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Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington D.C. 20554

January 26, 1995
Re: MD Docket No.95-3

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Commission:

I wish to offer the following testimonial in support of reduction of fees for marine vhf radio ship station licenses.

I presently own vhf ship station license WTB 8467 which has recently expired, and I may choose not to re-license because the lump sum fee is sufficient to place the cost of use of the radio too high compared to other safety equipment costs.

I am a recreational boat user of a 15 foot sailboat, and license WTB 8467 was secured to permit operation of a 1 to 5 watt hand held marine vhf radio as a safety device during approximately 15 sailing days per year.

In practice, WTB 8467 has only been keyed to transmit 10 minutes or less in eight years primarily to check if it was functioning properly. The majority of use for this small radio on a tiny recreational sailboat was to receive and monitor ship traffic and weather as a safety precaution, when sailing on such waters as San Francisco Bay.

During such sailing days it was always good to know that had any dangerous situations for myself or for others near me on the water developed, the radio would have permitted communication with the United States Coast Guard.

My assumption based on my own experience is that a great many small boat operators with marine radios carry them as a precautionary safety device, much the same as one carries a fire extinguisher.

The present fee structure of 130$ in a lump sum is sufficient to deter me from re-licensing and carrying a Marine VHF radio as a safety device. If the license was ten dollars per year collected tri-annually, i.e. thirty dollars every three years, it would be much more tolerable.

It appears to me, inconsistent to have virtually no fees for CB band radio users, and to have fees which are sufficient to deter purchase and use of Marine VHF units. Clearly this particularly applies to recreational boaters, where Marine VHF units can have a significant impact on public safety.

I would suggest that the Marine VHF user's safety, and the safety of others on the water should be seen as equally important to that of traveling motorists using the CB band frequencies. The Marine VHF fees should be drastically lowered.

Sincerely yours,

Bruce Hood, Professor of Speech, Butte College

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