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Ohio/Penn DX Special Bulletin No. 1201.1

The Ohio/Penn DX PacketCluster  
DX Special Bulletin No. 1201.1  
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3Y/B, BOUVET (Press Release #3 - Bouvet 2016 Project - an update and a reflection on DXpedition funding). Mark, ON4WW, sent out the following press release [edited]: Dear DXers -- Are you as excited as I am, being able to work K1N Navassa, the #2 Most Wanted Entity? What a thrill, and what a fine job the operators are doing under such difficult conditions! With already almost 23,000 unique callsigns in the log, there will be a lot of happy DX-campers! With Navassa being activated, Bouvet Island will be #2 on the Most Wanted Entity list. Time for an update on my plans.

I was going to wait with an update until I visited the boat owner to hopefully finalize the financial matters and contract (within a few weeks, if there is sufficient funding). However, a current discussion on Topband Reflector about DXpedition funding, has intrigued my interest and I would like to share this with you. Hence this pre-update.

As you know by now, for this specific one-man project I need to know upfront what financially is possible. Many of you, the deserving DXers, have responded graciously. Meaning, the Bouvet 2016 project is at 133,000 euro of the needed 250,000 euro. Waw, and thank you.

The following remarks on Topband Reflector intrigued my interest:

---quote

- Some of my friends go on these trips (three are on Navassa), and all of them complain that while EU hams are very demanding, they don't do much to contribute to the cost.

\*\*\*followed by

- It appears to be the case that NA finances the big trips and EU gets the Q's. That needs to be ironed out.

\*\*\*followed by

- Someone did a more extensive analysis of several DXpeditions maybe 2 or 3 years ago. Basically the same conclusion. Typically NA puts up the largest percentage of the funds but doesn't get that percentage in Q's.

\*\*\*followed by

- (back and forth arguments from Europeans and North Americans, too long to put here)

\*\*\*followed by

- The point that (yyy) is making, he did it very well, is that EU as a group should contribute more than what they are presently doing. And he is right.

\*\*\*followed by

- The last time I saw numbers several years ago the US had something like 530,000 licensed hams which I think was more than all other countries together (or close to it). No way to know what percentage are DXers and possibly concerned with working a particular DXpedition. However, it might be more relevant if the percentages of financing were percentages of DXers that contributed. It may be still skewed of course.

\*\*\*followed by a final and important remark (to silence this quite animated discussion) by my buddy Don, N1DG:

- "The number of US hams isn't the issue, it's the number of DXers working each DXpedition. And the better number to look at is uniques. My Dayton presentation is here:

<http://www.ncdxf.org/misc/N1DG-DXpeditioncosts-Dayton2012.ppt>

My NCDXF article is here on pages 5 through 7:

<http://www.ncdxf.org/newsletters/2012-AUTUMN.pdf>

Since I did the research, NCDXF has received updated information from its grantees that has not changed the results presented."

---unquote

I had a closer look at the outstanding analysis Don made, especially the part on Southern Oceans (Bouvet!). To everyone who hasn't read his analysis, it is important to understand the funding mechanisms behind the most difficult Most Wanted Entities, do read Don's analysis, please.

The following is quite an eye opener and -catcher of the PowerPoint

presentation:

Financial transparency rarely done on DXpeditions. It should be.  
If more of the ham community knew the costs and risks involved in big ticket DXpeditions fund raising might be easier.  
DX Foundations and Clubs cant continue to do all the heavy lifting.  
Not all DXpeditions are alike. One size does not fit all in donations.

Bullets 1, 3 and 4 are pertinent to the Bouvet 2016 project. Without having seen Don's presentation (until yesterday), I knew this was the way to go for my project:

1. Why on earth should I have secrets about YOUR finances (in case I couldn't find a single corporate sponsor)?
3. I tried to find a single sponsor outside the ham community, to try and get the financial burden away from the Foundations, Clubs and individual DXers. I failed so far, but I tried. Someone else will do better.
4. Why would Bouvet have to be done by a large group, if it can be done by one person? Is this written in stone? Not all DXpeditions are alike indeed, they are not.

Bullet number 2 is addressed to most of us. And is somehow related to the discussion on Topband Reflector. Let's have a look at some of Don's figures.

