

VE E-Express Newsletter Summer 2005

-----Original Message-----

From: Somma, Maria, KB1KJC [mailto:msomma@arrl.org]

Sent: Wednesday, September 14, 2005 6:25 PM

To: ve-list

Subject: [ve-list:149] [ve-list:148] [VE-LIST:123] ARRL VE Update for Summer 2005

Dear VE:

Volunteer Examiners - Lend me your ears!

These VE E-Express Newsletters serve to catch you up on happenings in the ARRL VEC program and to relay news items that are significant to the VE community.

It is important that everyone on the VE team sign up for the **VE-LIST** and receive the VE E-Express Newsletter via email. If you have VE team members who are not on this email list, feel free to encourage them to sign up.

It has been awhile since a VE E-Express Newsletter has been written, so there is a lot of information to be distributed to the VE populace. Look for additional updates (emails) to follow in the weeks to come. And by all means, please share copies with the rest of your team members. This information will also be posted to and can be printed from the ARRL VEC Newsletter [Web page](#). Any hardcopy requests can be phoned, emailed, faxed or mailed to the ARRL VEC.

As always, we are here to answer any questions you may have.

Please feel free to contact us via your ARRL VE Hotline at 800-927-7583 or email: vec@arrl.org.

I thank you for your efforts in and interest in the ARRL VEC program.

73,
Maria Somma, KB1KJC
Manager
ARRL VEC

vec@arrl.org

Summer 2005 VE E - Express

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VE-LIST Updates

A complete list of instructions can be found on the ARRL Web at <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/ve-list-updates.html>

VEC Staff Changes

ARRL VEC Department Volunteer Examiner Services Supervisor Maria Somma, KB1KJC, has stepped into the position of interim Department Manager, effective June 7. A long-time VEC and ARRL staff member, Somma succeeds Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, who returned to his native Wisconsin in May to pursue a business opportunity.

We are sad to report that Bart Jahnke, a nearly 20-year ARRL Headquarters staff veteran, is not with the ARRL/VEC any more. Bart, his wife and 2 children purchased a farm property 2 years ago, and had planned to one day retire in Wisconsin.

As Bart explained before he left, "With mixed emotions, I am sharing with you, that effective May 2005, I will be leaving ARRL for green pastures. An operations career opportunity surfaced for me that has sped up my timeline to complete the relocation."

We wish him success and prosperity in his new location. And yes, we will miss him.

Maria Somma has been at ARRL Headquarters since 1985, starting out in the comptroller's office. She applied for a position in the VEC Department the following year, handling contact with volunteer examiner teams and training new employees. "I processed examination sessions, and back then we had to overnight all the forms to FCC for processing," she recounted. When she became VE Services Supervisor in late 1988, her responsibilities extended into daily staff supervision, contributing to the VE Training Manual, establishing procedures and moving the department further into the computer age.

Since her arrival, ARRL VEC has conducted more than 90,000 examination sessions and served some 809,000 customers. "I'm proud to have had a hand in what the VEC has accomplished over the years," she said. "The allure and excitement I felt back when I first started here is still with me, and I look forward to future VEC endeavors as VEC Manager."

Also in the VEC Department, Perry Green, WY1O, has been promoted to Assistant VEC Manager. He previously served as Assistant to the VEC Manager. Green came aboard at ARRL VEC in 2002 following the retirement of

Wayne Irwin, W1KI. Before his employment with the VEC, Green was an active Extra Class VE for 12 years. He is president of his local amateur radio club, and deeply involved in emergency communications and a holder of an Army MARS license; AAR1BJ.

In ARRL VEC, Green became the League's primary point of contact for the club call sign administrator program, the issuance of International Amateur Radio Permits and the special event 1x1 call sign program. Subsequently he's become involved with--and a knowledgeable source for information on--accommodative testing procedures, exam software and the vanity call sign program.

The rest of the dedicated VEC staff includes; service representatives, Nonie Madone (test session registration), Pete Warner KB1KJB (post test session processing) and Ann Brinius (test session supplies fulfillment).

