W5YI

America's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable.

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In This Issue...

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FCC Plans to Reduce "Vanity" Call Sign Fee from $50.00 to $12.90!

In a stunning reversal of previous policy, the FCC is now in the process of reducing the *Regulatory Fee* associated with the issuance of a "Vanity" amateur station call sign. At present, requests for a specific amateur Vanity station call sign requires a payment of $50.00 to the Federal Communications Commission payable by check or credit card.

Although the FCC has been ordered by Congress to recover an additional $10 million in *Regulatory Fees* from its constituents during FY-1998, a substantially decreased amount will obviously come from Amateur Radio. That was a surprise! Most 1998 *Regulatory Fees* assessed users in other radio services were increased.

In *MD Docket No. 98-36* released March 25, 1998, the FCC's Office of Managing Director said that it would be reducing the cost of an amateur Vanity station call sign from an annual charge of $5 to $1.29!

According to the rules, payment of small fees must be made in advance. That is, the fee amount due for the current fiscal year multiplied by the number of years in the license term. That means the current $50.00 cost for a full ten year license term Vanity call sign will be reduced to $12.90.

The only FCC fee charged ham operators is for a Vanity call sign which is selected by the user who must conform to certain guidelines. The cost of a Vanity call sign was raised to $50.00 just last year.

Background:

There are two different types of user fees assessed by the Commission. As a result of the 1989 budget bill *(Public Law 101-239),* Section 8 of the *Communications Act* now directs the FCC to prescribe charges and collect fees from communications licensees for certain types of application processing and authorization services (such as equipment authorization) over which it has jurisdiction. *Application Fees,* which began in 1991, are adjusted every two years based on the inflation rate.

Beginning in 1994, Congress added Section 9 to the *Communications Act.* This section requires the Commission to recover the costs of its enforcement, policy and rulemaking, international, and user information activities. Congress sets the total that must be recovered to generally equal the amount of the funding it appropriates to the FCC for each fiscal year for these services.

Application and *Regulatory Fees* do not apply to government entities, amateur radio operator licensees (other than amateur "Vanity" call signs), and non-profit organizations. "Vanity" call sign fees were added to the list of *Regulatory Fees* in 1993 when it was determined that ham operators were willing to pay for station call signs that had a user-selected format. The initial fee was to have been $7 per year - or $70 for a ten year term Amateur license. This was later reduced to $3, then increased to $5 last year.

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Each year's new *Regulatory Fees* are presented to the public in the form of a *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* in March. A *Report and Order* revising the *Schedule of Regulatory Fees* is issued around July 1st stating the fees. A *Public Notice* is issued in August outlining the procedures for paying the new *Regulatory Fees* which are effective in September. At least this has been the practice for the past three years (1995 to 1997.) It all happens very quickly.

For Fiscal Year 1997, Congress mandated that the Commission collect $152,523,000 in *Regulatory Fees,* 21% more than for FY 1996. For FY-1998, Congress is requiring the FCC to recover $162,523,000.

Calculation of *Regulatory Fees* is fairly complicated. The fees are based on the actual direct and indirect support costs to provide the FCC regulatory services ...which are divided by the anticipated number of payment units (users.) Suggestions made the Commission staff are also evaluated. Any overage or shortfall is generally prorated.

Since an additional $10 million must be recovered, most FCC licensees will receive an increased *Regulatory Fee* for FY-1998. For example, the *Regulatory Fee* applying to ship, aircraft, and GMRS licensees was increased from $5 in FY-1997 to $6 per year for FY-1998.

Here is what the NPRM says about Amateur Radio: *(And we are quoting from the NPRM)*

13. <u>Amateur Vanity Call Signs</u>: This category covers voluntary requests for specific call signs in the Amateur Radio Service authorized under part 97 of the Commission's Rules. Applicants for Amateur Vanity Call-Signs will continue to pay a $5 annual *Regulatory Fee* per call sign, as prescribed in the FY 1997 fee schedule, payable for an entire ten-year license term at the time of application for a vanity call sign until the FY 1998 fee schedule becomes effective. The total *Regulatory Fee* due would be $50 per license for the ten-year license term. Section 9(h) exempts amateur radio operator licenses under Part 97 of the Commission's rules *(47 CFR Part 97)* from the requirement. However, section 9(g)'s fee schedule explicitly includes "Amateur vanity call signs" as a category subject to the payment of a *Regulatory Fee.*

For FY 1998, Amateur Vanity Call Sign applicants will pay a $1.29 annual *Regulatory Fee* per call sign, payable for an entire ten-year term at the time of application for a new, renewal or reinstatement license. The total *Regulatory Fee* due is $12.90 per call sign for the ten-year license term. We propose that there will be no refunds to applicants who submit applications before implementation of the FY-1998 fee. *(End Quote)*

Radio equipment voluntarily installed on recreational boats sailing within domestic waters do not need to be licensed and therefore pay no *Regulatory Fee.* The *Telecommunications Act of 1996* gave the Commission the authority to license certain ship and aircraft stations by rule rather than by individual license.

Private boat owners and aircraft pilots operating entirely within domestic U.S. waters or airspace are no longer required to hold a marine or aviation license. Since no station license is required, they will not be required to pay a *Regulatory Fee.* For FY 1998, ship and aircraft stations required to be licensed and those choosing to be licensed will pay a $6 annual *Regulatory Fee* per station, payable for an entire ten-year license term at the time of license application. The total *Regulatory Fee* due is $60 for the ten year license term.

