

January 2013 Report to the ARRL Board of Directors
for the
Programs and Services Committee

Prepared by David A. Norris, K5UZ, Chair

2012 saw several changes in the Programs and Services Committee (PSC) membership and some worthwhile accomplishments. For 2012 the committee included Directors Vallio, Norton, Weaver, Birmingham and Norris (Chair); along with Vice Director Olson. The most notable accomplishments of the Committee included authorizing the field checking of 160m cards for DXCC, the realization of Online DXCC, authorization of additional ARRL card checker appointments by Division Directors as well as clearing several items from the agenda that had been pending for some time. In this report, I shall present a synopsis of the previously mentioned programs/accomplishments as well as other items discussed in both meetings and our teleconferences topics and tasks covered by the PSC in 2012 as to bring our new Board members up to speed on last year's actions. Additionally, I will summarize some of the potential items on our agenda for 2013.

January 2012 Meeting:

In January, the Committee Chaired by Director Edgar discussed operations on the 30 Meter band and the status of some PSC questions to staff regarding removing the power restriction on the band as well as opening the discussion on PSC 2011-018, regarding Card Checking issues. The committee voted to task DXAC, VUAC and CAC with the topic of how to integrate mobile operating into ARRL's DXing and contesting programs. Also, the discussed the LoTW malfunctions that occurred after a major contest and the possibilities for adding the ability for contest entrants to opt-out of receiving contest awards. The PSC VOTED to make a motion at the Annual Board meeting to continue the VUAC for a period of one year – until July 31, 2013.

Also covered in the January meeting, the PSC members and other Board members discussed the ARRL Affiliated Club program and possibilities for energizing the program and the Special Service Club program. One proposal that came from this discussion was the value in being able to assign an OES (Official Emergency Station) appointment to an ARRL-affiliated club. The PSC VOTED unanimously to have staff updated appointment guidelines to allow for OES appointments to be given to clubs and design the criteria for which a club would qualify for such

an appointment. Finally, the PSC approved some minor changes to the ARRL Rookie Roundup rules, which included removing 6 meters from the event, and allowing for multi-operator entries.

The PSC unanimously selected Andrey Federov, RW3AH/KL1A, to be presented to the Board as the 2011 International Humanitarian Award winner. The PSC deliberated over the nominees for the 2011 Bill Leonard, W2SKE, Professional Media Award. The decision about which candidate to present to the Board as the winner was postponed until later in the evening after the committee members had viewed the media accompanying the nominations. All of the selected award nominees were presented in several PSC motions to the full ARRL Board of Directors which were unanimously passed.

March 29 Teleconference:

The following actions were taken by the Committee at the March 29, 2012 teleconference:

VUAC Tasking: The Chairman noted his previous comments about a mobile category. Mr. Patton said that none of the Advisory Committees had been formally advised of their new taskings and suggested that the Advisory Committee Chairmen should be asked now to help draft them.

ECAC Status: Mr. Norris said the Delta Division ECAC representative, Jim Coleman, AI5B, was about to become Louisiana Section Manager, moving up from SEC. The outgoing SM, Gary Stratton, K5GLS, will be an Assistant Director. He asked the PSC members to contact their ECAC representatives about where the ECAC should be going before the committee is sunset. ARES membership lists compiled through the Field Organization is a popular topic in the ECAC.

160 Meter DXCC field checking: The committee reviewed a proposal from Mr. Patton to allow Card Checkers who have achieved DXCC on 160 meters to check 160 meter cards in the field, provided they note the QSO time shown on the card on the application sheet. He also proposed to allow all Card Checkers to check Deleted Entity QSLs with provision for Headquarters to verify the accuracy of the claimed entity, if needed, via certified images of both sides of the QSL card. The committee discussed various ways of increasing the number of Card Checkers who could check 160 meter cards but concluded that the existing rules for appointing Card Checkers should not be changed at this time.

On motion of Dr. Weaver, seconded by Mr. Norton, the committee unanimously voted to authorize staff to amend the DXCC rules as proposed but with no change in how Card Checkers are appointed, i.e. with the last two sentences of the proposal deleted.

