

Dear FCC,

In response to Docket No. 98-143 I respectfully submit the following:

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking suggests the elimination of the Novice license and a reduction in the tested code speed. It appears that the only impetus for this change is to effectively allow more persons the access to different frequencies of operation. As an Amateur Radio operator for 30 years, and police officer for 20 years, this definitely gives the appearance of rules being changed to stimulate radio sales. The present system with the code speeds of 5, 13, and 20 w.p.m. have most recently been "dumbed down" with the advent of Volunteer Examiners. As a Volunteer Examiner myself, I feel quite qualified to say that the multiple choice exam for testing code speed has in effect lowered the speed. It is my recommendation that if you decide to lower any of the code speeds, PLEASE consider making copy of 1 minute solid a prerequisite. It is quite clear from your released document that you believe that knowledge of telegraphy appears to be outdated, however I submit to you that I have communicated with individuals around the world who could not speak english nor I their native tongue. Further, in the realm of emergency and disaster communications, the knowledge of telegraphy may be invaluable when off the shelf communications equipment are rendered useless (ie. storms, potential EMP radiation). FACT: A telegraphy transmitting station is the quickest and most effective station to set up in a crisis. As maintaining a core of telegraphy literate citizens is important, so is the licensing of electronic theory literate individuals. The present system of releasing all of the questions and answer pools to those studying is absurd. This is another case of "dumbing down" a system to allow those who wish to memorize the correct answers without actually understanding any of the theory involved.

The expediency of this Notice of Proposed Rule Making indicates to this writer that "outside influences" may be pushing their profit making agenda. I hope this is not the case. The need for a core of qualified Amateur Radio Operators may not be apparent at this time but history has shown otherwise. Hopefully events such as Y2K and other man made and natural disasters do not catch us unprepared.