

Bandscan analysis of Radio Handbooks for 2011

by Anker Petersen, Denmark, January 10, 2011. © DSWCI.

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On the 31st of October 2010 the B10 winter schedules became effective. Already on the 11th of December I received the "2011 Shortwave Frequency Guide" (SWFG) with the 2011 Super Frequency List (SFL) on a CD from Jörg Klingenfuss, Germany. But the review edition of the "World Radio TV Handbook 2011" (WRTH) first arrived from its publisher Nicholas Hardyman, UK on the 28th of December due to adverse weather conditions in the UK and Denmark. Thus this comparative analysis was delayed.

Both annual, printed Handbooks have kept their wellknown, but different format.

The SWFG 2011 (15th edition) contains 424 pages in English (257 about Broadcasting and 167 about Utility stations). The Broadcasting part begins with an updated article about DRM which overall is described to have been a flop! It is followed by the comprehensive SW frequency list which for each frequency contains a line for each broadcast, practicably arranged in timeorder within each frequency. 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, web sites, QSL info, etc. Price: EUR 40,-.

At the same time Klingenfuss has published the 17th Edition of the 2011 Super Frequency List (SFL) on a CD with the same 8,000 Broadcast frequencies and 8,300 utility frequencies in use plus 22,100 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! Price: EUR 30,-. More details at www.klingenfuss.org.

It is a Frequency List with SW schedules on all broadcast stations, 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 in time order. But I have no use of all the 167 pages about utility stations.

The WRTH 2011 (65th edition) has 672 pages, including 64 in full colour. The WRTH Contributor 2011 is Alan Davies who covers South-East Asia. Then John Nelson reviews the latest expensive receiver from AOR, the AR5001D. Other receivers are Winradio G31DDC Excalibur and the ultra lights Tecsun PL-310 and PL-380, Kchibo KK-D6110 and Degen DE-1103. Amongst several interesting articles is one about Radio St. Helena written by our member Robert Kipp.

After the maps, 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 608 is a useful list of current DRM International Broadcasts followed by terrestrial Television and on page 655 References. Read more at www.wrth.com. Price: GBP: 24,95.

The big news is mentioned on page 47 that from this month a CD will be sold from the WRTH Co. called "WRTH Bargraph Frequency Guide" with the full international schedules and domestic shortwave in bargraph form. It looks like the format of the old WRTH "Shortwave Guide" that was published in 2002 and 2003.

In contrary to the SWFG, the WRTH also contains LW, MW and some FM and TV information. Therefore I use the WRTH when I DX on the bands mentioned or need more information about the stations. It is highly appreciated that, like the three last years, an update free of charge will be published on their

website in February 2011 and a full summer edition of the International Section will be available in May 2011.

Spotcheck by bandscanning

As in my previous analyses, I also scanned through the SW-bands around New Year. I listened to 50 broadcast stations at random in frequency band and time and identified them 100%, no matter what language, and made a comparative analysis.

I then checked in the two Handbooks, if each particular broadcast heard was mentioned in the Country Section and in the SW frequency list. This must contain the five essential details: Station name, frequency, scheduled at that exact time, exact language and site of transmitter. Half of the stations heard carried domestic broadcasts, and half of them international broadcasts. A copy of the detailed analysis can be obtained from the author.

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 just one is missing, the column got a "-".

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. For listeners with Broadband internet (ATDL) is it also useful to know, if the station broadcasts live audio on the web.

Most of these useful details can be found in the WRTH, 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):

	SWFG Int. Dom.	WRTH Int. Dom.
Analysis result	123 123	124 123
Sum (Max. 250)	246 (98,4%)	247 (98,8%).

This year both the WRTH and the SWFG had improved from last year and were missing very few essential details:

One Africa Radio – CVC in Lusaka has been broadcasting all year throughout the night on 4965. But both Handbooks believed the misinformation from CVC, that broadcasts would close at 2200 which is not the case!

SWFG still wrongly names AIR Jeypore 5040 as AIR Jaypur, not to be mistaken with AIR Jaipur on 4910.

WRTH only has broadcast hours of about 20% of the Brazilian SW stations, whereas SWFG and DSWCI DBS have for 100%.

Conclusions

Once more, the editors of both Handbooks have done a tremendous work to gather up-to-date broadcasting schedules and other information for the B10 period and have succeeded in this to a very high degree!

Each of the Handbooks are 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!

**Next deadline will be on March 10th 2011
We look forward for your contributions!!**