The FCC estimates that 10,000 radioamateurs will want a Vanity call sign in FY-1998. The proceeding is now in the *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* stage and on a fast track. Historically, the new fees for vanity call signs go into effect in September. The Fiscal Year 1997 *Regulatory Fees* were effective September 15, 1997 and we anticipate a similar date for 1998.

Unless something changes -- and we doubt that it will -- Amateurs might want to consider waiting until September to get that spanking new call sign! We will keep you posted on how this proceeding progresses.

(Action by NPRM, MD Docket No. 98-36, Assessment and Collection of Regulatory Fees for Fiscal Year 1998. Adopted: March 13, 1998, released March 25, 1998)

• IOWA CITY, Iowa -- **The papers of the late Arthur A. Collins W0CXX (1909-1987), founder and president of Collins Radio Company,** now part of Rockwell International Corp. have been deposited at the University of Iowa Libraries.

Collins was a pioneer in the making of specialized electronic equipment. The Collins Radio Company in Cedar Rapids, which began producing amateur radio equipment in 1933, played an important role in the history of the area and was one of Iowa's most important employers. Later Collins expanded to other specialized areas of electronics including aviation, navigation, broadcast and general communications.

During World War II, Collins Radio supplied electronic equipment for airplanes and ships. Later, Collins was the major communications supplier for the U.S. Manned Space Program. When Admiral Richard E. Byrd planned his exhibition to Antarctica (1933-1934), he selected Collins to build transmitters that would enable him to make live broadcasts to America from the South Pole.

Filling 33 large boxes with documents covering the years 1932 through the late 1970s, the Arthur A. Collins Collection provides historically significant records of a major area employer and will prove valuable to students, faculty and other researchers. Materials in the collection include correspondence, subject files, photographs, notebooks, corporate annual reports, product literature, product drawings and other working papers.

The collection is currently being processed, which involves arranging, preserving and describing the materials so that they will be available to researchers. Processing could take up to a year. For more information on the collection and its contents, please call the UI Libraries department of Special Collections (319) 335-5921. *(Univ. of Iowa Press Release)*

New Universal Licensing System Impacts Ham Radio

Although the FCC's massive *Universal Licensing System* (ULS) proposal was adopted on February 18th, it was not released to the public until more than a month later. The *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, NPRM Docket WT 98-20, *"To Facilitate the Development and Use of the Universal Licensing System in the Wireless Telecommunications Services,"* ran to nearly 400 pages. The FCC proposed several rule amendments that amend the current Amateur Radio licensing procedures.

Those rule changes seek to privatize the licensing of amateur radio clubs and eliminates the current application procedure for foreign hams operating in the U.S. or its possessions under a bilateral (reciprocal) arrangement. New information collection requirements are being proposed along with a new streamlined FCC Form 605 (with an attached Schedule "C") that would replace the current Form 610. All FCC license applicants will now be required to supply their taxpayer identification number (TIN - Social Security Number) and to file electronically. Submission of all paper documents to the FCC would be discontinued.

The *NPRM* proposes to consolidate, revise, and streamline FCC rules governing license application procedures for all radio services licensed by the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) including the Amateur, Commercial and Personal Radio Services.

In the NPRM, the FCC asked for comment on:

- replacing over 40 existing wireless application forms (including all versions of the FCC Form 610) with five new forms (FCC Forms 601 through 605);
- consolidating the procedural rules relating to applications contained in each set of service-specific rules (Parts 13, 22, 24, 26, 27, 80, 87, 90, 95, 97, and 101) into a single set of rules in Part 1 and updating references to FCC form numbers throughout the FCC rules;
- requiring applicants and licensees in most wireless radio services to file applications and other documents electronically using ULS;
- providing for electronic or manual filing, using ULS forms, of routine requests regarding applications (*e.g.*, change of address), and eliminating the use of letter requests for these purposes except in emergencies;
- streamlining WTB authorization and application processing;
- conforming return and dismissal procedures for defective or incomplete applications;
- requiring the submission of a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) by applicants and licensees using ULS, consistent with the requirements of the *Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996;* and
- eliminating unnecessary or duplicative filing requirements

The proposed rule changes are basically designed to facilitate the implementation of the FCC's new Universal Licensing System. ULS is a new integrated licensing database that will become fully operational later this year.

Universal Licensing, which has been under development for nearly two years, represents a major breakthrough in the Commission's use of state-of-the-art technology to support its regulatory functions. Until now, wireless applicants and licensees have been required to use a myriad of forms for various wireless services and types of requests, and the information provided on these applications has been collected in eleven separate databases, each for a different group of services.

The Commission noted that the present "...service-specific approach to application and licensing causes a significant waste of time and resources on the part of applicants and licensees, who must often file the same information in different databases following varying procedures. The maintenance of multiple databases also impeded the Commission's ability to carry out its licensing responsibilities efficiently." In addition, the patchwork nature of the FCC's existing database made it difficult for the public to access licensing data, because the information was scattered and frequently not available in an easily usable form.

