

DX Advisory Committee Report

July 2014

to the

**American Radio Relay League
Board of Directors**

Submitted by:

**Arne Gjerner, N7KA
Chairman, DX Advisory Committee**

To the Members of the PSC:

From: DXAC – Prepared and submitted by Arne Gjerner, N7KA, Chairman

Subject: A Comprehensive Review of the DXCC Rules

At the July 2013 Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting a resolution was passed that tasked the Program and Services Committee to request the DX Advisory Committee (DXAC) to perform a comprehensive review of the DXCC Rules and recommend changes that may be warranted. The DXAC is asked not to base any possible changes to the entity criteria on any individual case that had recently come before the DXAC and the P&SC. Rather any proposed changes to the entity criteria should be in the broadest of terms and possible conditions. Additionally of particular concern to the P&SC was the increasing use of remote control stations by the amateur community and the affect such use has on the DXCC Program.

The task was received from Board Liaison, Mike Lisenco, N2YBB, on July 16, 2013. Attempting to forward the tasking documents I encountered problems with the DXAC reflector and contacted Bill Moore, NC1L for assistance. He in turn contacted Joe Carcia, NJ1Q who located the problem with the reflector while Bill was on the phone with him... Joe stated the reflector may have been down for 1 or 2 months. On July 17 I forwarded the Tasking documents to the committee.

I want to commend Bill Moore, NC1L, and Joe Carcia, NJ1Q, who were very responsive and quickly corrected the problem.

INITIAL reviews of DXCC Rules

Initially the DXAC committee was requested to review the tasking documents for a general understanding of the task presented. This included the Draft changes to rule 8 and 9 and new paragraph 11 prepared by DXAC Staff Liaison, Dave Patton, NN1N. The DXAC was also requested to review the current DXCC rules. For this review it was suggested that the rules posted on the ARRL DXCC web page, dated July 2011 be used to avoid any possible variations of the rules that may be posted or printed in other locations or references. This established a known reference document for any and all future discussions by the committee.

Proposed changes to the DXCC Rules.

Section I.1. Basic Rules

Second paragraph, last sentence:

Change from: “All DXCC awards can be endorsed with country totals (see Rule 5).”

Change to: All initial DXCC awards (unless otherwise stated) shall be issued for working and confirming a minimum of 100 entities on the ARRL DXCC List. All DXCC awards can be endorsed with country totals (see Section I, Rule 5).

Discussion: The basis of any DXCC award is submitting proof of having worked and confirmed a minimum of 100 entities on the ARRL DXCC List. This change clarifies the minimum quantity required for each DXCC award.

This change should have no impact to the intent of this or others rules other than to clarify the requirement for working and confirming a minimum quantity of entities for each DXCC Award.

Paragraph 1.v. First sentence:

Change from: “you must have worked every entity on the current DXCC List.”

Change to: ‘you must have worked and confirmed every entity on the current DXCC List.’

Discussion. First sentence: The basis of any DXCC award is stated in paragraph 3 of the Introduction to the DXCC Rules that states “Individual achievement is measured by working and confirming the various entities comprising the DXCC List”. Additionally, Section I, paragraphs 1.r, and 1.s, state the requirement of working and confirming entities on the current DXCC List.

This change should have no impact of the intent of this or others rules than to clarify the requirement for working and confirming any entity on the DCCC List.

Paragraph 1.v. second sentence:

Change from: There are 338 current entities on the ARRL DXCC List.

Change to: There are 340 current entities on the ARRL DXCC List, dated January 2013.

Discussion: second sentence: The quantity of current entities has changed.

This change should have no impact of the intent of this or others rules than to clarify the quantity of current entities as of the DXCC List dated January 2013 on the ARRL DXCC web site.

Section I.8

Dave Patton, NN1N proposed a draft change to delete the second sentence requiring remote control operating points must be “land based”.

Discussion: The first sentence requires all stations contacted must be land based. Rule I.9 states the location of any station is the location of the transmitter therefore the transmitter shall be “land based.” This change removes restrictions on the location of the remote control operator.

The DXAC agrees with the draft change proposed by NN1N.

Section I.9 (Addressing remote station locations)

Addressing this rule has certainly received the largest input from the DX community and also from the DXAC members as well.

To examine this issue, one must read the **Introduction** to the ARRL DXCC Rules. The third paragraph, third sentence that states “Individual achievement is measured by working and confirming the various entities comprising the DXCC List.” Most DXers would describe this sentence as meaning the use of an amateur’s home station.

The recent increase in use of remotely controlled stations has become a concern to many DXers. Most will say that using a remote station will allow an operator to enjoy amateur radio, including working DX, if they are prevented from doing so due to restrictions at their residence.

It is interesting to note that two major DX contests sponsored by ARRL and CQ do allow the use of a station using remote control. There is no restriction for the remote control operator location. These are competitions between stations in defined geographical areas and rather stringent restrictions are in place to define the physical boundaries in which the station, including the transmitter, receiver, and antennas must be located.

Two types of “remote” stations should be identified because of their basic difference.

1. The first remote station is built by an individual for their own use. In most all cases these stations are built because the operator lives in an area with restrictions due to home-owner covenants or local government restrictions, the operator lives in a large metropolitan area in an apartment and antennas are not allowed. In this case, building a station in the local area (local area may vary but usually would not mean “hundreds” of miles or greater). Or their home station is capable of remote operations when the operator travels away from home.
2. The second remote station is one built by other individuals that are not located in the operator’s local area. These remote stations may be in another state or even located across an entity many hundreds or thousands of miles from of miles from the home station location of the control operator using the remote station.

The word “unfair” when remote operations are discussed usually implies that the propagation advantage that one station has over another. This is especially true when two local operators, one using their home station and the other using a remote station many miles away are attempting to make a QSO with some rare entity, possibly a new one for their DXCC. Often the

remote station will have the advantage in propagation and possibly in the station capability.

Most input received from the DX community suggested some distance restriction be included for the location of a remote station from a home station location. Suggested distances ranged from 50 miles to 500km. Normally the issue of any distance advantage is noticed on 160M and to a greater extent on 6M.

The DXAC favored the proposed change of rule I.9, stating, however, some distance limitation should be included for the remote station. Using an idea similar to that used for contest stations, establishing a distance of 200km separation between the remote station and the operator's home station location and that no part of a remote station can be located more than 200km from any other part.

Discussion:

Remotely operated stations have existed for quite some time and for years were for use of the operator. Advances technology has opened remote operations to a larger segment of the amateur community. Remote operations are here to stay and how one utilizes these stations is their choice. For every day QSOs very few objections are made. It is the use of remote operations in DXCC award program that has resulted in most of the comments and objection to the use of remote stations.

Some segments of our hobby do allow use of remote stations, the examples are DX Contests. The rules that are proposed for use of remotely controlled stations in the DXCC program are presented in an attempt to follow closely the idea presented in the Introduction paragraphs to the DXCC Rules. That idea is the DXCC program is used as a measure of personal achievement and the rules define how each individual's achievement is pursued.

Our view is that any changes beyond what are presented within this document might possibly have detrimental effects to the DXCC program.

NN1N proposed new rule 11. The DXAC approves of this new rule; however suggest that paragraph 3 be deleted.

Section III. Accreditation Criteria

Paragraph 1.c) last sentence.

Change from: ... and GloriosoIsland (FR/G).

Change to: ...and Glorioso Island (FR/G).

Discussion: This is most likely just a typographical error (space between Glorioso and Island is missing) and the change should have no impact of the intent of this, or any other, rules.

Entity Criteria

Section II. DXCC LIST CRITERIA

The issue of entity criteria is one that has surfaced in recent years after an area of Serbia known as Kosovo declared its independence wishing to become an independent nation. Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008.

