



RSSL NEWS

OCTOBER
2004

The Journal of THE RADIO SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA

REGISTERED AS A PERIODICAL IN SRI LANKA

The General Meeting for the Month of October will be held at the Auditorium of Vidya Mandiraya, SLAAS – Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science 120/10, Vidya Mawatha Colombo 7 on Friday the 29th of October 2004 at 5.30 pm.

Note change of date of meeting to Friday as the last Wednesday of October is a holiday.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Please note that unless otherwise notified, monthly General Meetings will be held at the Council Room of SLAAS at 0530 PM on the last Wednesday of the month.. Please also monitor the RSSL net regularly on 145.625 MHz at 0900 P.M. for RSSL announcements You are welcome to contact any Council member if you need to verify. Membership and ID Card applications can be obtained at the meetings Membership renewals are also accepted by the Treasurer at the monthly meetings.

Amateur Radio page on TRC web site

Upon a request by RSSL The Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC) has included a page on Amateur Radio on their web site. Applications for the issue/renewal of Amateur Radio license for local operators and foreign guest operators can be downloaded from this site.

The Gazette relevant to Amateur Radio operations and a link to the RSSL web site are also included in this web page. The Amateur Radio page could be viewed under the Spectrum Management page of the TRC website.

<http://www.trc.gov.lk/ar12.htm>

The RSSL wishes to thank the TRC for prompt implementation of their request to include Amateur Radio page on TRC web site.

Consultation on Reducing the speed of Morse Code proficiency requirement for HF access by Amateur Radio license holders.

The TRC has published on their web site a consultation paper on above topic. Responses are invited from interested parties to the above consultation paper and could be sent till 31st October 2004. The RSSL will send it's official views after the meeting on 29th October 2004. The above consultation document could be viewed at the Consultations Documents page in the Spectrum Management section of TRC web site.

http://www.trc.gov.lk/trc12_consultation_document.htm

Members who wish to have a copy of the above consultation document in full by Email please send a request email and if you need a copy of the printed document by post please send a long self addressed stamped envelope. All requests should be sent to Secretary Kusal (Contact details given at the end of newsletter)

RSSL stand on Morse code test status for HF access

On the 7th of October the TRC informed the RSSL that the TRC had put a document on its web site asking for

submissions from radio amateurs, members of the public and interested parties to reach them on or before the 29th of October. The RSSL has sought a consultation with the DGT and also pointed out that the time allowed is insufficient as this matter is of great importance to Amateur Radio. We have also pointed out that it will not be prudent to appear to rush through changes to regulations.

The RSSL members have expressed strongly that the document is a very hurriedly got up one with the 4 proposals given are formulated without any valid basis and while seeking to give benefit to Amateur Radio, in fact threaten the very existence of Amateur Radio in the country . Out of the membership of almost 200 member countries of the ITU only about 25, have completely taken off Morse, mostly countries of European Union. Some countries have reduced speeds to 9 WPM and some to 5 WPM., while many have not changed. It is also a fact that some countries have very strong restrictions on Amateur Radio, permitting operations only on special occasions from supervised club stations, while a few have suppressed amateur radio totally. It is also to be noted that in Sri Lanka unlike in these countries which have liberalized, equipment importation and possession, it is under the strong supervision of the Ministry of Defense. HF operations in Sri Lanka have been very disciplined and it is no secret that the mandatory period of one year on Morse Code before being allowed the use of Voice, makes the radio amateur learn the moral obligations of amateurs, educates them of the conventions and practices of amateur radio without blindly getting on the international airwaves.

Another school of thought is that we should follow the west and a few people have urged the TRC to abolish Morse Code Testing for HF operations. The reason given is that we should follow trends.

