

Comments on Proceeding 05-235

Proposing rule change regarding morse code requirement for licensing of all amateur radio classes.

Dear Policymakers:

I am in support of easing the requirements for licensure in such a way that gives access to many, if not all, of the amateur radio frequency bands without knowing Morse Code.

I realize, as already expressed by many in this comments process, that Morse Code is an essential means of communication during emergencies and other extremely difficult operating conditions. I don't think that giving access to the voice bands will change anyone's ability to use Morse Code.

As a licensed amateur who currently has no interest in using Morse Code, I can say that there may come a day when I desire or even need to use Morse Code; and I hope that there will still be bands reserved for its use. However, I know for a fact that I have not used amateur radio to the extent that I might have otherwise in my 11 years of being licensed simply because I have no interest in using Morse Code.

Now, I have studied Morse Code. I purchased tapes, CDs, and software programs that teach various methods for using code. I might have even owned the skills to pass current requirements at given points in time. I did all of this so that I might gain access to the VOICE portions of the bands that I desired. Never has my study of Morse Code been made out of an interest in using it as a means of communication. If the proposed changes aren't made, I will surely take the time and effort to pass the Morse Code test sometime. Meanwhile, amateur bands will continue to shrink due to a declining interest from people less willing than I.

Some will call me lazy for expressing such a slow approach to a higher class of license (perhaps especially those that had to do the same thing I have just described to gain a license class of General or greater while having the same lack of interest in the code). Others will say I am foolish for not realizing the GREATNESS of the code. Everyone has a right to their viewpoint. I don't see why anyone should not be able to use longer-distance-able voice bands simply because they don't get excited about Morse Code.

In final analysis, I would like to make a few statements in the form of observations:

1. The proposal does not eliminate bands reserved for the use of Morse Code, and therefore does not affect the ability of anyone who desires to so use such skills in emergency or other situations.
2. As regrettable or fortunate as the case may be, depending on one's viewpoint, we live in a world of easy communication. Amateur service cannot compete realistically for the attention of younger users who can and will preferentially use email, VOIP, text-messaging, and other technologies that do not necessarily introduce them to the technical and inventive side of communication. There are emergency response implications here as well.
3. I have not used voice bands reserved for classes higher than my Technician license allows for about 11 years as a licensed amateur radio operator, even though I desired to do so, simply because Morse Code is so non-compelling to me. I am sure that there must be many others in my situation.

Please implement at least a degree of the intent of this proposal and relax the requirement regarding Morse Code for higher classes of Amateur Radio Licenses. I would be as happy to let the highest class retain the requirement as I would be to see it go at the General class level. I wouldn't be bothered if the requirement was done away with altogether.

Sincerely,

Matthew Hagberg
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