

OF SPECIAL INTEREST

MADAGASCAR. I have asked WWCR if they would be willing to stand down from 3215 for a time in order to give DXers a chance to hear the 7.5 kw xmtr being used by AWR-Madagascar. I do not have final confirmation yet, but it looks like this may well happen, at 0300-0330 on Sunday, May 3 & 10 (UTC date). Once I know for sure, I will be getting the word out to the DX community in general so that as many DXers as possible can try for it. See **NU Sight & Sound for the "Ask WWCR" segment (April 11) where this is discussed by General Manager George McClintock and Head of Operations Adam Lock**, or go to http://www.wwcr.com/cr_ask.html to listen to the whole prgm. Special thanks to Mahendra Vaghjee for keeping an eye on 3215 from his listening post in Mauritius (and for confirming that AWR is in fact operating on Sundays, e.g. *0300 Apr 12). Keep your fingers crossed. (JB)

3215, 0305-0329 Apr 10, first noted with bits of spiritual vocals and some talk, mostly by woman in presumed Malagasy, poking thru WWCR talk prgm "Wellness Matters" tuned in USB. Detected up to 0329:45, when WWCR switched to fanfare intro to next prgm segment, and unhrd thereafter. Also on Apr 11, much better from *0300:10 with clear AWR IS tune "Lift Up the Trumpet" played twice to 0300:40, EG ID by man as "This is Adventist World Radio, The Voice of Hope . . . Adventist World Radio . . .", slightly different version of the IS melody with opening anmt by woman in lang. to 0301:30, talk by the woman to 0302:30, then into spiritual by female vocalist. Ideal timing relative to 0259 xmtr SR; weaker by 0315+. Surprised at how well this pushed thru WWCR sideband for 7.5 kw, but the slow drone of the same "Wellness Matters" prgm host made it possible. The modified Siemens communications xmtr used by AWR may be operating USB + carrier, since it was readily detectable in USB mode, but I could not hear it in LSB. (Clark-ONT)

MADAGASCAR. 3215, AWR: I am still awaiting final confirmation that the May 3 & 10 stand down is going to take place. In the meantime, Adrian Peterson of AWR has arranged for the AWR Director of Engineering & Operations to contact RN-Madagascar with a request to ensure that AWR-Madagascar will indeed be on the air at the appointed date and time. Thanks, Adrian. -- 3215.0, 1535-1559* Apr 9, religious prgm of Malagasy talks, light mx and songs, multilingual IDs and IS at s/off; very good. (Korinek-So. Africa) 1533 Apr 15, hymns and sermons in Malagasy. At 1558, EG ID, then IS three times to 1559*. Poor-fair signal, but clear. This is proving a lot easier to hear than AWR via Meyerton! (Foster-OZ)

MADAGASCAR. WWCR has confirmed that it's a "GO" for the 3215 kHz. shutdown! It is not often that we are able to hear a new 7.5 xmtr over this distance, so this should be a nice DX event. (There have probably been other occurrences like this, but the only one I can remember is when VOA vacated 11760 kHz. one night many years ago so DXers could try for Cook Islands.)

In order to maximize the number of listeners who might try for this, I am sending out the "DX Advisory" shown below to a wide range of DX publications. Please help "pass the word."

Thanks -- and thanks to WWCR!

JB.

DX Advisory

MADAGASCAR. Adventist World Radio has begun transmitting from the Radio Netherlands relay station at Talata-Volondry via a 7.5 kw transmitter on 3215 kHz. They are presently broadcasting at 0300-0330 and 1530-1600 UTC in the Malagasy language.

In North America, a 7.5 kw signal from Madagascar is good DX. Unfortunately, reception at the otherwise feasible hour of 0300 UTC is almost impossible due to the very strong signal from WWCR in Nashville, Tennessee, which uses the frequency at that time.

There is good news, however. WWCR plans to vacate the frequency for a half hour on two days for the specific purpose of giving DXers a better chance to hear AWR-Madagascar. WWCR will turn off its transmitter on 3215 kHz. from 0300 to 0330 UTC on Sunday, May 3, and again at the same time on Sunday, May 10, 1998. (Those are UTC dates, corresponding to Saturday night in North America.) Some traces of the AWR signal have been heard behind WWCR at 0300-0330 UTC in North America, so the chances of hearing AWR while WWCR is off the air seem good.

For late information about this event, check the "Ask WWCR" program that will be broadcast during the period April 24-May 7. According to the WWCR website <<http://www.wwcr.com/>> the program is broadcast as follows (times adjusted for U.S. summer time): Friday at 2000 UTC on 15685, Saturday at 0915 on 5070 and 2030 on 12160, and Monday at 0430 on 5070 and 2100 on 9475. It can also be heard via RealAudio or True Speech on the WWCR website.

