

lined up ready to be taken into its columns – substantially exceeding the total numbers of Class A licences.

For the sake of historical accuracy it should be noted that although the little 1951 blue-cover *Callbook* was the First Edition of today's series, there was in fact, many decades ago, back in the 1930s, an RSGB *Callbook and Diary*, unfortunately just a little bit too pricey for the hard pressed 'hams' of the Depression years to afford in large enough numbers to make it viable. The commercial failure of this early forerunner of the *Callbook* may be due to the fact that there were only a bare 2,000 of us in those days!

'Document Four'

To this particular writer *The RSGB Callbook* has down the years become the second most important document in his radioperson's existence – after the coveted Transmitting Licence itself! – for, it establishes his (or increasingly these days her) identity as nothing else can.

But, wait a moment – there is another document that establishes one's identity even more firmly and indeed legally; the very proof of one's corporeal (as distinct from electronic) existence which lies in the Governmental records offices, and that of course is one's birth certificate. So, if the birth certificate may be regarded as Document No 1 in importance then The Transmitting Licence and *The Callbook* could well lay claim to being Numbers Two and Three.

"Haven't you forgotten something, dear?" came a still small

voice. Indeed one had – or nearly(!): the marriage lines. Remembering that many thousands of radio persons enjoy the blissful state of matrimony one should not fail to acknowledge that after the birth certificate "the next most important piece of paper" is without doubt the marriage document (ouch!). Other claimants might be the title deeds to the home QTH or perhaps the mortgage documents. But let us persuade ourselves, at least for the present, that they are superfluties. What better follower of the Marriage Licence than the Transmitting Licence? Each of them certifies that the holder is wedded for life (or should be!). This puts the Transmitting Licence at No 3 in order of importance closely followed at No 4 by *The Callbook*.

Effective Operation

If any of the foregoing seems like a mere plug for *The RSGB Callbook* perish the thought: it is intended to be a plug – in aid of more effective operating in the VHF/UHF bands, for, without some means of knowing where the other station lies, you have no idea in which direction to swing your beam. What, you don't have a beam, either vertical or horizontal? Then you are out of date! You are probably even worse than that: you could be accused of being anti-social! And if you think that language to be a bit strong, think on the following factor:

Why should any radio ham operating from his home site be so inconsiderate to his fellows that he uses an omni-directional antenna on 2m or 70cm and thereby inflicts his/her

signal on hundreds of others to whom it is not directed?

The answer to the question is often: "I've never thought of using a directional aerial when the thing I've got lets me talk to old Joe in the next suburb, and that's all I want most of the time"; or – "I can't afford a beam aerial" (but you *could* if you followed the simple-to-build diagram for a 4-element Yagi given here in HRT for May, 1983, page 55). Or –

"I can't afford – or, I haven't got the skill to construct – a rotating mechanism for a directional beam". Have you ever tried a few lengths of piping, plastic or metal, stepped into a scaffold-pole base and the lot hauled round by means of a pulley-rope?

Some of these considerations were rehearsed in the May article. Since then the congestion problem on "Two" has become so acute for any reasonable person to declare that omnis *must* be out and beams in.

Which brings us neatly back to the primary purpose of this article: directly you build directivity and *gain* into the station antenna system you will be hearing people you didn't know were there before. You will need to check where they are. Only *The Callbook* can tell you this: the VHF person's best friend after his rig and his log. Definitely document Four in order of importance, say I.

Tailpiece coming up: a chap said over the air to G5UM the other day that he wasn't going to buy a *Callbook* until his own callsign was in it. He invited the riposte – but, of course, over the air, didn't get it – "It's not your callsign you want to look up, stupid, it's the other people's."

In a typical urban locale, there will probably be numerous amateur transmitting stations sited close by and at random (shown dotted) in relation to the home station, "H". When at "H" an omni directional antenna is employed, it produces the ragged-edged field strength pattern, shown in Fig 1, and expends much RF power in essentially unwanted directions. When a directional antenna is installed the RF energy is concentrated as shown at Fig 2, and interference from stations behind it, operating close to your frequency, will be enormously abated. A wanted station, "W", hitherto barely audible, will be detected free of interference from unwanted stations, its identity at once being established from the *Callbook*!

