

Bandscan analysis of Radio Handbooks for 2008

by Anker Petersen, Denmark, January 19, 2008. © DSWCI.
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On 28 October 2007 the B07 winter schedules became effective. Already on 01 November in Lugano, Toshi Ohtake handed over a review copy from Larry Magne, PA, USA of his "Passport to World Band Radio - Edition 2008" (PWBR). On the 13 December I received from Joerg Klingenfuss, Germany, his "2008 Shortwave Frequency Guide" (SWFG) and after Christmas on 02 January the "2008 edition of the World Radio TV Handbook" (WRTH) arrived from Nicholas Hardyman, UK.

All three Handbooks have kept their wellknown, but different format. The PWBR has 560 pages and starts with articles about historical broadcasting in exotic Tangier and about the worldwide Network of the Trans World Radio. Then follows amazing 149 pages of reviews of technical equipment for the SW listener. Broadcast schedules are concentrated on broadcasts in English and an address list. The 170 Blue Pages with graphical 24 hour lines with all details on each broadcast station from 2310 till 21850 kHz. More at www.passband.com.

The SWFG 2008 (12th edition) contains 472 pages in English (273 about Broadcasting and 199 about Utility stations). The Broadcasting part begins with a new article about DRM including an up-to-date list of DRM schedules on LW, MW and SW. It is followed by the comprehensive SW frequencylist which for each frequency contains a line for each broadcast. That includes exact times, transmitter site, language and target area. The Country section contains the same data listed by Station, but without details like geographical coordinates, addresses, QSL info, etc.

At the same time Klingenfuss has published the 2008 Super Frequency List (SFL) on a CD-Rom with the same 8,500 Broadcast frequencies and 10,000 utility frequencies plus 20,700 formerly active frequencies. This modern tool is very easy to use on a PC using Microsoft Windows and has excellent search functions for specific frequencies, countries, stations, languages, call signs and times - or any combination thereof! More details at www.klingenfuss.org.

The WRTH 2008 (62nd edition) has 672 pages this year, including 64 in full colour. The first article is about Portuguese contributor Carlos Gonçalves who also is a very active DSWCI member. The WRTH Receiver Reviews 2008 describes the Icom IC-R9500, Morphy Richards 27024, FLEX-5000A, Palstar MW550P, Himalaya DRM 2009 and RACAL RA1792. Articles about Falklands Radio and Radio Voice of the People follow. Finally, before the maps is a Digital Update and George Jacob's forecast on SW reception conditions in 2008.

On page 65 begin the fully updated sections with all details about National and International Radio, MW and SW Frequency Lists, International broadcasts in English, French, German, Portuguese and Spanish. On page 610 is a useful list of current DRM International Broadcasts followed by Television and References. Read more at www.wrth.com. You can also order it from Hein Radio Bookshop www.radiobookshop.de.

Spotcheck by bandscanning

As in my analysis a year ago, I did not choose the traditional way of reviewing each section in the Handbooks. Instead I scanned through the shortwave bands in early January, selected 50 broadcast stations at random and identified them 100%, no matter what language, and made a comparative analysis.

In this I checked in the three Handbooks, if each particular broadcast heard, was mentioned in the Country Section and in the SW frequency list with the five essential details of station name, frequency, scheduled at that time, exact language and site of transmitter. Half of the SW stations carried domestic

broadcasts, and half of them international broadcasts. For further details on any of my results, please contact me.

Analysis

I consider the five details mentioned above to be essential for the DX-er during his listening and identification of the transmitter and broadcast. Thus it was checked for each logging, if the Handbooks have all these essential details and if they are correct. This is then marked "+" in my detailed analysis. If one is missing, the column got a "-".

In cases where the broadcast is listed, but the language is not specified (e.g. just called "other" language), it was noted as a minor mistake, probably made by an editorial decision.

I still consider it useful, if the Handbooks also can provide the DX-er with additional information about Geographical Coordinates for his propagation calculations and Google Earth search, and ID in the language heard. Furthermore it is necessary to know current addresses (postal, e-mail and web) and QSL-policy for his reception report writing.

