

days, which began as a PBI(TA) signaller in 1939. The equipment we had was of 1918 (or before), vintage. The phonetic alphabet was Ack-Beer-Charlie-Donald-Edward-Freddie-George-Harry-Ink-Johnny-King-London-Monkey-Nuts-Orange-Pip-Queen-Roger-Sugar-Toc-Uniform-Victor-William-Xray-York-Zebra.

We had radio for the first time in mid 1940 - WS18 sets. The HT batteries were the wrong type and would not fit inside the 18 sets. I was ordered to "make the damn thing fit," so two rows of cells were removed from the end of each battery, laid alongside and tied up with string. Melted candle wax was then poured over the joints. Yes, it was messy, but the operation was successful!

M. Hughes, GW3VFZ

Sir, viz Peter Murray's request for the vintage phonetic alphabet (sic), which one would you like? I have only ever used the standard NATO code as I'm a mere youngster. However, deep down in the junk box, I've an old publication from what I think is the war years.

It is "The New Morse Code Manual. 5th. Edition", and the author is listed as Flying Officer A W Eley, RAFVR. It is priced 1 shilling and three pence and was published as a guide to Service students learning the Morse code. I assume it's from the war years as the inside cover has the sentence, "Photographic reproductions in this Manual are by permission of The Ministry of Information" (when did that Ministry disappear?).

The Manual, as I said, has two phonetic codes and these are shown below:

Military exercises	Inter-Services use
A Ack	A Able
B Beer	B Baker
C Charlie	C Charlie
D Don	D Dog
E Edward	E Easy
F Freddie	F Fox
G George	G George
H Harry	H How
I Ink	I Item
J Johnnie	J Jig
K King	K King
L London	L Love
M Monkey	M Mike
N Nuts	N Nan
O Orange	O Oboe
P Pip	P Peter
Q Queen	Q Queen
R Robert	R Roger
S Sugar	S Sugar
T Toc	T Tare
U Uncle	U Uncle
V Vic	V Victor
W William	W William
X X-ray	X X-ray
Y Yorker	Y Yoke
Z Zebra	Z Zebra

Anyway there's two codes for you; in the back of the manual it has the printer down as "John Reader, 117, Asfordby Street, Leicester". It'll be fun to see how many other codes turn up.

Basil Spencer, G6VAN

2m PREAMPS

Mr. Ogden, Thank you for your letter regarding the supply of sample 144MHz band preamplifiers for review. We hadn't forgotten you! However, we are in an overload state and obviously our customers need satisfying before we are in a position to supply review samples - not that we're blind to the advantages of editorial review! You'll also appreciate that the last few weeks have included the Dayton Hamvention which has not helped with our production headaches!

We expect to be in a position to supply samples of our SLNA 144s, SLNA 145sb and GFBA 144e preamplifiers by your deadline, although as I mentioned on the telephone the latter item will be a prototype as our next production batch is not due for completion until around 23-24 May. If you'd like to look at a standard production unit after this time there should be no problems.

I remain a little concerned about your test procedures - in fact I can't see any point in your second method! If you are trying to examine the dependence of noise figure on source immittance, then surely it would be better to do it formally by rotating the phase of (say) a 2:1 source vswr around 360° and incrementally recording the noise figure. By using random cables you're likely to see all sorts of strange effects which have no bearing whatsoever on the performance that you're trying to measure and I'd hate to do a proper error analysis! The measurement of very low noise figures is an absolute minefield and you would do well to look very carefully indeed at your error budget. Unfortunately even comparative 'measurements' are subject to quite large random errors. As in so many other aspects of radiofrequency measurement accurate results can't be obtained simply by 'plugging in' to the first piece of noise figure instrumentation that you come across!

I hope also that you won't simply try

to measure noise figure - and that when you do you'll also present the results in a meaningful way. We would expect, as a minimum, any competent review to contain the following data: noise figure (corrected for second stage noise contribution), transducer gain, input 1dB compression point, input 2nd and 3rd order intercepts, frequency amplitude response (probably over 0 - 1GHz), input and output return-loss, and supply voltage sensitivity. Obviously the equipment used should also be listed, and as a company we would also wish to know which laboratory was responsible for performing the tests. I'd suggest it would be fruitful to include some discussion on the use of preamplifiers at vhf as it's a subject which is little understood. We'd suggest that a careful perusal of Julian Gannaway's articles in Radcom (November/December 1981 - I think) would also be in order - it's one of the few competent articles on noise figure to appear in the amateur radio press of recent years.

Perhaps we should also comment that we have no fears regarding competent review of our products (although I have nightmares about the self-opinionated quasi-engineering seen in some sections of the amateur radio and hobby electronics press). Modern devices have made it easy for any fool to obtain a low noise figure at vhf - what matters now is attention to good engineering, both in its systems and circuit design senses and any review should take this into account.

Of course, if you're merely sponsoring a noise figure contest we'll respond accordingly!

C.P. Bartram
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"Did you know that it isn't raining in Cape Town?"