The current rules for entity criteria have provided paths for the addition of new entities to the DXCC List. With current world politics, Section II.1 Political Entities, especially II.1.a and II.1.b are being questioned by some amateurs as being too stringent. The current rules, II.1.a and II.1.b provide for a vote by the member states of the UN or ITU member states.

A number of DXers asked that the entity criteria rules be changed to remove the obvious political aspects that influence a number of the UN and ITU member states. There exists an almost equal number of DXers who do not want a change in DXCC Rules just because a “new” situation has been presented to amateur radio.

One must look at the UN member states and recognize that many exist as separate political nations. This fact alone would demonstrate that politics cannot be removed from the voting process of the UN, and the ITU (since it is an organization within the UN.)

Many, if not most of the DXAC polled DXers in their sections to get an understanding of their position on the entity criteria rules. In some cases it was noticed that the more seasoned DXers were not in favor of a change in the entity criteria, while beginning DXers would be acceptable to a change.

The DXAC has discussed this issue and in comparing a preliminary “straw” vote in Nov 2013 with a final vote taken in May 2014 a few changes in the votes did occur.

During DXAC discussions two individual proposals were presented to the committee as possible additions to the political entity criteria.

The first proposal was to add new criteria, paragraph 1.d) “The entity is a listed on the U. S. Department of State’s List of Independent States.”

Discussion: This proposal had been discussed by the DXAC during a previous task and was rejected. This list is maintained by the US State Department who has sole control of who is placed on or removed from the list. This list cannot be free from the politics as a number of DXers have commented on. This list however does parallel the UN’s list of member states quite closely. The US State Department list contains 195 members and the UN list contains 193 members. The two additional members on the US State Department List are 1.) Kosovo, and 2.) Taiwan.

The second proposal was to add a new criteria, paragraph 1.d) “The entity shall have received documented recognition as a new entity from 2/3 of the UN member states. This recognition is independent of and external to UN proceedings.”

Discussion: This proposal was presented in an attempt to avoid the political influence that exists in the UN. At the UN, a possibility exists that a single vote against affirming an application will reject the application.

The application process for a new member initially requires a review and vote of the UN Security Council. Any recommendation for admission must receive the affirmative votes of 9 of the 15 members of the Council, provided that none of its five permanent members — China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America — have voted against the application. If an application is not approved by the Security Council it is rejected and not forwarded to the General Assembly for consideration or vote. If the application is approved by the Security Council the application is forwarded to the General Assembly where a 2/3 affirmative vote is required from the member states for acceptance as a member of the UN, (129 of 193 members is 0.668%). As of 25 June 2014, 108 UN member states have documented recognition of Kosovo. During discussions and voting this proposal was called the PEER Group vote.

One point that was mentioned when discussing any changes to the DXCC Entity Criteria was the possibilities of unknown consequences occurring as result of a vote for a change in the rules. I was made aware of some of the consequences that did surface during previous discussion for changing the entity criteria including direct contact from an entity official. This information was shared with the committee as information.

The DXAC committee final vote concerning the entity criteria from 15 members resulted in 7 votes for no change to existing, 3 votes for adding the US State Department List of Independent States, and 5 votes for adding the 2/3 majority of UN member states having documented recognizing a new entity.

It is clear that the vote is split close to the middle with 7 of 15 (or 46.67%) for no change in entity criteria and 8 of 15 being (or 53.33%) for adding one other criteria. The vote of the DXAC does not indicate a consensus for changing the DXCC List Entity Criteria for Section II.1. The DXAC proposes that NO Change be made to the entity criteria at this time and any efforts presently in process for any entity to gain membership in the UN or the ITU be allowed to take its due course. This vote does not indicate a failure of the DXAC to reach a consensus. It does however represent the divided opinion of the DX community on this subject.

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July 2014

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