

# NDB LIST - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Edition 5.6

Revised 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2014

## INTRODUCTION:

To help any members who are new to the group, and to provide existing members with a reminder of how the list operates, we have compiled a 'FAQ' document which will hopefully answer most of your questions or queries. Please save this file, or at least print out a copy to use as a reference until you become familiar with the workings of the list. If you plan to introduce someone to the list you might also like to send them a copy before they make an application to join us. A copy of this FAQ can now be downloaded at any time from the "Welcome Page" on the NDB List website, which contains a number of files that may prove to be very useful to newer members of the group. This site can be accessed by either clicking on the "NDB List Information Page" link, which appears at the bottom of every e-mail that arrives through the NDB List reflector, or from the following link, which will take you straight there: <http://www.ndblist.info> This FAQ should help you to solve many of problems which you might encounter from time to time.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND USEFUL INFORMATION FOR LIST MEMBERS:

### Q. What is the purpose of the NDB List?

A. To provide a forum where NDB enthusiasts can discuss, debate, post loggings, exchange information and views about NDBs or the equipment used to listen to them (aerials, receivers, filters etc.). Exchanging information about unidentified beacons for DF purposes, or for assisting in tracking them down. Also, if you need answers to any questions you may have relating to any aspect of the NDB hobby which isn't covered in this FAQ, to be able ask the other list members in the group for their help or advice.

### Q. Does this mean that only items relating to 'Long Wave' Non Directional Beacons can be covered on this list?

A. No, though LF NDBs will no doubt be the main area of coverage, items relating to all types of beacons can also be included. There are also many beacons to be found just above the Medium Wave Broadcast Band, and also a number of single letter and Amateur propagation beacons on the HF and VHF Bands throughout certain areas of the world as well. From January 2005 onwards we also started to cover NAVTEX loggings on the 490, 518 and 4209.5 kHz channels, but due to the popularity of this mode it now justifies having its own group, as do the data modes such as DGPS, DSC, LORAN and Time Signals, and details of how to join the group's new dedicated mailing lists can be found on the NDB List website.

### Q. Can anyone join the NDB List?

A. There are no restrictions on membership as such, though since members prefer the list to be run as a 'private' group no one can join the group without their membership application being approved by one of the group's moderators. The idea behind this is not to be selective or 'elitist', but rather to keep down the amount of spam that many of us already receive. It's unlikely that any applicant would be refused membership unless they were of dubious origin, previously known to have sent 'spam' to mailing lists, or known for 'flaming' or causing trouble, the NDB List will NOT tolerate that sort of behaviour under any circumstances! To have your membership application approved though it's helpful if you include your name and location, and because this is a private group it's important for us to know exactly who it is that wants to join us, spammers are very devious and will try all kinds of tricks to gain access to a group.

### Q. I have a friend who would like to subscribe, how does he go about this?

A. As I said before, the NDB List is currently run as a 'private' list, though if you know anyone who would like to join us all they need do is send an e-mail to us at [ndblist-owner 'at' yahoogroups.com](mailto:ndblist-owner@yahoogroups.com) (be sure to replace the 'at' with an @ symbol),, and just give a few details such as their name and location and a request to join us. Any other information they may wish to give, such as their level of experience, or any special beacon related interests is also helpful, as this will make it easier to give them information about any of their specific interests that we may cater for, and allow us to assist any newcomers to the hobby who may

otherwise feel a bit out of place initially. Also, there may be other list members in your area that you aren't aware of, and we might be able to put you in touch with them if you wish to make contact. Rest assured though that none of your personal details will ever be passed on to anyone outside of the group.

## **SUBSCRIBING TO THE YAHOOGROUPS SERVER:**

### **Q. Is it possible to subscribe to this server by sending an e-mail?**

**A.** Yes, this is possible, but anyone wanting to join who isn't known to the list moderators may still be asked for some basic details such as their name and rough location, this is just to ensure that no spammers or spam address collectors can get onto the list. A better way to sign up is from the Group page at Yahoo:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ndblist/>

Your approval may be blocked and you might well be contacted for more details if your address looks like it might belong to a Spammer. Because the NDB List is a 'private' group your application will still have to go through the usual approval routine though, because we don't allow people to join without them first receiving the approval of a list moderator. Spammers have tried to gain access to the group in the past, and we take this problem very seriously, I think most potential members will understand why we need to be careful and take these steps.

### **Q. Now I'm on the list how do I post messages to it?**

**A.** Just address your messages to: [ndblist 'at' yahoogroups.com](mailto:ndblist@yahoogroups.com) (be sure to replace the 'at' with an @ symbol), and they should be distributed to all of our members. If you've just joined us why not send a short mail to the list telling us a little about yourself, we may have members already living in your area who would be interested in knowing where you come from, and what your specific interests are, or possibly even making personal contact with you.

