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1210 - 7th St SW
Minot, ND 58701
October 12, 1998

Ms Magalie Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW, Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

Re:NPRM - WT DOCKET
98-143

Greetings:

I would like to file the following comments regarding the above notice of proposed rulemaking:

I agree with your proposal to eliminate the technician plus and the novice licenses, leaving the Technician, General, Advanced and Extra license classes remaining.

I support leaving the operating frequencies and privileges for all license classes just as they are and granting the existing novice licensee's CW privileges anywhere on the 80, 40, 15 and 10 meter bands.

I also support allowing the Advanced class amateurs to act as volunteer examiners for all license classes up through the General class license.

Regarding the morse code requirements, I would propose a two tier system. We should require 10 WPM for the General class license and 15 WPM for the Extra class license. Both tests should use the one minute solid copy examination method only. Existing Tech plus licensee's should be grandfathered for existing frequencies and privileges and the 5 WPM code test should be eliminated. Thus a General license would be required to operate below 30 MHz.

I feel morse code should be continue to be required for HF operation as under adverse operating conditions the use of morse code (CW) does a better job of communication than digital, ssb or any other mode. Since Amateur Radio Operators are the last resort used for disaster communications, morse code should remain as one of their tools.

I do not support an additional digital testing element. I would rather see it incorporated into the technician class element as most of our digital communications are above 30 MHz.

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I have been license since 1948 and I am active on all bands and modes from the satellites to 160 meters on digital, ssb and CW. Amateur Radio needs well rounded, well trained operators and technical people so they can do a good job of public service in times of disaster. Your license requirements make sure that happens!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Art Ekblad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Arthur H. Ekblad, K0QQ