

ARRL Programs and Services Committee (PSC)

Report to the Board of Directors – January 2018

This report from the PSC covers the 6-month period from July 20, 2017 to Jan. 10, 2018. During this period the PSC membership has fluctuated due to Kent Olson, KA0LDG giving up the chair and then not standing for re-election as Dakota Division Director due to heavy work commitments. President Roderick appointed Rod Blocksme, K0DAS, PSC chair on Aug. 21, 2017 and newly elected Dakota Division Director Matt Holden, K0BBC to the PSC effective Jan. 1, 2018. The table below defines PSC membership over this 6-month period.

	July - Aug. 2017	a/o Aug. 21, 2017	a/o Jan. 1, 2018
Chair	Kent Olson	Rod Blocksme	Rod Blocksme
Member	Tom Abernethy	Tom Abernethy	Tom Abernethy
Member	Dwayne Allen	Dwayne Allen	Dwayne Allen
Member	Bonnie Altus	Bonnie Altus	Bonnie Altus
Member	Rod Blocksme	Kent Olson	Matt Holden
Member	Greg Sarratt	Greg Sarratt	Greg Sarratt

Two PSC meetings have been held since the last report – July 20, 2017 in Newington, CT and Oct. 5, 2017 via Teleconference. Activities and actions of the PSC for this period follow:

DX Advisory Committee (DXAC) – The DXAC consists of 15 amateurs each appointed by their division director. The committee members choose their chairman - Gary Jones, W5FI, of Shreveport, LA. The board liaison, appointed by the president, is Dwayne Allen, WY7FD, of Sundance, WY. The DXAC report is contained in document #23.

Contest Advisory Committee (CAC) – The CAC consists of 15 amateurs each appointed by their division director. The committee members choose their chairman – Dennis Egan, W1UE, of Marlborough, MA. The board liaison, appointed by the president, is Rod Blocksme, K0DAS, of Robins, IA. The CAC report is contained in document #22.

VHF & Above Contest Revitalization Working Group – This working group currently consists of Kermit Carlson, W9XA, chairman; Rod Blocksme, K0DAS; Matt Holden, K0BBC; and Bart Janke, W9JJ. This PSC working group previously recommended terminating the ARRL UHF Contest due to yearly continued decline in participation. In its place the group designed a new contest – the 222 MHz and Above Distance Contest with rules to increase participation and to encourage operations in the amateur bands above two meters. The first running of this new contest took place the weekend of August 5-6 with nearly 200 logs submitted – more than the number in the last UHF Contest. The working group held a teleconference wrap-up meeting on Dec. 19, 2017 to review the details of the contest results. The working group’s task is now complete and recommends “sun setting” the group at the next PSC meeting.

Public Service Enhancement Working Group (PSEWG) – The PSEWG consists of the following:

Dale Williams, WA8EFK, Chair
Jim Pace, K7CEX
Jim Tiemstra, K6JAT
Ken Bailey, K1FUG
Mike Corey, K11U
Steve Ewald, WV1X

The PSEWG report is contained in Attachment 1 of this report.

Education Subcommittee – The Education subcommittee consists of the following:

David Woolweaver, K5RAV, Chair
Kermit Carlson, W9XA
Bonnie Altus, AB7ZQ
Tom Delaney, W8WTD
Tommy Gober, N5DUX
Kevin O'Dell, N0IRW
Gordon West, WB6NOA, consultant

The Education subcommittee reports for the last two quarters of 2017 are contained in Attachments 2 and 3 of this report.

Award Recommendations – The PSC has been forwarded the nominees for the 2017 Doug DeMaw Technical Excellence Award and will present a motion to the board. Nominations for the International Humanitarian Award have also been received.

