

Email response received 11 August 2005 from Mr M Vincent, G3UKV:

Question 1: Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a lighter, electronic licensing process? If not, please explain why.

I am in agreement using current technology, but have serious concerns regarding the security of Internet links, and the ease with which a document can be copied and altered. As a Newsletter Editor, I frequently do this. A Scanner plus suitable software can replicate almost anything ! Even if a photograph was included, this can easily be substituted. How would authenticity of a licence be assured ?

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposal to issue licences which remain valid for the life of the licensee? If not, please explain why.

I do not agree with a lifetime licence, because it will lead inevitably to a loss of valid data, particularly after a few years. What requirement could be included to ensure licence holders inform the Licence Authority (OfCOM ?) if they change address etc ? At present, the annual renewal goes a long way towards ensuring central data on amateur Licensees is quite accurate. This has considerable strategic significance, and in the case of interference caused by an Amateur Radio licensee, perhaps to an emergency service user, could be vital.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposal to issue electronic amateur radio licences free of charge? If not, please explain why.

In my view, people do not value things which come "free", therefore I do not support free amateur Radio licences. I would prefer to pay a reasonable fee for a valued asset - ie access to various radio frequencies. This is a privilege, of which I am proud to possess. Specifically, I believe that if there was no licence fee, I would be unable to request help from OfCOM on interference and EMC issues. In effect, I would be dis-enfranchised.

Question 4: Do you agree with the proposal to apply an administrative charge when processing postal applications for amateur radio licences? If not, please explain why.

So long as the charge was at the lowest figure to cover administrative costs only, this would be acceptable. (eg £5 to10)

Question 5: Do you agree that WT Act licence exemption for radio amateurs is not currently practical?

I strongly agree. Firstly, under the WT Act radio amateurs must currently be issued with and hold a licence to operate. Secondly, all UK licensed radio amateurs would not be permitted to operate abroad (CEPT regs.) if WT exemption was introduced.

Question 6: What are your views regarding the possibility of WT Act licence exemption for radio amateurs in the longer term?

I disagree very strongly with any move towards WT Act licence exemption, because of the implications to existing international agreements. Agreements with the EU, ITU and CEPT would at the very least be endangered. UK Radio Amateurs would be out on a limb, and it would signal the end of Amateur Radio in its present form in the U.K. This links strongly with question 5 response.

Question 7: *Is maintaining the existing licensing regime but with an extended renewal period your preferred option? If so, please state the renewal period that you believe would be appropriate and explain why.*

I believe that the status quo is the best option. A limited period licence, perhaps 5 years would be acceptable, so long as a **statutory requirement** for licensees to inform the licensing authority (eg OfCOM) of any significant changes (eg address) during such a period is included with the proposals.

Question 8: *Do you agree that the current licensing system is over-burdensome? If not, please explain why.*

I do not consider the present licensing system is over-burdensome. I have been licensed for 40 years this month, and at no time felt the annual renewal to be burdensome. If I wished I could already have an annual Direct Debit arrangement with the licensing authority, thus making the process of renewal even simpler. I am proud of my Amateur Licence and Callsign G3UKV, and feel the annual renewal process recognises this privilege.

Question 9: *Do you agree with the proposal to apply an administrative charge when processing applications for a Notice of Variation to an amateur radio licence? If not, please explain why.*

The administration of any N o V will incur cost to whoever carries out such administration. Accordingly a fair administrative charge (£5-8 ?) would be supported.