For the Southern Oceans DXpeditions, 63% of the funding comes from team members. DX Foundations/Clubs make up for 25% of the funding, individual DXers 12%. Of all QSOs made, 43% were by Europe, 36% by North America, 16% by Asia and 5% by the Rest of the World.

For the VP8ORK DXpedition, 80% of the funding came out of the USA (DXpeditioners, Foundations/Clubs, individual DXers). An impressive figure. As the team members were mostly Americans, this partially explains the high number of 80% funding by USA (63% > team members).

There is an additional explanation, albeit also being partial. The donation to DX Foundations in the USA is Tax Deductible, and makes it more attractive to donate, compared to other countries where this system is not in place.

Personally, I do believe that indeed the Americans are donating proportionally more than other countries/continents. Mind you, this is a personal opinion, not backed up by facts (as Don says, DXpeditions should be more transparent. I have no means to verify whether the figures in the

presentation are correct, neither can Don - these figures were handed over in good faith, and I base my assumption on that fact, thus being factually subjective).

There is no good or bad in this, whether the Americans donate more than others, or the Europeans donate less than others. Moreover, we have no objective means to verify who donates most. It is only the finance accountant of an expedition who has that information (I have been on two major DXpeditions, I have never seen the financial figures of those. This is no criticism, it is a fact).

We can and should be very grateful these DXpeditions take place thanks to the combined effort of DXpeditioners, DX Foundations/Clubs and individual DXers, in whatever gradation they are able to donate. It gets ugly (as happened on Topband Reflector) when people get personal and start accusing each other across continents of 'this or that party not donating enough to my personal likings'.

Let me give you some of the Bouvet 2016 figures (not taking into account the \$100,000 from the angel contributor).

The total number of individual DXers having given donation intentions so far, is made up by 51% European DXers, 42% North Americans, 3% by people from Asia and 4% by people from the Rest of the World. The total amount of donation intentions is made up by 57% from Europe, 29% from North America, 2% Asia and 12% by the Rest of the World.

For the DX Foundations/Clubs: 43% are out of Europe, 57% out of North America. No Foundations/Clubs from other continents stepped forward. The amount of donation intentions by Foundations/Clubs: 67% Europe, 33% North America.

If we combine the amounts of donation intentions made by both individual DXers and DX Foundations/Clubs: 60% Europe, 30% North America, 10% Rest of the World.

Perhaps a bit strange when you first look at it, this does not relate to Don's figures whatsoever. As always, there must be a reason. Here are some I can think of:

- for the one-man project there is no 63% paid by DXpedition members
- North American hams/Clubs tell me: we donate through the major DX Foundations, they will sponsor Bouvet 2016
- NCDXF has opted not to come forward (which takes away a big chunk of the North American support)

- I am a European (that is meant to be a joke!)
- (more clever people than me will find other reasons)

To conclude:

- figures (and certainly percentages) can reveal a lot of stuff, one way or the other. In the end, it is the absolute figure that counts: is there enough money at hand to activate a 'rare one'?
- kindly stop the mud-wrestling about who is donating most. There are probably reasons beyond our knowledge as to why the figures are what they are. If we even know the real figures, at all.

One more thing about NCDXF. I knew if I had their support, others would follow suit. Bouvet 2016 would be a fact by now.

The reason given for not funding Bouvet 2016: it is the policy not to support one-man DXpeditions. Fair enough of course, I can live with that, but it makes my endeavor incredibly more difficult. Probably to the point where the one-man concept comes to a halt.

For those of you who read Don's .pdf file: no way there will ever be a future expedition to Bouvet for less than the one-man project's budget of 280,000 USDs (the dollar/euro rate keeps swinging, you may have seen another figure in the past). Count a minimum of 600,000 USDs for a large group. Averaging 74,000 QSOs per DXpedition in the Southern Oceans (per Don's figures). My target: 100,000 Qs, with lots and lots of unique call-signs in the log. And lots of happy 9-banders as well. Propagation and other circumstances willing, I know I can make more than 100,000 QSOs. Substantially more.

I understand some of you still have reserves because of the safety of one man being on Bouvet. Believe me, I do have my limits in regard to safety (I would never board a space shuttle, never). For Bouvet, I have substantial logistical, medical and safety measures backup.