THE COUNCIL MET, REVIEWED THE SITUATION AND IS ASKING MEMBERS TO BE PRESENT AT THE OCTOBER MONTHLY MEETING TO DECIDE ON THE RSSL STAND ON THIS ISSUE. IT ALSO ASKS THE MEMBERS WHETHER THEY FEEL THE REGULATIONS SHOULD NOT BE CHANGED OR SHOULD THE RSSL PROPOSE REDUCTION OF MORSE SPEED TO 9 WPM FOR GENERAL CLASS. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND LET US KNOW YOUR VIEWS IN WRITING OR BY EMAIL. IN TAKING THE VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS IF NECESSARY A VOTE WILL BE TAKEN AT THE GENERAL MEETING. THE RSSL WILL DEVELOP ITS OFFICIAL STAND ON THE TRC DOCUMENT AFTER THE MEETING.

Below is an extract from the 8 page document.

(We are offering members the full document by e-mail or a printed copy for a Self Addressed Stamped Envelope)

CONSULTATION ON REDUCING THE SPEED OF MORSE CODE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT FOR HIGH FREQUENCY (HF) ACCESS BY AMATEUR RADIO LICENSEES.

1. Introduction

The Amateur Radio Licences are issued in Sri Lanka after a theory and practical Morse Code test conducted by Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (TRC).

The categories of Amateur licences are Novice (B), Novice (A), General and Advance.

The General and Advance class licensees have authority to access all HF Amateur frequency bands where Novice (A) can access only few HF frequency bands and Novice (B) Licensees are not authorised to access any HF Amateur frequency band. TRC has received several requests from Amateur licence holders as well as other interested parties to reduce the speed of Morse Code proficiency requirement for HF access. In order to encourage new comers getting in to Amateur Radio Service, internationally most of the countries have relaxed the Morse Code requirement. Hence some countries have removed the Morse Code proficiency requirement for HF access and in some countries it has reduced to 5 words per minute (wpm). According the modification made to the Article 25.5 of the ITU Radio Regulations at WRC – 2003 it says, that “administrations shall determine whether or not a person seeking a licence to operate an amateur station shall demonstrate the ability to send and receive texts in Morse code signals.”

2. Responses to the Consultation

Responses to this consultation paper may be forwarded by Hand, Post, E-mail or Fax to the Director-General, Telecommunications Regulatory Commission of Sri Lanka, 276, Elvitigala Mawatha, Colombo – 08, Sri Lanka on or before 31st October 2004.

For Further clarifications following Officers of TRCSL may be contacted.

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Please note that all comments received will be published in the TRCSL web site. Should you wish all your comments or parts of it to be treated as CONFIDENTIAL please indicate clearly and mark accordingly (for example with an header on each page stating CONFIDENTIAL when submitting your comments). All comments received before the above mentioned closing date will be considered by the TRCSL and published subsequently, unless the person responding had requested

the comments to be treated as confidential. The views of the TRCSL on the comments received will also be published. The 4 proposals put forward by the TRC in summary are as follows.

1. Reduce Morse speeds: Advanced class :From 20 WPM to 12 WPM, General Class Reduce 12 WPM to 5 (WPM). Without any other changes. One Novice class. VHF only. (Upgrade 4S6 to 7?)

2. Same conditions as above regarding Morse Code speeds but give all bands, HF, VHF, UHF to Novice class as well.

3 Morse Code only for Advanced Class Licenses at 5 WPM. No Morse for General and Novice Classes who get all band access.

4. Complete elimination of Morse Code and allow all Advanced, General and Novice all bands with only power levels being different.

6. Consultation

The TRCSL invites comments on the above proposals and, in particular, seeks the views of Amateur license holders as well as non-Amateur license holders on the following issues:

- 1) Would the above proposals encourage the new entrants?
- 2) What practical problems are foreseen if the Morse Code requirements are reduced or totally eliminated?
- 3) Should any additional rules be applied to Amateur licence?
- 4) Any other type of proposal other than above four?
- 5) Merits and demerits of each proposal?
- 6) Comments on any other relevant aspects of the proposals are also invited.

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