

Comments in Response to:

RM-10867(ARRL), RM-10868(RAF), RM-10869 (K4SX), and RM-10870(NCVEC)

It is obvious from the review of these proposals that a great deal of time and effort has been put into the thought process. All three proposals seek to improve the Amateur Radio Service and decrease the administrative burden on all parties. All should be commended for this effort by everyone who is a stakeholder.

After thoughtful review, I arrived at a conclusion. Of the three referenced proposals, I tend to favor the proposal made by the Radio Amateur Foundation. With the exception of RM-10868 proposals related to VE testing, I could strongly support all other aspects of their proposal. I believe it will receive the broadest support from the Amateur Radio Community, where RM-10867 and RM-10870 might receive wider acceptance from current Technician Class Amateurs. As a result, I have parroted many of the elements of RM-10868. Here are my comments:

Entry License Class

Instead of creating a new, entry-level license class, the Radio Amateur Foundation proposes to modify the popular and highly successful Technician Class license to allow restricted high-frequency telephony, data, image and CW privileges thereby remaining the entry point into the Service.

I agree with the elimination of the Novice Class license and a blanket upgrade of all Novice Class license grants to Technician Class. This coupled with expansion of limited HF privileges is the best overall solution.

Expansion of Privileges for Technicians and Novices with blanket upgrade to Technician

I agree with the proposal that restricted privileges in the high-frequency spectrum of the Amateur Service be granted to the Technician Class license without any reduction in privileges above 50 MHz. There should be some incentive for advancement left. I'm not sure I would go as far the proposals would suggest but RM-10868 provides a good proposal. Along with the 20 meter amateur band, both 40 and 80 meter phone segments could be considered premium space, and access to these segments is one of the fundamental incentives for the radio amateur to upgrade to a higher class license. These segments should be the factor that the amateur community uses as incentives to motivate amateurs to take on the task of self-training, and upgrading to the General Class license.

Permanent Credit for Element 1

I agree with the principle of all existing Novice Class licensees being granted lifetime credit for successful completion of the five word-per-minute Morse code exam.

As for current Technician Class Licensees with credit for successfully passing the five words-per-minute Morse code exam, it is recommended that they be allowed to maintain lifetime Morse code credit, as well. This will encourage those individuals to pursue a path toward a higher-class license.

General and Amateur Extra Stay the Same

Don't make any changes to the current General Class or Amateur Extra Class Licenses. There is no need and it has never been justified to my satisfaction.

I propose that the Element 1 Morse telegraphy requirement be retained for both the General and Amateur Extra Class license.

Blanket Upgrade – Advanced to Amateur Extra

I am in favor of a blanket upgrade of all Advanced Class license grants to Amateur Extra. There is very little difference between the Advanced Class and Amateur Extra in terms of privileges granted or any other factor at this point. It would permanently eliminate a License Class in the files and thus some benefit is derived in less administration for the FCC.

Volunteer Examiner Program

I believe that the Volunteer Examiner Coordinator program for giving Amateur Radio Exams is a program that is a model program. I do understand the concern of some proponents for changing the testing to improve validity and reliability, however, I do not agree with the assertion that the VEC structure is broke. I do agree with the idea of a cooling off period between re-test where a person fails a specific element.

Vanity Call Sign System

The topic of Vanity Call Signs is interesting. I think, if we have a system for Vanity Call Signs, then any licensed amateur should be able to request a call sign of there choosing consistent with their license class. In my mind, it's all Amateur's get the privilege, or none get the privilege. I can't say I like the fact that someone outside of Area "8" can get a Vanity call sign for Area "8" though. Otherwise, I am neutral on the assignment of call signs.

Earl Paazig
N8KBR
Amateur Extra Class