



VHF/UHF Contesting and Awards Survey

A state of the sport survey - October 2002

Background

With a higher proportion of VHF-only licensees than ever before, one might expect that VHF/UHF contesting would be experiencing a surge in popularity. To the contrary, while the total QSOs being made in the multi-band contests seems steady, the number of logs - and thus the number of serious participants - has fallen off considerably since 1996. This has led the ARRL to ask you for your thoughts on why this might be happening and how to best address and reverse the trend. We'd also like to hear from you about the ARRL VHF/UHF awards program in general.

The survey is the result of a request from the ARRL Board to look into ways to increase participation. It is being sent to a random sample of regular top-scorers and average participants, regardless of their score, plus clubs that regularly participate in VHF/UHF club competitions. Our interest is in gathering information we can use to improve the participation and quality of both the various ARRL VHF/UHF contests and the ARRL VHF/UHF awards programs. The detail and quality of information in your answers is especially important to us.

The Survey

The survey below is organized into several areas of inquiry. The first group deals exclusively with contesting:

- ? Existing contests - how can their formats, rules, or reporting be improved such that activity and log submissions are increased? This survey refers to the following ARRL sponsored contests: January VHF Sweepstakes, June & September VHF QSO Parties, August UHF Contest, 10 GHz and Up competition, and the Oct/Nov EME Contest
- ? New contest formats - are there new formats that would be attractive to the existing contest community?
- ? New participants - what improvements or additions to VHF/UHF contesting would attract more operators to the sport? How can these operators be reached?

A second area of interest is the ARRL VHF/UHF awards program and increasing the level of interest and participation. The existing awards such as VUCC, WAS, and DXCC, are derivatives of the HF awards program. There is some concern that these awards either have too high an initial qualification level or may be missing some interests of VHF/UHF operators. There are two groups of questions:

- ? Existing awards - how can their rules or categories might be improved so that more activity is encouraged?
- ? New awards - are there new award programs that would be attractive to VHF/UHF operators?

Responding

Each topic has a series of questions related to either VHF/UHF contesting or awards. Please select the answer that best matches your position or situation. ***Please feel free to extend your remarks (use additional pages if necessary).*** Your detailed comments are very important.

The survey should be returned to: VHF/UHF Survey, attn: Wayne Mills, N7NG, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington CT 06111. We would like to have the returned surveys by October 31st. A postage-paid reply envelope is enclosed for your convenience. You may copy the blank survey and distribute it to other amateurs, particularly to operators that may not be active in VHF/UHF contesting now. A summary of the results will be available in the future.

Thanks for your time and 73!

The ARRL Membership Services Committee



ARRL VHF/UHF Contesting and Awards Survey

Please return to: VHF/UHF Survey, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111, by October 31st

1) On which VHF/UHF bands are you active? (Check all that apply)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 50 MHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 902 MHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 5.7 MHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 GHz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 144 MHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 1.2 GHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 GHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 119 and Up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 222 GHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.3 GHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 GHz | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 432 GHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.4 GHz | <input type="checkbox"/> 47 GHz | |

2) In which VHF/UHF contests have you participated in the past year? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes | <input type="checkbox"/> ARRL June VHF QSO Party |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARRL August UHF Contest | <input type="checkbox"/> ARRL September VHF QSO Party |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARRL EME Contest | <input type="checkbox"/> ARRL 10 GHz and Up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-ARRL VHF/UHF events | <input type="checkbox"/> I have not participated in VHF/UHF events in the past year |

3) Compared to five years ago: (Check one)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I participate in more VHF/UHF contests | <input type="checkbox"/> I participate in fewer VHF/UHF contests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I participate in the same number of VHF/UHF contests | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not participate in VHF/UHF events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was not licensed five years ago | |

4) If your participation increased or decreased over the past five years, what are the principle reasons for the change?

5) Which VHF/UHF operating awards have you earned?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> VUCC (VHF-UHF Century Club) | <input type="checkbox"/> WAS (6m and up) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DXCC (6m and up) | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-ARRL awards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None | |

Regarding Existing ARRL VHF/UHF Contests

6) What aspects of the ARRL VHF/UHF contest format would you change and why?

7) What aspects of non-ARRL VHF/UHF contests that you find interesting should be included in ARRL VHF/UHF events?

8) In ARRL VHF/UHF contests, which rules would you change and why?

9) Have you seen the expanded Contest Results on the ARRL Web (www.arrl.org/contests/results)? If so, what additions or changes would you make to the presentation?

10) What additions or changes would you suggest regarding the editorial content (write-up) of QST VHF/UHF contest articles?

11) Are you satisfied with the level of log-checking that is applied to ARRL VHF/UHF contest logs?

12) If you participate in ARRL VHF/UHF contests but don't submit a log, why?

13) If you don't submit a log, what changes would you suggest be made to ARRL-sponsored VHF/UHF contests that would make you more likely to send in a log?

14) Are there specific barriers that prevent you from participating or sending in an entry? If so, what are they?

New Contest Formats

15) If you could design your own VHF/UHF contest, what would it be like?
(Frequencies - Modes - Method and Type of Exchange - Categories - Scoring)

New Participants:

16) How were you introduced to Amateur Radio contesting? (Please select one)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I heard activity on the air and decided to join in | <input type="checkbox"/> A friend / Elmer who is active in contesting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was invited to participate in a multioperator station | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation or speaker at a club meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARRL Field Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Article in QST or other publication caught my attention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

17) Have you ever been a contest Elmer to another ham? If so, approximately how many?

18) How can the ARRL identify potential newcomers and encourage them to participate in contesting?

Existing ARRL VHF/UHF Awards

19) What aspect of the ARRL VHF/UHF award formats would you change and why?

20) What aspects of non-ARRL VHF/UHF awards programs do you find interesting which should be included in ARRL awards?

21) Which rules of the ARRL VHF/UHF awards programs would you change and why?

22) What do you like and not like about the management of the ARRL VHF/UHF awards program?

23) What would make you more likely to actively work for an award and apply for it?

New ARRL VHF/UHF Awards

24) If you could "design your own VHF/UHF awards", what would it be like?
(Frequencies - Modes - Categories - Rules - Certificates, Trophies, Other Awards)

One final question...

25) Are there questions or issues we should have asked about but forgot to include?

To help us understand who is participating, would you please complete the following:

- 26) Your callsign (optional) _____ 27) QTH (state) _____ 28) Age _____
29) # Years Licensed _____ 30) # of Years in VHF Contesting _____ 31) # of years in HF Contesting _____
32) Do you have Internet access? _____ 33) ARRL Member? _____ Yes _____ No

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