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Bill Cross
WT Docket 98-143

DEC 7 1998

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FCC SEC., Magalia Roman Salas
Office of the Secretary, FCC
1919 M St., NW, Rm.222
Washington, DC, 20554

RE: Ham KC6VEJ, new Code speed for Amateur General/Advanced Class.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I personally believe the opportunity to allow both General and Advanced Amateur licenses with a code speed reduction to 5 WPM (with grandfather provision) is a sound one.

Some humans are simply not gifted with the instinctive link between brain and hearing to be highly adept to Morse code. I am a retired EE and yet even as a young Navy sailor in WWII, I could not handle 13 wpm as a Radioman/operator. I became a 1st class Electronic Technician although I wanted to be versed in code for backup. Over the years I've tried several methods to learn, including a PC. But, so far, I've given up. If some ham users had to struggle to get the 13 WPM requirement, how long would they actually use it instead of voice? The answer shows in how many prefer voice to code and without regular use, they lose their ability. Code is like music. Some have the ear for it, others unfortunately do not.

Like so many others, I settled on use of 2M/440 repeater, not requiring a General License. I also dropped out of ARRL because I was not involved in HF and yet I have the transceiver and antennas for it. Like my son in Long Beach, I was hoping to get a General License, as he has, and join the RACES emergency Ham operators as a civic service. Because of my engineering and electronics background, I would have no problem with the technical and legal tests (as I did with Novice and Technical).

At one time code was a critical requirement of amateur radio, but now there are so many challenges beyond code, involving satellites, TV, etc., that allowing more amateurs in this way, would help backup commercial communication. You would be doing both amateurs and the public a favor.

I trust your good judgment in this matter that has been needed for decades. I like to think your favorable decision will be expanding human communications abilities!

Sincerely,

Walter C. Tice, 619-483-3343.

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