

Comment on WT Docket 05-235

I am opposed to WT Docket 05-235. The proposal to eliminate morse code testing for amateur service licenses above the level of Technician is misguided. Instead, the testing should be strengthened to include a sending component as well as a copying component. Also, the 13 wpm and 20 wpm tests requirement should be restored for General and Extra licenses.

These are my reasons for opposing WT Docket 05-235:

- 1) Morse code transmission requires very little bandwidth and should be considered a preferred mode of communication because of that and suitably encouraged. The bands available to the amateur radio service are finite and the narrower the bandwidth required to communicate the better. Morse code is a clear winner when bandwidth efficiency considerations are taken into account. The more people who are trained in morse code and who use it on the amateur band the more room there will be for all.
- 2) Morse code can succeed where more modern emergency communications systems fail. For example, after hurricane Katrina cell phone capability was virtually non-existent in the affected area as electricity was not available. It was amateur radio service operators who filled the communications role using battery powered and generator powered radios. When reduced to low power communications during an emergency a morse code CW signal will get through when intelligible phone communications are not possible.
- 3) An amateur radio license is a privilege and is something that should be earned, not just given away with minimal requirements. The written tests for license exams have been markedly dumbed down and the answers are available to everyone prior to taking the exam. The 5 wpm morse code test is capable of being passed by anyone willing to study hard for it instead of whining about having to take it.
- 4) Proponents of eliminating morse code testing state that it is a barrier to entry to the amateur radio service. It is, and rightly so. Any collegiate freshman economics course discusses the “tragedy of the commons” – over-use of an asset renders it useless to everybody. There should be barriers to entry to obtaining amateur radio service licenses, with higher barriers for the higher license classes, so that those who are most dedicated and want to participate the most will gain entry.
- 5) One of the objectives of the amateur radio service is to encourage experimentation and the increase of electronics knowledge among the population. There are thousands of QRP (low power) operators who have built low cost continuous wave transceivers at home to send morse code and have learned a good deal about electronics in the process. I realize that we increasingly live in a plug-and-play society which craves instant gratification and where everybody is supposed to be entitled to everything just

because they want it. This is objectionable and I hope the FCC not only maintains the morse code testing requirement but strengthens it.

Sincerely,

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