Most of these useful details can be found in the WRTH and PWBR, but they are still missing completely in the SWFG!

Comparison

I then counted how many essential details were correct for the 25 international and 25 domestic stations randomly heard. The results were (each figure out of 5x25 = 125 possible):

	PWBR		SWFG		WRTH	
	Int.	Dom.	Int.	Dom.	Int.	Dom.
Analysis result	114	117	123	120	123	118
Sum(Max. 250)	231	(92%)	243	(97%)	241	(96%)

The WRTH and the SWFG contain nearly all essential details. SWFG is slightly better, because the Domestic stations of All India Radio contain the three main languages. In PWBR furthermore the language in several cases in both International and Domestic broadcasts is just identified as "other".

It surprised me, that even though PWBR is published 1½ month before the other Handbooks, only 3 frequencies (all international) were missing out of 50 (94% correct). Larry has ensured me that he does his utmost in order to get the latest schedules, before the printing deadline and he succeeded.

Please be aware that changes in broadcast schedules occur nearly each day and also during the period from the editorial deadline till the printed Handbook reaches the listener. It has always been so. Because of this, it is impossible to achieve a 100% score!

Conclusions

It is evident that the editors of all three Handbooks once more have done a tremendous work to gather up-to-date broadcasting schedules and other information for the B07 period and all have succeeded in this to a very high degree! Each of the Handbooks is useful for the DX-er and ordinary shortwave listener. The details published are at a very high accuracy level and can hardly be much better!

An important feature when searching for and identifying broadcast stations, is their complete frequency schedules, so that all parallel frequencies can be checked. The schedules are easily available and very complete in the WRTH and SWFG and on the SFL CD-version.

For DX-purposes on SW, the **PWBR** offers an excellent overview on its "Blue pages" with incredible many details included.

The **SWFG** is a Frequency List with SW schedules, but without any other details about the stations. I prefer the SWFG when I scan the SW broadcast bands, because the current schedule and language is available at each frequency. But I am afraid that the ordinary Broadcast DX-er does not have any use of the many Utility pages, so I suggest again this year that the book is split up into two cheaper publications in the future.

In contrary to the PWBR and SWFG, the **WRTH** also contains LW, MW and some FM and TV information. Therefore I use this Handbook when I DX on the bands mentioned or need more information about SW stations. It is highly appreciated that a summer edition of the International Section is available free of charge from their website and will be further expanded.

All three handbooks have complete agreement between the information in the Country Sections and in the Frequency Lists.

I must state that all three Handbooks are very comprehensive, up-to-date and accurate and absolutely worth purchasing by the active shortwavelistener and DX-er! It requires hard work by many experienced people to edit and publish such high quality products year after year!

Explanation:

PWBR Passport to World Band Radio 2008, International Broadcasting Services, Ltd., PA., U.S.A.
 SWFG 2008 Shortwave Frequency Guide, Klingenfuss Publications, Germany
 WRTH World Radio TV Handbook 2008, WRTH Publications Ltd. , UK

My loggings were made in Denmark on an AOR AR7030PLUS between 07 and 13 January 2008.

For the logged station: + = Scheduled at that time, frequency, language and site.

* = Scheduled at that time, frequency and site, but language unspecified.

- = No or wrong information available on at least one essential detail.

