

I have been a licensed Amateur Radio Operator for 48 years, getting my Novice in January 1955 and earning my Amateur Extra in 1977. I became a VE in 1984. Further, I worked in electronics for 20 years and am now a Professor Emeritus, having retired from a major community college district after twenty years. I am neither an engineer nor attorney, as many of the writers of petitions and comments seem to be. Still, this background gives me good insight into the level of knowledge needed to function on technical and communications planes.

I speak only for myself, not for any amateur related organizations that I belong to; nor do they speak for me.

My opinion of RM-10786 is that it should be denied for the following reasons:

NCI has traditionally used their own opinion as fact and innuendo to highlight and possibly confuse the reader. In researching NCI, I came across this interesting twist: in their comments (undated) re WT Docket No. 98-143, paragraph 17 (footnote 9), they agree that the Federal Aviation Administration is correct in not issuing “waivers permitting blind people to obtain licenses to become airline pilots”. (My emphasis.) As a pilot for 40 years, I wholeheartedly agree! But they apparently feel it is then permissible for any pilot, holding certificates between Student and Commercial ratings to be blind, since they make no mention of these classes. Federal Aviation Regulation 67, Subparts C and D do not agree, giving vision standards in 67.203 and 67.303. Parenthetically, in thumbing through the FAR’s, I was reminded that the minimum age for a student pilot is 14 (61.83(b)). Perhaps there is merit in this minimum age with reference to understanding the theories involved.

Page Para Comment
Executive Summary

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| 3 | 2 | The FCC is neither bound nor obligated to follow the Conference recommendation. |
| | 3 | R & O 98-143 did not mandate following any Conference recommendation; therefore legal notice must be done. |

Introduction and Background

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| 4 | 2 | The last bulleted item adds (Morse). My copy of the 1956 License Manual does not include “Morse” in Part 12.0(d). |
| | 7 | Although there may be no great need for radiotelegraph operators today, the FCC still issues First and Second Class Telegraph licenses at speeds of 20/25 and 16/20 groups and WPM. Proficient Amateur Operators would be of great value for Homeland Security, in the area of public interest, convenience and necessity. |

Virtually No Government...

5 9 Morse station identifications are currently in use by the FAA in identifying navigation beacons at 7 WPM,, which is 40% faster than the amateur requirement. The terrorists of September 11 were known to have taken flying lessons and therefore are cognizant of Morse. It then follows that high-speed Morse has positive implications for Homeland Security, in that it is easily done with more simple equipment and thus provides a measure of security in the transmission.

Bullet 3 Covert troops use Morse.

Bullet 4 Police organizations did use Morse for administrative purposes. Naturally, dispatching was done with voice, so I question the relevancy of this statement, along with paragraph 15 on page 6. Regarding the latter, this convoluted thinking, taken to an extreme, would require Morse of the broadcast listener.

10 Once again, "Morse" is injected into former Part 12.0 and current Part 97.1.

Morse Skill is...

6 12 What data does NCI use to validate this statement?

14 Probably true, but at what cost, complexity and flexibility?

15 Please see comment above

7 16 Yes, it is and always has been a "technical service" and therefore has standards imposed upon it. Those wishing to join it should be well aware of the obligations and privileges.

The Maintenance of...

8 21 What hard data supports NCI's "belief"?

Even the IARU recognizes...

9 24 I find it interesting that NCI agrees that they are not "mind readers", yet they do their utmost to change minds with sometimes questionable data.

The *Only* Reason...

10 25 Even though there is no longer a waiver, neither is it mandatory for the FCC to eliminate Morse.

Other Administrations Have...

11 27 As the days go on, more administrations have opted to eliminate their code requirement. I wonder what the percentage of total amateurs is and how this percentage relates to the whole picture.

28,29 Begs the question by again rehashing previous material.

31 Flattery will get you everywhere.

12 33 True, but see the next paragraph.

34 But it is still the prerogative of the FCC and is not mandatory.

35 It would be interesting to cite the applicable FCC documents.

13 37 Precisely, what is the "good cause" in this instance? The Morse issue is not life or death and should wait for a reasoned conclusion.

40 How is this reference relevant to the Morse issue?

14 41 A burden is a self-imposed, not necessarily legal, issue.

44 How is this relative to the Morse issue?

45 How so? Since no notice was given that Element 1 would be automatically removed from Part 97 and all licenses would be modified accordingly, the legal process must continue.

- 15 46 What other radio service has over 600,000 licensees that would not be adequately served?
- 47 Bullet 1 The logic of the statement is debatable.
Bullet 2 By railroading it through, money would be saved, but would the constituency be properly served?
Bullet 3 The burden concept is back again.

Specific Relief Requested

- 16 49 Expeditious, in this case, means that public input is necessary.
Bullet 2 As I recall, at a point in 1987, Technicians needed to Take Element 1A (5 WPM), Element 2 (Novice) and Element 3 Technician AND General). These licensees then met the R&O 98-143 requirements for General and were upgraded upon application at a VE session without further testing. After that date, Element 3 was split into A (Technician) and B (General) sections. After April 15, 2000, different rules apply. So, I have trouble understanding this “only testing distinction”.

Further personal comments:

On May 11, 1998, in a Statement in Opposition to RM-9259, NCI said on page 2, first full paragraph:

“Morse code is just another mode available...”

I would refer the reader to “Is Morse Code Dead?” by Walter Fair, W5ALT, in which his data indicate that, on HF, Morse runs a very close (if not leading on some bands) second to SSB..

Given the scenario that Element 1 is eliminated for whatever reason, then Elements 2, 3 and 4 would have to be modified to include appropriate questions on Morse operation because of its high usage, just as SSB, FM, packet and other modes are now tested.

Consider then, the number of questions currently in each element are 35, 35 and 50, respectively. What current valid questions would have to be removed?

In this regard, I again refer the reader to the yet unnumbered petition by AE4FA and K0PU, where they critically analyze the contents of the national council of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC) pools over the years. Part 97.1 (d) mentions "...trained operators, technicians, and electronics experts." I often wonder how answering 75% of 120 known questions does an expert make??

Both the unnumbered petition and the Morse item are available several places on the Internet. If you don't have access, please ask a friend to do a search (www.QRZ.com is a good starter) and provide you with a copy.

Further consider that the NCVEC has a petition (RM-10787) which is very much akin to this petition. How many Morse-based questions will be in the question Pools?

Therefore, I would not support this RM.

Thank you for reading and considering my view on this Rulemaking. I apologize to the reader for the inevitable typos and formatting errors that may occur in flipping around for editing and converting to ASCII.

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