

I am requesting that the FCC require open-linked-repeater-networks and that such networks provide the technical specifications needed for the inclusion of a repeater, that meets these technical specifications, and that such networks will allow the inclusion of such a repeater without discrimination on social, economic or other grounds as long as the repeater does not disrupt the network. Those networks do not require the purchases of any particular hardware or services to be included in the network.

I understand that this maybe new and expect the FCC to modify and come with there own statement with regard to this issue, as long as the central point of open membership is addressed.

Previous Letter to the FCC

I have an issue with the privatization of the Amateur Service related to large linked-repeater-networks and would like the FCC to look into this area. How do I do this?

Background

There are two specific incidents which lead me to question existing norms.

The first was a question, which I have not received an answer to: Under what circumstances is it legal or illegal to refuse the addition of a repeater to a linked-repeater network?

For example, if I wanted to add a repeater to the D-Star, Wires, Echolink or IRLP linked repeater network using my own hardware, would refusal on social-economic issues be legal?

Since linked-repeater networks have very different properties from lone repeaters, I feel they raise a special set of questions not addressed adequately in the present rulings. These networks provide a layer of control and management that limit access and membership. This limiting of access violates the present rules in two areas, restrictions prevent the development of radio technology ('Continuation and extension of the amateur's proven ability to contribute to the advancement of the radio art') and the use of encryption (The use of keys for VoIP may violate §97.113 'messages encoded' .

However the larger issue is, could the Amateur service become a private-members-only-club with regard to linked-repeater networks.

I was raising the issue of the use of public-airways for private gain in the amateur service, by restricting what has been traditionally free.

It is important to understand this is not a technical issue, it is not about technology or using the repeaters, it is about the linked-repeater-network becoming an exclusive club or business which limits who may join (not just use) the network, setup a repeater or who's hardware may be used.

I feel the access to D-Star technology meets the criteria for legitimate access at the technical level. The question is about access to the 'linked-network' the services,

directories and web services that are needed to be a member of the network. The availability of these services are essential to Amateurs and the membership in a linked-repeater network is restricted.

I would not like private clubs (in the form of linked-repeater networks) to become dominate within the Amateur service and I am seeing a tendency arising to 'exclusive' access, which I feel needs addressing.

I would like to have a wider discussion on this issue within the FCC and the Amateur community and am requesting the FCC to investigate this issue.

I see parallels with the telephone service. The growth of VoIP within the Amateur service raises some of the issues previously addressed in the telephone system.

Telephone companies were required to supply technical requirements for equipment to be used on their networks (make the system open) and not allowed to limit hardware to their own products, a similar ruling is needed for linked-repeater-networks.

Access to the back-office (numbers, directories, etc) supporting networks within the telephone system was guaranteed, access to the web-based support services for linked-repeater-networks is needed.

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