FCC's Licensing Restructuring NPRM

On July 19, 2005 the FCC released NPRM (Notice of Proposed Rule Making) WT Docket 05-235 in which the FCC has **proposed** dropping the 5 WPM Morse code element as a requirement to obtain an Amateur Radio license of any class. Use of Morse code for amateur service communications would still be permitted even if the FCC eliminated the testing requirement. The FCC cited changes in Article 25 of the International Radio Regulations adopted at World Radiocommunication Conference 2003 as the primary reason to go forward with eliminating Morse code as an Amateur Radio licensing requirement in the future. Among other changes, WRC-03 deleted the Morse testing requirement for amateur applicants seeking HF privileges, leaving it up to individual countries to determine whether or not they want to mandate Morse testing. Several countries already have dropped their Morse requirements. Any rule changes proposed in the FCC NPRM would **not** become final until the FCC gathers additional public comments, formally adopts any changes to its rules and concludes the proceeding by issuing a Report and Order (R&O) spelling out the changes and specifying an effective date. An FCC Report and Order in this proceeding is not likely until late 2005 or early 2006.

The FCC declined in its NPRM to go forward with any other suggested changes to Part 97 Amateur Service licensing rules or operating privileges beyond elimination of the Morse requirement. The NPRM turned away several other petition requests, including proposals to create a new entry-level license class. The FCC also said that it's already addressed some of the other issues petitioners raised in its "Phone Band Expansion" (or "Omnibus") NPRM in WT Docket 04-140. In that proceeding, the Commission proposed to go along with the ARRL's Novice refarming proposal aimed at reallocating the current Novice/Tech Plus subbands to provide additional phone spectrum. Under the plan, Novice/Tech Plus licensees would be granted CW privileges in the current General CW subbands. This NPRM consolidated 18 petitions for rule making from the amateur community--including one from the ARRL--that proposed a wide range of additional changes to the amateur rules.

1. In response to the 18 petitions, over 6,200 comments were filed. Because some of the petitions have presented sufficient evidence to warrant proposing changing our rules, and in the interest of administrative efficiency, we have consolidated our treatment of these petitions in the NPRM.

2. Based upon the petitions and comments, we propose to amend our amateur service rules to eliminate the requirement that individuals pass a telegraphy examination in order to qualify for any amateur radio operator license. We believe that this proposal, **if adopted**, would (1) encourage individuals who are interested in communications technology, or who are able to contribute to the advancement of the radio art, to become amateur radio operators; (2) eliminate a requirement that we believe is now unnecessary and that may discourage amateur service licensees from advancing their skills in the communications and technical phases of amateur radio; and (3) promote more efficient use of the radio spectrum currently allocated to the amateur radio service. We solicit comments on our tentative conclusions. We decline to propose any other changes to amateur radio service licensing or operating privileges in this proceeding.

In summary, we (the FCC) believe that the public interest will be served by revising the amateur service rules to eliminate the telegraphy testing requirement. We also believe that these proposed rule changes will allow amateur service licensees to better fulfill the purpose of the amateur service and will enhance the usefulness of the amateur service to the public and licensees. We therefore seek comment on these proposed rule changes. We conclude that some rule changes proposed by some petitioners are unnecessary, or are already being considered in the ongoing *Phone Band Expansion NPRM* proceeding.

The amateur community has the opportunity to comment again--this time on the FCC's proposals in response to those petitions. The deadline to submit comments on the FCC Notice of Proposed Rule Making and Order (NPRM&O) in WT Docket 05-235 is October 31, 2005. Reply comments are due November 14. Comment deadlines are established by the NPRM&O's publication in the Federal Register, which occurred August 31. To file comments on the FCC NPRM&O in WT Docket 05-235 following the FCC Comment Filing instructions below.

1. Comments may be filed electronically using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS), the Federal Government's eRulemaking Portal, or by filing paper copies. Commenters filing through the ECFS can be sent as an electronic file via the Internet to <http://www.fcc.gov/e-file/ecfs.html>. If multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, filers must transmit one electronic copy for each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, commenters should include their full name, U.S. Postal Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Interested parties can view others' comments in the proceeding at the ECFS system. Commenters may also submit an electronic comment by Internet e-mail. To get filing instructions for e-mail comments, commenters should send an e-mail to ecfs@fcc.gov, and should include the following words in the body of the message, "get form." Commenters will receive a sample form and directions in reply. Commenters filing through the Federal eRulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>, should follow the instructions provided on the website for submitting comments.

