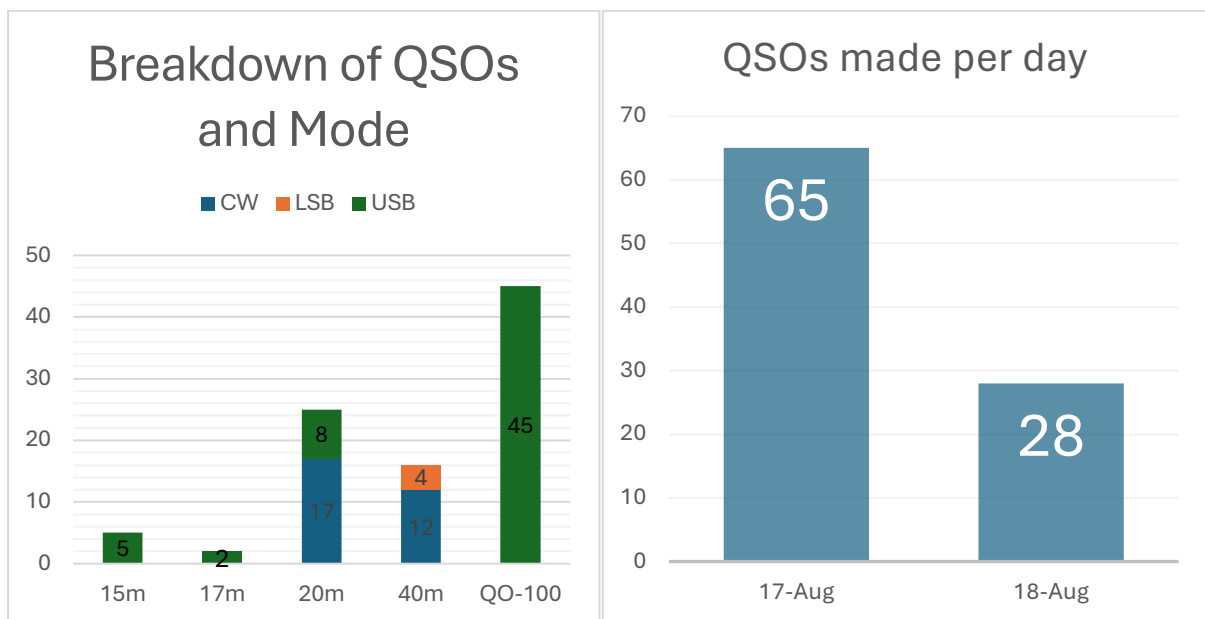
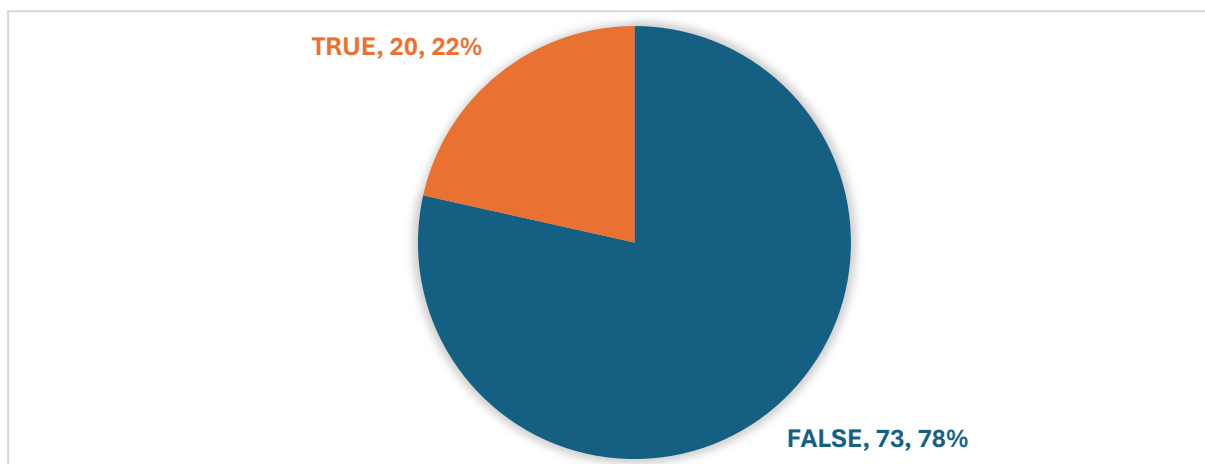