Many thanks to WWCR for their cooperation in this DX venture, specifically to George McClintock, General Manager, and Adam W. Lock, Sr., Head of Operations. If you would like to express your thanks to them directly, you can contact them at WWCR@aol.com, or WWCR International, 1300 WWCR Avenue, Nashville, TN 37218, USA.

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MADAGASCAR. From Adrian Peterson of AWR, this additional info on AWR in Madagascar from the Adventist Yearbook. According to the entry in this book, the Seventh-day Adventist denomination operates about 175 churches in Madagascar, with some 35,000 baptized members (not including children, young people, regular visitors, etc.). There are four administrative offices: one local administrative office for central Madagascar, one for the south, and one for the north, plus a fourth office serving as the regional headquarters over all of the Adventist work in all of the islands in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Africa. These offices are located in Antananarivo, Mahanjanga and Fianarantsoa. There are also two colleges, two dental clinics, one hospital, a radio production studio, a printing press, and a wide network of elementary schools.

Adrian also advises that he has talked with the Adventist radio studio that produces the radio programs for broadcast from AWR-Madagascar. They deliver the tapes locally, and they are now planning to include a greeting in English to the listeners worldwide who will be tuned in during the WWCW silent period on May 3 and 10. Adrian also confirms that the local details in NU 1471 are correct. The telephone number [261-20-22-404-65] is for the regional headquarters, as is the office address of Box 700, Antananarivo. The studio is Box 460.

An AWR QSL stamp for the two new AWR locations, Sentech and Madagascar, should be available by now from both Forli and Indianapolis.

Thanks for this excellent work, Adrian. Let's hope that all the pieces come together this weekend.

MADAGASCAR. AWR invites rcpn rpts from listeners worldwide for the special b/cs from AWR-Madagascar during the WWCR silent periods, and at all other times also. All rpts will be verified with a colorful Madagascar postcard, containing a full data QSL text on the data side, as well as an AWR-Madagascar QSL stamp. All rpts will be processed by AWR-Europe, at Box 383, Forlì 47100, Italy. There is no facility for processing rcpn rpts and QSL cards at the AWR studio in Madagascar. All rpts rcvd by the Adventist radio studio in Madagascar will be forwarded in bulk to Europe for processing in the normal way at AWR-Forlì. Where possible, return postage will be appreciated, in the form of notes in a major intl currency, mint postage stamps, or IRCs. (Adrian Peterson/AWR-IN)

MADAGASCAR. AWR-3215: "I had a long talk with the [WWCR] board operator this evening [Saturday night--JB], explaining how to get shut down in time properly. We should be off a couple of minutes early, if everything goes as planned. As well, I will be monitoring here to insure proper shutdown, and am just a phone call away if something crops up (it shouldn't, but I do NOT want to leave this to chance). Reports are saying that conditions are very favorable tonight . . . Good DX to you and everyone else listening." (Adam Lock, WWCR, May 2)

Even though rcpn condx last evening were dismal here in Indianapolis, with local thunderstorms and a high noise level, nevertheless the new AWR-Madagascar was hrd quite clearly, albeit at a very low level. Just a few minutes before 0300 UTC, WWCR made the anmt: "WWCR is now going off the air so that Adventist World Radio on the island of Madagascar can be hrd," and then left the air. At 0300, AWR signed on with its familiar s/on routine, using the IS, "Jesus Is Coming Again," followed by at least one ID anmt as "Adventist World Radio." This was followed by at least one piece of Gospel mx, and speech that was too low to identify. Towards the end of the prgm, the signal strength improved sufficiently to note that a girl gave a P.O. box number and also ment. Antananarivo. The s/off theme and multi-lang. ID was noted quite clearly, and the final IS was given three times. After nearly four mins. of silence, WWCR signed on again with this anmt: "At this time, WWCR will resume its normally scheduled prgmng." Though several radios and antennas were available, best rcpn was from the Grundig 650, with its twin tuning ranges and the attached whip antenna. Again, we here at AWR express our deep appreciation to our colleagues at WWCR for their excellent courtesy in enabling AWR-Madagascar to be hrd on a clear channel. (Adrian Peterson-IN)

