

Geoff Watts, SWL BRS-3129

Eminent SWL anglais (BRS-3129) disparu en 1994, Geoff Watts a créé DX News Sheet en 1962. Il l'a dirigé seul jusqu'en 1982 en éditant également le célèbre DXNS DXCC countries Guide and Radio Amateur Prefix Country Zone List.

Geoff Watts a créé le programme des diplômes IOTA en décembre 1964 et l'a dirigé pendant 20 ans jusqu'en mars 1985.

Dans les années 60, les soubresauts géopolitiques provoquèrent l'apparition de nombreuses nouvelles contrées et fit culminer l'attrait pour le DXCC. Le programme IOTA mit quelques années à s'imposer. La baisse de la propagation le favorisa énormément. Les passionnés du DXCC n'ayant plus rien de neuf à se mettre " sous l'antenne " se tournèrent peu à peu vers le IOTA.

Geoff Watts, visionnaire, déclara : " Maintenant que la propagation baisse, la possibilité de nouveaux DX s'amenuisant, les DX'ers n'ayant plus de nouveaux DX à contacter, il est proposé la création d'un nouveau programme, le diplôme Islands On The Air, pour promouvoir l'activité et l'intérêt pour le trafic parmi les DX'ers ; ces derniers pouvant même, pour la plupart, activer eux-mêmes une nouvelle île."

Geoff Watts était tout à fait qualifié pour créer un nouveau diplôme : il fut le premier SWL à confirmer 40 zones CQ en 1958, le premier SWL britannique à confirmer 300 contrées DXCC et il eut la totalité des contrées DXCC confirmées pendant de nombreuses années.

Geoff Watts fut introduit en 1977 dans le CQ Magazine's DX HALL OF FAME. Il fut le premier et seul SWL à accéder à cette distinction.



The eminent British short-wave listener Geoff Watts was the founder and long-term editor (1962-1982) of The DX News Sheet, and in 1964 Geoff Watts created the IOTA (Islands-On-The-Air) Award.

When IOTA was taken over by the RSGB in 1985 it had already become, for some a favorite award. Its popularity grows each year and it is highly regarded among amateurs world-wide. He also published the DXCC Countries Guide and the Radio Amateurs Prefix Country Zone List.

Geoff was the first SWL to receive confirmations from all 40 CQ Zones in 1958, the first British SWL with 300 countries confirmed and was #1 on the SWL DXCC Honor Roll for many years. For his efforts as editor, inventing the IOTA Programme and many other services to the DX community, Geoff Watts was elected to the CQ DX Hall of Fame in 1977, the only non-licensed amateur ever to be so honored. Geoff Watts passed away in 1994.

THE "DXNS" DXCC COUNTRIES GUIDE

 COMPILED & PUBLISHED BY BRS-3129
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 Editor (& publisher) of "DX News-Sheet" 1962-1982.

This list gives all current countries counting for the ARRL DXCC Award, plus a 'deleted countries' list, & a reference list of previous names of countries, etc.

- * QSOs for the ARRL DXCC Award count from *
- * 15 November 1945 unless shown otherwise *

IOTA Award Island ref.Nos are also included below, but for those groups marked also with an asterisk, there are separate ref.Nos for certain islands, therefore consult the IOTA Directory of Islands (obtainable from G3KMA), which also gives rules and full details of the various IOTA Awards available, and IOTA Honour Roll.

Current DXCC Country	normal prefix	earlier prefix	previous name of country	QSOs count from this date	IOTA ref.
Abu Ahi, & Jabel-at-Tair	A1	(ET3ZU/A FL80M/A G5ACI/AA			4S35, 4S34

The famous DXNS DXCC list by Geoff Watts

DIRECTORY OF ISLANDS FOR THE ISLANDS-ON-THE-AIR AWARD

(price 20p, abroad 4 IRCs, by air-mail 6 IRCs)

The Directory is divided into separate sections which cover Europe, Africa, Asia, North America, South America, Oceania and Antarctica. Continental boundaries are as indicated on the RADIO AMATEURS PREFIX MAP OF THE WORLD and in THE RADIO AMATEURS WORLD ATLAS, both published by Radio Amateur Call-Book, Inc. The Antarctic Convergence line as shown in the WORLD ATLAS of THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY has been taken as the boundary of Antarctica.

An attempt has been made to cover the majority of the islands of the world, but it has been found necessary to group them, geographically wherever possible, not only in order to limit the size of the Directory, but also to prevent the IOTA 'total' from becoming a ridiculous figure.

All the main island groups, as well as the majority of known minor groups, will be found in the left-hand (ISLAND GROUP) column (please advise Directory Editor concerning groups not found listed, together with details of latitude/longitude, and if possible, the names of the islands included in the group).

An asterisk * indicates no official group name found.

Although there may not be any present activity from quite a number of these groups, they have been included in the IOTA listing so that the Directory may also provide a guide to enterprising DXpeditioners the world over.

Latitude/longitude is given to nearest degree or 30' (please notify any errors).

It would take a volume to list the multitude of islands not covered by a group name, but in the right-hand (NAME OF ISLAND) column will be found:-

- a) most of the remote islands of the world's oceans,
- b) all present DXCC islands not already covered by a group,
- c) the majority of the larger islands, (see Rule 3).

This still leaves numerous smaller islands scattered along the continental coasts (resident amateurs please contact Editor concerning possible inclusion in Directory).

It will be observed that each island or group with current or recent activity, has been given an IOTA ref.No, and this will be retained for Award and Record purposes.

The Directory also contains a separate listing of the islands and groups that count for the Arctic Islands Award, the British Isles Award, and the West Indies Award.

Although IOTA is rather a formidable undertaking, it is hoped that no elaborate 'island status' ruling will be necessary.

RULE 1 With few exceptions 'inland' islands located in rivers, lakes, harbours, etc, will not count for IOTA, and this also applies to smaller off-shore islands.

RULE 2 In the groups already listed, only those islands which form a recognised sub-group will be considered for 'separate IOTA status', with the possible exception of an island remote or geographically separate from the main group.

RULE 3 Adjacent smaller islands count same as main island, except where these form a recognised group.

RULE 4 Islands not already covered by the IOTA listing will normally only be considered for inclusion in the Directory in the case of the following:-

- a) an island group, or sub-group,
- b) an island not in any group but with resident amateur population, (but see Rule 3),
- c) a DXpedition to a larger island not in any group, (but see Rule 3),
- d) a DXpedition to a remote island not in any group,
- e) a DXpedition to an island remote or geographically separate from the main group.

Information on stations active from those islands that are not already indicated by a separate International Prefix appears regularly in DX NEWS-SHEET, (e.g. Bornholm, Hebrides, Orkney Is, etc) resident amateurs should advise Directory Editor.

Additions/amendments to the Directory of Islands will appear in DX NEWS-SHEET.

Space for additions has been left between entries in the Directory.

A blank column for recording QSLs appears on the LH of the sheets.

First IOTA directory by Geoff Watts



First Iota award design

Le premier répertoire Iota listait 500 groupes d'îles dont 194 étaient référencées par un numéro. Par exemple, pour la France, seule l'île de Corse était référencée. Le premier certificat fut délivré en août 1966 à un swl suédois : Eskil Eriksson SM5-2086. 5 des 10 premiers titulaires du Iota étaient swl. 80 certificats avaient été délivrés à la fin de l'année 1974, soit 10 ans après la création du diplôme. F3AT, Ivan, fut le premier français à obtenir le Iota avec le certificat n° 33 en octobre 1970

The original directory of islands listed 500 groups of which 194 were numbered. For example, for France, only one island was listed : FC Corsica. The first certificate was issued in August 1966 to a Swedish SWL : Eskil Eriksson SM5-2086. Five of the ten first holders of Iota certificates were SWL. 80 certificates had been issued by the end of 1974, ten years after the Iota creation. F3AT was the first F to get the Iota award with certificate nr 33 on October 1970.

GEOFF WATTS, FOUNDER OF IOTA

The world-wide DX community was deeply saddened to hear of the death of Geoff Watts on 9 May 1994 at the age of 75. He died quite suddenly from a heart attack in Norwich where he had lived all his life. As the news spread, there was shock at the loss of a friend who for so many years had given so much to amateur radio. Many remembered him as the founder of the DX News Sheet which he ran single handed between 1962 and 1982, editing, printing and mailing the bulletin weekly to thousands of readers worldwide. Others knew him as the editor and publisher, over three decades, of the authoritative DXNS DXCC Countries Guide and Radio Amateur Prefix-Country-Zone List. But, for readers of this booklet, his crowning achievement was his creation of the IOTA Award Programme in December 1964 and his management of it for more than 20 years until March 1985.

IOTA is the result of Geoff's vision which was to catch the imagination of amateurs worldwide. During the 60s most DXers were concentrating on DXCC following an influx of new countries as a result of political change. IOTA took a few years to catch on but catch on it did. Geoff had introduced it by saying "Now that propagation conditions are poor, DX getting scarce, the possibility of brand new DXCC countries eventually becoming extremely remote, top DXers retiring because there is nothing new left to work, it is proposed that an entirely new DX achievement be created, the ISLANDS ON THE AIR AWARD, to promote more activity and interest among all DXers, many of whom could then go on a brand new island DXpedition themselves". This is as true today as when it was written in July 1964!

Geoff was well qualified to found a new award programme. Not only had he been at that time the editor of the DX News Sheet for two years but he also had a distinguished SWL record. As BRS-3129, he had, already in 1958, become the first British SWL to get all 40 CQ zones confirmed. He went on to become the first British SWL to have 300 countries heard and confirmed and for many years he had all countries on the current DXCC list heard and confirmed.

Those who had contact with Geoff knew him to be quiet and unassuming, always a gentleman.



He was one of "the old school." He always strove for high standards in himself. The strict routines adopted for the weekly issue of DXNS, the care and accuracy devoted to the maintenance of IOTA records, the conscientiousness in handling correspondence and queries all bear this out. It was perhaps natural that he expected high standards in return, particularly from those who participated in his IOTA award programme.

Geoff passed IOTA to the RSGB in 1985. This must have been as great a wrench for him as the transfer three years earlier of the DX News Sheet. His wife was in poor health and he himself was having problems with his sight. But his support for IOTA never wavered. In the two years before his death Geoff under his SWL call BRS-3129 started to collect islands himself! He received IOTA-100 certificate No. 639 on 10 March 1993 - and by January 1994 his score had increased to 390 islands confirmed, not bad going! Quite often he would give me a land-line to ask about a particular operation coming through there and then on the band. He was indeed a real short wave listener right up to the end.

Geoff was inducted in 1977 into the CQ Magazine's DX HALL OF FAME, one of the highest honours possible, for his services to DXing through DX News Sheet. He was the first, and remains the only, SWL to have been so honoured.

IOTA will always be linked to the name of Geoff Watts. Its growth into a major international award programme is fitting tribute.
Roger Balister, G3KMA