

**Contest Advisory Committee
Semi-Annual Report**

**For the American Radio Relay League
Board of Director's Meeting**

January, 2018

**Dennis Egan, W1UE
Chairman, CAC**

CONTINUING ASSIGNMENTS

The Contest Advisory Committee (CAC) has continued with their two assigned tasks: **Youth In Contesting (YIC)** and the **Rules Consolidation Project (RCP)**.

1.) The objective of the YIC assignment was to undertake a study of youth and radio contesting, "Radiosport". The YIC assignment was multifold, in that the CAC asked to do the following:

- a.** Find out whether young operators are under-represented in contesting particularly, or whether contesting's young operator demographics are just representative of the current ham population.
- b.** Engage in a broad survey of hams between 10 and 50 [years of age] to assess their interest levels and preferences for contests.
- c.** Research and report on what youth programs and approaches are successful in Europe.

The PSC requested that the YIC project be done in two parts: first to do the research, and second to analyze the information and make specific recommendations. The CAC conducted the first part of YIC in 2016 as Phase I, and plans to tackle the analysis and make recommendations in 2017 as Phase II.

2.) The objective of the RCP was to Consolidate the "General Rules for All ARRL Contests", the "General Rules for ARRL Contests Below 30 MHz", and the individual contest rules into a single rule set for each of the nine ARRL HF contests.

Numerous benefits of this project include the elimination of confusing language and inconsistencies in the current three tiers of rules, and the establishment of rules for the ARRL HF contests that are easier to understand by the contest community, especially youth and others new to contesting.

- a.** In the consolidation of the three tiers of rules documents, the project will only consider the rules for the HF contests to be those that are published in the Contests and Radiosport Section of ARRL.org.
- b.** The project will not make any modifications or revisions to contest rules as they are currently written; language may be changed, but the goal is to rewrite the rules without changing the intent of any of the rules. The project will make recommendations for revisions to existing rules as deemed necessary or beneficial to the understanding of rules by the contest community at large.
- c.** The project will NOT assess log checking (LCR) software.
- d.** The project will NOT consolidate the rules for ARRL VHF/UHF contests:

Review of the Current Status of Each Task

Youth In Contesting

A Youth Survey was designed to gather data regarding youth and their interest in Radiosport. Although the target of the survey was youth, hams and (non-hams) of all ages were asked to take the survey. It was launched in January 2016, and ran through August 2016. In excess of 1350 responses were received from the survey, and a thorough analysis was done of those results. A full review of the survey results was held with the PSC in early 2017.

Some of the high-level conclusions reached from the survey results included:

- Youth who responded mainly had General and Novice class licenses — contests must consider this fact.
- Very few females responded — this is an issue that goes beyond Radiosport
- Youth have limited experience in ham radio — make sure that anything we do for youth take this into consideration, such as contest bonuses for younger age groups.
- Predominant interest among youth is in VHF and Phone
- Need to leverage the youths' outside interests (electronics, outdoor activities, social media, DIY, etc.). Create partnerships and collaborations with these other areas and activities.

As we move into the first half of 2018, the YIC effort will continue into its Phase II with this focus:

- Analyze and report on our findings regarding youth contesting activities in Europe.
- Explore the development of new contest events for youth
 - Youth Round Up – Similar to the old Novice Round up
- Analyze existing ARRL HF contests to identify ways of making these events more attractive for youth. Possible targets are:
 - Youth overlays for ARRL DX and SS
 - Rookie Round Up – a category for youth
 - Increased focus on Kid's Day and School Club Round Up

Since I have been involved with this topic, I have become aware of a myriad of initiatives that clubs and individuals are using to get more youths involved in amateur radio, not just contesting. There are several initiatives that members of the CAC are involved in that are outside this task. We have reached somewhat of a stalling point on this YIC task; we need to revive the topic and finish the assignment in early 2018.

The CAC members working on the YIC subcommittee are Don, K4ZA, Glenn, W0CG, Pat, NA0N, Stan, K5GO and Dennis, W1UE. Additionally, Bob Gerzoff, WK2Y, a retired statistician volunteered his services to do a statistical analysis and reporting of the Youth Survey responses.

Unfortunately, real life has intruded into the best of intentions. I have not yet completed the write-up on the YIC project but anticipate doing it by March 2018.

Rules Consolidation Project

The Rules Consolidation Project has progressed nicely. For the ARRL DX Contest, we have consolidated the three sets of rules into one set. The subcommittee for the first phase of this project has been Chas, K3WW, Dennis, W1UE, Dave, K8CC, and Pat, NA0N. In addition, we will be submitting a list of rules that we feel should be revised.

The ARRL DX rules were completed and a final document submitted on August 10, 2017 to KA0LDG and K0DAS in the form of an email with 5 attachments. The 5 attachments were the Revised Rules, copies of the current ARRL 3 tiers of rules (General, Contests under 30MHz, and ARRL DX), and a list of rules that should either be changed or modified. Inside each of the existing 3 tiers of rules is a reference number that indicates where that rule resides in the Revised Rules. The Revised Rules were also arranged in a specific manner that we felt were logical; someone else reading it may see a different logical order in the same rules.

Feedback, though, has not been received from anyone outside the CAC other than an acknowledgement that they received the rule consolidation. Therefore, we have not begun work on any additional rule consolidations.

Rule consolidations are tricky; one of the caveats that we were asked to follow is no rule changes. It took over 20 hours of work to produce the ARRL DX rule changes, the major time factor being the cross-referencing from the current rules to the revised rules. Rules are tricky; change or omit one word, and you've changed the contest. While I expect that each successive set of rules consolidation will take less time, it is too much work to perform without agreement that we are on the right track.

CAC ADMINISTRATION

As recommended in our 2015 review of CAC activities with the PSC, the CAC is now managing its assignments through the use of subcommittees. This is being done to make it easier to have group discussions and make operational decisions with fewer individuals than the full 16 member committee.

The primary method of communications within the CAC is the cac-i@arrl.org email reflector. As Chairman, I periodically issue updates of CAC activities to the full CAC to keep everyone informed of the progress on our projects.

CHANGES IN CAC MEMBERSHIP

There were no changes in the CAC membership during the last half of 2018. The CAC members as of January 1, 2018 are:

- Atlantic – Charles D. Fulp, Jr, K3WW; k3ww@fast.net
- Central – Craig Thompson, K9CT; Craig@K9CT.us
- Dakota – Pat Korkowski, NA0N; korkowp1@comcast.net
- Delta – Stan Stockton, K5GO; wa5rtg@gmail.com
- Great Lakes – Dave Pruett, K8CC; k8cc@comcast.net
- Hudson – Dr. George Tranos, N2GA; n2ga@aol.com
- Midwest – Dr. Glenn Johnson, W0GJ; w0gj@arrl.net
- New England – Chairman- Dennis Egan, W1UE; w1ue@verizon.net
- Northwestern – Jim Cassidy, KI7Y; ki7y@arrl.net
- Pacific – David B. Ritchie, W6DR; w6dr@arrl.net
- Roanoke - Don Daso, K4ZA; k4za@juno.com

- Rocky Mountain – Kenneth “Mike” Fatchett, W0MU; W0MU@w0mu.com
- Southeastern – Charles Wooten, NF4A; NF4A@knology.net
- Southwestern – Glenn Rattmann, K6NA; k6na@cts.com
- West Gulf – James K. George, N3BB; n3bb@mindspring.com
- Radio Amateurs of Canada – Samuel A. Ferris, VE5SF; ve5sf@sasktel.net

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