Some of you have reserves because there will be a large group going to Bouvet in 2016. So far I have not commented much on this, but as I get more and more people telling me "Too bad the 3Y0F DXpedition is at the same time", let me tell you this: there is no other group going to Bouvet in 2016. There are no operators nor funding for 3Y0F. I was hoping someone else would bring you this news, but as nobody has done so far, and as I feel it is hampering my endeavor, here it is. Perhaps Alex will succeed in another year, but not in the 2015-2016 time frame.

I received a radio license with a Bouvet callsign from the Norwegian

Communications Agency. Perhaps a bit premature, but better early than not, I suppose. No, I will not yet tell you what the callsign is. I have my reasons to differ from my usual transparency policy.

When I listen to the K1N pileups (police and DQRMers), I ask myself: do you really want to go to Bouvet? Yes. I envision fun for everyone, for 3 months. With or without the silly police and DQRMers. For me it is all about fun (it is a hobby!), to give something back to the DX community (from which I received so much joy over the years) and activate Bouvet in the cheapest possible way, giving an opportunity to get as many unique DXers in the log as possible.

Unless another angel contributor shows up, or the Board of Directors of NCDXF changes its mind, this project may very well come to a halt under its current format.

I hope to bring some good news in the near future. In case not, as always there is a plan B (which you will also like). In case plan A and B fail, there is plan C: someone else will activate Bouvet, but not in 2016.

If you are able to, and would like to contribute to this project, kindly let me know your donation intentions via e-mail to: bouvet2016 'at' telenet.be (just the amount and your callsign). (I suppose in nowadays terminology we can call this 'DXpedition Crowd Funding') You don't have to pay now. Only if the project officially goes forward, a PayPal account will be opened. You will be informed whether or not the project goes forward. For those of you who contacted me in the past and did not get a reply from me: please resend your mail (so far I have answered all e-mails).

73 - Mark - on4ww.

ps: I will not engage in a polemic about 'who donates most', the above is just for your info, not for further discussions.

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BEST COMMUNICATION AWARD 2014 (by DxCoffee - PRESS RELEASE) [Edited]:

After analyzing all the Dxpeditions that were conducted in 2014, our preference for the Dxpedition that stood out the most, regarding communication with the ham community, goes to FT5ZM, the Dxpedition to Amsterdam I., that operated in January-February 2014.

We have especially appreciated their website <[www.amsterdamdx.org](http://www.amsterdamdx.org)>, a site made to satisfy any curiosity that one could have about FT5ZM. The

information given ranged from describing the island itself, a place little known by the general public, to the long crossing in the Indian ocean starting from Western Australia, to the frequent updates during the operations.

In the space where you could ask questions to the pilots (contact us), you could also find a section with the "frequently asked questions", pointing to other important ways of communication: Facebook and Twitter. Of course there were several pictures too.

Again this year, it didn't seem fair to ignore other Dxpeditions that have distinguished themselves for their communication.

We have thought of five "special mentions" that we are listing below in chronological order as we don't want to rank them from best to worst.

We are not giving scores here, but we are simply taking our stand from our impressions in the scope of communication, where you can't make clear cut comparisons.

A35V e A35X for fascinating us with their diary and the final account published on [a35va35x.com](http://a35va35x.com). We have appreciated the commitment of these two operators (yes, only two!) who have adopted a simpler style as opposed to the professional one of the big Dxpeditions, but nevertheless just as captivating.

YW5D, Tortuga I. This Venezuelan team didn't have their own website for this short (four days) Dxpedition, but have stood out for the great use of social networks and for spreading information through several web magazines.

VK9MT, VK9DLX, FT4TA, for realising comprehensive and updated websites, that are: <[vk9mt.com](http://vk9mt.com)>, <[www.lordhowe2014.org](http://www.lordhowe2014.org)>, and <[www.tromelin2014.com/en](http://www.tromelin2014.com/en)>.

The award presentation will take place in Florence, Italy at the DxCoffee Party on April 12, hosted by the Florence HamFest. To know more about this nice event, click on [www.florencehamfest.com](http://www.florencehamfest.com).

Special thanks to the Dx University, for making it possible to realise this award.

Fabrizio Valdirosa IU0BMP Award Manager Best Communication Award

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