

Comment on RM-10787

Don't degenerate us like the Europeans!

Why must America become a "something for nothing" society? Why must we year after year degenerate and lower standards in everything whether it's societal, scholastic, moral or constitutional? And then we ask ourselves "What happened". We as amateurs and members of the ARRL now have the opportunity now to make sure disaster does not happen. Now is the time to say no, we will not allow a hobby that takes great pride in itself to be brought down into the cesspool of mediocrity. We will not allow this hobby to become a group of degenerated socialists that have no order or respect for dedication, hard work and reward for those who do possess great traits. It's these traits that brought us and attracted us to the hobby in the first place; the feeling of pride and accomplishment in studying and passing an exam; to be set apart from others; to be a part of a special group. It means something now and I hope it will mean something in the future. For God's sake, let's look and see what history has taught us in deregulating a radio service using citizens band as an example. We already have a no-code HF band; it's citizens band... If it's something for nothing you want in a radio service/hobby, then go there.

I will cite several examples of "arguments" that the anti-code people will use to justify their point of view.

1. The "Coast Guard doesn't use it anymore so why should I" excuse.

Now there are those who want to remove CW from testing. If we remove the code element of testing then what is next? Removing slow scan television questions as well? How is SSTV relevant to "talking" on HF? Why not remove the questions about photoconductive material and light? What the hell does light have to do with me and how does it relate to me talking on 20 meters SSB? The Coast Guard doesn't teach its radio operators the two families of circles that make up the Smith chart why should hams? Do you see my point and where I'm going with this? How come these individuals aren't yelling about these mentioned topics if their argument is "Why should I have to learn _____ when either I nor the Coast Guard use it?" The "It's not fair because I'm not interested in it" argument is weak and shows that these people are unmotivated and wish to cheapen and lower the standards in a hobby that prides itself in setting itself apart. If you can't do it or choose not to, then maybe it's another hobby you should consider?

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2. The "It's not relevant to ham radio today and I should not be forced to use something I won't use anyway" argument.

The real issue is not the code itself. I agree if you don't want to use it once you get your upgrade then fine. I don't use it hardly at all. No one is forcing anyone to use a particular mode and the subbands won't go away if the code is removed from testing. I can also say that I don't remember or use the polar coordinates of the impedance of a circuit that has an admittance of 7.09 millisiemens at 45 degrees either. I can also say that I had to learn SSTV but I never had any intention on using it. But that's fine it was expected of me to learn. But you know what, like the

code I learned it at some point because I had to if I wanted to upgrade. No gripes, no complaints, not once did I say, "This isn't fair"; I learned it and did it. The issue is to remove something that appears to be "no longer relevant" to one's ability to operate HF. The "code" could have easily been the SSTV topic or the electrical principles questions.... because they too, if argued, can also be "not relevant" to the future of ham radio as these anti-coders use as justification. It is a stupid and weak argument for removing the code from testing. How come No Code International, NVEC or Fred Maia have not recommended we remove testing all together? What will they consider "not relevant" next? Where will it end? Fill in the blank questionnaire and a \$5 fee?

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3. The "We are no longer attracting people to the hobby or upgrading" excuse.

What? I continually find information that indicates growth into and within the ranks of amateurs. There must be some "right wing conspiracy" thing going on here because the numbers I see tell a different story: *(All examples are approximate and rounded either up or down for simplicity)

-Out of 5 license classes (all except Novice) the Technician or No-code Tech is the leader by far and percentage wise is the fastest growing since it is the entry level. But this is where it comes apart.

-Again not using the Novice class in examples, nearly 60% of licensed hams have some form of a code license. That's more than half or that's 6 out of 10 for those who may live in Florida and don't understand a majority.

-Of the 3 current classes, Technician, General and Extra, approximately 251,000 are either General or Extra and 276,000 are Technician. As with any service or "special interest" group, the entry level stages are the most popular and might also show that not everyone who got licensed at entry level had any interest in the hobby at all or are satisfied with Technician. Regardless, a great number or percentage of the entire group decided to rise to the challenge or had a true desire to become "full-blown" hams.

-The most impressive number is in the new licenses vs. upgrade license. Out of 22,000 new licenses, 14,000 upgraded class. Wow! This shows a great deal of people have taken advantage of the new 5 WPM. Of this statistic, nearly 63% of the amateur community is upgrading.

I think both the no-code entry level and the easy, simplified higher levels have struck a pretty good balance and should be left alone. We (us hams who took 4 or 5 written tests and either 13 or 20 WPM code) have had enough taken from us already and don't need to be kicked in the teeth anymore.

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4. The “I cant learn code because its too hard or I don’t have the time” excuse.

Nothing in life should be easy. And if you don’t have the time then I guess you don’t have the time or choose not to make it. Don’t bring down the rest of us for another’s “complaint” or lack of time that the rest of us have had no trouble finding or doing. I wanted to be a doctor when I was younger but I did not “make the cut” so to speak. I got over it and went on. When I received my degree in Fire Science there were times it was hard. The math classes I had to take were hard and at times not fun (I might also add they were “irrelevant” to firefighting). But I did it and kept on smiling. But there are those who will complain and use every other excuse to justify why they can’t have something. Why does society in general do this? Why if someone has something then the rest should have it as well? I’m a conservative so I guess I don’t understand or choose to ignore anything that resembles socialism.

5 WPM is really not learning the code anyway; it’s familiarization and memorization. It’s once you hit the 10 WPM barrier that you must “know the code”. If you can memorize that a dit and a dah together make the letter “A”, then congratulations, you just “memorized” the letter A! So again, we did away with the code in 2000 when we dropped all HF access to 5 WPM. I say if you are smart enough to memorize the 600 questions from a book, you should know when you see a picture of a duck you call it a duck. If you found the time to memorize the book you have time memorize a few dots and dashes!

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5. The “Code is being used as a filter” excuse.

Yes it is a filter. If it wasn’t for the code, the amateur radio service is just CB where 98% are rotten. It, along with the written test, is there because lazy people who have no desire to put into radio more than they get out of it is there as a “filter”. We want only the best and most motivated that’s all. However, there are those who will act like children and this “filter” did not clean them out. In these cases the code was not the “filter”. The filter applies to the rest of us, the remaining 98% of amateurs who respect law and want nothing more than preservation of good, high standards. This is a great segue to number 6. As I say...

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6. The “Have you listened to 3.950 in the evenings, those are extras” excuse.

Well unfortunately this is true for ALL things in general. There is always a “dirty dozen” or “two percent” in everything. It’s too bad that a few have to spoil the entire bunch. This will only come through better enforcement. What class you are DOES NOT indicate how good of an operator you are or will be. Remember that 98% of the hams are good.

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I am somewhat realistic however. I understand that one may need a “gateway” into HF to explore its possibilities. I would support limited access to Technician class in the 28.300 to 28.500 MHz SSB and all “novice” CW sub-band for CW.... besides copying tapes and Morse tutors, how else is one to learn the code unless they are using it on the air? So in this instance, I would support a modified no-code HF privilege.

If you choose not to upgrade, then fine. There is plenty of room in the hobby and plenty to do above the 50MHz band. It appears that about 40% of the people have not up-graded and must be happy where they are. If those who complain spent half their energy trying to learn the code they may actually pass.

If you want to be a ham then know what is expected of you and do it. If you get in and find you don't like the rules, then leave. There are some of us who want to keep a service from going to the want-something-for-nothing, instant self-gratification society.... The issue is not the code; it's a slow removal and decay of all aspects of what has made this the greatest hobby on earth!

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