



Doc #26

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station

Committee Report

to the

ARRL Board of Directors

January 17-18, 2020

by

The ARRL ARISS Committee

Executive Summary

Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) project is a well-known international partnership that promotes STEM education and Amateur Radio around the world. The ARRL CEO in 1996 tasked ARRL Headquarters staff to meet NASA's challenge to set up one worldwide ISS ham radio team; the staff, working together with AMSAT-NA, set about doing that. The ARRL has been an ARISS sponsor since 1996. The ARRL-led parts of the project successfully including leadership roles, advice to ARISS leaders on items related to FCC regulations, and Public Relations support for the project in addition to education activities related to many school contact events. The ARRL ARISS Committee was tasked in January 2019 with improving the ARRL support-part of the project.

Since 1983, international amateur radio organizations have worked with the space agencies to fly Amateur Radio to support educational and ham radio activities on Space Shuttle (SAREX), Mir (Mirex) and ISS (ARISS). Each year, astronauts make hundreds of school contacts from the ISS because of ARISS. The educational activity alone puts Amateur Radio in the picture for students, educators, media, school leaders, communities, local political leaders. Astronauts have also made thousands of Amateur Radio contacts using FM voice, SSTV and packet.

During the January 2019 Board meeting the Board passed a motion to establish a new Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) committee. The new ARRL ARISS Committee was tasked with improving the ARRL support-part of the project. The Board motion / committee charter is as follows.

Be it therefore resolved: A permanent ARISS committee is created by the Board to develop an interactive relationship with ARISS. Said committee should consist of three members of the Board, with assistance of the ARRL Lifelong Learning Manager and the ARRL Communications Manager as consultants, all to be appointed by the ARRL President. The committee will recommend the framework under which the ARRL will support ARISS to include recommendation of the ARRL representative to ARISS, standardized mission support, operational needs, ongoing mentoring and assistance to local Amateur Radio clubs in support of ARISS contacts, and a standardized set of Public Relations messages to ensure consistency of the ARRL message to ARISS, local Amateur Radio groups and the public at large.

2019 ARRL ARISS committee members:

Director Sarratt (Chairman)

Director Jairam

Vice Director Tharp

Mr. Kris Bickell (Consultant - Lifelong Learning Manager)

Mr. David Isgur (Consultant - Media & Communications Manager)

Ms. Rosalie White K1STO (Consultant - ARRL representative to ARISS)

ARRL ARISS Committee Activities from August to December 2019 were:

The committee met three times, September 12th, October 10th and November 21st via Zoom video teleconference service and exchanged multiple emails via the ARRL email reflector. August and December meetings were not held due to multiple committee member obligations with various other projects, but work continued via many emails.

Ms. Rosalie White K1STO, ARRL representative to ARISS continued to participate in multiple ARISS teleconferences and meetings each week. This work is outside the normal ARRL ARISS committee functions. Rosalie reviewed significant items to the ARRL committee such as a list of many Media Hits from ARISS school contacts, progress report on ARISS-developed hardware, and a report of third quarter ARISS team accomplishments that had been sent to Directors.

Mark Tharp shared a video recording with the Board committee of an ARISS contact in his ARRL Division.

The white paper developed by Mark Tharp for Section Managers (SM) that explains what members may ask SMs about ARISS, went through a last committee review and was finalized. Mark, Greg Sarratt and Kris Bickell coordinated with ARRL staff to have the white paper inserted into the ARRL SM Workbook, and get the white paper added to ARRL web pages under "Resources for SMs."

Rosalie White forwarded a few requests to Kris Bickell for revising outdated items on ARRL ARISS web pages or fixing broken links.

After the July 2019 Board Meeting the committee member efforts became focused on discussing items and associated funding needed such as, ad space in QST, marketing materials, PR involvement and items related to ARISS that could be for Lifelong Learning, such as ARISS SSTV sessions very popular with thousands of hams and the general public (as an example, over 11,600 ARISS SSTV images were downloaded and posted by hams and space enthusiasts during the December 2019 session).

Rosalie White continued to work with David Isgur to connect him with ARISS schools' PR volunteers. This allowed him to have the opportunity to then reach out directly to PIOs in the area. He ensured those PIOs could get involved in promoting ARISS contacts with the media.

David Isgur reported that members of the ARRL Public Relations Committee were working on updating and improving its sample press release and one-page fact sheet about ARISS. When finalized, these would be reviewed by Rosalie White before posting.

The committee's main efforts were spent identifying needs and developing an operating budget for 2020. This included looking into specific costs and labor needed for developing QST house ads and web page house ads such as those run for ARISS in past years. Also roll-ups are badly needed to revise and replace one ARRL purchased in past years. The committee discussed how a plan for ad placement could be useful. The committee looked at these old items (ads, roll-ups) and studied options for new items, for instance, because of the many national conferences the roll-up is shipped to, a durable case and a substantial coating is needed. The committee looked at what graphic revisions on the roll-up and ads were necessary, and talked about how staff time previously available for graphics work is not available now with outsourcing of graphics being done. The committee identified the need for a part time person to assist Rosalie in her activities. This person would be employed by ARISS. The committee realizes to be effective in our mission we needed funding. The committee reviewed a draft budget listing individual items and associated costs that had been discussed, and felt it was appropriate and the funding need for 2020 is \$85,400.

On October 22nd, the budget was submitted to A&F Chairman for addition in the ARRL 2020 budget. We will appreciate the Board's consideration and approval of our budget.

I am proud to serve on the ARRL ARISS committee with a group of very fine and dedicated Amateur Radio operators.

Submitted for the Committee by,
Greg Sarratt, W4OZK (Chairman)