

ARRL Electronic QSL Policy (June 2010 Revision)

Discussions regarding the QSL services offered by several electronic QSLing services suggests that there is some confusion about ARRL QSL policy. Simply put, there has been no change in League policy regarding e-QSLs. ARRL does not accept QSLs (for any award, including DXCC, WAS, VUCC and WAC) that have been transmitted to the recipient via electronic means for its awards. Anyone acting as an authorized QSL manager, however, may receive logs via e-mail (or any other direct means) and send QSL cards, via post mail, to recipients. This is the traditional QSL manager process. As has always been the case, certain norms are expected when handling cards in this manner.

First, we expect that a QSL manager will seek permission from operators for whom QSLs are handled. We do not accept cards from unauthorized QSL managers for award credit.

Second, since most operators requesting QSLs expect that the returned cards will correctly reflect the actual QSO data, we expect that a QSL manager will do the checking required to assure that only real contacts are verified. We all know that raw logs contain many errors. Often, these errors are only detected when incoming cards are compared to the log. The distribution of QSLs, without any checking of the information contained on the incoming cards is poor QSLing practice, and may lead to blanket rejection of all QSL cards from the station/manager in question.

Also, we expect to be able to identify cards as authentic. Many cards are printed on home printers, and, in many cases, the data is printed on card stock at the same time. Although this is technically acceptable, the process often makes verification difficult. In certain cases we may reject these cards. Cards should be personalized or otherwise made unique through the use of a stamp or other personal mark (signature or initials) across a label boundary.

Finally, the concept of obtaining a QSL card at no charge is a long-held tradition in ham radio and DXCC, and we endeavor to continue this tradition. QSL managers handling cards for DXCC submission must make cards available if adequate postage is supplied. Postage can be supplied by sending International Reply Coupons (IRCs), direct funds, or SASEs. *As noted in DXCC rule 12(d) - Complaints relating to monetary issues involved in QSLing will generally not be considered.*

For its awards, the ARRL does not accept electronically transmitted QSLs that are printed by the recipient. There is no restriction placed on how log information is conveyed to an authorized QSL manager, however. Cards provided by QSL managers who make a reasonable effort to comply with the guidelines presented here will be gladly accepted for DXCC credit.

The only, current, exception to this policy is ARRL's LogBook of The World System. ARRL has gone to great lengths to provide a system of electronic verification of individuals, even before they are able to upload logs and/or claim credit towards awards, through the use of Trusted QSL software and VeriSign Inc electronic certificate authentication. For more information on LoTW, visit: <http://www.arrl.org/logbook-of-the-world>