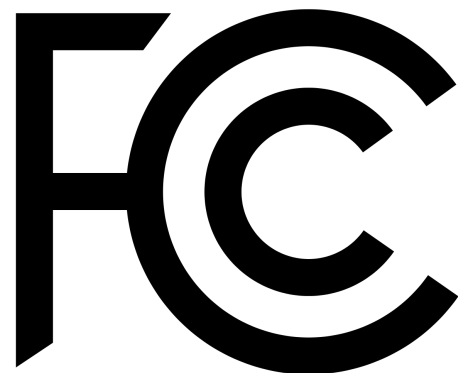
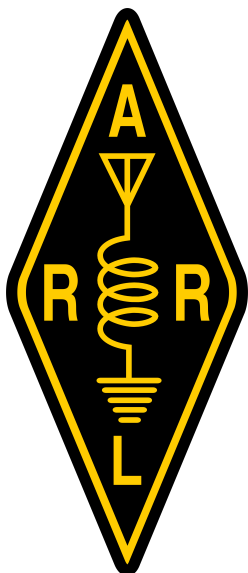

HAM SHACK

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Edition

This special edition of my monthly newsletter is going out to my Youtube subs, Facebook, Discord and of course Patrons. Normally I discuss a few aspect of what has happened over the last month and what I am looking forward to, this month however is only going to be about what I am sending to the FCC in support of the Technician Enhancement Proposal. If you would like to receive the newsletter each month, check out my [Patreon](#).

FCC Requesting Input on The ARRL Technician Enhancement Proposal



The last weekend in March I held a live stream on the topic of the “*ARRL Technician Enhancement Proposal*”. I tried to speak to both sides covering the arguments for and against. You can watch it [here](#). For those that did not see the stream, the core takeaway is that the ARRL has proposed to give technicians small sections of 15, 40 & 80 meters bands to allow voice and digital in addition to the CW they already have on said bands.

The ARRL has been working towards this petition for over a decade, citing that rule changes to the Technician license in the 90's and 2000's left them with little more than local comms (via VHF/UHF) and not giving the Technicians a way to experience "worldwide" communications. I agree with argument at a simple level. I appreciate that Techs do indeed have HF privileges in form of CW, I think we should all do more CW. Also, they have access to amateur radio satellites, the quirky fun of 6 meters and 10 meters on a very lucky day.

The ARRL is generally right though that the license does not give access to any form for consistent world-wide communications. I mentioned it above, but at our current point on the solar cycle 10 meters is not very usable throughout the day and when it does open, it's not reliable.

In preparing for their decision, the FCC has requested we licensed amateurs provide feedback with our thoughts on the proposed changes. This article will continue with what I plan to send to the FCC in support of the ARRL proposal. Thank you for reading.

If you would like to send your thoughts to the FCC, use this [link](#) and reference Proceeding **RM-11828**.

=====

Here is the letter I will be sending as an example:

I support the ARRL petition for rule-making RM-11828. I believe, as the ARRL does, that the improvements to the Technician license would not only incentivize the already licensed Technicians to upgrade their license, but will bring new life into amateur radio to help it grow during the next ten to fifteen years.

Simply put the Technician license has not kept pace with the changing face of amateur radio. While CW is still important and viable, the vast majority of people have moved away from it to spend time on single side-band (SSB) and the ever growing number of popular digital modes. By not implementing the petitioned recommendations and leaving the Technician with only CW on 15, 40 & 80 meters it would seem like a great oversight as the requirement to demonstrate CW operation was removed in the 90's. The removal of which brought many into the hobby and service, but without the demonstration of CW, it leaves Technicians woefully unchecked into its proper use. Since we don't test for CW anymore and given its complicated nature to get started and the lack of currently licensed amateurs using the mode, its no longer a privilege but more a vestige that hasn't improved with time.

The ARRL argued in their petition that the Technician license today does not provide an effective means for a new amateur to experience world-wide radio communication. The most used privileges the license offers is currently VHF/UHF communication, the majority of which is facilitated by repeater communication. Those repeaters are most often owned and operated by clubs which then compels the new amateur to work with those mainly in a local vicinity. Again to reiterate the ARRL's

point, the Technician license should not only encourage local communication for emergency preparedness, but foster interest in HF radio which provides for longer range communications for maximum effectiveness. Limiting Technicians to HF via CW aside from 10 meters, which is suffering from the low sun cycle, does nothing to foster interest in this important area. This is compounded by the fact that many proactive radio mentors (Elmers) are aging out of the hobby, which takes with it amateur radio clubs that provide an inclusive environment for potential amateurs to learn and experience the hobby.

If we are looking forward to the next ten to fifteen years of the hobby and we are wanting it to stay viable, the only way to bring new people in will be to make it seem interesting to today's realities. We're competing against cellphones and the internet for attention, which to a lay person, already provide world-wide communication ability. When educated with amateur radio we are self-supported in times of emergency, getting out to those in need; and in times of fun we're able to rack up many contacts from around world, many are largely interested. When we follow that up with the fact that the first level of license offers none of that satisfaction either due to bands locked to only CW or those that allow digital are dead for the next few years due to the sun, it's a losing proposition; that potential new member of the radio fraternity will simply go back to making other fun things that compete for their time.

Many against this petition have expressed their concern in potentially letting new amateurs onto the voice and digital spaces of 15, 40 & 80 and I share their concern. It seems obvious though from what I have experienced in my ten years in the hobby that those that would seek to do harm on the amateur radio bands are already doing it. There is nothing keeping them off the air. In the past, when I have found a Technician, or General for that matter, doing something incorrectly they always seemed proactive in rectifying the issue as they share our common belief in protecting amateur radio and would like to see it grow. In other words, mistakes are temporary and hams are often eager to help those out that are new. Further, isn't it easy to help other fellow hams over the air than to visit someone in person, face-to-face to experience HF radio?

If we look around to the reality of our society today, it seems clear that we need to pave a road to the new Technician licensee and that same road should encourage self-learning without walling off experiencing world-wide comms to time spent at a club meeting, Elmer or a friend's home. The Technician license does well enough to train the new amateur operator how to work on ten meters, what is the problem with them gaining access to some of the lower bands too? I personally am looking forward to new contacts.

Josh,

KI6NAZ

Thanks to the Patrons!

If you're seeing this, I owe you a lot. Thanks for going the extra mile in helping move the channel forward. You're voting with your dollar and it means a lot to me! Feel free to contact me via @hoshnasi on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, I'm also at hoshnasi@gmail.com.

If you're an Amazon shopper, if you don't mind perhaps bookmarking <https://amzn.to/2JfiYBt> and using it for your searches I'd appreciate that too. No additional effort on your part, just pull up the link and use the search bar as you normally would!



As I learned recently, I do see items ordered, but never who ordered what. In case you were interested.

[Let me know what you think of this edition of the newsletter!](#)

Josh

KI6NAZ