

TWENTIETH MEETING ON THE CANADIAN AMATEUR RADIO ADVISORY BOARD (CARAB)

Date: April 23, 2003

Time: 1300

Place: Industry Canada Offices
Room 1585D
300 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario

Chair: Mr. Earl Hoeg
Acting Director
Spectrum Management Operations
Industry Canada

Participants:

Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC):

William, J. Gillis, VE1WG, President
James G. Dean, VE3IQ, Vice-President, Regulatory Affairs
Ian MacFarquhar, VE9IM, First Vice-President
R.D. (Bob) Cooke, VE3BDB, Regional Director, Ontario South
Earle W. Smith, VE6NM, Regional Director, Alberta/NT/NU

Industry Canada (IC):

Earl Hoeg, Director, Spectrum Management Operations
Line Perron, Director, Eastern Ontario District, (Amateur Service Centre)
Rob Cepella, Chief, Authorization, Spectrum Management Operations
Gary Steckly, Technical Policy Analyst, Spectrum Management Operations

Items

1. Welcome and Introductions

Earl Hoeg expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to participate as chair of this meeting and welcomed everyone. This was followed by introductions by all participants.

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda

Agenda was approved as submitted.

Bill Gillis introduced a special interest item by circulating a letter that RAC received from the Prime Minister with respect to International Amateur Radio Day. In his letter Prime Minister Chrétien gave recognition to Amateur Radio as means of cultural awareness and vital emergency communication in times of local and national distress. He expressed his best wishes that Amateur Radio will offer all participants the opportunity to explore the history and practical uses of Amateur Radio.

3. Acceptance of the November 21, 2002 Meeting Minutes

Minutes were accepted as submitted.

4. Video "Amateur Radio Today" Narrated by Walter Cronkite, KB2GSD (6 minutes)

ARRL colleagues have shared with RAC a video production on the public service aspect of Amateur Radio narrated by Walter Cronkite. The program, intended for regulatory agencies and officials concerned with public safety was reviewed. RAC provided Industry Canada with a copy to share with their staff.

5. Status of the National Tower Consultation Process (Industry Canada)

Earl Hoeg gave a brief update of the progress of the tower consultation process that is currently ongoing. He outlined the various contributors and participants that would be providing input to Professor David Townsend, and expressed his regrets that Professor Townsend could not be in town today as had been previously planned. Earl requested that RAC liaise with Rob with respect to their opinions on the process and to provide a list of people they felt might be able to make contributions. RAC noted that comments would be provided both directly and through their participation in the Radio Advisory Board of Canada (RABC).

6. Status Report by Industry Canada on the Examination Generator and Updating Exam Corrections to the Web Site (IC progress report needed)

Industry Canada provided a brief update on the status of the revisions. The known problems and errors in the exam data bank have been corrected, and the software has been recompiled and is ready for distribution. A copy of the program was distributed on CD to RAC members at the table for review, along with a copy of the revised printing instructions that offers solutions to problems mentioned at the last meeting (format related, lack of unique identification on each printed exam, wasteful printing due to format limitations, etc.). While the new versions of RIC-7 and RIC-8 have not yet been posted, the software and revised printing instructions will be distributed to the examiners via a mass e-mail at the end of the week, and their comments solicited prior to posting to the general public on the Spectrum Management and Telecommunications Web site.

Action Item: IC will distribute exam generator software and revised printing instructions to examiners.

7. Considerations in the Administration of the Amateur Service

RAC continues its consideration with respect to the continuing administration of the Amateur Service in Canada including options that were discussed at the previous meeting.

Action Item: RAC to prepare their response to the matter of continuing administration of the amateur radio service.

6. Status Report by Industry Canada - Reciprocal Operating Agreements - Thailand and Hong Kong (Update from IC needed)

Industry Canada gave a brief update on the progress with these initiatives. The Thailand agreement is currently under review by the Canadian Ambassador in Bangkok. No word has yet been received as to whether a similar approach (using the wording of Treaty 7 that makes issuance of an authorization optional) will be acceptable to the Chinese. Industry Canada will continue to promote this agreement to a final resolution.

9. Resolution of Interference Problems on 7055 kHz (Update by RAC)

RAC expressed their gratitude with Industry Canada for help in resolving this particularly troublesome problem. No further incidents have been noted since the intervention by the FCC.