The new integrated ULS database addresses these problems in several ways. First, this single database will replace the eleven separate licensing databases previously in use in Gettysburg. It will provide a single technological platform for information collection and will enable licensees to file all applications electronically, thus increasing the speed and efficiency of the application process.

ULS will also make licensing information more accessible and usable by Commission staff in carrying out its regulatory responsibilities. And for the first time, the public will be able to access all wireless licensing data online by dialing into the Commission's wide area network (WAN) and using any World Wide Web (WWW) browser.

In addition, the cost of filing applications or obtaining information will be greatly reduced. License applicants will be charged normal filing fees for filing applications under ULS, but will save time and resources by filing electronically.

Getting the new licensing system underway

To fully implement ULS for all wireless radio services, the FCC is proposing to make certain conforming changes to their wireless licensing rules to reflect new electronic filing procedures, new electronic forms, and other technical changes in the licensing process.

All wireless licensing rules will now be consolidated in a single section of Part 1 and dozens of duplicative rules in other service-specific rule parts will be eliminated. The FCC said that their goal in this proceeding is to establish a simplified set of rules that

(1) minimizes filing requirements as much as possible;

(2) eliminates redundant, inconsistent, or unnecessary

submission requirements; and

(3) assures ongoing collection of reliable licensing and ownership data.

"Accordingly, we propose in this *NPRM* to revise our regulations to efficiently collect from wireless radio services applicants and licensees only the data necessary to carry out our statutory spectrum management and compliance responsibilities," FCC said.

The new proposed rules are listed by rule part in Appendices B through N of the NPRM. The Commission pointed out that this NPRM is only one of a number of proceedings that will be initiated to streamline FCC rules and to take advantage of new technology to perform their regulatory functions more efficiently.

Toward that end, the FCC recently announced that they would be amending the FCC Part 97 rules to further privatize the administration of the Amateur Radio Services. While no further information is available on that initiative, the two new ULS forms to be used by Amateurs have needed information missing. That might indicate this data might be contained in a privatized database.

Only five new FCC forms will be used

The FCC wants to replace 41 application forms with only five, FCC Forms 601 through 605. The FCC Form 605 (Quick-Form Application) would be used as a short-form application for applicants who are not presently required to submit extensive technical data to receive a license, such as General Mobile Radio Service, Amateurs, Ships, Aircraft, and Commercial Radio Operators.

Amateur Service applicants would submit the short FCC Form 605 in conjunction with a Schedule "C." There are four other schedules: ("A" for the Ship Radio Service, "B" Aviation Radio Service, "D" Commercial Radio and "E" for GMRS.) The FCC asked the public to comment on each of these forms and on any possible suggested modifications.

We are enclosing draft copies of both the FCC Form 605 and the Schedule "C" attachment used by the Amateur Service in this newsletter. The Radio Service Code (entered on Line 1) is "HA." Strangely missing from both the Form 605 and its attachment is the newly required statement where an amateur certifies that he/she has read OST/OET Bulletin 65 and will comply with the FCC's new RF radiation safety rules.

Another interesting point is that the FCC's database will apparently no longer indicate the license class of the applicant! Possibly this is the database information that is to be privatized and maintained by the Amateur Service itself. The schedule basically asks only whether an individual wants either a sequential or Vanity call sign assigned. There is also no provision for VE certification signatures or telegraphy exam waivers for severely handicapped amateurs on either form.

Noting that the percentage of electronically filled applications has increased over the past few years, it is the FCC's intention that beginning January 1, 1999, all future wireless application forms will be required to be filed electronically.

The Commission said that "While we propose to establish mandatory electronic filing for all wireless radio services, we seek comment on whether manual filing should continue as an option for certain services or classes of applicants."

Use of Taxpayer Identification Numbers

In 1996, Congress enacted the *Debt Collection Improvement Act* as part of an effort to increase collection from private entities of delinquent government debts. As a result of DCIA, government agencies are required to monitor and provide information about the public to the U.S. Treasury. This provision includes a requirement that the FCC collect Taxpayer Identification Numbers (TIN) and share them with the U.S. Treasury to ensure that the Commission does not refund monies to entities that have an outstanding debt with the federal government.

TINs are 9-digit identifiers required of all individuals and employers to identify their tax accounts. For individuals, the TIN is an applicant's Social Security Number (SSN). Commercial license applicants would generally use the Employer Identification Number (EIN) issued by the IRS to all employers. But since all ham operators are individuals, only the SSN would be submitted. TINs are an integral part of the DCIA system and are necessary for the collection of delinquent debt owed to federal agencies.

The TIN matches payment requests with delinquent information. As a result, federal agencies have been required to share the TINs of benefit recipients since April 26, 1996, the effective date of DCIA. The U.S. Treasury wants all government agencies to obtain the TIN when an agency first has direct contact with a person.

The FCC will routinely collect the TINs from parties seeking to make filings using ULS. The FCC has received approval from OMB to require existing licensees to register their TIN using online FCC Form 606 until the ULS is operational. On November 4, 1997, the FCC's Wireless Bureau released a public notice announcing that existing licensees (including ham operators) could register their TIN and associated call signs on-line.

Anyone filing an applications through ULS will be required to submit a TIN as a prerequisite for using the system and the FCC will use TINs as the unique identifier for such parties. Applicants submitting manually filed applications (where permitted) will also be required to supply their TIN on their application form because all such applications will be placed on the ULS and a TIN is necessary to track these applications.

