

Report of the Programs and Services Committee July 2007 ARRL Board Meeting

The PSC had an in-person meeting in April and will have a second in-person meeting immediately before the July Board of Directors meeting. Other committee business has been conducted via the PSC reflector.

The ARRL Articles and Bylaws charge the Programs and Services Committee with a broad range of responsibilities including recommending program priorities and, evaluating current and developing services within the Membership and Volunteer Program Department. The PSC is also responsible for overview of Education activities, W1AW, and advising the CEO on the Volunteer Examiner and Volunteer Professional programs.

Recent changes in HQ structure, operational actions and the use of ad hoc committees have impacted the ability of the Committee to fulfill some of those responsibilities. The effect of these changes on the future role of PSC and the scope of PSC activities is a subject of current discussion within PSC.

A. Membership and Volunteer Programs

1. Membership Services

Membership Services has now been integrated into the combined Membership and Volunteer Programs Department. Most of the MVP staff have either taken on additional duties or begun cross-training to better understand the range of MVP activities and have the capability to fill-in when needed. With the appointment of Kathy Allison as LoTW Specialist senior managers have been freed from answering most day to day LoTW inquiries. This has been well received by LoTW users.

DXCC continues to improve and is generally maintaining a seven week turnaround time on cards. The addition of WAS to LoTW has required some adjustment and fine tuning but is now working well.. Staff and the Committee are reviewing *DXCC* data with view toward seeking ways to encourage interest among new and casual DXers.

Contest – Contesting continues to be a favorite activity of members. This interest is frequently coupled with suggestions for new contest categories, rule changes and new contests and operating events. The committee works with staff and the Contest Advisory Committee to evaluate the suggestions as they arise. At the time contest line scores were removed from QST the Board committed to expand narrative contest coverage in QST and on the Web page. From time to time contesters question whether that commitment is

being met. The committee is looking into alternatives to the current process for processing contest awards certificates. Processing certificates is time consuming and can be the source of hard feelings toward ARRL if there are any errors on the certificates. The PSC voted to recommend that ARRL not give credit for any contacts made on 60 meters toward any ARRL operating awards including DXCC, DXCC Challenge and WAS. The PSC further recommends that should there be a substantial increase in the frequency allocation in the future, the prohibition against credit for 60 Meter contacts could be reviewed as to contacts made on or after that date. It is not known if any action has been taken regarding these recommendations.

Advisory Committees –

VUAC has been busy as the report will show. The rules for the EME contest have been revised with a view to reflecting the interests of both long time EME enthusiasts and those attracted to this area by advances in digital communications. VUAC is now looking at other contest issues.

CAC has also been active and is currently looking for clarification of the Club Competition Rule and for a referral to consider the rules relating to remote operation in contests.

DXAC there have been no referrals to DXAC, however this may change with evolving political situations throughout the world.

As always look to the advisory committee reports for more specific information.

2. Field Services

Field Services has now been integrated into the combined Membership and Volunteer Programs Department. Field Services has also undertaken a program of cross-training staff to better understand the range of Field Services activities and to enhance the capability to fill-in as needed.

ARES and EmComm

The Committee is heartened that ARRL is close to hiring a dedicated Emergency Communications Preparedness Manager. Public Service is one of the four pillars of ARRL yet the ability of Field Services to meet its Public Service emergency communication preparedness goals in the past year has been hampered by the lack of a person dedicated to managing the League's emergency communication preparedness mission.

The Group charged with reviewing the NERPC report, identifying action items, and referring the action items for implementation by staff or for consideration and further action by either PSC or the Board continues to keep PSC informed. Thus far no action by PSC has been requested.

The ability of local ARES groups and ARRL EmComm volunteers to provide emergency communications service continues to be dependent upon the ability of volunteers to secure any necessary credentialing locally.

Clubs

The Club e-newsletter has been successful and generated good response. The newsletter is part of an ongoing plan to expand and promote the awareness of the resources and materials available from ARRL for use in club programs and activities. FS staff has initiated processes to notify Section Managers of Clubs that have not provided current club information and contacts to HQ for over a year.

Section Organization

The FS staff has begun a series of monthly teleconferences with Section Managers. Each teleconference involves a different group of SMs. As part of its responsibility to evaluate programs and services and recommend possible changes PSC looks forward to seeing a summary or report of the teleconference discussions.

Web Page

The ability of members and volunteers to fully utilize the resources of ARRL and the information available on the Web Page continues to be hampered by the current Web Page structure and ease of use. The expansion and possible revision of the Web Page been pushed back to 2008 due to a lack of programming resources needed to facilitate these additions.

ADMNT and Digital modes

The committee continues to discuss options to provide information resources to amateurs engaged and interested in the use of digital technology for emergency communications. Reports continue of communications on certain digital modes containing content not permitted by Part 97. The committee understands that a presentation on this issue may be made at the July Board meeting and is deferring any further activity until that time.

B. Education Services

Education Services Manager Debra Johnson, K1DMJ will provide a complete report as part of the COO Report. From a PSC perspective ES has "hit the road running." Debra spoke to PSC at its April meeting and presented the Committee her outline of Education Services goals regarding Organization of the Department, Student/Mentor Feedback, Instructor Communications and Relationships, Educational Resources, Development of Licensing Materials, EmComm Instruction and Outreach. Educational Services will need inter-departmental cooperation to achieve these goals. ES has begun regular distribution of an e-newsletter for volunteer instructors and teachers. ES is also working on developing objectives/standards for education products and quality/value assessment criteria for licensing products and other education products/programs.

C. VEC

Volunteer Examiner Coordinator Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM will provide a complete report as part of the COO Report. From a PSC perspective VEC has done a superb job of meeting the tremendous increase in new and upgrade testing as a result of the change in license requirements.

D. Other PSC Activities

Field Code Proficiency Testing

Director Weaver is leading a field test pilot program to provide testing of Morse Code proficiency in the Great Lakes Division. The next status report will be made at the July PSC meeting.

US to US QSL Bureau

The question of the feasibility of a US to US QSL Bureau has been raised again. This question was last studied in 1991. Current QSL Bureau Managers have been surveyed as to the interest in taking on this task and the pros and cons of a stateside QSL bureau. A summary of the prior study and the comments of the current Bureau Managers will be presented at the July meeting of PSC.

July 11, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

Director Jay Bellows, KØQB, Chair

Director Jim Weaver, K8JE

Director Dick Norton, N6AA

Director Bruce Frahm, KØBJ, also as CAC Liaison

Director Frank Fallon, N2FF

Vice Director Mike Raisbeck, K1TWF

Ad Hoc Member Vice Director Cliff Ahrens, KØCA as DXAC Liaison

Dave Patton, NN1N, Manager, Membership and Volunteer Programs