July 2012 Meeting:

The July meeting of the PSC was called to order July 19, 2012 with all Programs and Services Committee (PSC) member present. Also present were Vice Director Abernethy, W3TOM, Atlantic Division Vice Director, Vice Director Kermit Carlson, W9XA, Central Division, Jay

Bellows K0QB, Vice Pres. For International Affairs, Bruce Frahm, K0BJ, Vice President, Dave Patton, NN1N, Manager ARRL MVP Department, and Debra Johnson, K1DMJ, Manager ARRL Education Services Department.

The committee reviewed the proposal from Director Bodson, which included a draft proposal from Director Weaver, to modify the rules on Field Card Checker appointments. After a lengthy discussion, including a discussion of suggestions for tightening up 160 meter DXCC checker standards, Director Vallio made a motion to approve the proposal with changes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Weaver and the committee voted to approve the following wording of the changes to the rules:

a) Nominations for Card Checkers may be made by:

i) The Section Manager of the section in which the prospective checker resides.

ii) An ARRL affiliated DX specialty club with at least 25 members who are DXCC members, and which has DX as its primary interest. If there are any questions regarding the validity of a DX club, the issue shall be determined by the Division Director where the DX club is located. A nominee of a DX club does not need to be a member of the club to be nominated.

iii) By the Division Director. The Division Director may appoint as many Card Checkers as there are Sections within their Division.

b) Qualifications:

i) Those nominated as a Card Checker must be found by the person making the appointment to be of high integrity, and must be known to the person nominating them for appointment.

ii) Candidates must be ARRL members who hold a DXCC award endorsed for at least 150 entities.

iii) Candidates must complete an open book test about DXCC rules concerning QSL cards, and the Card Checker training guide.

iv) The applicant must be willing to serve at reasonable times and places, including at least one ARRL-sanctioned hamfest, or Section, State or Division ARRL Convention each year.

v) The applicant must have e-mail and internet capabilities, be willing to check QSLs for all applicable phases of the ARRL DXCC program and maintain a current e-mail address with the DXCC Desk.

c) Approval

Appointments of DXCC Card Checkers are made by the Director of the ARRL Division in which they reside following consultation with the Membership and Volunteer Programs Manager.

d) Appointments

Appointments are made for a two year period, or the current term of the appointing Director or Section Manager, whichever ends first. Retention of appointees is determined by their performance of the duties of the position as determined by the Director of the Division in consultation with the DXCC Desk.

The committee also discussed a proposal to harmonize the CW and Phone DXCC starting dates. The committee referred the issue to the DXAC for investigation. The PSC directed Mr. Patton, MVP Manager to work with the DXAC chairman to draft tasking language for approval by the PSC.

Mr. Patton gave an update on the LoTW, noting that half a billion QSOs are now in the system. WPX has been added successfully. The terms of the agreement with CQ was discussed. The only problems noted are that LoTW does bog down at the end of a contest weekend, and getting set up to get a certificate is a challenge for some users. The PSC may look at one or more of these issues in 2013.

Mr. Patton gave a report on rules for remotely controlled operations. Noting that existing rules on remotely controlled operation are out-moded, he proposed some new language changes. Mr. Norris made a motion that the DXAC review the proposed changes for rules 8,9 and 11 and report back to the PSC in 6 months with their recommendations. Mr. Vallio seconded and the committee voted approval for the motion.

Mr. Norris provided a summary of the topics addressed in the VUAC report, which was accepted by the Committee. Mr. Carlson noted that there is very limited activity on the upper bands, with contest events on only three weekends a year. He asked the Committee to find ways to promote more activity. Mr. Norris made a motion to modify the task list of the VUAC to look at activities that might encourage activity on the upper bands. The VUAC has received a tasking to this effect.

Director Birmingham noted that the Field Day locator offered on the ARRL website does not allow multiple site listings at the same location. She made a motion to ask ARL IT to write a modification to allow multiple Field Day sites to be displayed simultaneously at a single location and to have this modification in place for Field Day, 2013. IT staff estimates the time to write this modification is 5 hours. Mr. Vallio seconded the motion and the committee voted to take this motion to the Board. The full Board later passed this motion.

The CAC report was submitted and accepted. The PSC agreed to defer recommendation 1-5 to the Awards Committee. Mr. Norton raised a question about the option to “opt out” of receiving a certificate. Mr. Patton agreed to check on the status of this option and report back to the

Committee. Also, The Committee reviewed the list of potential tasks identified in Appendix A of the report. The PSC voted to send items 1 and 4 to Mr. Patton and the CAC Chairman to draft tasking language to bring back to the PSC for review. These items concern categorization of Single Ops Using Assistance and RTTY contest rules regarding off-time and band changes. The Committee chose not to act upon items 2, 3, 5 and 6.

