

I support the majority of this proposal with the exception of continued morse code testing for extra privileges. The changes in license structure otherwise presents a balanced and well thought out much simplified amateur license configuration. The acceptance of this proposal would reduce the complexity that now exists with amateur privileges in the United States. It redistributes existing spectrum in a more realistic and balanced manner. It will be argued that the combination of General and existing Technicians into the General class will be giving away privileges to those that did not earn them. The current exams for both these licenses cover much of the same material at this time.

As far as continued testing of morse code for extra privileges. This does not appear to be consistent with the international pattern of dropping morse code completely as a requirement for amateur operation. Perhaps the ARRL felt it necessary to compromise with members of its organization that insist on continued morse testing as a means of excluding otherwise technically qualified operators from having access to radio spectrum that they believe they own. I believe that it is in the public interest to discontinue morse testing all together in amateur radio. It will be argued that morse code is essential for emergency communications. There is no evidence to support this allegation. As seen in recent emergencies both voice and digital communications were the main methods used by amateurs to provide emergency support. Morse code is primarily a mode that is used for contesting and dx award programs. And of course rag chewing for those that have a preference for it.

To summarize, I support the restructuring proposal as presented by the ARRL with the exception of continued morse testing for extra.

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