10. Frequency Assignments for the Montréal Grand Prix

RAC reported that interference has occurred during past Montréal Grand Prix events as a result of certain participants from Europe operating radio equipment on the input frequency of one of the amateur repeaters in the 146 -148 MHz portion of the 144 - 148 MHz amateur band. Operation in this band was not authorized by Industry Canada. Since this is an annual event with economic benefits to the local community, the RAC recognized that a measured response is appropriate, but that they would like to have some assurance that there would not be a recurrence of this incident. Industry Canada will ensure that a concerted effort is made to improve the communication between the race coordinators and IC, stressing the importance of ensuring that proper authorizations are obtained.

Line is meeting with the Montréal staff this week and will raise the issue at that time. She will report back to Jim Dean.

Action Item: Line Perron will raise the issue of potential interference during the Montréal Grand Prix with the Montréal IC staff.

11. RAC Brochure Mail-out - (Update by RAC)

Discussion took place regarding the RAC brochure that might be included in any future Industry Canada mass mail-outs to the amateur community. The purpose of the brochure is to promote membership in the RAC as well as reminding recipients to update Industry Canada in the event of a change of address. It was noted that the integrity of the call sign data base is very important to both the amateur radio community and Industry Canada.

Action Item: RAC to prepare brochure for the amateur radio community.

12. Wording of Morse Code Qualification on Certificate of Proficiency

Since mid-February 2003, certificates issued by Industry Canada are now worded as was agreed upon in the previous meeting. The certificate no longer makes reference to any particular speed qualification, since there is now only one speed qualification.

13. Kit and Microwave Equipment Construction by Basic Qualification Holders (RAC)

RAC questioned the possibility of radio amateurs with only basic qualifications being permitted to construct "kit" type radio apparatus including experimentation with certain system-level (as opposed to component-level) microwave kits. IC noted that perhaps such individuals might be well suited as candidates for the advanced qualification. RAC agreed to reflect on the matter and if appropriate put forth a formal proposal for IC's consideration.

(Comment: All amateurs must have the Basic Qualification. Current interpretation is that an amateur with only the Basic or the Basic + Morse Qualifications cannot build kits. The Advanced Qualification is required to build kits).

Action Item: RAC will present IC with their formal proposal for "kit builders" recognition.

14. Possibility of "Entry Level" Qualification (RAC)

Following the success of the foundation license in the UK, the RAC observed that the Australians have followed this path with good success, and asked the question about the possibility that Canada might follow a similar approach. Since modifications may have implications to another restructuring project, the RAC is considering putting together a proposal should Industry Canada be willing to consider such a change. IC indicated that it would be pleased to consider proposals that the RAC feels would inject renewed interest by youth to the field of amateur radio.

Action Item: RAC will submit formal proposal for "Entry Level Qualification" to IC for consideration should the RAC conclude that it would like to see Canada introduce an entry level qualification similar to the one in the UK.

15. Integrity of Call Sign Data Base (RAC)

Item 11, above, relates.

Discussed as part of item 11.

16. New and Other Business

16.1 Update of RIC-2 and RIC-3

The RAC noted that sections of these documents are out of date and requested that be revised.

Action Item: RAC will submit comments outlining their concerns with RIC-2 and RIC-3.

17. Preparation for the 21st CARAB Meeting - Date, Time and Place

Action Item: Industry Canada agreed to provide dates in the October/November time frame that would be suitable.

18. Adjournment

Summary of Action Items:

- 1 - IC will distribute exam generator software and revised printing instructions to examiners.
- 2 - RAC will prepare their response to the matter of continuing administration of amateur radio service.
- 3 - Line Perron will raise the issue of potential interference during the Montréal Grand Prix race with the Montréal IC staff and will stress the need to use only the authorized frequency bands.
- 4 - RAC will prepare brochure for the amateur community.
- 5 - RAC will present IC with their formal proposal for "kit builders" recognition.
- 6 - RAC will submit formal proposal for an "Entry Level Qualification" to IC for consideration.
- 7 - RAC will submit comments outlining concerns with RIC-2 and RIC-3.
- 8 - Industry Canada agreed to provide dates in the October/November time frame that would be suitable for the next CARAB meeting.