

One of the more interesting parts of our hobby is foreign DX'ing. Chasing exotic foreign countries can be a big challenge, and one of the ways we measure our results is by the number of countries we hear. As a result, in the 1960's the IRCA established a Countries List. It included criteria for determining what a DX country really is (it's not the same as a political country), and identified the DX countries which have medium wave stations. As such it was similar to those published for hams and SWLs, but it was a bit more specialized. The main purpose of the list was (and still is) to put everyone on an equal footing for contests, achievement awards, etc, as well as individual goals and achievements.

It's been several years since the list was last updated, and the world has changed a lot in those years. So recently I offered to update the list for the club, the results of which appear herewith.

As you look through the list, you'll discover lots of places that obviously are countries by anyone's definition. However, there are other places which are not so obvious choices for inclusion in the list. To give you a better idea of the rationale behind the list, here's the criteria I used for establishing what constitutes a DX Country. These criteria are very similar to those established by the ARRL (for amateur awards) and NASWA (for shortwave purposes).

Most of us know instinctively what a Country is; places like Brazil, Egypt, France, and many others come to mind right away. Occasionally there are some borderline cases, so some objective criteria are needed. Generally, a country has most or all of the following characteristics: membership in international organizations like the UN, diplomatic relations with other countries, its own defense forces, currency, taxes, laws, etc. If it doesn't meet most of these criteria, then it probably isn't an independent country. However, it may still be a DX Country for other reasons, especially those outlined below.

A part of a country is considered a separate DX country if it is separated from the rest of the country by at least 225 miles of open water, or at least 75 miles of another country. Hawaii is an example of the former, Alaska is an example of the latter. There are many other less obvious examples, such as French Polynesia (Tahiti), which is part of France and separated by thousands of miles of water. Similarly, the city of

Kaliningrad is separated from the rest of Russia by the Baltic countries. In addition, a territory, possession, colony, etc can be considered a separate country if it has a separate administration from neighboring DX countries. An example would be the US virgin islands, which are close to Puerto Rico (under 75 miles) but qualifies as a separate country because they are separately governed.

I've divided the IRCA Countries List into three categories: active countries, inactive countries, and deleted countries. Active countries are those which currently have one or more medium wave broadcast stations on the air. If you were to travel to that country today you would be able to hear the local station(s). This category includes only places which have broadcast stations; it does not include places which have only beacons, coastal stations, weather stations, or other utility transmitters within the AM broadcast band.

Inactive countries are ones which have a permanent population and meet the definition of a DX country. However, they don't currently have active medium wave broadcast stations. Several used to have medium wave activity at one time, but don't anymore. Others, as far as I know, haven't ever had a medium wave station, but there's a reasonable possibility they might some day have one. I had to be a bit judicious in choosing the latter category - there are lots of inhospitable rocks out in the oceans of the world which hams can legitimately claim as DX countries, but no one's likely to build radio stations on them. For some reason, a surprisingly large percentage of African countries do not have medium wave outlets, but instead rely on a shortwave and/or FM to provide broadcast services to their populations. I've tried to indicate in the list why each country is inactive, but in a couple of cases there's simply no indication in WRTH and other references to determine if there is any current MW activity at that location.

The deleted countries are ones which don't exist anymore. This can happen for several reasons: it may merge into another country (such as when East Germany reunited with West Germany), it may split completely into other countries (such as occurred recently with Czechoslovakia splitting into separate Czech and Slovak republics), or control may be transferred from one country to another (such as the Canal Zone, which is now part of Panama). A country does not cease to exist merely because of administrative or name changes. For example, when British Honduras became independent and changed its name to Belize in the early 1980's, it did not become a new DX country. In addition, a country continues to exist even if portions of it become independent; Yugoslavia still exists even though large portions of became independent countries. It's possible for a deleted country to become undeleted; for example, Eritrea was once a separate territory, then became part of Ethiopia, then became an independent country.

The list includes former or alternate ("aka") names, if any, in parentheses after each country's official or preferred name. Each country's

continent is noted in brackets (i.e. [AF] for Africa). I've also included various notes, such as when it became a country. If a place doesn't have its own heading in the WRTH, I've also listed one or more of its stations to confirm its existence as a separate medium wave DX Country.

There are a few places which have appeared on past IRCA country lists, but were left off this time because their status as countries is questionable. The South African homelands fall into this category; as far as I know, only South Africa thinks of them as independent. In addition, the provinces of Jammu and Kashmir have appeared on some DX country lists, apparently because they are claimed by both Pakistan and India. However, all the information I've seen, including an August 93 article in the Los Angeles Times, indicates they are both firmly part of their respective countries and not separately administered regions.

Your comments and questions on this list are appreciated. You can write me at 6546 19th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115.