The FCC said that "We tentatively conclude that the

FCC 605
Main Form

Quick-Form Application for Authorization in the Ship, Aircraft, Amateur, Restricted and Commercial Operator, and the General Mobile Radio Services

Approved by OMB
3060-xxxx
See instructions for
public burden estimate

1) Radio Service Code:

APPLICATION PURPOSE (Select only one from item 2) (_____)

2)	NE - New MD - Modification AM - Amendment	RO - Renewal Only RM - Renewal/Modification EI - Reinstatement	CA - Cancellation WD - Withdrawal EM - Reinstatement/Modification	DU - Duplicate

3)	If this request for an STA (Special Temporary Authorization)?	( ) Yes or No
4)	If this request is for an Amendment or Withdrawal, enter the File Number(s) of the pending application(s) currently on file with the FCC. (Attach additional sheets if necessary).	File Number(s)
5)	If this request is for a Modification, Renewal, Renewal/Modification, Reinstatement, Reinstatement/Modification, Cancellation, or Duplicate, enter the Call Sign(s) of the existing FCC license(s). (Attach additional sheets if necessary).	Call Sign(s)
6)	Does this filing propose a Waiver or Exception to the Commission's Rules? If 'Yes', attach an exhibit providing rule numbers and explaining circumstances.	( ) Yes or No

APPLICANT INFORMATION

7) Taxpayer Identification Number:

8) Licensee is a(n): ( ) Individual, Corporation, Unincorporated Association, Limited Liability Corporation, Trust, Partnership, Government Entity

Legal Name of Applicant

9) First Name (if individual):	Middle Initial:	Last Name:	Suffix:

or

10) Entity Name (if other than individual):

Legal Mailing Address of Applicant

11) Attention To:

12) P.O. Box:	**And/Or**	13) Street Address:

14) City:	15) State:	16) Zip:

17) U.S. Telephone:	18) FAX:

19) E-Mail:

Fee Status

20) Is the Applicant exempt from FCC application fees? ( )Yes No

21) Is the Applicant exempt from FCC regulatory fees? ( )Yes No
22) If 'Yes', does applicant qualify as a Non-Commercial Educational Broadcaster? ( )Yes No

If the answer to either 18 or 19 is 'Yes', attach a copy of the current IRS Determination Letter documenting status under IRS Code Section 501.

Environmental Policy (Refer to instructions for applicability)

23)Would a Commission grant of this application be an action which may have a significant environmental effect as defined by Section 1.1307 of 47 CFR? ( ) Yes No

If 'Yes', submit an environmental assessment as required by 47 CFR, Sections 1.1308 and 1.1311.

General Certification Statements (Refer to instructions for applicability)

1) The Applicant waives any claim to the use of any particular frequency or of the electromagnetic spectrum as against the regulatory power of the United States because of the previous use of the same, whether by license or otherwise, and requests an authorization in accordance with this application.

2) The Applicant will have unlimited access to the radio equipment and will control access to exclude unauthorized persons.

3) Applicant certifies that the signature is that of the individual, partner, or officer or duly authorized employee of a corporation, or officer who is a member of an unincorporated association, or appropriate elected or appointed official on behalf of a government entity.

4) Applicant certifies that all statements made in this application and attachments are true, complete, correct, and made in good faith.

5) Applicant certifies that all statements made in exhibits are a material part hereof and are incorporated herein as if set out in full in this application.

6) Nieither the Applicant nor any member thereof is a foriegn government or a representative thereof.

7) Applicant certifies that neither the Applicant nor any other party to the application is subject to a denial of benefits that includes FCC benefits pursuant to Section 5301 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, 21 U.S.C. ', 862, because of a conviction for possession or distribution of a controlled substance. *If the applicant can not certify, attach an exhibit explaining the circumstances. *See 47 CFR 1.2002(b) for the meaning of 'party to the application' for these purposes.

Signature

24) Typed or Printed Name of Party Authorized to Sign:

First Name | Middle Initial | Last Name | Suffix

25) Title:

26) Signature:

27) Date:

Failure to sign This Application May Result In Dismissal Of The Application And Forfeiture Of Any Fees Paid

WILLFUL FALSE STATEMENTS MADE ON THIS FORM OR ANY ATTACHMENTS ARE PUNISHABLE BY FINE AND/OR IMPRISONMENT (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001) AND/OR REVOCATION OF ANY STATION LICENSE OR CONSTRUCTION PERMIT (U.S. Code, Title 47, Section 312(a)(1)), AND/OR FORFEITURE (U.S. Code, Title 47, Section 503).

Notice To Individuals Required By Privacy Act Of 1974 And The Paperwork Reduction Act Of 1995

The Solicitation of personal information requested in this form is authorized by the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. The Commission will use the information provided in this form to determine whether grant of this application is in the public interest. In reaching that determination, or for law enforcement purposes, it may become necessary to refer personal information contained in this form to another government agency. In addition, all information provided in this form, as well as the form itself, will be available for public inspection. If information requested on the form is not provided, processing of the application may be delayed or the application may be returned without action pursuant to Commission Rules. The foregoing notice is required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13, October 1, 1995, 44 U.S.C. 3507.

