

Regarding the proposed changes in licensing for Amateur Radio operators, I would prefer to see less emphasis on code requirements for accessing the HF bands (below 50 Mhz). I'm a Code + Tech (I've passed 5 words a min. morse) and VERY MUCH would like to not lose credit for having passed that requirement. Being "Grandfathered in" for HF privileges seems very reasonable. It satisfies the treaty requirements of code proficiency for HF bands, it properly doesn't take away anything already earned, and sets a new emphasis on the technical aspects rather than just being able to use an antiquated little used mode. These days there are so many other modes.. How would most amateurs respond if they were suddenly required to show proficiency on amateur TV or packet to maintain their HF privileges?

Another factor to consider is finding a way to interest and entice young people into the enjoyment of amateur radio and related technologies. As you know, many of today's people active in many communication technologies got their first taste of the possibilities in the field by experimentation possible with an amateur radio license. With the internet and other attractive possibilities out there these days, we need to find more ways to attract people to ALL the bands, not find ways to discourage or limit them to the point that there isn't sufficient reason to stay with it.

The ARRL proposal to allow the Tech plus to be Grandfathered into the HF bands - with the higher code speeds getting progressively more of the HF spectrum in those restrictive bands, really makes good sense. It provides a starting point, 5 wpm (if there has to be a code requirement at all) then graduating up to a max of 10 to 13 wpm. Even at the starting level of 5 wpm, everyone would be able to experience the thrill of world wide communication possibilities on a regular basis. And no, 10 meters is generally not a decent HF alternative for the Tech +. The last several times I tried it, it was nothing but static... most young folks will quickly find more interesting ways to spend their time if 10 meters is the best HF alternative they have at the entry level.

Thanks for your time.
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