

Status of the Volunteer Monitor Program as of July 15, 2019

Submitted by Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH

The ARRL announced on May 6 that applications were being accepted for the Volunteer Monitor (VM) program and briefly explained the nature of the program.

We received approximately 210 applications by the end of June. By the first of July, very few applications were being received until the announcement on July 10 that the cutoff date for filing would be COB July 15. We have received 180 additional applications. Each will be acknowledged by e mail and the applicant thanked.

I have had telephone conversations with 167 applicants and left telephone messages with 38 applicants who have not yet returned my call. Each of these applicants received two calls from me with a message to call back regarding their application. Messages were left at each number the applicant provided if the number provided the option to leave a message.

167 applicants were told that we needed them in the program. I found that a good conversation would result when the applicant was engaged in discussion of what equipment they had, their antennas and whether they had built them, what their operating habits and favorite bands were. I saw no reason not to include the applicants I talked to so far, i.e., I could detect no “agenda” or grudge or unfavorable reason that they wanted to be in the program. In this manner we are not subject to criticism that we have “hand-picked” applicants or that Section or Division politics were involved. In my view all the applicants I talked to so far would be good assets for the program.

I suggest that we keep the Volunteer Monitor team at about 175. The remaining applicants that have not returned our calls would not be in the program.

I suggest notifying the new applicants (those filing July 1 or after) that we would like to include them in the Reserve Pool if they would be interested, but not to interview them unless we need more VM's.

I am pleasantly surprised with the apparent qualifications of the applicants I have talked to so far. Many have very sophisticated stations and seem very technically adept. There are 29 former OO's, 9 VE's, many life members, several teachers, a former software tech for Apple and MS, the lead tech for SDRplay, an engineering manager for CISCO, several broadcast engineers and a Physics professor at Cal Tech. Many were involved in ARES, Skywarn and other facets of emergency communications as well as local clubs and public service events.

I'll be suggesting next steps in the coming weeks, such as training plans and various ways to communicate with the VM pool.

Contrary to rumor, there is no limit on the number of VM's per ARRL Section.

Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH