



The Royal Engineers Association Radio Branch



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Notes of the of second REA Radio Branch Development meeting at RE Command Support Branch, Gibraltar Barracks, Camberley, Surrey On 4th September 2017

Present:

Capt J Wooley RE AI RE CSB (JW)
Mr TG Milne President REA Radio Branch (TGM)
Mr S Dixon - Branch Secretary (SD)

Apologies:

Mr R MacDonald - Chairman REARB

The REA Radio Branch - Branch Development Plan dated 22nd July 2017 was re-issued after this meeting on 4th September 2017 unaltered.

Aims

1. To reignite the REA Radio Branch with a sense of enthusiasm, volunteering and progress by creating an action plan that will enable the required change (outlined in the branch development plan) to be executed.
2. To Sign off the Development Plan at a working level and escalate the bid for funding assets to support the plan.
3. To give a view of progress.

Project Approach

It was agreed that the PRINCE project method would be used to develop the branch. Working as a project will allow it to be broken into deliverables and work packages and assign human resources to them. An initial action plan was drawn up in the form of a GANTT chart to identify and enable this. See attached. A discussion about resourcing the various work packages was had. The difference between serving soldiers being assigned to tasks and ex-serving people interested in volunteering made for an interesting combination. It would certainly promote teamwork across a range of skills and have a level of difficulty. Thought should now be given to Leadership, Project Team Composition and establishing a project board etc.

Item 1 SD - Review Notes of Previous Meeting

There was no further feedback about the documentation at this stage. Agreed.

Sign off at a Working Level

Capt Woolley said that the Command Support Branch was behind the project and the development plan front cover was signed by him on their behalf. A milestone had been reached. Both parties agreed they would now work as one to fulfil the project aims (subject to command approval).

A copy of the cover pages signed by each of the parties, RE Command Support Branch and REA Radio Branch was added to the development plan. This was re-issued with these notes. A covering letter will be attached as appropriate and titled joint plan for the development of the REA Radio Branch. (Draft Attached).

This step now enables the forwarding of the document up the chain of command for approval. JW would circulate the document to RHQ 3RSME Regt. Mr Milne would circulate the document to REA SE District and CO 1 RSME Regt.

The bid for funding of assets at appendix 2 would need to be endorsed on Page 5 and JW was requested to submit this to CO3 RSME Regt for his approval as CSB is under his command. (Concurrently an update should go to REA SE District as we would require permission to proceed beyond this exploration.

Funding. An update on REA Welfare funding had been seen. Timing for funding bids was thought to be critical. SD had reviewed various other potential sources for contingency purposes.

Running Costs. Thought needed to be given as to how a number of incidental running costs, not yet accounted for in the scope of the grant application (appendix 2) would be met, for example:

- The development of a high quality thirty minute presentation and the delivery to 11 courses a year.
- Software for planning purposes. (SMARTsheet subscription).
- The plan to focus on Minley weekend (see later) with a full programme for Command Support \ REA Radio Branch would need to be funded.
- (Social Media Advertising - although this had been funded by the branch before.)
- Development of event booking forms (Digital)

Fund Raising. SD said he thought the time was coming to put up branch subscriptions and to think about asking the membership to donate to the plan as a worthy cause. The branch was not rich by any means. TGM said it had five hundred pounds approximately. The joint plan would now need be marketed and this would be an opportunity to raise funds. A social media advert would be placed (SD). Another milestone was added to the plan and he suggested by December we should have decided on the events we would market with our members for 2018/19 and be booking people into them using the branch website with a digital form. This would need development.

Membership Data. It was noted the admin base for membership and events would need to change from the branch secretary to CSB. An access database and the website were used to communicate with members, however the records were out of sync with the REA. In any case the CSB had data about eligible members the branch had never seen and this would need to be available during phase 3 of the plan. This would need admin and data management skills and potentially need 1 person day per week to manage initially. SD asked if CSB had an administrator who could manage the membership data? There was a potential task to develop the skills of administering the branch. Also it would provide confidence in the fact that the REA Radio Branch belonged to the Corps and was being administered professionally and securely. (The current arrangement for admin has problems, especially in the area of booking events and will not survive the changes being proposed without modification, also using it to manage the new look branch would be detrimental to the aims). (These workstreams would be crucial).

Item 2 - Marketing - Developing a Blueprint Programme of Events Starting in 2018

Process. The plan must be to display all our events together in one place and advertise them six to nine months in advance, giving people the opportunity to book in via a Digital Booking System while simultaneous marketing activity drives members towards booking the event. This differs from the current process. SD said it would be useful if there was a computer booking system that could be adapted, saving time and effort. JW said the current RSME course booking system would be unsuitable therefore the required facility would need to be developed. SD said the data analysis had been part complete for some time but the form was not developed. The REA Branch requirements regarding scheduling and advertising events is already a live module of their website with good functionality. This was tested during the RE300 but is currently not maintained. It would need to be reactivated and brought under administration.

Events - Change of Focus to Minley Weekend

By focusing joint activities on the Minley weekend it would enable a full programme to be developed that would benefit both parties. To date this has not been possible. The difference would be to enable old comrades to mingle with current serving signallers and also attract people in units to the centre to update, not least to enjoy a re-union dinner and various other fun opportunities. Maximum use could be made of this event to both advertise our aims and objectives and the REA Lifelong Membership approach.

Awards. Thought was given to presenting the former Tony Bernstein Trophy to the member who made best use of the branch website to publish a relevant article or electronic project. TGM said the president's award was for the best contribution to the branch during the year. This is a shield. It could go to any member of the branch. Mike Gater was the current holder and he would keep it until next AGM. (How this was managed would need to be documented - SD).

Item 3 - Internal Marketing - REA Radio Branch focussed Lecturette

The aim of this is to deliver a half hour lecturette giving the background to the branch and lifelong aspects of the trade. Recruits are given the basic details of the days' pay scheme during training. We should focus on the REA Radio Branch and what it does for signallers in terms of welfare, remembrance and benevolence bearing in mind its relationship with the REA. JW identified 11 courses per year and would review the programme for each one. SD said it may require a different lecture for each class of course. Some potential content was discussed. JW would send a list of courses to REARB for planning purposes.

Item 4 - (TGM)- Training and Development Review:

TGM brought two books along with a view to identifying the Radio Amateurs Exam Syllabus against the wing courses and re offering the exam to wing students. Liaison with the local Radio Club was still to be done.

These were for Sgt Walker to review.

Item 5 - Committee Structure - Constitution, volunteers. Wing\Unit reps.

Currently the committee structure was not up for change. The committee as it stands, is in no position to deliver any of the plan except provide steerage. The joint plan would present an opportunity to re-elect a committee in June 2018 (The REA constitution would need to be reviewed to assure our proposals are legal and above board). There is a lot of new ground being covered. The new structure would need to be a workstream of the project. How the change was managed would

be covered by a project board and last but not least security would need to be a part of every workstream.

AOB

Next Meeting October (TBC)