### **Q. I don't like to receive mails containing html, can I avoid this?**

**A.** Yes, many people use mail programmes that don't support the use of html, and the simplest method is often to just change the settings in your mail programme to 'plain text' only. If you have created a 'Yahoo ID' you should also be able to log in to the Yahoogroups site and change your personal preferences there. Members who opt to take the 'Daily Digest' versions will only receive them in plain text anyway but minus any attachments that may have been sent, this is another option available to you. If you don't feel confident about doing this yourself please feel free to contact the List Owner or one of the Moderators and ask them to see if they can advise on how to go about doing this. You can also log into the group's page at Yahoo and edit your preferences there as well, or change your Yahoogroups preferences from 'fully featured' to 'plain text' only by sending a blank e-mail to: [ndblist-traditional@yahoogroups.com](mailto:ndblist-traditional@yahoogroups.com)

### **Q. Can I send attachments?**

**A.** Yes, attachments are permitted, but not everyone has broadband, so please remember that large files can take a long time to download for members on dial-up, and their mailboxes may have a limited capacity. Large and unwanted attachments can cause problems for some members. See also the comments in the next section in relation to this.

### **Q. Is there any restriction on the size or number of messages I can send to the reflector?**

**A.** There is a limit of 15 Megabytes on the Yahoogroups server now, but we usually recommend that messages no larger than 800kb are posted as these might bounce back to the sender. If a message is really large you may want to consider whether or not all of the list members who will receive it will actually want to see it. Very large messages should be avoided so as not to overload the mailboxes of other members (some may have lower limits than you have), and if the item is considered to be something that will be enjoyed by the majority of list members (recordings etc.) might we suggest that you upload it to the Special "Files" area at the Yahoogroups NDB List page, this will automatically send a message to all members containing a link to your file. If you're not sure how to go about this please contact the group's owner, or one of the List Moderators for more information.

**Q. Can I receive a 'Daily Digest' instead of individual messages?**

**A.** Yes, just log into the Yahoo site and change your personal settings, or click on the link at the bottom of your messages if it is shown there.

**Q. Are there any restrictions as to what subject matter I can post to the NDB List?**

**A.** We would prefer it if we kept close to the subject of beacons, mainly because list traffic levels are very high these days and additional postings may not be welcomed by many members. It is a hobby though, and it is supposed to be fun, so we wouldn't want things to get too restricted. Unless things get way off topic though we are quite happy to leave it up to the individual member to decide what material should be posted. Please note though - the list is currently un-moderated, which means that whatever you do post is seen by all members, so if 'dubious' subject matter was to start being posted we would have to make the list into a 'moderated' one, which would mean that all material had to be vetted before it was redistributed. To date the standard of mailings to the reflector has been extremely high, and I'm pretty sure that this is one function that will never be required here.

**Q. I'm going away on vacation/business for a while and don't want to receive mail?**

**A.** In this case there is no need to unsubscribe, you can either log into the Yahoo site and set your personal settings to 'no mail', or ask the List Owner/Moderator to do this for you. You will still be a group member, and can still post messages or read mails from the Yahoo Group page, and on your return just ask to have your settings reverted back to 'normal' once.

**Q. What happens if some list members become abusive or start to 'flame' other members of the list?**

**A.** Practically all of the NDB enthusiasts we know are very nice people, so we don't anticipate having any problems like this. There haven't been any problems at all during the list's long existence and we don't expect any to start now, but members can rest assured that if we should ever start to get the sort of 'flame wars' or personal abuse that has ruined so many other good lists in the past, we would issue one single warning only to the person or persons involved, and then we wouldn't hesitate to suspend them from the list for a cooling off period. If the poor behaviour continued the offending culprits would be removed permanently, and would NEVER again be allowed to re-join the group at any time in the future. We know where the 'remove member' key is and we wouldn't hesitate to use it if it prevented any deterioration in the extremely high standards of the list. To date this has never been a problem, and we intend to keep things that way, rest assured that we will try hard to ensure this sort of thing is never allowed to occur in our group.

**NOTE:**

The Yahoo server is generally very reliable, but in the case of a severe outage, or members having problems posting or receiving mail due to 'bounce' problems etc. do please contact the list moderators with your details, we may be able to help you resolve this issue or at least inform you if the problem is at Yahoo or at your end.

**GENERAL LIST INFORMATION:**

**Q. For some reason I don't seem to have received any mail from the reflector for a while, is there a problem, and what could be causing this?**

**A.** Sometimes, if your local server goes off line and the mails start to bounce back to the Yahoogroups server for an extended period, the server may automatically place you on a 'bounce' list using an automated facility. We do try to check this list daily, and send out 'Re-activation' messages as soon as possible, and replying to these should restore your account to normal working order. If you think you might have a bouncing problem please contact us directly as soon as possible, and let us know the date of the last mail you received and we will check things out for you.

