

Proceeding: In the Matter of 1998 Biennial Regulatory Review -- Amendment of Part of the Record 1 of 1
Applicant Name: Robert E. Williams
Proceeding Name: 98-143 Author Name: Robert E. Williams 15200684
Lawfirm Name: _____
Contact Name: _____ Contact Email: _____
Address Line 1: _____
Address Line 2: _____
City: Hillsboro State: OR
Zip Code: 97123 Postal Code: _____
Submission Type: CO Submission Status: ACCEPTED Viewing Status: UNRESTRICTED
Subject: _____
DA Number: _____ Exparte Late Filed: File Number: _____
Calendar Date Filed: 09/07/1998 12:52:44 PM Date Disseminated: _____ Filed From: EMAIL
Official Date Filed: 09/08/1998 Date Released/Denied: _____ Initials: _____
Confirmation # _____ Date Filed: _____

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

INTERNET FILING

98-143

9/8/98

In my opinion, the FCC Proposal for restructuring the U.S. Amateur Radio Service, is a prime example of governmental "REACTIVE" change, rather than being "PROACTIVE". The Commission has proposed changes solely because it is required to make a certain number of changes annually, due to law. In this case, they have done so without thinking of the future and more changes that certainly lie ahead.

Let's face facts: Amateur Radio as it was in earlier years, is dying, if not already dead. The days of needing Morse Code as a reliable means of communication have been superseded by other means: satellite, digital, microwave; and with the advent of high speed computers and modems, even the Internet. This is not to say that use of CW as an approved mode should be eliminated; rather, it should be allowed for those who CHOOSE to use it, for whatever reason.

The RAC and GBRC have already stated their position on NOT requiring Morse Code proficiency at any speed, for any class of license in Canada and Britain. The IARU will also likely eliminate code proficiency requirements at the 2000 meeting. So why is the governing authority in the U.S. not only MAINTAINING a code requirement to obtain an amateur radio license, but RAISING the minimum code speed requirement at the same time?

Years ago, the CW requirement was utilized to keep troublemakers out of the amateur ranks. Has it effectively done this? Given the amount of problems on 75 meters and other HF bands, the answer is an unequivocal NO!. After personally monitoring the HF spectrum reserved for current EXTRA class amateurs, I never want to associate myself with that group. I hear more foul language, intentional interference, and the like, than I do on the Citizen's Band frequencies! A lot of good 13 or 20 wpm testing did to weed out the aforementioned troublemakers.

I support the Commission's suggestion for 4 license classes. We need an entry-level license, where newcomers can learn how to conduct themselves properly on the air by peer EXAMPLE, often referred to as elmering or mentoring. Then 3 additional upgrades based upon operational knowledge, and increased technical knowledge/skill. This is very similar to the upgrade path we have now of: 1) Novice/Tech Plus, 2) General, 3) Advanced, and 4) Extra. All that is REALLY necessary is a 5 wpm test to access the HF bands, as the ARRL proposed.

I realize there is a large community of amateurs who feel the code speeds should stay as they are, with no change in license classes. This

is based upon a belief that, "I had to pass the fast code test, so should anyone else who wants to go past Novice/Tech plus". By this same

thought process, I shouldn't be able to do anything modern life offers, like use cellular phones, calculators, computers, or even indoor plumbing because they were not needed by previous generations! The Amateur Radio Service is getting a wake-up call to join the 1990's.

Lastly, the commission's comments that most new tech plus operators use mainly VHF/UHF is shortsighted, in my opinion. There are MANY tech plus operators currently operating on 10M phone, as the propagation gets

better. I talk to many daily, conditions permitting on 10 meters. There may not have been many there (10m) previously due to lack of people

present to talk to! I feel that if the ARRL proposal of a 5wpm entry level code test for HF phone accesss is made into law, there will be a BENEFICIAL increase in the number of voice operations on all HF bands.

I urge the commission to endorse and use the restructuring proposal submitted by the American Radio Relay League in it's entirety. It is much better for the future of amateur radio than the Commission's NPRM. Hams provide vital communications service in times of need nationwide, let's keep the ranks growing, rather than dropping in number due to outdated opinions and regulations.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Williams
KD7BVL
NCI-1643
ARRL member