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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr. Reed Hundt  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M. St, NW, RM 514  
Washington DC 20554

Dear Chairman Hundt,

I am writing to express the objection of the members of our organization to the proposed increase in fees for VHF Radio Boat Licenses. We also object to the increase in the personal permit fee.

The Commission has historically kept fees at a nominal level in order to promote marine safety, if nothing else. We fear the proposed increase will cause boaters to abandon use of their VHF Radio, or forgo licenses, since the fees involved would be in many cases, more than the cost of the radio. The resultant compromise of marine safety and consequent cost to the taxpayers in Coast Guard and other State and Local Agencies promises to dwarf whatever revenue is realized at tripling current fees.

I understand that of an estimated 10 million equipped boats in the U.S., only about 6.5% are properly licensed. It would appear that enhanced enforcement would raise far more revenue, enhance safety, promote good communications discipline and permit those who choose to flaunt the law an excellent opportunity to fulfill the obligations of responsible citizens.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Paul Mee*

Paul Mee  
President  
Northwest Steelhead & Salmon Council  
Trouts Unlimited, Tacoma Chapter  
P.O. Box 98044  
Tacoma, WA 98498

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# SEA KAYAKER

The Magazine

94-19

PRIVATE RADIO BUREAU  
SPECIAL SERVICE

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3/21/94

Mr. Reed E. Hunt  
Chairman, FCC  
Room 814  
F.C.C.  
1919 M St. NW  
Washington, D.C.

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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Dear Mr. Hunt.

It has come to my attention that the F.C.C. is considering raising the fee for a VHF operator's license from \$35 to \$105. Sea kayakers are just beginning to be able to afford a VHF radios as electronics prices drop. An increase in the operator's license would again put VHF radios out of reach for many kayakers.

A VHF radio can provide a paddler with a considerable margin of safety and prevent unnecessary search and rescue operations. In addition to the distress calls that can save lives, the communications link provided by VHF radios can provide: weather reports (perhaps from larger vessels when weather-band radios can't pick up a signal), status reports via radio telephone to family members if kayakers are delayed by bad weather (avoiding searches initiated by reports of overdue paddling parties) and vessel traffic information when navigating in fog.

It is my opinion that allowing kayakers (and other boaters operating on small budgets) affordable access to VHF radios will help save lives and save money wasted on unnecessary rescues and prolonged searches.

I urge you to help keep VHF licenses affordable.

Thanks for your attention.

Sincerely



Christopher Cunningham  
Managing editor and kayaker

*Sea Kayaker* is a quarterly magazine in its eleventh year of publication. In the interests of our 18,000 readers *Sea Kayaker* has a strong focus on kayaking safety.

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SEA KAYAKER, INC.

7001 Seaview Avenue N.W.  
Seattle, WA 98117  
Post Office Box 17170  
Seattle, WA 98107-7170, USA

Editorial: (206) 789-1326  
Advertising: (206) 789-6413  
Business: (206) 789-9536  
FAX: (206) 781-1141