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# OFARC Monthly Meeting Minutes 2026\_0425

Meeting started 0920 hours. Meeting ended 1158.

License testing is going electronic for both taking tests and grading the tests. There will be an ability to get all the information sent directly to FCC when this is all set up. All new test pools will be electronic (paperless).

There was much discussion about the Icom AH-4 random wire antenna tuner and the installation thereof. Recently, Barry and MarkL installed a used AH-4 at Hal's QTH. Barry supplied about 70 feet of CAT6 cable obtained from his work-place recycle bin. Mark did the wiring/splicing of this cable that connects the radio (Icom 7300) to the tuner. The cable is a "plenum" grade and is not designed to be used outdoor but should last a few years if kept out the sun. The cable was 24 AWG stranded, 4 pairs in the usual twisted pair arrangement as specified for ethernet CAT6 data rates. It is not "shielded" (you'd need CAT7 for that). The pairs are individually twisted but not all the same twists per inch as per the standard.

The AH-4 is no longer in production but can be found used for about \$400. Icom offers a more expensive model now... The AH-4 automatic tuner is designed to be installed at the base (or near the feed point) of the antenna. It is rated for 125W RF power and requires for the control cable connections: 1) Power, 2) Ground, 3) Start and 4) Key. It needs about 1A of current when tuning and a voltage of 13.8V +/- 15%. Due to IR drop of with the light gauge CAT6 wire, it is prudent to use two conductors for all the connections, particularly those that supply the power. It is best to wire the 14V and GND together in a single twisted pair. Then use two pairs to reduce the voltage drop by a factor of 2. Wiring 14V and GND together on each pair keeps the inductance down so that the voltage at the AH-4 power terminals is more stable with transient loads. The AH-4 manual can be found here: <https://www.icomjapan.com/support/manual/1385/>

There was a discussion regarding whether or not keep our ZOOM account active and the possibility of using Google Meet instead. A vote was taken and it was decided to keep our Zoom account registered through our VP, Jeremy.

Antennas and the quest for perfection was discussed along with the solar weather for radio communication. Perfection is not going to exist in antennas. Antennas and prices were discussed. Surprise, prices have gone up.

WTDofA - Web Time Difference of Arrival, if you get 2 or 3 stations that are far away the software will give you a reasonable idea of where the signal is coming from. There are YouTube videos about this program. It isn't perfect, but close.

The Crossroads Ham Radio Club was discussed along with their repeater system <https://crhrc.org/>

A large screen TV was available in the conference room this morning so we pulled up some instructional videos about the POTA performer antenna, the AH4, web SDRs, and signal mapping. Here are the links:

## **The POTA Performer**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqw3ultuPQg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OP2cPZRyzwA>

## **The AH4 Tuner**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JaZKI-WIrdw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5SRsQE1FXI>

## **KIWISDR (web access HF transceivers, world wide)**

<http://rx.linkfanel.net/>

<http://kb6c.proxy.kiwisdr.com:8073/>

<https://www.radiomarine.org/kph-sdrs>

## **Ionosondes**

<https://www.hfunderground.com/wiki/Ionosonde>

<https://www.dxmaps.com/spots/mapg.php?Lan=E>

## **Signal Identification**

[https://www.sigidwiki.com/wiki/Signal\\_Identification\\_Guide](https://www.sigidwiki.com/wiki/Signal_Identification_Guide)

<https://www.sigidwiki.com/wiki/Category:HF>

*Minutes Recorded by Ken Wenzel, KW5KEN*