

AN INTERVIEW WITH MANAGER AND OWNER OF NORTH COAST RADIO
RADAR ROY (9TH JANUARY 1992)

1. WHEN WAS NORTH COAST RADIO SET UP ?

It was first set up in September 1987 on 221 metres medium wave 1350 khz

2. WHY WAS IT SET UP ?

I am a pirate radio enthusiast and after biding my time on other pirate radio stations I saw the need for a new station

3. WHERE ARE THE STUDIOS AND TRANSMITTERS ?

I decline from answering that question for security reasons

4. WHAT AREA DOES NORTH COAST RADIO BROADCAST TO ?

We broadcast to Wirral, Liverpool, the North Wales coast and surrounding areas although we have had reception reports from Ipswich, Aberdeen, Ireland and the Isle Of Man. It all depends on transmitter power and also the weather conditions

5. WHAT ARE THE BROADCASTING HOURS ?

At the moment we broadcast for 18 hours per day from 8am in the morning through to 2am the following morning on Saturdays and Sundays

6. WHAT KIND OF PROGRAMMES DOES NORTH COAST RADIO TRANSMIT ?

We play a general mixture of music from the 1960's to the up to date chart music. North Coast Radio is mainly a request station and therefore we play whatever the listeners ask for

7. WHICH ARE YOUR MOST POPULAR PROGRAMMES ?

This is a very difficult question to answer due to the fact that they all seem to be as successful in their own right

8.HOW DO YOU MEASURE AUDIENCES ?

We don't,we just know that due to mail in responses and phone in requests that a lot of people listen to us regardless of age,colour or creed

9.HOW MANY STAFF DOES NORTH COAST RADIO HAVE ?

We have approximately 15 at the moment,but this amount is constantly changing

10.HOW EASY IS IT TO GET A JOB ON NORTH COAST RADIO ?

It isn't very easy at all,because disc jockeys have to be up to a certain standard and also trustworthy.We also prefer to take on people we already know,again due to security reasons

11.HOW IS NORTH COAST RADIO PAID FOR ?

It is funded solely by the station crew.We do not accept money from outside sources and we do not advertise.It is not a profit making station,if it was it would never have been put on the air in the first place.

12.DO YOU ADVERTISE NORTH COAST RADIO ?

No,due to the fact that we can not afford to advertise on television,and we would not be allowed by law anyway even if we could and mainly because the next best thing to television is radio

13.WHY DO YOU PUT DIFFERENT KINDS OF PROGRAMMES OUT AT DIFFERENT TIMES OF THE DAY

We mainly look for a gap in the market.We open the phone lines and see what the response is for that particular show and if it is not successful in the hours when it is on then we change it round untill it receives a good response

14. WHAT DO YOU FEEL THAT NORTH COAST RADIO OFFERS THAT THE LEGAL STATIONS DO NOT ?

At one time a great deal because legal stations in the area did not give the listener enough choice, but since the early 1990's new legislation now allows legal radio stations the power of two services on both FM and mediumwave and this has brought about a wider variety of music. With pirate radio stations or rather as we like to be known as free radio, the disc jockeys offer the back street or the boy next door image to create a more natural and relaxed atmosphere. It is now changing, mainly because of the success of pirate radio in the North West, in that the local independent legal stations are now using a large selection of old pirate radio disc jockeys, especially Radio City, Marcher Sound and Red Rose Radio, but saying that we are still successful due to the fact that we are a 99% music station in other words, more music, less talk.

15. DO LEGAL STATIONS AFFECT OR INFLUENCE YOU IN ANY WAY ?

No, apart from when they put in complaints to the department of trade and industry, which result in us being taken off air. I know this is true, due to the numerous court appearances of our disc jockeys, in each case there has always been a letter sent from one of the local legal stations stating that North Coast Radio should not be on air, this in my eyes tends to suggest that we are competition to them and that they are worried about us. I believe that we influence them because they are forever stealing ideas from us such as putting shows on air at the same time as us with the same music policy and they also tend to poach a lot of our disc jockeys although I must point out that this is not true of the BBC stations.

16. WHAT HAPPENS IN A RAID ?

Department of trade and industry officers from the radio investigation service knock on the door and give us half a minute to open it, if we don't they use sledgehammers to knock it down. They come in with search warrants and confiscate all our equipment and records. They then interview everybody present. Within six months they make a court appearance where they are usually fined leaving them free to return to the airwaves. It proves that the bigger free radio stations are not deterred by this action.

17. WHY DO YOU NOT BROADCAST FOR LONGER HOURS AND MORE DAYS ?

As discussed in an earlier question, more broadcasting hours brings about more raids from the department of trade and industry

18. SHOULD PIRATE RADIO BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE ?

I can understand the governments reasons with a lot of stations that interfere with vital emergency services or overlap legal stations. In London there are National Front and political stations forcing their views, wanted or unwanted on the general public, giving pirate radio a bad name. The more legitimate pirate radio stations like North Coast Radio likes to see them off the air just as much as the government. North Coast Radio has never interfered with vital services, if it did it would not be on air and that would be my own decision. For years the governments excuse for not allowing legalisation of some of the pirates was that there were not enough available frequencies, but with the latest legislation about community radio stations, they have suddenly found all these extra frequencies that according to them did not exist four years ago. If we did want to get a licence it would mean going off the air for five years before we would even be considered, this is a big gamble to take when there is no guarantee at the end. If the government granted us a licence we would be broadcasting legally within six months.

19.HOW POPULAR IS NORTH COAST RADIO ON MERSEYSIDE ?

For a free radio station it is huge.

20.DO YOU THINK THERE IS A FUTURE FOR PIRATE RADIO AS IT IS NOW ?

No,due to increased activity from the government changing laws,even international laws that affect pirate radio.

What I mean by that is that laws that the world recognizes, Britain does not.For example Radio Caroline have been continuously taken off air whilst broadcasting out at sea in international waters,all of a sudden Britain seems to think that these international waters are theirs.The officers from the department of trade and industry creep up on the ship during hours of darkness,cut their anchor line,tow them into British waters and then raid them.

In other words I wonder who the pirates really are,is it us who broadcast on frequencies that nobody else uses or the government who make up their own laws to suit their own needs.It is a high act of piracy at sea by the great British government.

NORTH COAST RADIO FORMAT

Sunday 5th February 1992

8am - 12 Kenny G's Country and Western Show
12 - 2pm Back to the 60's
2pm - 4pm Tony West's Golden Oldies Show
4pm - 6pm Tony Hollis
6pm - 8pm Dance Extravaganza
8pm - 10pm The N.C.R. Top 20
10pm - 12 Radar Roy
12 - 2am Kevin Burnett's Late Night Show