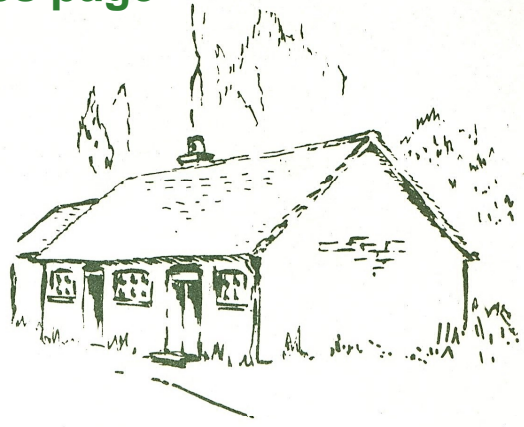


Surrey Electronics Limited

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Dr. John Forrest,
Director of Engineering,
IBA.
071 589 5533.

Copy by post 26th Sept 1990

25th May 1990

Dear Dr. Forrest,

Over the past few days we have been observing the transmission arrangements for Spectrum Radio. This Company was founded in 1967 and we have band occupancy and field strength measurements going back more than fifteen years. It is difficult to think of a more inept allocation.

With the background of the government Green Paper which identified frequency availability for hundreds of new radio services in the United Kingdom there can be no technical justification for the present operation. Notwithstanding contractual details, the effect of the affair is to bring the profession of broadcast engineering into disrepute.

What are the possibilities at this late stage? There are several suitable alternatives. To outline just two:

- 531 Likely to provide good coverage around London. Plans for resumed operation on a regularised basis in the Republic of Ireland would not suffer from an inland outlet in South East England running in the region of 100W EMRP, nor would planning criteria for adjacent channel service in Belgium (540) be exceeded.
- 954 Once cleared for Hoo, with a directional system aiming at the continent, would seem an obvious option for London. The probable higher EMRP resulting from greater efficiency of the present Lots Road antenna and earth system is likely to more than compensate for propagation attenuation in the middle of the band and give rather better service within 20km than any frequency on the low side of the 720 BBC outlet.

At these power levels altering diplexer and drive unit ought to take someone competent no more than one day and in its new 'Agency' guise the R.A. should be oriented to prompt provisional clearance.

We await developments with interest.

Yours sincerely,



Trevor Brook

Directors: Trevor Brook, Juliet Brook



INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

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DR. JOHN R FORREST, F Eng,
Director of Engineering

JRF/hhw/1007.10
2 October 1990

Mr T Brook
Surrey Electronics Ltd
The Forge
Lucks Green
Cranleigh
Surrey
GU6 7BG

Dear Mr. Brook,

I apologise for our failure to respond to your letter of the 25 May 1990 containing advice on frequencies for Spectrum Radio. I have been unable to trace your letter on our files and am grateful to you for the reminder and a copy.

You suggested that there would be several suitable alternative frequencies for Spectrum Radio, and specifically identified 531 kHz and 954 kHz. I am afraid, however, that regulatory, commercial and technical realities rule these out.

The regulatory reality is that international clearances of MF assignments not already registered for UK use have taken as a minimum seven months and usually 10 to 14 months (and sometimes longer) to become co-ordinated by the International Frequency Registration Board.

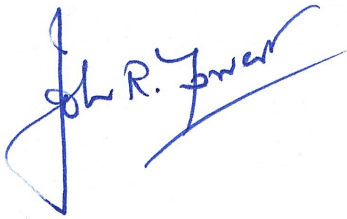
The commercial reality was that Spectrum Radio's business plan as it stood in 1989 could not accommodate deferment by an unpredictable period lasting perhaps seven to fourteen months or more, had we decided to register a new UK assignment. Thus we had to select their frequency from a very short list indeed of available channels that had already been registered for use in the UK at other locations and which would require merely the re-registration (internationally) at a revised location, a procedure that takes somewhat less time.

The technical reality was that the Lots Road BBC aerial, comprising a folded thin-wire radiator and minimal earthing arrangement (although no doubt adequate for the BBC's single channel needs at 720 kHz) turned out to have an impedance resonance and efficiency characteristic that made it virtually impossible to share at frequencies around 1 MHz and effectively restricted us to channels below about 650 kHz.

You suggested that the new Radiocommunications Agency ought not to be in a position to give prompt provisional clearance for new MF frequencies but I regret to say that the Agency is still tied to existing ITU bureaucratic procedures and timescales and it cannot in reality provide the degree of "promptness" that commercial radio enterprises would aspire to in their business plans.

I trust this helps to clarify why we had only one course of action in this matter, and once again I am grateful for the advice that you offered at that time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John R. Foweraker". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'J' and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.