

Sirs:

While I agree with the proposal in principle, I disagree with some of the points. I feel a more limited allowance of new privileges would be far more realistic.

The proposed changes to amateur radio privileges are touted by the ARRL as "giving new Novice licensees the opportunity to sample a wider range of Amateur Radio activity than is available to current Technicians while retaining a motivation to upgrade". Giving new operators 100 kHz of bandwidth on each band is not a "sample". A newly-licensed operator would have little reason to upgrade their license, as they will be gaining less than they are already allowed.

If it were truly an "opportunity to sample a wider range of Amateur Radio activity", a 50 kHz allotment from 80 to 15 meters would offer generous amounts of bandwidth in which to operate, while upgrading would offer an increase in bandwidth by a factor of three or more.

There is also the matter of power levels. There has been legislation put through both on both federal and local levels that gives licensed amateur radio operators greater protection when it comes to installing antennas on their property. Such is well, as hams provide communications during emergencies, and many communities look very severely upon antennas when it comes to restrictive covenants and local ordinances.

However, consider the following: a license class is being proposed in which a radio operator with limited or no experience can operate at 100 watts and have some sort of legal protection where antenna structures are concerned. How long will it be before this privilege is abused? Lets face it, it would be attractive to some elements of the population to take a 25-question exam, buy low-priced non-type-accepted equipment which abounds on internet auction sites, and immediately put it on the air using maximum power and a poorly-designed and installed antenna system. This is an invitation to TVI and RFI. A bad public image is the last thing the amateur radio community wants or needs, and people are fond of pointing a finger at the bad operators even if the vast majority are well-behaved.

If authorized power levels for the new class of license were lower -- perhaps 10 or 50 watts input -- entry-level operators would be more likely to develop good operating practices and pay more attention to proper installation of antennas rather than increasing power to compensate for poor performance. Perhaps a moratorium on external ("linear") amplifiers for "novice" licensees below 30 mHz would also be in order, considering the number of non-type accepted units on the market.

As for the Morse Code requirements, I see no need to keep the code test; however, I believe the allocations for the CW/data portions of the bands should not be changed, as computer technology and data communications will continue to grow and this portion of the band will be needed.

I apologize for the lengthy comments. Thank you for your time.