Member Benefit and Services Study – The PSC and A&F have been jointly tasked by the EC with performing a study and analysis of all member benefits and services. Initial coordination between the two committee chairs has taken place and a draft listing of benefits and services has been prepared and sorted into the “Five Pillars” of ARRL: Advocacy, Education, Membership, Public Service, and Technology. This is an important study to establish “who gets what – and how much does it cost”. From this completed analysis, informed decisions can be made for improvements.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rod Blocksome, K0DAS
PSC Chair
ARRL Midwest Division Director

Attachment 1 – PSEWG Report

Date: January 5, 2018

To: Rod Blocksome K0DAS, Chairman, Programs and Service Committee

From: Public Services Enhancement Working Group (PSEWG)

Jim Pace K7CEX

Jim Tiemstra K6JAT

Ken Bailey K1FUG

Mike Corey K1IU

Steve Ewald WV1X

Dale Williams WA8EFK, Chair

Subject: Year-End Report

Our charge: "... to conduct a pragmatic review of ARRL's public service program elements; identify opportunities as well as gaps that could benefit from improvement, modernization etc.; and finally, provide findings and suggestions to ARRL's Programs and Services Committee for consideration."

With few exceptions, the PSEWG has continued to meet by teleconference on a weekly basis. Over the past year, we have completed our evaluations of shortfalls and potential solutions for resolving key issues with the Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®). Included are:

1. Lack of uniform training standards.
2. No standards for setting members qualifications to serve.
3. Inadequate credentialing.
4. No method of certifying and group's skill set
5. No method of establishing any group's capacity to handle a given load.
6. No method of determining any group's capabilities.
7. No complete method of registering ARES members.
8. Inadequate reporting of activities by ECs.

Some of the listed shortcomings can be related to a common cause, and items 7 & 8 began a search for suitable reporting methodologies that would be effective in several key areas.

1. Provide adequate information storage
2. Allow a full membership database to be developed
3. Allow remote field entry
4. Allow HQ access to database
5. Insure membership security
6. Allow automate reporting
7. Be Internet accessible
8. Allow database download and/or offline operation by local ECs
9. Provide adequate user training.

The PSEWG found several such systems were being operated independently across the country serving multiple ARES Groups. None was found to meet all of our needs but some providers were willing to incorporate our new requirements. The key problem with a field-developed system relates to system ownership and long term survivability and based upon those concerns PSEWG asked for input from

commercial vendors. Two were selected initially and one was ultimately found to be acceptable for ARES' requirements.

Budgetary bids were solicited to determine the financial feasibility of such a system. During this period, HQ staff was intimately involved with the features and benefits of the ARES membership reporting system and its benefits were found to be profoundly important not only to the future of ARES but an immediate advantage was realizable. After staff discussions at HQ, funding was made available to allow the immediate acquisition of the system now named "ARES Connect".

The PSEWG planning process included a timeline to introduce a revised ARES Program to the field following acceptance of the changes by the Programs and Services Committee at the January 2018 meeting. The schedule includes plans to roll out the introduction to the entire field organization at the Hamvention in Xenia, OH in May 2018. Some preliminary training in ARES Connect is necessary to have the Field leadership prepared for their members to begin the entry of their personal information. Said training must therefore be complete by May 1.

Hamvention appears like the perfect time to maximize exposure to the new plan and PSEWG is working with ARRL's Communications Manager David Isgur to develop a full introductory program for the Field Organization. Whether the Hamvention date is achievable remains to be seen. There is a considerable amount of editing and material review that remains before the Guidelines can be called complete. One of those final reviews will be conducted by qualified individuals in served agencies. At this writing, the decision relating to the date for full introduction to the field is under review.

Preliminary guidelines for the revisions to ARES have been drafted for the Programs and Services Committee. As these were prepared by different authors and the writing style is varied, these documents are in the process of being consolidated into a consistent format by ARRL HQ staff. The key elements will remain while the body and structure will be developed into a uniform format. Each of these guidelines has had the benefit of being evaluated by the PSEWG's Peer Review Team and the PSEWG has considered and included most of the PR Team's suggestions. Our plan incorporates methodology to allow continuous improvement to occur in ARES as both the needs of our Partner Agencies change and technology improves, so the plan is much less likely to become obsolete or require manual updates.

