

INTRODUCTION TO IOTA, A BRIEF SUMMARY

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The **IOTA (Islands On The Air) Programme** is an amateur radio HF / VHF band activity programme, administered by Island Radio Awards Ltd (called here **IOTA Management**) in partnership with the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB). Established in 1964 it promotes radio contacts with stations located on islands around the world to encourage greater use of the amateur bands, and to do this it draws on the widespread mystique surrounding islands. **IOTA Management** has grouped the oceans' islands into some 1200 'IOTA groups' with, for reasons of geography, varying numbers of 'counters', i.e. qualifying islands, in each group and has published the listings in the IOTA Directory and on the IOTA web-site at <http://www.rsgbiota.org>. The objective, for the **IOTA Island Chaser**, is to make radio contact with at least one counter in as many of these groups as possible and, for the **IOTA Island Activator**, to provide such island contacts. **IOTA Management** encourages friendly competition among chasers by publishing details of participants' performance in an Honour Roll and annual listings, as well as by recognising it with certificates and prestige awards.

KEY PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

For **Island Chasers** the main **requirements** for valid contacts in the Standard Category of Application are that they should be made:

- (LICENCE) in conformity with the operator's licensing conditions,
- (OPERATOR) by the operator personally,
- (LOCATION) from the same DXCC entity and from a land-based location,
- (DATES) since 15 November 1945,
- (BANDS) on any HF bands licensed to the operator, and
- (MODES) in Phone, CW and / or Data modes.

For **Island Activators** these **requirements** are varied in that contacts should be made:

- (LICENCE) in conformity with the operator's licensing conditions in the country concerned,
- (LOCATION) from an island listed as valid for IOTA in the IOTA Directory or on the IOTA web-site, whether in the same DXCC entity or not,
- (PERMISSION) with written permission where required from the government, local authorities and / or the island owners to land and operate.

For a first-time operation from a previously un-activated IOTA group **IOTA Management** requires a minimum 1000 QSOs in five continents to be made before confirming the provisional IOTA reference number. If the first operation does not make this total, the shortfall may be made up by a subsequent operation by another station. There is no minimum number of contacts required for operations from existing numbered groups that are confirmed.

Island Activators are requested:

- (PROOF OF PRESENCE) to retain all documentation relating to their operation in case of challenge – **IOTA Management** will need to seek sight of it only in the case of operations from new or very rare IOTA groups or otherwise on request,
- (CONFIRMATION OF CONTACT) to establish reliable arrangements for contacts to be confirmed on request by QSL cards:
 - printed with the island name (this is a **requirement**), and
 - issued on a non-selective basis and at no profit beyond recovery of costs.

Recognising that for many island enthusiasts use of national QSL bureaus is the only feasible way of obtaining cards, **IOTA Management** asks **Island Activators** to consider making arrangements to QSL via the bureau, if necessary appointing a volunteer manager for this purpose,

All Programme Participants are requested:

- (ON-AIR BEHAVIOUR) to follow the guidance given in the DX Code of Conduct.

CATEGORIES OF APPLICATION

Island Chasers' Record Options

There are four Categories of Application for a record: Standard, Club, VHF / UHF and SWL, the latter on a 'Heard' basis. Most applicants start with the Standard Category of Application.

Applicants may enter only one record per call-sign in a category although they may enter more than one category. On opening a record they may indicate a mode specialization (Phone, CW or Data) but, if they do so, they will need to make all updates in the same mode unless they move to All Modes.

CERTIFICATES AND AWARDS

22 separate certificates are available graded for performance. In addition prestigious awards are issued at the highest level for confirmed contacts with 750 and 1000 Islands.