WT DKT #
98-143

[redacted]

11/14/98

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DEC - 7 1998
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: proposed changes in Amateur Radio licensing.

I worked very hard for and am very proud of attaining my EXTRA class license by successfully learning Morse Code at 20 wpm.

I knew the downgrading of Code speed requirements was coming, but it is a real kick in the teeth to all of us who, worked so hard for that EXTRA class license, to not only completely drop 20 wpm but to change the names of the licenses.

The need to drop the 20 wpm and change the names isn't clear to me.

I thought the big deal was to allow more people to more easily attain the General class license, thereby having use of more of the bands.

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[redacted] changing the code speed requirement to 5wpm certainly accomplishes that goal and although I personally feel it's just giving in to the whiners and wimps, it's better than abolishing the code requirements altogether. Compromise is ok, but for the life of me, I don't see why the 20 wpm EXTRA is to be dropped or for that matter why changing the names of the license classes is necessary.

I'm sure those who sell books and code tapes will be thrilled with this. There's bound to be a big boom in business and that's ok, bringing more people into ham radio is ok, but for the 10% of us who got that EXTRA, who worked hard and passed that 20 wpm test, it's a real slap in the face to drop it.

It's saying what we did was meaningless, insignificant, [redacted] worthless and deserves no special recognition and the worst part is, there seems to be no valid reason for it.

So I hope you'll think long and hard

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before implementing these new rules.

I say keep the classifications the same — Technician, General, Advanced, Extra. If you MUST, change the code requirements to General 5 wpm and Advanced 12 wpm, at least keep the EXTRA requirements the same; have some respect for us who worked for that license class.

Probably, like most governmental entities, this is all cut and dried and the comments are to make us feel like we have a voice. So when the rules are implemented, I will have a shirt — maybe a bumper sticker, too, that reads

I got my EXTRA class license when it meant something!

Claire A. Doucette, AC6QO
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