It was rough here. Somebody's carrier was present as soon as WWCR went off (the WWCR mention of Madagascar was a nice touch). Nothing more than occasional traces of audio for the first 15 mins.--some talking around 0309, mx at 0311, chorus at 0313, but almost "imagination level." Things improved very slightly at 0315, with a man talking. Reception was very choppy, with the audio peaking and then disappearing rapidly. A bit more improvement, with a short mx bridge at 0320, then back to a man talking; another light instr. mx bridge at 0323, then lady talking. What saved it was the familiar AWR tuning sequence which could be heard comparatively "well" at 0324--the AWR melody and anmt by woman in what sounded like FR, then multi-lingual ID by men (I think five langs., EG first, GM third, not sure of the others), then the AWR organ IS played three times. It sounded to me like the audio ended at 0326--I could make out nothing after that, but a carrier (AWR's-?) stayed on until WWCR came back on at 0329. All's well that ends well--the last couple of minutes made it all worthwhile here, and perhaps next weekend will be better. Thanks, WWCR and AWR! (Berg-MA) See **NU Sight & Sound for recordings of this one from Chuck Rippel, Horacio Nigro and**

yours truly. Chuck definitely gets the prize so far. -- And, while I realize that we are not exactly enthusiastic about WWCR's presence in the tropical bands, I would urge all who heard the b/c to send a message of thanks to Adam Lock at WWCR@aol.com

Logs: 0256-0330 May 3, WWCR noted s/off at 0256, clearing the channel for special AWR b/c. Weakly noted s/on of AWR with EG ID and apparently non-EG b/c. Poor overall, with static and fading. Signal seemed to peak just before 0326*. WWCR returned its carrier at 0329, with regular prgm returning at 0330. Thanks JB for the arrangements, and WWCR for clearing out for this special occassion. (D'Angelo-PA) I was listening at 0259 when female ancr at WWCR ancd their half-hour standby. Stayed on fqy, with just a het at first, some mx and voice at imagination level, and finally at 0329 it built up enough to get some mx, talks by woman in local lang., and the closing ID anmt in EG, FR and IT with their trumpet fanfare IS, then open carrier till WWCR resumption. My warmest congrats to JB, Adrian Peterson and the staff at WWCR. Loking forward to next similar event on May 10. Very happy to log this one on my humble Grundig YB400! (Nigro-Uruguay) *0300 May 3 with brutal QRN during WWCR shut down. Talks and religious prgm in lang. Very poor at begining, but steadily built throughout the xmsn. Discussions by M&W in lang. S/off in EG, then with multi-lang. ID, "Adventist World Radio, the Voice of Hope," then IS repeated three times. Off at 0327. LSB very poor, and I suspect xmsn was in USB + carrier. (Rippel-VA) *0300 May 3; actually, the xmtr seemed to snap on just a few seconds prior. Opened with IS repeated several times, seemingly with anmts by a M&W. Peaked nicely around 0315 with hymn, then talk or sermon by a man. Later, more talk by a woman. Concluded with IS at 0325, though xmtr stayed on with OC until WWCR switched their's back on just after 0329. (Sharp-FL) Only bits of audio noted here through the static crashes. Maybe next week? (Herkimer-NY) Nothing above the imaginary level hrd here. (Sellers-ONT)

Over here, the rcpn was as good as from the first day I heard this stn, and I understand the excitement of all my far away DX friends; but I was excited too, as I was expecting a special prgm with anmts or some sort of special greetings, or a least a welcome message to all the DXers--but nothing special. Normal prgm with usual IS, ID talk by M&W on religion, advice and songs, address and telephone number. (Vaghjee-Mauritius)

Comment from JB: Perhaps I shouldn't be surprised that 7.5 kw from Madagascar put in such a poor signal, but the traces of AWR that I have hrd on the fringes of WWCR's signal in the past at 0300 seemed stronger than this, and made me optimistic. Is it possible that AWR somehow "rides in" on the WWCR signal, and that what we really need is not WWCR off the air, but their carrier on the air with no audio? (JB)