The Committee discussed the proposal for a new 10 Meter Grid award. On motion of Mr. Norris, seconded by Mr. Weaver and voted by the Committee, to task Mr. Patton to draw up a plan for this award to propose to the PSC by September 30, 2012. Additionally, the Triple Play Award single band variants/endorsements were discussed but no action was taken. Finally, the PSC discussed modernizing ARRL contest adjudication software. Mr. Norris and Mr. Patton will review the situation and bring any recommendations to the PSC.

The ECAC Report was accepted and the high level of activity and diligence of this committee noted. Also regarding emergency communications, Mike Corey, K11U, ARRL Public Service and Preparedness Manager was invited to provide his recommendations about minimum training standards for SECs. The background training he recommends be required as core competencies are:

- NIMS 100,200, 700 and 800
- The FEMA Professional Development Series
- Basic and Advanced Skywarn
- Red Cross Disaster Services Overview

Hence it was voted to task the ECAC to recommend criteria for minimum training standards for SECs and to report back to the PSC within 6 months. These recommendations will be discussed at the January PSC Meeting. Also, the PSC voted to send a request for an official ARESmat team badge to the ECAC to define criteria for such a badge. The ECAC has made a recommendation on the SEC tasking and is still debating the criteria for the issuing of badges.

On motion of Mr. Weaver, it was voted to bring a motion to the Board to accept an alternate process for producing official ARRL badges, which result in the same appearance as the existing engraved process dictated by ARRL bylaws. This measure was adopted by the Board,

The following awards were recommended by the PSC:

John T. Luebbers K1AYZ nominee for the McGan Award,

David Rowe VK5DGR for the Technical Innovation Award.

Joe Lowenthal WA4OVO for the Herb Brier Instructor of the Year Award.

Mr. Norris reviewed appointments to the sub-committee and re-commissioned it with the following appointments: Director Woolweaver, Director Birmingham, Vice Director Hartlage, KG4IUM, Ms. Johnson, all of whom served previously, and with the addition of Director Weaver and Mr. McCray. On motion of Mr. Vallio, seconded by Mr. Norris, the Committee voted to task the Education Sub-committee to evaluate ideas for changes to the instructor registration program and make recommendations to the PSC in 120 days.

The Committee discussed Dr. Woolweaver's proposal to develop/identify more relevant ways to promote ARRL membership through ARRL volunteer instructors and volunteer examiners. Norm Fusaro, W3IZ, ARRL Assistant Manager Membership and Volunteer Programs Dept., was consulted to give an update on the status of ARRL's affiliated club program and asked for suggestions of ways ARRL can help affiliated clubs. Mr. Fusaro reported that the number one reason clubs affiliate is the insurance program ARRL offers. He noted that the number of affiliated clubs is increasing, though it is difficult to determine how many are actually active.

At the end of 2012, all Advisory Committees have completed most of their taskings or are making progress towards completing the balance as can be seen in their respective reports. We are making progress on a number of items that MVP Manager Dave Patton and the Chair have been working on and will be bring before the PSC in 2013 with the aim of improving those specific programs for the benefit of the ARRL members. The PSC will continue to utilize the pscom reflector, teleconferences, webinars and other low cost meeting alternatives.

Agenda items for 2013 include acting on the previously tasked Advisory Committee recommendations, picking up on the Mobile operating awards issue as well as the following items:

- Recommending further LOTW improvements
- Adding another category of contest operating
- Improvements in DXCC, VUCC and WAS awards
- Reviving the Education Committee
- Youth involvement in contesting and DXing
- VE testing improvements
- Clarify rules on contest scoring
- Finalize ARES MDEC definitions and requirements
- Review of the National Traffic System
- Advise and assist in the planning for operating events for the ARRL Centennial in 2014.

It is the Chair's intention to get all the pending Advisory Committee recommendations reviewed and acted upon, as well as following up on our agenda items expeditiously. The PSC is ready to assist the Advisory Committee Chairs when requested and offer guidance when needed. The

PSC is ready to work with the full ARRL Board, Officers and HQ Staff for the benefit of the organization and its membership.

Respectfully submitted,

David A, Norris, K5UZ

Director, Delta Division,

Chair, Programs and Services Committee