

**Contest Advisory Committee
Semi-Annual Report**

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

January, 2017

**George Wagner, K5KG
Chairman, CAC**

2016 HIGHLIGHTS

2016 was an active year for the Contest Advisory Committee. Two important initiatives were assigned to the CAC by the PSC early in the year. They were **Youth In Contesting (YIC)** and the **Rules Consolidation Project (RCP)**.

- 1.) The objective of the Youth In Contesting 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 Rules Consolidation Project (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. However, 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:

2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PLANS FOR 2017

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 is planned with the PSC for 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 HF 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 2017, the YIC effort will continue into its Phase II with this focus:

- Analyze and report on our findings regarding youth contesting activities in Europe.
- Propose a year-long YOUTH CHALLENGE event for 2018
 - Similar to the NPOTA and W1AW/x operations
- 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

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.

Rules Consolidation Project

By the end of 2016, the first stage of the project was completed by Bob Neece, K0KR, with the consolidation of the three tiers of rules into a single document using the ARRL DX Contest as a basis for the consolidation. The project has now been passed into the hands of a subcommittee comprised of Chas, K3WW, Dennis, W1UE, Dave, K8CC, and Pat, NA0N. The work for these four very accomplished contesters is to decide what redundancies, contradictions, and surplus verbiage to eliminate from the consolidated rules, and also to document their ideas as to which rules should be revised or perhaps even off-loaded a separate document.

The result of this work will then be presented to the PSC for their feedback and guidance on the continuation of the RCP. Assuming the support of the PSC to move forward with this project, the work will then continue with the consolidation of the rule sets in a similar fashion for the other eight ARRL HF contests, and a detailed cataloging of proposed rule changes.

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 CAC is routinely using GoToMeeting (GTM) for its full committee and subcommittee meetings. In addition to GTM, we also use the cac-i@arrl.org email reflector for routine communications among our members.

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 CAC membership during 2016. The CAC members at the end of 2016 are:

- Atlantic – Charles D. Fulp, Jr, K3WW; k3ww@fast.net
- Central – Greg W. Clark, K9IG; greg@k9ig.com
- 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 – 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 – Robert Neece, KØKR; nreece@bwsn.com
- Southeastern – Chairman – George Wagner, K5KG; georgek5kg@aol.com
- 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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