



# The A-1 Operator Club Newsletter



First organized in May 1933, the ARRL A-1 Operator Club has a proud history and occupies an important place in Amateur Radio tradition. Communications Manager Ed Handy, W1BDI, announced its formation with these words in July 1933 *QST*:

Are *you* an A-1 Operator? Excellence in stations has often been emphasized. Yet, station performance, equipment, adjustment, etc., are but part of the story. The *operation* of the equipment, knowledge of procedure, and general communications technique are of very great importance in determining the results of any station. To bring attention to *good operating* as a paramount issue, and to give it something of the importance it deserves we are this month announcing in these columns the launching of a *club for A-1 operators*.

By early 1934, the roster of recognized A-1 operators had swelled to more than 400; by the end of 1938, to 1,000. Then, as now, nominations were not made lightly; through the years, recognition as an A-1 Operator has represented an unsolicited acknowledgment of one's high standing among one's peers.

Much is said about the handful of radio amateurs whose operating practices do not quite measure up. Not enough is said about those who, by contrast, lead by example — who set the standard for others to follow. Let us correct that now. Let us honor them as A-1 Operators and in so doing, honor the best in Amateur Radio. — *David Sumner, K1ZZ*

This newsletter is going to US members of the ARRL A-1 Operator Club. In March 1995 there were only 3,000 members world-wide. Do you believe that this is an accurate representation of the number of above average operators? We don't. We ought to be seeing 500 new A-1 Ops each year.

The good news is last year we received 477 nominations. The bad news is that the club grew by only 140 new members because two of every five nominations lacked a second.

## Who to Nominate?

Membership comes after nomination by two Club members who find the nominee qualified to be a member of this elite group. Nominations should be based on the following:

1. General considerations. Transmissions stable, well filtered, and occupying the minimum required bandwidth. On voice, clarity of speech, brevity, uses appropriate words and good grammar. On digital modes, clean tones and appropriate operating-frequency selection. On CW, proper character formation and spacing with appropriate speeds (high-speed ability is not a consideration).
2. Procedure. Always listens before transmitting. Appropriately short CQs, avoidance of unnecessary repetition, use of proper procedures and abbreviations recommended by ARRL, avoidance of common inanities in making contacts. When operating a message forwarding system, make sure

that traffic is routed to its destination.

3. Judgment and courtesy. Courteous, and considerate of the other operator's point of view. Takes every opportunity to assist others, especially beginners. Patient and helpful at all times, and never knowingly operates in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.
4. Copying ability. This applies to all modes, for there is a knack to passing information through such difficulties as interference from other stations (QRM), atmospheric noises (QRN), fading (QSB), etc.

## How to Nominate

Use the roster to see if someone is already a member, or to find a second for your nominations. Send those nominations to: ARRL Awards Desk, 225 Main St., Newington, CT 06111. If you're on e-mail send them to: [awards@arrl.org](mailto:awards@arrl.org).

We'll need to know your name and callsign plus the callsigns of your nominees. If you know their names and addresses, please include that information too. Names and addresses are particularly important for nominees living outside the USA. Please take a moment to check the accuracy of the information you send us. It can save a lot of work and avoids delays at this end. Thanks.

We're ready to receive your nominations, and issue awards. Please, help us reach the goal of 500 new members per year!