2. Commenters who chose to file paper comments must file an original and four copies of each comment. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number. All filings must be sent to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, 445 12th Street, SW, Room TW-A325, Washington, D.C. 20554.

3. Interested parties may view documents filed in this proceeding on the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) using the following steps: (1) access ECFS at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs>. (2) In the introductory screen, click on "Search for Filed Comments." (3) In the "Proceeding" box, enter the numerals in the docket number. (4) Click on the box marked "Retrieve Document List". A link to each document is provided in the document list. Filings and comments are also available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, 445 12th Street, SW, Room CY-A257, Washington, DC, 20554. Filings and comments also may be purchased from the Commission's duplicating contractor, Best Copy and Printing, Inc., Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW, Room CY-B402, Washington, DC 20554, telephone 1-800-378-3160, or via e-mail www.bcpweb.com.

People with disabilities may contact the FCC to request reasonable accommodations (accessible format documents, sign language interpreters, CART, braille, large print, electronic files, audio format, etc) by e-mail FCC504@fcc.gov or telephone 202-418--0530 or TTY 202-418--0432. For additional information, contact William T. Cross, Public Safety and Critical Infrastructure Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, 202-418--0680; TTY 202-418--7233.

FCC 605 Form Revised

A revised FCC Form 605 <http://www.fcc.gov/Forms/Form605/605.html>, "Quick-Form Application for Authorization in the Ship, Aircraft, Amateur, Restricted and Commercial Operator, and General Mobile Radio Services," has gone into effect. The new form must be used for all receipts as of July 18. The revised form includes a new Question 13 (subsequent questions have been appropriately renumbered) that will affect amateurs applying for an administrative update (AU) to reflect a change in licensee name. Question 13 now asks: "If the licensee name is being updated, is the update a result from the sale (or transfer of control) of the license(s) to another party and for which proper Commission approval has not been received or proper notification not provided?" Amateur Radio Service applicants should always answer "no" to Question 13. Not answering the question--which has nothing to do with the Amateur Radio Service--could result in dismissal of an application. Starting with receipts of Monday, July 18, 2005, the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau no longer will accept an FCC Form 605 bearing an edition date prior to July 2005. Applicants can avoid filing outdated editions by submitting applications electronically via the Universal Licensing System (ULS) <http://wireless.fcc.gov/uls>. **This particular change will not affect usage of NVEC Form 605, that VECs and VE teams use.**

FCC Increases Vanity Call Sign Application Fee

A higher Amateur Radio vanity call sign application fee is now in effect for applications received on or after Tuesday, August 23. The FCC raised the vanity application fee for fiscal year 2005 to \$21.90 (from \$20.80) for the 10-year license term. The FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (WTB) released a new Fee Filing Guide http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-260618A1.pdf spelling out fees for services it regulates. A re-evaluation in the number of anticipated vanity call sign applications--or "payment units"--accounts for this latest fee increase. The FCC says it anticipates 7600 vanity applications--up only slightly from a year earlier. More information on vanity call signs is available on the ARRL Web site <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/vanity.html> .

Number of ARRL Sessions Served on VEC Web Site

The ARRL VEC Web site makes it possible to access a list of the number of ARRL VEC exam sessions each Volunteer Examiner has served in. The listings are in alphanumeric call sign order according to VE location by state. Being present and ready to serve--or providing service--at an ARRL/VEC-coordinated test session, measures the activity count. Access your VE session Participation total via the "VE Session Counts" page <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/veparti.php> .

The VE Session Counts page recognizes the accomplishments of the 25,000-plus current and actively accredited ARRL VEs. We thank you for your support over the years.