ACTIVE COUNTRIES

The following countries currently have active medium wave broadcast stations

- Afghanistan [AS]
- Alaska [NA]
- Albania [EU]
- Algeria [AF]
- Andaman & Nicobar Isl (part of India) [AS] - WRTH lists AIR stations at Port Blair
- Angola [AF]
- Anguilla [NA]
- Antigua & Barbuda [NA]
- Argentina [SA]
- Armenia [AS]
- Aruba [SA] - receptions before 1-1-86 count as
- Neth Antilles
- Ascension Island [AF]
- Australia [OC]
- Austria [EU]
- Azerbaijan [AS]
- Azores [EU]
- Bahamas [NA]
- Bahrain [AS]
- Baleaic Islands (part of Spain) [EU] - includes Majorca et al
- Bangladesh (formerly E Pakistan) [AS]
- Barbados [NA]
- Belarus (formerly Byelorussia) [EU]
- Belau (aka Palau, formerly W. Caroline Is) [OC]
- Belgium [EU]
- Belize (formerly Br Honduras) [NA]
- Benin (formerly Dahomey) [AF] - after 8-1-60
- Bermuda [NA]
- Bolivia [SA]
- Bosnia-Herzegovina [EU] - after 10-15-91
- Botswana (formerly Bechuanaland) [AF]
- Brazil [SA]
- British Virgin Islands [NA]
- Brunel [AS]
- Bulgaria [EU]
- Burkina Faso (ex-Upper Volta) [AF] - after 8-5-60
- Cambodia (formerly Kampuchea) [AS]
- Cameroon [AF]
- Canada [NA]
- Canary Islands [AF]
- Cayman Islands [NA] - scheduled to leave MW 7/93, current status unknown
- Central African Republic [AF] - after 8-13-60
- Ceuta (part of Spain, located in Morocco) [AF]
- Chad [AF]
- Chagos Islands (includes Diego Garcia, aka British Indian Ocean Territory) [AF]
- Channel Islands (part of the UK) [EU] - stations include Guernsey-1116 & Jersey-1026
- Chile [SA]
- China [AS]
- Christmas Island (located in Indian Ocean) [OC] - one outlet on 1422
- Cocos-Keeling Islands [OC] - one outlet on 1404
- Colombia [SA]
- Comoros [AF]
- Congo [AF] - after 8-15-60
- Cook Islands [OC] - The North Cook Islands are far enough from South Cooks to qualify as a separate country, but has no known stations
- Costa Rica [NA]
- Crete (part of Greece) [EU] - WRTH lists stns in Iraklion
- Croatia [EU] - after 6-26-91
- Cuba [NA]
- Cyprus [AS]
- Cyprus, Turkish Federated State [AS] - the portion of northern Cyprus occupied by Turkey, WRTH lists outlets on 1098 & 1494
- Czech Republic [EU]
- Denmark [EU]
- Djibouti (formerly French Somaliland, Afar & Issas) [AF]
- Dodecanese Is (part of Greece) [EU]
- Dominica [NA]
- Dominican Republic [NA]
- Ecuador [SA]
- Egypt [AF]
- El Salvador [NA]
- England [EU]
- Eritrea [AF] - became part of Ethiopia 9-15-93, then gained independence in early 1993
- Estonia [EU]
- Ethiopia [AF]
- Falkland Islands [SA]
- Feroe Islands [EU]
- Fiji [OC]
- Finland [EU]
- France [EU]
- French Guiana [SA]
- French Polynesia (aka Society Islands, includes Tahiti) [OC]
- Gabon [AF] - after 8-17-60
- Galapagos Islands (part of Ecuador) [SA]
- Gambia, The [AF]
- Georgia [AS]
- Germany [EU]
- Gibraltar [EU]
- Greece [EU]
- Greenland [NA]
- Grenada [NA]
- Guadeloupe [NA]