**Q. I've noticed that all of the mails sent to the reflector have [ndblist] in brackets in the subject line, who puts this into the messages?**

**A.** This is an automatic facility available with this server. Every mail that you receive from the reflector will have this in the subject line, and therefore you can set up a 'filter' if your mail programme allows this so that all your NDB List mails will be transferred automatically to a chosen folder.

**Q.** I've also noticed that some messages have an extra entry in the subject line showing things Like "TECH", "GEN", "NA-LOGS", "EU-LOGS" or "ADMIN", what are these for?

**A.** List traffic can get very high at times, and it can help members greatly if a 'topic' title is added to the subject line, this allows members to sort messages more easily, or filter them into folders. Some members like to keep the "TECH" (technical) messages on file, especially if they contain items about aerals etc. Messages with [ADMIN] in the subject line mean that the message contains something, which all list members should read, as it relates to the running of the group. These extra entries can assist the task of sorting messages greatly. This system was originally suggested by Andy Robins, and has proved to be very popular, the more members who use it the better for everyone. Below is a list of suggested categories and can be taken as a guide (these are not set in stone though, and you might come up with something of your own, any entry that descriptive is okay!), and the [ ] brackets are not compulsory:

[ADMIN] or ADMIN	Message contains information relating to the running of the NDB List.
[ASIA] or ASIA	Message contains information about Asian beacons.
[CLE] or CLE	Message contains information or logs for a CLE.
[EU] or EU	Message contains information about European beacons.
[EU-LOG] or EU-LOG	Message contains information of interest to European members e.g. EU-LOGS.
[GEN] or GEN	Message covers general topics relating to NDBs.
[HF] or HF	Message contains information or logs about HF or VHF/UHF Beacons.
[NA] or NA	Message contains information about North American beacons.
[NA-LOG] or NA-LOG	Message contains information of interest to North American members.
[OT] or OT	Message may be 'Off Topic', e.g. not covering beacons, but of general interest.
[PROP] or PROP	Message contains information about Propagation or Solar matters.
[QSL] or QSL	Message contains information about QSLs received from beacons etc.
[TECH] or TECH	Message contains information of a technical nature (e.g. Aerials, Receivers etc.)
[UNID] or UNID	Message contains information about Unidentified Beacons.
[VOR] or VOR	Message contains information about VOR/ILS/DME beacons and logs.

You can customise these to suit your own preferences as long as the basic subject is easily understood, for example: [EU – T/A LOG] could be used to show that the log contains details of T/A (trans-atlantic) beacons, that were logged in Europe. Likewise, a North American member reporting T/P (trans-pacific) beacons could use [NA – T/P] instead. Some members may prefer to use subject lines showing reception from their own location, e.g. [EU-UK LOGS], or [NA – NW LOGS] (from the north west of North America), or more specific areas such as [NA – Michigan], [NA – Texas] etc. The system is very flexible, as long as the basic meaning is still understood.

**Q.** So how long has the NDB List reflector been going then?

**A.** The list started in November 1998, and as of early 2014, membership stands at 590 members in 41 countries and is still growing. Average monthly postings vary between 300 and 1200 messages depending on the time of year, and the part of the Sunspot Cycle we are in.

**Q.** How can I get in contact with the List Moderators for the group?

**A.** To do this you can send a mail direct to either:

[ndblist-owner 'at' yahoogroups.com](mailto:ndblist-owner@yahoogroups.com) (be sure to replace the 'at' with an @ symbol)

**Q.** I'm quite new to NDB DXing, can you give me any advice about how I should get started, or any publications that will help me?

**A.** We are fortunate in that we have many talented people in the group, many of who will be only too happy to answer any questions that you may have via the reflector. A number of them also produce some

really excellent beacon publications, which will be of great benefit to many of our list users. Buying some of these will be a big help, and to help you choose you will find a lot of useful information in the 'beacons' and 'welcome' sections of the NDB List website at: <http://www.ndblist.info>

**Q.** What are these 'CLE's that I keep seeing mentioned on the list every month or so?

**A.** Some years back we decided to try a few Coordinated Listening Events, in which all members could take part if they pleased. These are non-competitive events and are designed to study conditions on a particular part of the band at a particular time (or period of time). As well as being very informative they are also a lot of fun, and all members are welcome to join in if they wish. Events are co-ordinated by our 'CLE Co-ordinator' **Brian Keyte**, and I'm sure that Brian will be only too happy to answer any questions that you may have about them. You can contact him at: - [ndbcle 'at' gmail.com](mailto:ndbcle@gmail.com) (be sure to replace the 'at' with an @ symbol). In the meantime I suggest that you visit the CLE Information page at: <http://www.ndblist.info/cle.htm> and download a copy of Brian's "CLE Explanation", or check out the page for details of any upcoming events:

**Q.** I've heard mention of an "Awards" scheme run by the group, what is this and how can I find out more about it?

**A.** Yes, we run a very comprehensive scheme which was set up by Andy Robins, and is now administered by **Joseph Miller**, our new Awards Co-ordinator. This service offers a wide range of certificates of achievement for participants, all completely free of charge. To find out more about this unique and very interesting scheme check out our "Awards Scheme" publication at the NDB List website, just follow the link in any mails that arrive through the reflector, or click on: <http://www.ndblist.info/awards.htm> to reach these. If you prefer, you can also 'order' your awards through the RNA/REU/RWW system as well.