FCC 605
Schedule C

Schedule for Additional Data for the Amateur Radio Service

Approved by OMB
3060-xxxx
See instructions for public burden estimate

Part 1: AMATEUR STATION CALLSIGN CHANGE AND VANITY CALL SIGN REQUEST:

Systematic Call Sign Change:

1) Is this a request to change a station callsign systematically? ( ) Yes No

Vanity Call Sign Change:

2) I hereby apply for a vanity callsign under the following eligibility:
(make an 'X' in the appropriate box and enter the required information):

(A) ( ) FORMER PRIMARY STATION HOLDER: I request callsign _____ be shown on my primary station license. This call sign was previously shown on my primary station license. **Available under all Gates.**

(B) ( ) CLOSE RELATIVE OF FORMER HOLDER: I request callsign _____ be shown on my primary station license. This callsign was previously shown on the primary station license of my deceased spouse, child, grandchild, stepchild, parent, grandparent, stepparent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or in-law. Enter your relationship to the deceased _____.. **Available under all Gates.**

(C) ( ) FORMER CLUB STATION HOLDER: I request callsign _____ be shown on the license for the club station, for which I am the license trustee. This callsign was previously shown on the license for this club station. **Available under all Gates.**

(D) ( ) CLUB STATION WITH CONSENT OF CLOSE RELATIVE OF FORMER HOLDER: I request callsign _____ be shown on the license for the club station, for which I am the license trustee. The club was established prior to and was in existence on March 24, 1995. This callsign was previously shown on the primary station license of a person now deceased. I am acting with written consent of the deceased person's spouse, child, grandchild, stepchild, parent, grandparent, stepparent, brother, sister, stepbrother, stepsister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or in-law. Enter the relationship to the deceased of the person giving consent: _____. **Available under Gates 1(A), 2, 3, and 4.**

(E) ( ) PRIMARY STATION PREFERENCE LIST: I request the first assignable callsign from my preference list in item #3 be shown on the license for my primary station. **Available to Amateur Extra Class Operators under Gate 2, To Advanced Class Operators under Gate 3, to General, Technician Plus, Technician, and Novice under Gate 4.**

(F) ( ) CLUB STATION PREFERENCE LIST. I request the first assignable callsign from my preference list in item #3 be shown on the license for the club station, for which I am the license trustee.

Vanity Call Sign PREFERENCE LIST

3) Select your preference list of vanity callsigns very carefully. Give exact prefix, numeral and suffix for each call sign.

1)	6)	11)	16)	21)
2)	7)	12)	17)	22)
3)	8)	13)	18)	23)
4)	9)	14)	19)	24)
5)	10)	15)	20)	25)

NOTE: If none of the callsigns that you requested are assignable you will retain your existing callsign for your station permit.

Part 2: AMATEUR CLUB, RACES, OR, MILITARY RECREATION STATION REQUEST:

1)Application Classification:

( ) **C**	( ) **R**	( ) **M**

2)Name of Club Station Trustee or License Custodian

First		Last	Suffix

4)Responsible Official

I certify that the above named person is the station trustee or license custodian authorized to apply for and hold an amateur radio station license for this organization,

First		Last	Suffix

Title or Authority to Approve:	Date Signed

Applicant certifies that the named person is the station trustee or license custodian authorized to apply and hold an amateur radio station license for this organization, society, or entity.

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1)Are you a US Citizen?( ) **Y** **N**o

3)Expiration date of your Amateur Service License (MM/DD/YYYY):_____/_____/_____

4)Are you a citizen of the country that issued your amateur license:( ) _es **N**

Certification Statements for Permit of an Alien Amateur Radio Licensee to Operate in the United States

The Applicant certifies that in requesting a reciprocal permit for operation of an amateur station in the United States, it is understood that, if a permit is

1) the terms and conditions of the agreement in this subject between the Applicant's government and the Government of the United

2) Part 97 of the FCC Rules;
The terms and conditions of the amateur service license issued to the Applicant by their government, but not to exceed the Amateur Extra Class operator privileges; and
Any further conditions attached to the reciprocal permit by the FCC. The Applicant also understands that any reciprocal permit issued to them may be modified, suspended, or canceled by the FCC without advance notice.

TIN is the logical choice for the system identifier because it is unique to each licensee and applicant...." The TIN number would not be available to the general public.

Commercial Radio Operator Licensing

Commission-licensed Commercial Radio Operators serve as radio officers aboard U.S. vessels, repair and maintain maritime or aviation radio equipment, and use international maritime and aviation frequencies to communicate with foreign stations. With the exception of the Restricted Radiotelephone Operator Permit, applicants must pass a written examination prior to obtaining a Commercial Radio Operator license or permit.

In order to obtain a license, an applicant must contact a Commission-certified commercial examination manager (COLEM), pass one or more written tests, obtain a Proof-of-Passing Certificate (PPC) from the examination manager, and provide the original PPC to the Commission upon application for a license.

In order to facilitate electronic filing of Commercial Radio Operator licenses, the FCC must consider alternative means of verifying that applicants have passed the requisite written examinations under the supervision of a Commission-certified examination manager. (National Radio Examiners, a subsidiary of the W5YI Group already electronically files Commercial Radio licenses, but the balance of the COLEM's generally do not.)