Guam [OC]
 Guantanamo Bay Naval Base [NA] - AFRTS-1340
 Guatemala [NA]
 Guinea [AF]
 Guinea-Bissau (formerly Portuguese Guinea) [AF]
 Guyana (formerly Br Guiana) [SA]
 Haiti [NA]
 Hawaii [OC]
 Honduras [NA]
 Hong Kong [AS]
 Hungary [EU]
 Iceland [EU]
 India [AS]
 Indonesia [AS]
 International Waters [OC] - mainly includes stations on board ships; current operations are located off the coasts of Israel & Yugoslavia. Past well known operations have taken place near Britain (many), New Zealand (Radio Hauraki, late 1960's) and NE US (Radio New York International, late 1980's)
 Iran [AS]
 Iraq [AS]
 Ireland [EU]
 Isle of Man (part of UK) [EU] - Manx Radio
 Israel [AS]
 Italy [EU]
 Ivory Coast [AF] - after 8-7-60
 Jamaica [NA]
 Japan [AS]
 Jordan [AS]
 Kaliningrad (non-contiguous part of Russia) [EU] - WRTH lists outlets on 549 873 1116
 Kazakhstan [AS]
 Kenya [AF]
 Kiribati (formerly Gilbert Is) [OC]
 Korea, North (DPRK) [AS]
 Korea, South (ROK) [AS]
 Kuwait [AS]
 Kyrgyzstan (formerly Kirgizh SSR, Kirgizia) [AS]
 Laos [AS]
 Latvia [EU]
 Lebanon [AS]
 Lesotho (formerly Basutoland) [AF]
 Liberia [AF]
 Libya [AF]
 Lithuania [EU]
 Luxembourg [EU]
 Macao [AS]
 Macedonia [EU] - after 9-8-91
 Madagascar (aka Malagasy Rep) [AF]
 Madeira Islands [AF]
 Malawi (formerly Nyassaland) [AF]
 Malaysia, East [AS] - after 9-16-63, consists of Sabah & Sarawak
 Malaysia, West [AS] - after 9-16-63, consists of peninsular Malaysia
 Maldives [AS]
 Mali [AF] - after 6-20-60
 Malta [EU]
 Mariana Islands (aka N Mariana Is) [OC]
 Marshall Islands [OC]
 Martinique [NA]
 Mauritania [AF] - after 6-20-60
 Mauritius [AF]
 Mayotte (aka Mahore) [AF]
 Melilla (part of Spain, located in Morocco) [AF]
 Mexico [NA]
 Micronesia (aka E. Caroline Is) [OC]
 Moldova (formerly Moldavia) [EU]
 Monaco [EU]
 Mongolia [AS]
 Montserrat [NA]
 Morocco [AF]
 Mozambique [AF]
 Myanmar (formerly Burma) [AS]
 Namibia (formerly SW Africa) [AF]
 Nauru [OC]
 Nepal [AS]
 Neth. Antilles [SA] - includes Bonaire & Curacao
 Netherlands [EU]
 New Caledonia [OC]
 New Zealand [OC]
 Nicaragua [NA]
 Niger [AF] - after 8-3-60
 Nigeria [AF]
 Niue [OC]
 Norfolk Island [OC]
 Northern Ireland (part of UK) [EU]
 Norway [EU]
 Oman [AS] - includes Masirah Is
 Pakistan (formerly W Pakistan) [AS]
 Panama [NA]
 Papua New Guinea [OC]
 Paraguay [SA]
 Peru [SA]
 Philippines [AS]
 Poland [EU]
 Portugal [EU]
 Puerto Rico [NA]
 Qatar [AS]
 Reunion [AF]
 Romania [EU]
 Russia, Asiatic [AS]
 Russia, European [EU]
 Saharan Arab Republic (aka Western Sahara) (formerly Spanish Sahara, Rio de Oro) [AF]
 Samoa, American [OC]
 Samoa, Western [OC]
 San Andres & Providencia (part of Colombia) [NA] - WRTH lists HJMY-910 & HJPA-1110
 Sao Tome & Principe [AF]
 Sardinia (part of Italy) [EU]
 Saudi Arabia [AS]
 Scotland [EU]
 Senegal [AF] - after 6-20-60
 Seychelles [AF]
 Sierra Leone [AF]
 Singapore [AS]
 Slovak Republic [EU] - after 1-1-93
 Slovenia [EU] - after 6-26-91
 Solomon Islands [OC]
 Somalia [AF]
 South Africa (including homeland republics) [AF]
 Spain [EU]
 Sri Lanka (formerly Sri Lanka, Ceylon) [AS]
 St. Helena [AF]
 St. Kitts & Nevis [NA]
 St. Lucia [NA]
 St. Pierre & Miquelon [NA]
 St. Vincent [NA]
 Sint Maarten, Saba, & St Eustasius [NA] - WRTH lists PJE3-1120 & PJF1-1410
 Sudan [AF]
 Suriname (formerly Dutch Guiana) [SA]
 Svalbard (Spitzbergen) [EU] - WRTH lists 1465

Swaziland [AF]
 Sweden [EU]
 Switzerland [EU]
 Syria [AS]
 Taiwan (Republic of China) [AS]
 Tajikistan [AS]
 Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika) [AF]
 Thailand (aka Siam) [AS]
 Togo [AF]
 Tonga [OC]
 Trinidad & Tobago [SA]
 Tunisia [AF]
 Turkey [AS]
 Turkmenistan (formerly Turkmen SSR) [AS]
 Turks & Caicos Islands [NA]
 Tuvalu (formerly Ellice Is) [OC] - after 1-1-76
 Uganda [AF]
 Ukraine [EU]
 United Arab Emirates [AS]
 United States of America [NA]
 Uruguay [SA]
 Uzbekistan (formerly Uzbek SSR) [AS]
 Vanuatu (formerly New Hebrides) [OC]
 Vatican [EU]
 Venezuela [SA]
 Vietnam [AS]
 Virgin Islands (US) [NA]
 Wake Island [OC]
 Wales [EU]
 Wallis & Futuna Islands [OC]
 Yemen [AS] - formed 6-22-90 by merger of Yemen Arab Rep & People's Dem Rep of Yemen
 Yugoslavia [EU]
 Zaïre (formerly Belgian Congo) [AF]
 Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia) [AF]