International broadcasts

kHz	Station	Transmitter	UTC	Language	PWBR	SWFG	WRTH	Remarks
3350	REE	Cariari de Pococi	0215	Spanish	+	+	+	
3945	VOIRI	Zahedan	0225	Urdu	*	+	+	
3985	V. of Croatia	Deanovec	0235	Croatian	-	+	+	PWBR still on 6165
4005	Vatican R	S.M. di Galeria	0245	French	*	-	-	SWFG & WRTH still on 6100
4828	V.of Zimbabwe	Gweru	2350	Shona/Nde.	*	+	+	
4930	VOA	Moepeng Hill	0310	English	+	+	+	
4965	Voice Africa	Lusaka	0035	English	+	+	+	
5025	R Rebelde	La Habana	0045	Spanish	+	+	+	
5840	R Ukraine Int.	Kharkiv	1935	Ukrainian	*	+	+	
5850	R Polonia	Jülich	1950	Ukrainian	*	+	+	
5875	BBC	Zygi	1955	English	+	+	+	
5880	Vatican R	S. M. di Galeria	2005	Italian	*	+	+	
6075	DW	Rampisham	0040	German	+	+	+	
7130	VOIRI	Kamalabad	2035	Spanish	+	+	+	
7155	V. of Turkey	Emirler	2045	French	+	+	+	
9640	R Polonia	Montsinéry	2055	German	+	+	+	
9725	R Liberty	Briech	2105	Belarusian	-	+	+	PWBR: Not current schedule
11705	VOIRI	Kamalabad	0925	Bengali	*	-	+	PWBR & SWFG: Wrong site
11940	REE	Noblejas	2110	Spanish	-	+	+	PWBR: Not current schedule
15100	R Pakistan	Islamabad	0935	Urdu	+	+	+	
15345	RAE	Buenos Aires	2115	Spanish	+	+	-	WRTH: Not current schedule
17525	R France Int.	Meyerton	1155	French	+	+	+	
17590	RDP Int.	Sao Gabriel	1200	Portuguese	-	+	+	PWBR: Not current schedule
17595	REE	Noblejas	1205	Spanish	+	+	+	
21505	BSKSA	Riyadh	1210	Arabic	+	+	+	
All details/Lack of details					14/11	23/2	23/2	

Domestic broadcasts

kHz	Station	Transmitter	UTC	Language	PWBR	SWFG	WRTH	Remarks
3320	SABC	Meyerton	0130	Afrikaans	+	+	+	
3950	Xinjiang PBS	Urumqi	0230	Chinese	+	+	+	
3990	Xinjiang PBS	Urumqi	0245	Uighur	+	+	+	
4010	Kyrgyz R	Bishkek	0300	Kyrgyz	+	+	+	
4050	R Rossii	Bishkek	0305	Russian	+	+	+	
4800	Voice of China	<u>Golmud</u>	2345	Chinese	+	+	+	
4805	R Dif. do Am.	Manaus	0015	Portuguese	+	+	+	
4840	AIR	Mumbai	0005	Hindi	*	+	*	PWBR: Schedule not updated
4845	R Mauritania	Nouakchott	0010	Arabic	+	+	+	
4895	Mongoliin R	Murun	0035	Mongolian	*	+	+	
4905	Xizang PBS	Lhasa	0100	Tibetan	+	-	+	SWFG: Missing on 4905
4940	AIR	Guwahati	0010	Hindi	*	-	*	SWFG: Schedule not updated
4950	R Nac. de Ang.	Mulenvos	0020	Portuguese	+	+	+	

4970 AIR	Shillong	0025 Hindi	*	+	*	
4975 R del Pacifico	Lima	0240 Spanish	+	+	-	WRTH: Schedule not updated
4976 R Uganda	Kampala	0245 English	-	-	+	PWBR & SWFG: Not updated
5015 Turkmen R	Asgabat	0050 Turkmen	*	+	+	
5030 R Burkina	Ouagadougou	2340 French	+	+	+	
5035 R Aparecida	São Paulo	0310 Portuguese	+	-	-	SWFG & WRTH: Not updated
5040 AIR	Jeypore	0030 Hindi	*	-	*	SWFG: Wrong spelling Jeypore
6035 Bhutan Brc.Sc.	Thimpu	0140 Dzongkha	*	+	+	
6190 Deutschlandfunk	Berlin	1025 German	+	+	+	
9575 R Medi 1	Nador	1700 French	+	+	+	
11780 R Dif. da Amaz.	Brasilia	0110 Portuguese	+	+	+	
11925 Voice of China	Lingshi	0055 Chinese	+	+	-	WRTH: Schedule not updated
All details/Lack of details				17/8	20/5	18/7