This scheme is something that is strongly recommended, it's not 'competitive', and allows the individual member (and non-member in some cases) to set their own challenges and at their own pace, and this all adds to the fun of the hobby. Please note though that this award scheme is operated on the 'Honour' system, and that means that we have to trust that applicants are sending in bona-fide loggings when applying for their awards; in the rare cases where we feel that 'unlikely' or 'decommissioned' beacons are being reported when we know that they couldn't possibly have been heard at that time, we reserve the right to refuse the award certificates. Although any such occurrence would just mean that the applicant was cheating only themselves, we consider that such behaviour would devalue the entire award programme, which in itself is something quite unique and well loved, if 'cheating' was permitted to go unchallenged.

**Q.** What is the RNA/REU/RWW that I keep reading about?

**A.** This is an online database that records the most recent times that a beacon (or Navtex Station) was received, the RNA stands for "Received in North America", REU for "Received in Europe", and RWW "Received World Wide". This project was originally conceived by Andy Robins, and is now run by Martin Francis and his team, and can be found at: <http://www.classaxe.com/dx/>

#### **PLEASE NOTE#**

Any logs posted to the ndblist may be added to the RNA/REU/RWW online Database, or to the CLE Combined Results unless otherwise requested by the member who made the log. Anyone not wishing to have their logs included should see the 'help' page at the RNA/REU/RWW website (see above) for the editor's contact details, and then request that their logs are not to be used.

**Q.** I've been contacted by a service called 'Grouply', which says it will make my experience better, can I sign up for this to use with the NDB List?

**A.** Grouply looks good on paper, but requires members to give them their user ID and password and allow them access to their accounts, and this means that in effect you have just given permission to thousands of non-members to access our members only areas, and membership archive and information which could potentially put all list members at risk of being spammed. If any member is tempted to do this please think again, because we are a closed 'private' group and we would take a very dim view of this, and anyone putting us in this position would be instantly removed from the group and banned from ever rejoining

again. This may seem like a draconian attitude, but we go to great pains to protect our membership, and giving Grouply access to our member details without our permission would be something that we would not approve of. If any member has any further questions about this subject please feel free to contact the List Owner or Moderators off-list and discuss them.

**Q. What do I do if I encounter any problems that aren't covered in this FAQ?**

**A.** Don't hesitate to contact us directly via the ndblist-owner 'at' yahoo groups.com (be sure to replace the 'at' with an @ symbol), \_ address and include the word "help" in the subject line (without the commas!).

**Q. What happens in the event that the List Manager isn't available, or happens to be offline due to technical or personal reasons, or my knowledge of the English language isn't too good, or I am having a problem with the reflector?**

**A.** In the event of this happening, or in case of anything unforeseen happening, we have appointed a number of list moderators and they are able to access any of the group's settings should the need arise, you can contact them by sending a message to: [ndblist-owner 'at' yahoogroups.com](mailto:ndblist-owner@yahoogroups.com) (be sure to replace the 'at' with an @ symbol), In the event that you are having problems with understanding or communicating with us in english we will try to put you in touch with a list moderator that speaks your native language, or with a member in your country with a better command of the english language where possible.

**AND FINALLY.....**

We hope you all enjoy using the NDB List and find it a great way to make friends with other NDBers and exchange information. In many ways we are more like a small club than a reflector, and we try to keep things as interesting and interactive as possible. If you have any suggestions as to ways the NDB List service could be improved we are always happy to hear them, either directly or over the reflector; likewise, any complaints or criticisms should be directed to us at: [ndblist-owner 'at' yahoogroups.com](mailto:ndblist-owner@yahoogroups.com) (be sure to replace the 'at' with an @ symbol), address as well.

And last but not least, if anyone wishes to reproduce any material which has appeared on the NDB List reflector, or re-use it on any other mailing lists or bulletin boards, or in any electronic newsletters or club bulletins, they may do so gladly providing that they give due credit to the NDB List as the original source, and specifically to the person who originally produced the message. In the event of anyone wishing to use the material in commercial magazines or publications they should endeavour to get the permission of the author and originator of the article or logging first. Otherwise, all material posted to the reflector is subject to the usual International copyright restrictions and is copyright of the NDB List.