

## News Release

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2008

### Calling All Scouts!

Last weekend more than 60 young people from all over Scotland were given a chance to experience for themselves the thrills and science of radio technology by participating in the largest Scout Jamboree in the calendar – the annual Jamboree on the Air.

Members of Kingdom Amateur Radio Society (KARS) provided several special radio stations to allow scouts to chat and communicate with their opposite numbers in all parts of the world.

63 young people qualified for their “Communicator” badge by taking part in the activities on offer which included passing messages, learning morse code and taking part in a high tech game of chasing “secret agents” wearing home made GPS tracking devices as they tried to evade capture roaming across the 48 acre Fordell Firs activity centre.

KARS Chairman Brian Donnelly said: “We are grateful to the Scottish Scouting movement for their support and we appreciate the opportunity to show young people just how relevant radio communication is to everyone’s lives and how they can participate in science and engineering themselves. Remember that Scotland is an industrial leader in the field of technology and the serious message behind the fun is that technology can form the basis for not just of a part time hobby but of a lifetime career.”

Scouts Scotland Programme and Development Officer Juultje Holla said: “The Kingdom Amateur Radio Society members provided a great service to the Scouts over the weekend. We are also very grateful for the help of Radio Communications company ICOM who loaned us top of the range equipment for the event, giving the young people the chance to take part in activities which most Scout Groups can’t run without this kind of support. The Scouts all had a great time and were very happy to get a badge for their work!”

Cub Scout Scott Lilburn said: “We had a great time. We used short wave radio and managed to talk to people in Germany and Norway, it was really good fun.”

**Ends**

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## Notes to Editors

1. Jamboree On The Air is an annual event in which Scouts and Guides all over the world speak to each other by means of amateur radio contacts. Scouting experiences are exchanged and ideas are shared, via the radio waves. When Scouts want to meet young people from another country they usually think of attending a World Jamboree or another international gathering. But few people realize that each year, with the help of licensed amateur radio operators about half-a-million Scouts and Guides "get together" over the airwaves for the annual Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA). Modern communication technology offers Scouts the exciting opportunity to make friends in other countries without even leaving home. Today some operators even use television or computer linked communications.

JOTA takes place on the third full weekend of October each year, officially between 00.00 Saturday and 24.00 Sunday.

Started in 1957, it now involves approximately 600,000 Scouts and Guides, with the help of over 23,000 radio amateurs in over 100 countries.

Several countries have permanent Scout Headquarters stations - for example the World Scout Bureau in Geneva has the callsign HB9S and Gilwell Park in the UK operates under the callsign GB2GP.

2. Fordell Firs is one of the three National Scout Activity Centres situated throughout Scotland, the other two are Lochgoilhead and Meggernie.

The campsite covers 48 acres, consisting of camping areas, woods, rocky outcrops and a few cliffs. A wide range of activities is on offer including Quad Bikes, Archery, Caving, Climbing, Adventure Play, Cycling.

3. Kingdom Amateur Radio Society regularly operates its station at Fordell Firs National Scout Activity Centre. Further information at [www.kars.org.uk](http://www.kars.org.uk)
4. Amateur Radio is a hobby that is unique in that it is defined by international treaty signed by over 90 nations. It is "A service of self-training, intercommunications, and technical investigation carried on by amateurs; that is, by duly authorized persons interested in radio technique solely with a personal aim and without pecuniary interest."
5. Amateur Radio is a unique, fascinating and friendly hobby that captivates the interest of millions of people around the world. Radio amateurs have their own communication satellites, can communicate across the country, around the globe, or even with astronauts on space missions. Others may like to build and experiment with electronics. Some enjoy using Amateur Radio's digital communications opportunities. Those with a competitive streak enjoy "Sport Radio," whose different activities include the location of hidden radio transmitters in remote countryside locations, or "contesting" where the object is to set up radio stations in the field and compete to see who can make most contacts with others around the world. Contesting is born out of the community service aspect of amateur radio which sees teams being prepared to handle communications during times of national emergency.
6. One of the reasons that Amateur Radio is encouraged by national governments is because it has great social and educational value. Many Radio Amateurs have gone on to develop successful professional careers in engineering – others find it a satisfying alternative to their work be it in artistic or political spheres. A list of famous and highly motivated individuals who became radio amateurs early in their lives would have to include the Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi, the Kings of Spain, Jordan and Thailand, the Prime minister of Japan, President of Argentina, the broadcast

Walter Kronkite, the actor Marlin Brando, the CEOs of Sony and of Apple Computers, several Nobel Prize winners, a world tennis champion, and 112 Astronauts/Cosmonauts including the first man in Space Yuri Gagarin. Dr. Michael Brown who won a Nobel Prize for Medicine he is quoted as saying "the gaining of an amateur radio operating license when I was 13 led to a life-long fascination with science."; Amateur Radio enthusiasts were named inventors of the Microwave Oven, the television tube, the cardiac pacemaker, the mobile telephone and the satellite telephone.

7. The Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) is the national membership organisation for Amateur Radio enthusiasts. The society was first founded in 1913 and incorporated in 1926. The patron is HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, KG, KT. Further information from [www.rsgb.org.uk](http://www.rsgb.org.uk).