MADAGASCAR. 3215, AWR, *0300 after WWCR s/off anmt at 0258. Into IS repeated 3 times, followed by ID by man in EG/FR/SP/GM: "This is Adventist Radio, the Voice of Hope." Then into mx, ID by YL, then local ID by second man with local accent which I did not hear last week: "You're tuned to AWR . . . Radio . . . Malagasy prgm, the voice of . . . we would . . . Americas." This local ID was badly chopped up by QRN and fading. (Rippel-VA) *0300 May 10, was startled to hear IS at decent level through static after WWCR closedown. IS repeated 3 times, then man in EG, "This is . . . the Voice of Hope . . ." followed by lang. IDs, brief mx, ID by woman, mx, then man with "You're tuned to AWR . . ." Into Malagasy prgm, which consisted of talks by M&W, with choral mx bridges. Signal started to deteriorate around 0317, and by 0323 was nearly gone. Thought I hrd traces of IS at 0329, but not sure, and WWCR back on at 0330. What a difference a week makes! Tnx JB, AWR and WWCR for a great DX experience. (Herkimer-NY) See **NU Sight & Sound for a brief audio clip of this one from John.** (JB) 0303-0322 May 10 with much louder signal than May 3, WWCR off 0257, QRM until 0303, no ID hrd, much religious mx and man in Malagasy. Signal faded at 0322, gone by 0325. Thanks WWCR! R390A was much better rcpn than R8A on the same antenna. (Henderson-MD). *0302:30-0330* May 10, opening late, some 2-1/2 mins. after WWCR anmt of leaving the air so the AWR xmtr on the island of Madagascar could be hrd. [Could your clock be off, Dave?] IS played three times, first time a little weak, as if the xmtr was still coming up to full power or the antenna beam (heading-?) was still being adjusted, then twice more at very solid level, followed by opening ID by man in EG and FR. Organ theme followed by anmt by woman in Malagasy, man again with prgm anmt initially in EG/FR, IS theme one more time, then brief local lang talk by woman before spiritual song. Talk segment by man, followed by another lengthy devotional song. Fair-good signal to this point, but last 10 mins. or so (post 0307 SR) talk by man and occasional mx bridges much weaker, almost smothered by QRM. Woman returned about 0327, ahead of final closing by man, unreadable at this point, although IS theme then weakly hrd two times before WWCR carrier popped back on with anmt of resumption of regularly scheduled prgmng. Logging this thru USB of WWCR audio as I did on April 10 & 11 was more exciting from a DX standpoint; nonetheless, getting a solid QRM-free log on tape was nice. Kudos to JB for arranging it, and WWCR for their co-operation with our hobby interests. (Clark-ONT) AWR came in just fine here last night, with a good signal and solid readability till I tuned out at 0310. There was very little audio at first, then I switched my sync detector from LSB to USB amd 0302 and all was well. Apparently they were xmting in carrier + USB. Tried it back and forth a dozen times with the same effect. I've seen no mention in the DX press about suppressed LSB; surely I'm not the only one to notice it? Kudos to JB for arranging this. (Hill-MA) Much better than last week, at least at the outset. WWCR closedown anmt at 0257 May 10, AWR IS three times at 0259, multi-lingual ID, last in Malagasy, and woman with opening anmt in Malagasy as AWR melody contd. Then what I think was a special EG anmt: ". . . AWR, Adventist World Radio, Malagasy . . ." but I could not get the rest. Talk by lady, light religious group vocal with nice "island" flavor at 0303, then talk by man, woman, with occasional mx bridges. Another choral vocal at 0311, then mostly talk by man with mx bridges. Unlike last week, when the signal picked up for the closedown sequence, the signal was extremely weak by then, though the AWR IS could be just barely hrd at 0327. WWCR came back at 0329:30. I think last week's observation by Chuck Rippel about USB + carrier, and Bob Hill's comment above, are correct; there wasn't much signal on LSB. (Berg-MA) The special EG anmt was: "You are tuned to AWR, Adventist World Radio, Malagasy programs, the Voice of Hope for all people. Today, we would like to give special greetings to all dear listeners in America from Madagascar." (Vaghjee-Mauritius) Parked the radio on 3215 waiting for AWR. For some reason, I paused the tape right after WWCR made the anmt and never restarted it. It was coming in quite well, though. Good thing I already have that country QSLed. (Rausch-NJ) This certainly was an unusual event, reminiscent of the old days, as covered by JB in his "Proceedings" article on the origins of radio. WWCR should be commended for trying something like this. I barely hrd something in there. WWCR was blasting in at S9 when they signed off at 0257*. I had a relatively good het on what I presume was AWR, along with some YL choral mx and occasional man talking, but there was nothing approaching an ID, and the het weakened by 0315. At 0330, WWCR came back on with the preachers. So while this was very interesting, I essentially didn't hear much. The problem was a steady S3 local buzz noise that I could not get rid of. If I had been in a quiet place, I think I could have IDed this one. (Zeller-OH) Logs of

this one also rptd elsewhere from Ross Comeau-MA, Dan Ferguson-VA, Bill Harms-MD, Al Merriman-VA, also from NH.

MADAGASCAR. 3215, AWR: Inadvertent error in my rpt--I indicated AWR came on "late" at 0302:30, but I failed to realize in reviewing my tape (which ran in my absence) that WWCR had cut their xmsn a bit early, circa 0258 acc. to other rpts. The gap between WWCR closing and AWR startup was in fact 2 mins. and 25 secs. of dead air. Thus it seems AWR started up just after 0300, and this is consistent with the IS opening I hrd on Apr 11, about 0300:20, thru WWCR on that occasion. Sorry for any inconvenience. (Clark-ONT)

3215, AWR, *0300:10-0330:30 May 11, canned WWCR ID slightly after 0300, then about 20 secs. of dead air before commencement of next prgm, during which gap the AWR IS and start of opening ID was hrd at very weak level, riding in on WWCR's USB carrier, but nothing of it could be hrd once WWCR audio resumed. My supposition is that it was not propagating nearly as well as the fine, clear channel signal on May 10, so I think we in N.Am got lucky with that 2nd arranged WWCR standby. (Clark-ONT)