"We tentatively conclude that the Commission must retain measures to verify whether an applicant has passed the requisite examinations," the FCC said. "As noted above, license holders are responsible for emergency communications aboard vessels and for repairing radio equipment that serves as a mariner's or pilot's lifeline during emergencies.

"Because of the critical, safety-related responsibilities of license holders, the Commission must ensure that only qualified individuals receive a Commercial Radio Operator license.

"One way to automate the verification of applicants' PPCs would be for examination managers to electronically file with the Commission data showing which examination elements an examinee has passed. A second option would be for examination managers to establish procedures that would allow them to verify the authenticity of a PPC, upon Commission request. A third option would be to require examination managers to submit applications on behalf of applicants."

Currently examination managers may submit applications for examinees or other individuals. This service, however, is a non-regulated service, separate from their activities as an examination manager. "Commenters should discuss the administrative burdens associated with automating the verification of PPCs, and any alternative solutions not discussed herein."

Amateur Service Reciprocal Licensing

The United States has reciprocal arrangements with 65 countries to allow amateur operators to operate their stations temporarily in the other country. The Commission currently grants annually some 2,000 reciprocal permits for alien amateur licensee (FCC Form 610-AL) to amateur operators from those countries. The visitor must obtain the application form (FCC Form 610-A) -- which is often difficult to do in a foreign country -- and file it with the Commission.

No standards are required of these applicants other than possession of the license document issued by their country of citizenship. There is no fee. The FCC-issued permit, therefore, simply confirms that the holder of the permit also holds a license from his or her home country. For Canadian amateur operators who visit the United States, no permit is required because they are authorized to operate by rule.

The FCC said it tentatively concluded that there is little or no need to continue issuing the reciprocal permit for alien amateur licensees because the license from any foreign country with which the United States has reciprocity would stand as the proof that the foreign operator is qualified for the reciprocal operating authority.

The NPRM proposes to automatically authorize all reciprocal operation by rule. As is now the case, however, no citizen of the United States -- regardless of any other citizenship held -- would be eligible under this authorization procedure. United States citizens would continue to have to acquire an FCC-issued amateur operator license by passing the requisite examinations.

Amateur Radio Club Licensing

Currently, the Commission processes annually some 1,500 applications for new, renewed and modified amateur service club, military recreation and radio amateur civil emergency service ("RACES") station grants. Application is made on FCC Form 610-B. There is no fee. The resulting license grant simply authorizes the use of a unique call sign in the station identification procedure. It does not authorize any operating privileges.

Section 4(g)(3)(B) of the *Communications Act* authorizes the Commission, for purposes of providing club and military recreation station call signs, to use the voluntary, uncompensated and unreimbursed services of amateur radio organizations that have tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the *Internal Revenue Code of 1986.* The Commission's rules were amended in 1995 to administer the club call sign system under the Commission's then-new automated licensing process. *(See* Amendment of the Amateur Service Rules to Implement a Vanity Call Sign System, PR Docket No. 93-305.)

The FCC said "We believe that the ULS provides an opportunity to utilize the electronic batch filing services

provided by the private sector. We propose, therefore, to accept the services of any organization meeting the minimum requirements of section 4(g)(3)(B) of the *Communications Act* that completes a pilot electronic autogrant batch filing project similar to that completed by the 16 volunteer-examiner coordinators ("VECs"). Moreover, we anticipate that many VECs would be likely to volunteer their service as club station call sign administrators.

General Mobile Radio Service Licensing

The GMRS is a Part 95 UHF land mobile radio service for short-distance two-way communications. It is used to facilitate the business or personal activities of licensees and their immediate family members. Under the current rules, there are fifteen frequencies allocated to this service. Applicants may be authorized to use up to ten of these channels. Applicants are currently required to submit technical information and location information for control points and small base stations.

"All GMRS frequencies are shared and no frequency coordination is required; therefore, we propose to revise the rules for GMRS to limit the data collection required of individuals applying for a license to contact information, such as name, address, and telephone number. Additionally, we propose to authorize stations to transmit on any authorized channel from any geographical location where the FCC regulates communication without the need for temporary licensing."

The FCC said they believe that there is no regulatory purpose to be served by limiting the number of frequencies for which a licensee may be authorized or by collecting technical information from applicants. "We seek comment on these proposals."

Conclusion

The NPRM sets forth proposals to consolidate FCC licensing rules into a single set of rules for all wireless radio services. The Commission said "Our goal is to establish a streamlined set of rules that minimizes filing requirements as much as possible; eliminates redundant, inconsistent, or unnecessary submission requirements; and assures ongoing collection of reliable licensing and ownership data. We believe that these consolidated rules will eliminate duplication and inconsistencies that exist in our rules and will make it easier for applicants to determine our application requirements by referencing a single set of licensing rules. We find that such consolidation will allow the ULS to function more efficiently. A more efficient and fully functional ULS will mean that licensing information will be widely available to members of the public. We also believe that development of full electronic filing and universally available databases for the wireless radio services will shorten application filing times for applicants, make the most recent data available to them concerning other spectrum uses, and relieve the administrative burden on this Commission, enabling us to operate with greater efficiency. Accordingly, we tentatively conclude that it is in the public interest to implement the electronic filing of applications and other documents, and that ULS implementation, as well as the combined application and processing rules proposed herein, will help achieve that goal."