It should be noted, that PSEWG took the initiative to make needed improvements to ARES immediately and is committed to working with ARES's Partner agencies on an ongoing basis as we move forward to looking at the future of the NTS. It is expected that NTS improvements may well be driven by the new requirements of ARES messaging in serving their Partners.

At this time, PSWEG only asks for continued support from P&S as we continue this effort.

Respectfully submitted,



Dale R. Williams WA8EFK

Chair

Public Service Enhancement Working Group

Attachment 2 – Education Subcommittee Report, 3Q 2017

September 29, 2017

To: Rod Blocksome

FM: David Woolweaver

Subj: PSC Subcommittee on Education Report

Since the Subcommittee's last report, several things have been accomplished. As the members of PSC will recall, at the beginning of 2017 the PSC Subcommittee on Education was given three new tasks.

Review the ARRL's relationship with the ARISS/AMSAT program

Review the Teacher's Institute organization

Creation of new Volunteer Instructor power point programs for Technician and General class licenses.

At the July PSC meeting, the Subcommittee reported that the ARISS/AMSAT relationship had been modified and that the ARRL will now be providing ARISS/AMSAT a cash contribution annually to support their program. The ARRL will no longer provide secretarial duties, but will actively publicize and promote ARISS/AMSAT activities and will provide representation at the FCC.

The Teacher's Institute operation was reviewed and the following was suggested.

Reduce the number of sessions annually to two, instead of three while more evaluation is completed.

In the application materials, identify whether the applicants will be permitted to incorporate wireless technology materials into the curriculum.

Identify ways to better target possible applicants, perhaps from private or charter schools who may have more flexibility for curriculum updates.

Develop a consistent survey of attendees that can identify quantitative data that can evaluate the success of the program.

The process goes on with regards to TI and, in addition, the Subcommittee is exploring the possibility of developing a Life Time Learning program that would benefit all ARRL members.

The creation of new VI power point programs is being pursued as well. It is hoped that a "show and tell" will be available by the January 2018 meeting.

Unfortunately, one of our long term members, David Cockrum, N5DO, has left the Subcommittee due to work commitments. The Subcommittee sent David a letter of appreciation for his years of service.

Due to the loss of David Cockrum and the new vision of Life Time Learning for the Teacher's Institute, Gordon West, WB6NOA, of the Gordon West Radio School was invited to join the Subcommittee as a consultant. Gordon has been a successful educator in amateur radio for many years and I feel certain he will be making significant contributions to the work of the Subcommittee.

In addition to Gordon, Tom Delaney, W8WTD, Vice Director Great Lake Division has been added to join Kevin O'Dell in the creation of new Power Point programs. Tom has an extensive background in video production and his contributions will make the Power Point presentations much more interesting and entertaining.

Respectively submitted by the PSC Subcommittee on Education,

Bonnie Altus, AB7ZQ
Kermit Carlson, W9XA
Kevin O'Dell, N0IRW
Thomas Delaney, W8WTD
Tommy Gober, N5DUX
David Woolweaver, K5RAV

Consultant
Gordon West, WB6NOA

Attachment 3 – Education Subcommittee Report, 4Q 2017

January 1, 2018

To: Rod Blocksome

FM: David Woolweaver

Subj: PSC Subcommittee on Education Report

Since the last PSC Subcommittee report, members of the Subcommittee have been working on the Volunteer Instructor power point program for the Technician class license. There are literally hundreds of slides that require revision; consequently, the process is time consuming.

Kevin O'Dell and Tom Delaney provided the Subcommittee via a Go to Meeting event a preview of the finished product. Tom has prepared a short presentation that he can deliver at the PSC meeting if you so desire.

The Subcommittee is “on hold” regarding the Lifetime Learning program. We are awaiting direction from the CEO. Gordon West was added to the Subcommittee as a special consultant for instruction. Gordon has decades of experience in instructing amateur radio courses and for training instructors. We are well positioned for the next step in the reconstruction of the Education Department.

Respectively submitted by the PSC Subcommittee on Education,

Bonnie Altus, AB7ZQ
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