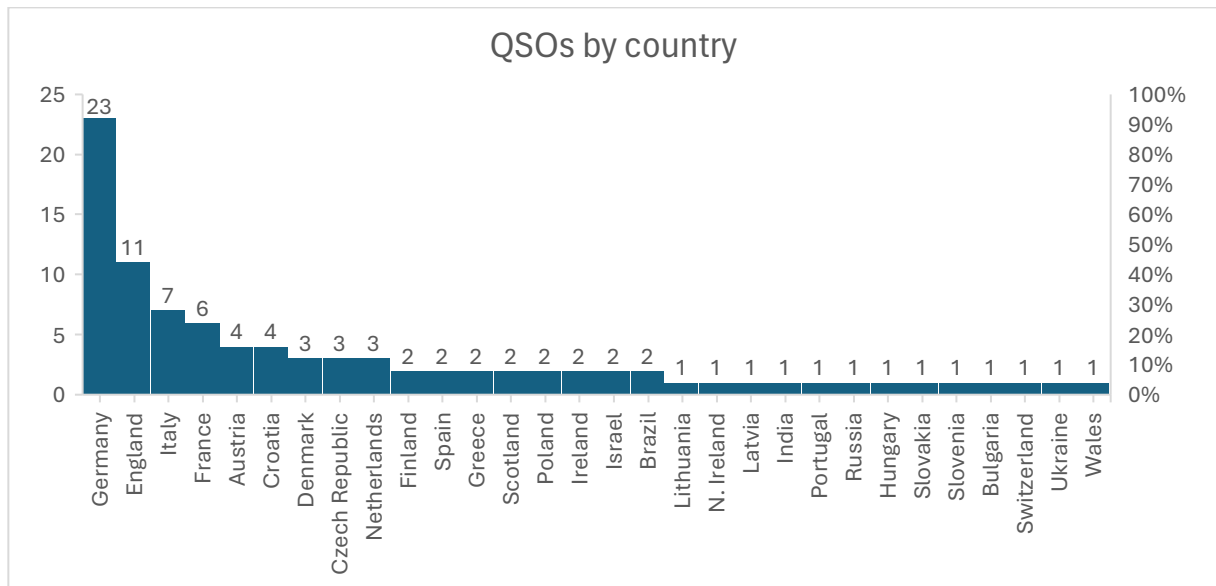
ILLW Report 2024

Over the weekend we made 93 contacts with 30 different countries, with a heavy bias to European countries like the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and France. More than two thirds of the contacts were made on the first day of the weekend, thanks to QO-100 gear which was brought in by Iain GM0ONN. On HF, we contacted 29 stations over morse code (CW), split across 20 and 40m, and made 19 contacts on SSB modes over 15, 17, 20 and 40m.



Out of our 93 QSOs, 20 of these were lighthouses. We made contacts with lighthouses as far as Slovenia, Croatia and Austria, and also a few contacts just across the coast at Tarbat Ness Lighthouse.





These graphs show the bias towards nearby European countries, but also shows outlier contacts such as India and Brazil. These contacts were made using the QO-100 satellite equipment which was available for the first day of the weekend.

The setup was completed late into the first day – getting the main radio running at around 1pm after the beam antenna had been properly set up. However, CW and satellite stations were running before that. We had a few issues with the mechanical parts in our vertical antenna, and another issue with an end-fed wire antenna producing noise making it unusable across different bands. There was also time wasted, where two members of the club were hanging rope from the lighthouse – which turned out to be entirely unused both days.

There was not much preparation for the event this year, we did not test any of the equipment beforehand to ensure that it was all in working condition. The logging software was admittedly slightly broken, failing to handle sending emails correctly in some cases, failing to handle N1MM QSOs automatically, and the band field not filling in automatically for N1MM QSOs. I will take on the project throughout the year and make the logging software support satellites and other propagation modes and fix the bugginess in N1MM QSO handling.

Overall, this year's ILLW was better compared to last year's ILLW, achieving almost double the contacts, and attracting much more visitors than last year – with the air cadet group visiting on Sunday, and various members of public showing interest in the radio operating room, and even coming in to speak to the people operating the station. However, members of the club have suggested multiple ways that the event can be improved next year.

It was suggested that setting up a station to be capable of running FT8 while nobody is operating, or when the conditions are bad to increase the number of QSOs which are made over the weekend. We have agreed to troubleshoot the vertical antenna, and if we cannot fix the antenna, there will be a meeting to think about replacing the antenna. Next year, we ideally plan to have the same amount, or more satellite equipment, which should further increase the QSO count over the weekend. We have also agreed that further events outside of the ILLW are important for club outreach and getting new people interested in amateur radio. It was also suggested that creating name badges or having t-shirts with names, callsigns, etc on them would be useful for public events, and it was suggested that we could use a label printer. Another thing that is important is getting attention to the events, which was done much better this year, with posters being placed around Lossiemouth advertising the event at the lighthouse.