The NPRM carries an extremely short comment period ...only 30 days after publication in the Federal Register. Replies close 15 days later. To file formally in this proceeding, you must file an original and five copies of all comments, reply comments, and supporting comments. If you want each Commissioner to receive a personal copy of your comments, you must file an original plus ten copies. You should send comments and reply comments to Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.

Three different versions of WT Docket 98-20 are available online at http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireless/-Notices/1998/ ...or you can link to the document from the FCC home page. The proposal was not released to the public until March 20.

Surprisingly, comments may not be filed electronically (by e-mail) but parties are encouraged to submit comments and reply comments on a 3½-inch (IBM formatted) diskette using WordPerfect 5.1 for Windows software for possible inclusion on the Commission's Internet site so that copies of these documents may be obtained electronically. Such diskette submissions would be in addition to and not a substitute for the formal filing requirements presented above.

Parties submitting diskettes should submit them to the Policy and Rules Branch, Commercial Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, 2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554. Such a submission should be clearly labeled with the commenter's name, proceeding, type of pleading (comment or reply comment), and date of submission.

Written comments by the public on the proposed and/or modified information collections are due at the same time as other comments on this *NPRM*. Written comments must be submitted by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the proposed and/or modified information collections on or before 60 days after the date of publication in the Federal Register.

In addition to filing comments with the Secretary, a copy of any comments on the information collection items contained in the Notice should be submitted to: Judy Boley, Federal Communications Commission, Room 234, 1919 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20554, or via the Internet to jboley@fcc.gov and to Timothy Fain, OMB Desk Officer, 10236 NEOB, 725 - 17th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20503 or via the Internet to fain_t@al.eop.gov.

Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Report - 1995 to February 1998

It has been several months since we last published this chart. These figures come from the FCC in Gettysburg and indicate the number of examination sessions, persons examined, total elements administered and average session size since January 1995. Note that the only two months with an increase in the number of applicants and exam elements administered was May and June 1997. (Shown in **bold** below.) This is because a new Element 2 (Novice) and Element 3A (Technician) question pool went into effect on July 1, 1997. There are 46% less persons taking ham radio examinations than in 1995!

	Sessions				Persons				Elements				Session Size			
Month	1995	1996	1997	1998	1995	1996	1997	1998	1995	1996	1997	1998	'95	'96	'97	'98
Jan.	942	845	812	735	8330	6228	5331	4098	14355	10353	8999	6765	9	7	7	6
Feb.	951	882	921	770	9516	7231	7154	5447	16230	12355	12087	9000	10	8	8	7
March	1067	1084	1034		11050	10196	8883		18726	17245	14795		10	9	9	
April	1080	1088	1082		10895	9671	9284		17896	16618	15714		10	9	9	
May	1089	971	992		10043	7557	**7910**		16985	12666	13297		9	8	8	
June	977	914	1165		8045	6748	**9314**		13563	11266	15215		8	7	8	
July	837	755	617		6526	5155	3172		11086	8710	5087		8	7	5	
Aug.	821	819	696		6533	5674	4077		11085	9435	6538		8	7	6	
Sept.	921	848	731		6498	5181	3700		11096	8844	6078		7	6	5	
Oct.	840	847	736		6398	5271	4077		10930	8892	6673		8	6	6	
Nov.	889	880	803		6986	6156	4782		12007	10510	7964		8	7	6	
Dec.	845	791	747		6726	5323	4289		11370	9053	7176		8	7	6	
Total:	**11260**	**10724**	**10336**		**97547**	**80391**	**71973**		**165330**	**135945**	**119621**		**8**	**7**	**7**	
	(3.2%)	(4.8%)	(3.6%)		(8.6%)	(17.5%)	(10.5%)		(15.0%)	(17.8%)	(12.0%)					

We have now updated the chart below to show the actual VEC statistics for the months of November 1997 through February 1998. Note that over 1 million applicants have been examined since the beginning of the VEC System in 1984. The number of persons taking Amateur Radio examinations peaked in 1992. It has been declining ever since.

Examinations Administered Under VEC System by Year - 1984 to Present

Date	Sessions	% Inc.	Persons	% Inc.	Elements	% Inc.	Pass Rate
1984	413		8599		12633		47.5%
1985	3223	680.4%	41439	381.9%	62589	395.4%	58.2%
1986	3784	17.4%	42422	2.4%	61921	(1.1)%	59.7%
1987	4378	15.7%	49728	17.2%	81042	30.9%	60.6%
1988	4903	12.0%	53546	7.7%	89788	10.8%	61.0%
1989	5486	11.9%	57417	7.2%	96092	7.0%	61.5%
1990	6250	13.9%	64737	12.7%	105763	10.1%	60.8%
1991	8118	29.9%	103251	59.5%	172061	62.7%	66.2%
1992	10016	23.4%	115852	12.2%	193521	12.5%	65.6%
1993	10848	8.3%	113028	(2.4)%	193911	0.2%	65.0%
1994	11638	7.3%	106670	(5.6)%	194584	0.3%	65.2%
1995	11260	(3.2)%	97547	(8.6)%	165330	(15.0)%	55.2%
1996	10724	(4.8)%	80391	(17.6)%	135945	(17.8)%	54.3%
1997	10336	(3.6)%	71973	(10.5)%	119621	(12.0)%	53.3%
1998	1505		9545		15765		59.6%
Total	**102882**		**1016145**		**1700566**		

• **Certain medical telemetry devices, such as cardiac monitors, are allowed to use unoccupied TV broadcast channels on a secondary basis.** Now that digital TV is beginning to use these formerly unoccupied TV channels, there have been several cases where the digital signal has interfered with these systems. Fortunately no patients were significantly affected.

