

all these, without any signs of spurious controls being sent to the printer, or unwanted characters, even during corrupted decoding. The usual symptoms of this are changed print modes, but will depend on your actual printer.

Trying to copy commercial RTTY transmissions led to some fun and games. Besides finding the speed and sense of the transmission, you are often dealing with an encrypted code (to stop people like us seeing it!), so the majority of the time will see garbaged output. When you do find one that is compatible, the copy is generally faultless, and a good way of using up your stock of paper on hard copy.

Incidentally, there is no facility provided in the unit for driving a video monitor, or TV, directly, presumably thought superfluous by virtue of the built in display and other options offered.

Transmission of RTTY doesn't really raise any problems, as the once you have set up the switches for your correct input/output modes, and programmed the I.D. the transceiver controls the Rx/Tx

function. Getting an I.D. at the end of the transmission entails shifting the OUTPUT Transmit switch to MORSE, and pressing the I.D. Button once.

Caution...

The manual correctly warns that you should be careful of the power input on your transmitter, as with RTTY you are running 100% duty cycle, instead of the much lower cycles demanded by CW and SSB. They suggest 40% of your normal power rating, but it would be sense to check the handbook, and see what is recommended for FM or AM use. More than adequate gain is available from the AFSK output socket on the rear to drive virtually any rig via its microphone socket.

Conclusions

With no reason to suppose that the unit will not perform as specified with keyboard inputs, the MBA-RC is an intriguing answer to coping with the various modes of transmission now available. For those sta-

tions not already possessing any form of computer, it could be a very versatile means of getting onto RTTY, together with CW and ASCII facilities, although you would really still want to get hold of some form of keyboard if you are going to use it a lot. At the price you could invest in a quite reasonable micro, and maybe even get a RTTY program for it, if it is specifically RTTY you want — and also have the benefit of the micro for other applications.

One of its few limitations is not being able to copy 300 Baud ASCII, which will limit compatibility with many other stations using ASCII.

The MBA-RC does appear to have an element of being an answer looking for a problem to solve. While it can cope with all sorts of mixed modes, and it is great fun playing with it, in the long run its benefits seem limited for serious applications.

Taken for the facilities offered, it performs its decoding and other functions very well, and would be a useful addition to any shack, providing you can make use of all the facilities.

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