INACTIVE COUNTRIES

The following countries have no known medium wave stations. Most have had MW stations which are no longer on the air. A few have never, as far as I know, had a MW station but are listed either because they might have one in the future.

Andorra [EU] - Two high powered MW stns operated here until early 1980s
 Antarctica [OC] - No known stations at this time, but there have been some in the past
 Bhutan [AS] - currently SW/FM only
 Burundi [AF] - inactive on MW, now FM/SW only
 Cape Verde [AF] - now FM only
 Christmas Is (Part of Kiribati) [OC] - now inactive
 Cyprus, British Bases on [EU] - now FM only
 Easter Island [SA] - the one MW station is reported off the air
 Equatorial Guinea (Rio Muni) [AF] - SW/FM only
 Ghana [AF] - SW/FM only
 Johnston Island [OC] - inactive after 1977
 Laodade Islands (part of India) [AS] no known MW stations, but has large enough population to justify a radio outlet or two
 Lord Howe Island [OC] - had MW, now FM only
 Liechtenstein [EU] - authorized 1386 with 500kw but has never activated it
 Midway Island [OC] - now FM only
 Ogasawara (formerly Bonin & Volcano Is, includes Iwo Jima) [AS] - no known MW outlets
 Phoenix Islands (part of Kiribati) [OC] - WXLE

operated here in 1970s
 Rwanda [AF] - SW/FM only
 Saint Martin (French, near Neth Antilles) [NA] - several FMs listed in WRTH, but no MW
 San Marino [EU] - has stations, but prob FM only
 Tristan da Cunha [AF] - SW only
 Walvis Bay (non-contiguous part of S Africa) [AF] - no known MW outlets
 Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) [AF] - FM only

DELETED COUNTRIES

The following countries no longer exist, but were known to have had MW stations. Dates in parentheses are when the country ceased to be a separate DX country. Two dates indicate it did not "exist" before or after those dates.

British North Borneo [OC] - 9-15-63 (now part of Malaysia)
 Canal Zone [NA] - 9-30-79 (now part of Panama)
 Czechoslovakia [EU] - 12-31-92 (now Czech & Slovak Republics)
 Danzig [EU] - 9-1-39
 Fr. Equatorial Africa [AF] - 8-16-60 (now Chad, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo)
 French Indo-China [AS] - 12-20-50 (now Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia)
 French W Africa [AF] - 8-6-60 (now Niger, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Benin, Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Guinea)
 German Dem Rep [EU] - 10-3-90 (now part of Germany)
 Goa [AS] - 12-19-61 (now part of India)
 Guangdong Peninsula [AS] - 8-14-45
 Karelo-Finnish SSR [EU] - 7-15-56 (now part of Russia)
 Leeward Islands [NA] - 2-27-67 (now various island nations)
 Malaya [AS] - 9-15-63 (now part of Malaysia)
 Manchuria (Manchuguo) [AS] - 9-16-63 (now part of China)
 Newfoundland & Labrador [NA] - 3-31-49 (now part of Canada)
 Okinawa (Ryukyu Islands) [AS] - 5-14-72 (now part of Japan)
 Peoples Dem Rep of Yemen (Aden) [AS] - 5-21-90 (now part of Yemen)
 Portuguese Timor [OC] - 12-31-61 (now part of Indonesia)
 Ruanda-Urundi [AF] - 7-60 to 6-30-62
 Saar [EU] - 1-3-48 to 12-31-56 (now part of Germany)
 Sarawak [OC] - 9-15-63 (now part of Malaysia)
 South Vietnam (Rep of Vietnam) [AS] - 7-1-76 (now part of Vietnam)
 Swan Island [NA] - 8-31-72 (now part of Honduras)
 Tangier [AF] - 6-30-60 (now part of Morocco)
 Tibet [AS] - 5-30-74 (now part of China)
 Trieste [EU] - 2-10-47 to 5-19-54 (now part of Slovenia)
 West Berlin [EU] - 10-3-90 (now part of Germany)
 Windward Islands [NA] - 6-1-67 (now various island nations)
 Yemen Arab Rep. [AS] - 5-21-90 (now part of Yemen)
 Zanzibar [AF] - 6-30-64 (now part of Tanzania)