

BEFORE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

COMMENTS ON RM-9259)

REQUEST FOR A DECLARATORY RULING)

ON BAND PLANS)

SUBMITTED BY JAMES S. PRATT)

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I am an Extra Class Amateur Radio licensee and would like to comment on RM-9259, the request for a Declaratory Ruling on bandplans submitted to the Commission by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). As I understand this request, it would relate "good amateur radio practice" with "compliance with the accepted voluntary international, national and regional bandplans adopted by cooperation and coordination". While I applaud the spirit of this request, I foresee major obstacles in its implementation.

There are indeed voluntary bandplans that are in effect today, and many radio amateurs obey these plans. However, there certainly is NOT a set of agreed-upon international bandplans that could be referred to in matters of conflict. In fact, many international bandplans conflict with national bandplans, and international bandplans do not agree with one another. For example, the bandplans of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) in Region One do not match the Region Two bandplans, and neither agree with the suggested bandplans of the ARRL in terms of HF operation. In particular, the bandplans on 40 meters (7000-7300 kHz) are in tremendous conflict. Which one of these "agreed upon bandplans" would the FCC refer to in deciding "good amateur practice"?

Another case in point is dealing with VHF repeater bandplans and coordination. The "national bandplan" published by the ARRL does NOT match bandplans adopted by the Northern Amateur Relay Council of

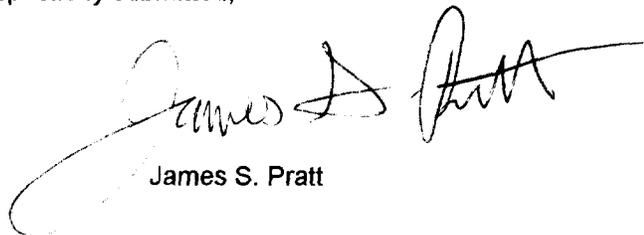
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California (NARCC), the recognized repeater coordination body in Northern California. And the bandplans of NARCC do not match those of the Northern California Packet Association (NCPA), the packet radio coordinator in Northern California as to the proper usage of packet radio channels. Again, which "voluntary bandplan" would the FCC chose in times of conflict?

I believe that the FCC would never be able to enforce such a rule as anyone cited would be able to point out the conflicting bandplans and question the validity of the citation. In essence, the FCC would be creating a paperwork burden for itself as well as the Amateur Auxiliary program.

I suggest the FCC NOT adopt the petition of the ARRL until the ARRL can demonstrate to the Commission how it suggests resolving such conflicts that I have pointed out. The desired outcome of this petition, namely to lessen conflict, may in fact heighten problems as one bandplan's proponent seeks to make the FCC an unwitting accomplice in its fight with another bandplan. The Amateur Radio community should first come together and define the mutually accepted, international bandplans that the FCC would be in charge of enforcing.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James S. Pratt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James S. Pratt