

ARRL Programs and Services Committee (PSC)

Report to the Board of Directors – December 2020

This report covers PSC teleconferences August through December 2020. The PSC attempts to meet each month to keep tasks on track and assignment status reports frequent.

Current PSC members include:

- Director Baker
 - Director Blocksome
 - Director Holden (Chair)
 - Director Norris (CAC liaison)
 - Director Ritz (DXAC liaison)
 - Vice Director Hudgens
 - Second Vice President Vallio (Officer Liaison)
- Director Hippiusley is the Chairman of the Public Service Enhancement Working Group, but, not a voting member of the PSC.

ARRL HQ support is provided by:

- Mr. Norm Fusaro (Staff Liaison)
- Mr. Dan Henderson (Secretary to the Committee)
- Mr. Bart Jahnke (Radiosport and Field Services Manager)
- Mr. Paul Bourque (Radiosport)

The Multi-single category band-change rule, for ARRL events that include such a category, was changed to allow 10 (up from 8) band changes per hour.

Work commenced on a white paper addressing the ethical and appropriate use of Social Media during contesting.

It was reported that the DXAC declined to consider changes in the remote operating proposal for DXCC. After discussion it was decided the proposal be dropped from further consideration.

At the October 21st teleconference, ARRL Director of Emergency Management Paul Gilbert, KE5ZW joined the meeting to introduce himself and share his initial observations of the ARES program. The PSC looks forward to Mr. Gilbert's January 2021 report to the Board will give specifics on his department's vision and goals.

The PSC approved the to expansion of the ARRL International DX Contest categories, in the Single Band entries, to differentiate by power and assisted/unassisted status. The rules change for the International DX Contest to add power level and assisted/unassisted differentiated categories for Single Band entries will begin with the 2022 events.

Mr. Blocksome and Mr. Henderson presented the proposal to add a VHF Mentor/Student rule to ARRL VHF and above events. The rule would mirror the intent of the current family-station rule in the General Rules for all ARRL Contests. On the motion of Mr. Blocksome, seconded by Mr. Norris, the rule change was adopted, to begin with the June 2021 VHF QSO Party.

On the motion of Mr. Ritz, seconded by Mr. Blocksome, the committee adopted a one-year rule waiver for the 2021 ARRL International DX Contest which would allow multi-multi stations to operate from multiple locations, to accommodate Covid-19 social distancing and safety concerns for participants. All locations must: a) be located in the same DXCC entity; b) operate using the same callsign; c) logging software must be networked real-time so that all participants are using a common log; d) stations must be within 100 km (62 miles) of the regular multi-operator station location; e) all other multi-operator station rules still apply; and f) procedures must be in place and followed that ensure no more than one station is transmitting on each band.

Mr. Norris led the discussion on his proposed amendment to the DXCC rules to allow a single, fixed point award. After extended discussion, on the motion of Mr. Ritz, seconded by Mr. Norris the PSC voted 4-2 tasked Mr. Jahnke to look at the issue and decide what could possibly be easily implemented to achieve the intent of the proposal, which is to provide recognition to those who do not use remote stations with the DXCC award.

Mr. Jahnke's team is preparing to implement PSC approved changes to the Single Band category rules and the apportionment of club scores for multi-operators for Affiliated Club Competitions.

In front of you, at the January 2021 Board of Directors meeting, is a proposal to reorganize the Advisory Committee structures. The PSC asks the Board of Directors to approve this change to make the committees task oriented with specific short-term objectives rather than long standing committees with a broad mission.

Open Items for the 2021 PSC to consider

- **Field Day 2021 rule waivers**
The United States is likely to have differing gathering rules in different parts of the country. While some clubs will be able to gather with no restrictions, other ARRL members will be restricted to their homes. The outgoing chair recommends the 2020 Field Day rule waivers be re-introduced for 2021, as written, with one notable exception - 100W maximum PEP for home stations. High power should be reserved for those stations that can truly get out there and operate "in the field."
- **ARES modernization**
Mr. Gilbert's eagerly awaited plan should be received in January 2021. The PSC should work with Gilbert's team to strengthen the tools we use to support our communities and served agencies while retiring antiquated tools and programs that are of little use to ARES leaders, community leaders and emergency managers.
- An earlier sweepstakes operating start time. This proposal from former NCJ Editor Al Dewey, KØAD, has been endorsed by the CAC and is supported by the outgoing PSC Chair.
- A review of the DXCC card checker program. Outgoing director Blocksome has outlined some key points for discussion:

1. Consider a re-name to include field checking for all ARRL Operating Awards
 2. Clearly state the Qualifications required to check cards for each covered award
 3. Clarify Number of QSL Checkers and their locations permitted in a Division
 4. Clarify who may nominate a QSL Checker
 5. Clarify who makes the appointment
 6. Clarify the QSL Checker term of office
- Create a best practice working group for transmission and transmitter signal quality standards as proposed by Director Ritz.
 - Please approve the nominations for the 2021 Technical Service Award and the Knight Distinguished Service Award that I have submitted to Mr. Ewald.

It has been a pleasure to serve as the 2020 Program and Services Committee Chairman. In one year, the PSC rose to challenge of more frequent online meetings to improve the services the ARRL provides its members, facilitate discussions of modernizing the ARRL's role in emergency communication and adapt contest rules to facilitate the ever-changing contest landscape and respond to the curve pitches COVID-19 has thrown at us so we can all enjoy this hobby that is so important to all of us.

Thank you to Dan Henderson for being the committee's recording secretary and "village" historian.

I wish to thank Norm, Bart, Paul and the ARRL HQ staff for their guidance, support and faithful execution of the changes introduced by the PSC.

Outgoing Director Blocksome and I hope to work you, on six meters (and up), from a grid square this summer. Good health and good DX to all in 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matt Holden KØBBC
Program and Services Committee Chair