Current Exams and Question Pools

Written Exams

2-1-2003
2-2-2003
2-3-2003 (removed from circulation)
2-4-2003 (removed from circulation)
2-5-2003
2-6-2004 (contains no graphics)

3-1-2004
3-2-2004
3-3-2004
3-4-2004
3-5-2004

4-1-2002
4-2-2002
4-3-2002
4-4-2002
4-5-2002 (contains no graphics)

Code Exams - 2001

1-1-2001
1-2-2001
1-3-2001
1-4-2001
1-5-2001
1-6-2001

If your team is using ExamWin software, please be sure that you have the July 2004 ExamWin update (vers. 1.25). If you will need any NCVEC Form 605s, CSCEs, other exam summary forms or code supplies to go with your ExamWin use please contact us at the ARRL VEC.

The current ExamWin Software can be downloaded at <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examwin/> .

Click on the link "choose this file". That will download the executable file for ExamWin. Once downloaded, click on it to execute the installation process.

This is a working ExamWin program, but to protect the security of our grading program, the files for creating templates have been removed from this installation. As an ARRL VE, you can add the template files back in from your earlier ExamWin installation, or this installation allows you to retain the templates if you already have them installed.

If you are an ARRL VE, and if you do not have the templates, contact ARRL VEC for the 36 template files. We will send/email the files to be installed into the working directory. This ExamWin software is free, but is only supported for ARRL VEs.

ARRL VEs may also request a full ExamWin package on CD by contacting the ARRL VEC at 800-927-7583, or by email to vec@arrl.org

Question Pools

The three current question pools (and any exam designs based on these question pools) are valid as follows: Extra Class Question Pool Effective July 1, 2002, Technician Class Question Pool Effective July 1, 2003, General Class Question Pool Effective July 1, 2004. There were no updates in 2005.

Due to errors, omissions, FCC Rule changes or the like, the National Conference of VECs Question Pool Committee has formally withdrawn the following questions. Please make sure these questions have been blocked in the ExamWin software.

Technician Element 2 (effective 7/1/2003):

T1D11
T1E08
T2B17
T5B04
T5B06

Extra Element 4 (effective July 1, 2002):

E1A10
E1A11
E1F05
E2E09
E2E10
E6B17

General Element 3 (effective July 1, 2004):

G4B14
G5B11
G8A06

The Question Pools can be viewed on the ARRL Web at <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/pools.html>

Question Pool Committee (QPC) Members:

* QPC Chairman: Jim Wiley, Anchorage Amateur Radio Club VEC, 8023 East 11th Court Anchorage, AK 99504

Email: jwiley@alaska.net

* QPC Member: Larry Pollock, W5YI VEC, POB 565101, Dallas TX 75356-5101

Email: nb5x@w5yi.org

* QPC Member: Perry Green, ARRL VEC Assistant Manager, 225 Main St, Newington CT 06111

Email: pgreen@arrl.org

SESSION TIDBITS

*** Fall National Exam Day Weekend -- September 24-25, 2005**

The ARRL VEC Sponsored Spring and Fall National Exam Days are held annually on the last full weekends of April and September. These are the last Saturday and Sunday of their respective months. See the date above. Knowing these dates well in advance allows prospective hams and upgraders to have a target to shoot for when preparing for their test(s).

Good luck to all National Exam Days participants and we thank you for your ongoing support of these events !

* Exam Session Registration and Supplies

Now is the time to start planning your session dates for 2006. Please remember to schedule your yearly listings [specific date(s) and location(s)] with us near the beginning of every year. Team liaisons should contact the ARRL VEC directly so that we have the most up to date information posted in our computer and on the ARRL VEC Exam Session Search page <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/examsearch.phtml> .

Under normal situations, the team should try to register 3 to 4 weeks in advance of the session. This way we can make certain the materials requested reach the team in a timely and cost effective manner.

Field Stocked teams should be especially vigilant about keeping us informed of who has possession of the exam supplies. Notify us immediately when the teams Field Stock changes hands to ensure that any exam updates will be mailed to and received by the proper person. Periodically check your supplies to make sure they are current and that the quantities are sufficient.

* Fees

The ARRL VEC Test Fee for 2005 is \$14.00. Remember that a \$14 fee is charged to every person seeking a new license or upgrade as listed on your ARRL VEC Candidate Roster. That one fee pays for one attempt at each of the four exam elements. If an applicant retests an exam element that was failed moments earlier, another \$14 fee is charged (and another Roster entry is created).