The FCC is now requiring TV broadcasters to communicate with area hospital and other health care facilities to avoid interference. Manufacturers of these devices are being asked to assist their customers in determining whether they may be effected by new DTV operations and to assist them in finding vacant channels. A Fact Sheet is being developed by the FCC that will list the channels that will be used for digital television service in each area.

PHASE 3-D FINAL INTEGRATION CONTINUES

AMSAT teams from a number of countries recently converged on the Phase 3-D Integration Lab in Orlando, Florida to install the remaining electronic and communications modules into the new Amateur Phase 3-D International Satellite, and make it 'flight ready' for launch.

In a joint statement issued just prior to their departure from Orlando on March 18th, Dr. Karl Meinzer, DJ4ZC, AMSAT-DL President and Phase 3-D Project Leader, and Bill Tynan, W3XO, AMSAT-NA President, outlined recent progress made on the satellite. "We are most happy to be here and to again participate with our international partners in the final integration of Phase 3-D," said Karl. "The cooperation with the American integration team in Orlando remains excellent." Karl went on to note that, "I am happy to say that after successfully recovering from the setbacks caused by the major structural reworks of last summer and fall, the spacecraft is now once again rapidly nearing flight readiness." Karl also expressed his gratitude to Stan Wood, WA4NFY, AMSAT-NA's VP Engineering, Lou McFadin, W5DID, P3-D Integration Laboratory Manager, and the other members of the Orlando Lab team including Dick Jansson, WD4FAB, Rick Leon, KA1RHL and Bob Davis, KF4KSS, for their hard work in preparing the Amateur Radio satellite for the final integration phase.

Soon after his arrival, Peter Guelzow, DB2OS, AMSAT-DL's Digital Integration Manager, performed a number of checks and measurements on the spacecraft's Internal Housekeeping Unit (IHU). The IHU is the spacecraft's main computer. Following this extensive checkout, Peter then successfully accomplished a major integration milestone by sending and receiving commands from the spacecraft via radio uplink. This was a critical task that had to be accomplished before each of the individual flight electronic modules could be commanded on and tested for flight readiness. Dr. Stacey Mills, W4SM, P3-D's North American Command Station, was also present in Orlando to assist the integration team by putting the finishing touches on software to format and decode the telemetry stream from the satellite. Needless to say, there were big smiles all around when, once again, P3-D team members heard the familiar "growl" of 400 baud PSK telemetry coming from the new "bird".

In addition to his duties as AMSAT-DL's Vice President, Werner Haas, DJ5KQ, is responsible for coordinating the entire communications suite for Phase 3-D. While in Orlando, Werner performed yet another bench test on each of the flight electronic modules just prior to their re-installation into the satellite. Then, Werner directed other members of the communications team including Freddy de Guchteneire, ON6UG, and Dr. Matjaz Vidmar, S53MV, in successfully powering up each of the onboard flight electronic modules. Michael Fletcher, OH2AUE, and Harri Leskinen, OH2JMS, were also on hand in Orlando during this time to re-install the 10 GHz transmitter hardware. In addition, Stefaan Burger, ON4FG, assisted the communications team by connecting and powering up the 24 GHz transmitter. It performed "as advertised", delivering its designed 1 watt output into its 26db gain feedhorn antenna.

The RUDAK team was well represented in Orlando by Peter Guelzow, DB2OS, Bdale Garbee, N3EUA, Jim White, WD0E, Chuck Green, N0ADI, and Harold Price, NK6K. They gave the RUDAK digital experiment module a thorough checkout and declared it 'electrically flight ready'. Bdale also performed a complete check of the JAMSAT SCOPE camera. In addition, Gerd Schrick, WB8IFM, was on hand in Orlando to help the P3-D team put the final touches on the satellite's all-important Earth and Sun sensors. These instruments will help ground controllers determine Phase 3-D's physical orientation in orbit for tracking and motor burn considerations.

Meanwhile, Konrad Mueller, DG7FDQ, AMSAT-DL's Structural Specialist, and his team consisting of Horst Wagner, DB2ZB, and the P3-D Lab's Bob Davis, were busy preparing the second Specific Bearing Structure (SBS) for flight. The SBS is the large cylindrical structure that will ultimately carry the Phase 3-D spacecraft to orbit. In addition, Phase 3-D's Documentation Manager, AMSAT-DL's Wilfred Gladish, was also present in Orlando to insure that all the spacecraft's documentation, including each of the spacecraft's drawings and photos, match the 'as built' spacecraft.

Despite the very good progress made in this most recent integration effort, a definitive launch opportunity for Phase 3-D remains unsure. However, negotiations with the European Space Agency for a ride to orbit are continuing in earnest, and all remain optimistic that Phase 3-D will be successfully launched ...hopefully sometime this year. *[For more information, visit http://www.amsat.org . Thanks, Keith Baker, KB1SF, AMSAT Exec. Vice President.]*