frequently any group is activated after 1 December 2011.

3. It is not within the spirit of the 50th Anniversary Marathon for 'Activators' to seek to gain points for one or more very short mini-operations resulting in few QSOs. To prevent this happening the IOTA Committee has decided that in order to qualify for points all activations must be longer than 10 hours (from the time the first QSO is made until the time of the last QSO), and at least 100 QSOs must be made.

4. Impact of activity: Multi-operator / multi-station and longer duration DXpeditions are particularly encouraged in order to give more 'Chasers' the opportunity to make a contact. IOTA 'Activators' will therefore be rewarded with 'bonus points' as follows for the number of contacts made:

Activity resulting in fewer than 1000 QSOs	0 bonus points
Activity resulting in 1001 to 2000 QSOs	2 bonus points
Activity resulting in 2001 to 3000 QSOs	4 bonus points
Activity resulting in 3001 to 4000 QSOs	6 bonus points
Activity resulting in 4001 to 5000 QSOs	8 bonus points
Activity resulting in more than 5000 QSOs	10 bonus points

See Note 2 below.

5. In the case of multi-operator IOTA DXpeditions, all participants who individually make a minimum of 100 QSOs may count both the IOTA group points and bonus points towards their own 'IOTA Activators' Marathon score if they participate for the full length of the operation. Otherwise the score claimed must be reduced in proportion to the time spent. See Note 3 below.

6. An 'IOTA Activator' may activate an IOTA group any number of times during the IOTA 50th Anniversary Marathon period and claim points and bonus points on each occasion, provided that at least 28 days has elapsed between the two operations. The period is calculated from the time of the first operation's last QSO until the first QSO of the second operation. If there are fewer than 28 days between two operations made by the same IOTA Activator from the same IOTA group, the operation may only be counted once. However, bonus points may be accrued up to a maximum of 10 for any single activation. Amateurs who are full-time residents on an island or part-time residents for more than four months continuous may not benefit from this 'repeat activations' provision. Their activity will be regarded as a single activation attracting bonus points once. See Note 4 below.

## NOTES

1. Island residents: Island residents (which include, for example, all operators in the UK, Ireland, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, to name but five countries) are encouraged to participate both as 'Chasers' and as 'Activators' in the 50th Anniversary Marathon. The provisions outlined above will apply in all respects. Thus a resident operator on the mainland of Great Britain would score 11 points in the 'IOTA Activators' section if he / she made more than 5000 QSOs during the period of the 50th Anniversary Marathon (1 point for activating EU-005 plus 10 bonus points). Similarly a resident of Tasmania, VK7, who made 3500 QSOs during the period of the 50th Anniversary Marathon would score 8 points (2 points for activating OC-006 plus 6 bonus points).

2. The maximum number of points that may be claimed for a single Activation is 60: for activating a new IOTA and making 5000+ QSOs.

3. A 'Multi-Operator' DXpedition is defined as one in which the same call-sign is used by more than one individual. (If two operators operate from the same IOTA group during the same time period, but use different callsigns, this is considered to be two single-operator activations.)

4. Repeat activations. See 'IOTA Activators' Rule 6. Example 1: If an IOTA Activator activated an island scoring 5 points and made 2500 QSOs he / she would score 4 bonus points making a total of 9 points. If he / she returned to the same IOTA group less than 28 days later and made an additional 1500 QSOs, he / she could claim an additional 2 bonus points making a total of 11 overall. Example 2: If an IOTA Activator activated an island scoring 5 points and made 4500 QSOs he / she would score 8 bonus points making a total of 13 points. If he / she returned to the same IOTA group less than 28 days later and made an additional 3500 QSOs, he / she could only claim an additional 2 bonus points (since the maximum available for a single activation is 10), making a total of 15 overall. Example 3: If an IOTA Activator activated an island scoring 5 points and made 4500 QSOs he / she would score 8 bonus points making a total of 13 points. If he / she returned to the same IOTA group more than 28 days later and made an additional 3500 QSOs, he / she can claim the 5 points for activating the IOTA group again, plus an additional 6 bonus points (since this is considered a separate activation), making a total of 24 points for the two activations.

## AWARDS

### 'IOTA Chasers' Marathon

Certificates, sent electronically, will be available for all 'IOTA Chasers' who score a minimum of 100 points. The following certificates are available:

50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Chasers Participation certificate	100 points
50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Chasers 'Bronze' certificate	250 points
50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Chasers 'Silver' certificate	500 points
50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Chasers 'Gold' certificate	750 points
50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Chasers 'Diamond' certificate	1000 points

In addition, there will be a special prize for the highest-scoring 'IOTA Chaser' in both the single-operator and multi-operator categories on each continent, subject to achievement of the 'Silver' certificate.

### 'IOTA Activators' Marathon

Certificates, sent electronically, will be available for all 'IOTA Activators' who score a minimum of 15 points. The following certificates are available:

50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Activators Participation certificate	15 points
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50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Activators 'Bronze' certificate	25 points
50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Activators 'Silver' certificate	50 points
50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Activators 'Gold' certificate	75 points
50th Anniversary Marathon IOTA Activators 'Diamond' certificate	100 points

In addition, there will be a special prize for the highest-scoring 'IOTA Activator' in both the single-operator and multi-operator categories on each continent, subject to achievement of the 'Silver' certificate.

## **APPLICATIONS**

All logs must be submitted electronically. Paper logs will not be accepted. All applications should be made after the end of the IOTA 50th Anniversary Marathon period, i.e. not before 1 January 2014. The deadline for applications is 28 February 2014. Full details of the application procedure will be available on the RSGB IOTA web-site at <http://www.rsgbiota.org> closer to the time. Any questions about the IOTA 50th Anniversary Marathon rules may be sent to: [iota.chaser@gmail.com](mailto:iota.chaser@gmail.com) or [iota.activator@gmail.com](mailto:iota.activator@gmail.com) as appropriate.

## **QSLs**

QSL cards are not required to support an entry in the 50th Anniversary Marathon. However, it is expected that all entrants will QSL on request since cards are required for credit in the IOTA Programme. Proven failure to QSL with an acceptable card could invalidate a claim for an Activator's certificate or award.

(E&OE)

## **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?**

1. Take part in the Marathon as a 'Chaser'.
2. Mount your own IOTA operation or series of operations as an 'Activator'.
3. Persuade your local club to mount a club event from an IOTA counter.
4. Suggest a competition within your club to work IOTAs.
5. Organize an IOTA evening at your club, illustrating the thrill of IOTA DXpeditioning with videos.
6. Help fund IOTA operations either through IREF (Island Radio Expedition Foundation) at [www.IslandRadio.org](http://www.IslandRadio.org) or directly.
7. Remember every IOTA contact counts for DXCC and every contact with a DXCC island entity counts for IOTA.
8. Promote the event in whatever way you think useful (does your National Society know about it?).

## **USEFUL ADDRESSES**

1. RSGB IOTA Website for the list of qualifying islands: <http://www.rsgbiota.org>
2. Questions about the 'Chaser' rules: [iota.chaser@gmail.com](mailto:iota.chaser@gmail.com)
3. Questions about the 'Activator' rules: [iota.activator@gmail.com](mailto:iota.activator@gmail.com)
4. IOTA Committee (event sponsor): [iota\\_hq@rsgb.org.uk](mailto:iota_hq@rsgb.org.uk) or [g3kma@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:g3kma@dsl.pipex.com)