The maximum reimbursement fee the ARRL VEC allows for test sessions is \$6.00 per exam fee collected. Only the amount needed to offset out-of-pocket expenses incurred (or to be incurred) is to be retained. As long as the expense is warranted and has been prudently incurred, the expense is specifically related to exam administration and the team keeps a complete record of the expenses paid (with receipts kept in team records for three years), then the fee can be retained.

Non-ARRL-Member License renewals or changes can be processed by ARRL VEC for a \$14 fee. The \$6 reimbursement may **not** be retained for these non-session related transactions.

* What to return to the ARRL VEC after each test session

For Field Stocked ARRL VE teams, do not return unused test supplies--keep them with your field stock. But do send back anything the applicant has written on, including any Form 605, applicant's written element answer sheet(s), code copy sheet, and the 10-question quiz used with the code test. Also send back any sheet used by the applicant during the exam for calculations or notes, etc. Send back every test document, including all passed AND failed tests. Yes, send us the failed tests! Also send us a copy of EVERY credit document the applicant presents to you seeking exam credit.

For non-stocked ARRL VE teams, you must return **ALL used** and **unused** materials after each test session. This includes anything the applicant has written on, Form 605, applicant's written element answer sheet(s), code copy sheet, and the 10-question quiz used with the code test. Also send back any sheet used by the applicant during the exam for calculations or notes, etc. Send back every test document, including all passed AND failed tests. Also send us a copy of EVERY credit document the applicant presents to you seeking exam credit.

* FCC CORES Taxpayer Information (SSN/FRN) on Applications

We have seen a steady pattern of SSNs or FRNs not being collected and included on NCVET Form 605s. This will delay license processing for applicants. Be sure to check each Form 605 before the applicant's leave to ensure that either an FRN or SSN is written in the box. If the number doesn't look like either an FRN (ten digits) or an SSN (with a format of xxx-xx-xxxx), ask what the number is that is in that box. All too often we find a strange number is a driver's license number.

* Element Credit

Be sure to include a copy of each CSCE or other credit document you receive and accept as valid for credit. A Callbook listing dated prior to Fall 1967 (the first date Callbook included the class of license) is only useful for

listings for Novice code credit where the listing shows a "WN#xxx", "KN#xxx" or "WV#xxx" Novice call sign. Callbook listings dated before Fall of 1967 will not verify any pre-3/12/87 "Technician" grandfather credit as the call sign itself (except for Novices) is not unique to a particular license class. Be sure to also include a license copy or internet call sign data listing for each applicant. A complete list can be viewed at our web page <http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/grandfather.html> .

*** Certifying VEs Signatures**

Every so often we receive NCVEC Form 605 applications within test session packages where one, two or all three VE's signatures are missing. When reviewing NCVEC Form 605s for SSNs/FRNs, also check to be sure that all three required VE signatures are completed at the bottom of forms where a new license or where an upgrade is earned.

When filling out the Test Session Report, please insure all participating VE's are legibly printing their information under the "Participating VE's List". Easy to read call signs, allow us to quickly confirm VE certification and guarantees credit can be given for VE participation.

*** VE Credentials Updates**

License Renewal: Notify us when your license has been renewed so that we may begin creating your renewed credentials or renewal stickers. This is free.

License Class Upgrade: Notify us when your license class has been upgraded so that we may begin creating your upgraded credentials. This is free.

Systematic Call Sign Change: Notify us if your call sign has been systematically changed so that we may begin creating your new credentials. This is free.

Vanity Call Sign Change: Notify us by mail with \$2 if you have a new Vanity call sign AND if your accreditation is not otherwise in need of renewal or license class update. A new badge at your routine renewal or at time of an upgrade is free.

Notify the VEC department directly when your address, your email or your phone number(s) have changed. Notification to VEC by email, fax, mail or phone is acceptable.

*** VE Patches**

Volunteer Examiner patches are available for ARRL VEs. Send a self-addressed envelope and a copy of your ARRL VE Badge with \$3 to the ARRL/VEC. Additional patches can be obtained at \$3 per patch. ARRL/VEC will pay the postage.

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