

Email response received 11 August 2005 from Mr R Wadsworth, GW3UOF

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

Answer 1.

Agree with the principle. I have serious concerns about the security and integrity of the necessary amateur radio licensing examinations and the licensing database. The two must be inter-related to avoid widespread illegal piracy of callsigns and illegal transmissions. The proposal assumes all amateurs have computer access – this is not the case and is therefore discriminatory.

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

Answer 2.

A licence issued for life will depend totally on the licensee to inform the licensing authority of a change of address. The current issuing of an annual licence sent to the address of the licensee ensures the recipient is located at that registered address. This maintains the integrity of the licensing database. A lifetime licence would not offer this protection for database integrity.

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

Answer 3.

A 'free' licence minimizes the value given worldwide to amateurs and the amateur services. This threatens the future for amateur radio by removing the respect and strength of it's voice currently existing. This could eventually result in the abolishment of amateur licences. Again 'issue electronic' is used. This is discriminatory and unfairly biased against amateurs who do not have either a computer or no internet access.

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.*

Answer 4.

Not agreed. If a 'free' licence exists, it should be issued without discrimination. There should be no condition attached for the issuing of a 'free' licence, such as having or not having internet facilities in order to qualify.

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

Answer 5.

Yes, agree. All British radio amateurs must pass examinations to ensure a minimal standard of technical knowledge and operating standards. The resulting licence is required prior to issuing that person a callsign which is peculiar to him or her. Operating amateur radio equipment by any British radio amateur is strictly controlled and licensed under international agreements with other countries. These international agreements refer solely to the licence issued by the country of origin of the licence holder. Removal of this document would negate these international agreements.

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

Answer 6.

Strongly disagree. The reasons are partly answered in the reply given to Question 5. Over the years there have been long involved negotiations between countries through the European Union (EU), the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administration (CEPT) and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) for international agreements. Deregulation would destroy domestically and internationally the amateur radio service. Deregulation would result in widespread illegal high power and spurious transmissions in and outside of the amateur radio bands. Chaos would result from the interference and free-for-all that would result. Control of this situation would be irretrievable.

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.*

Answer 7.

Yes, agree. There should be a period of 5 years maximum with regulations remaining as currently in force. However, the idea of an online web-based licence structure is acceptable as an addition only. This online service should be free of charge to those using it electronically. The online service should also be free to persons who are given a paper copy of the document or form and send it to the licensing authority by post. Any rejection of this last proposal is blatant discrimination against persons without electronic access.

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

Answer 8.

I have not seen nay evidence or comments to support this suggestion. There is an annual renewal procedure by post. Payment is by direct debit or cheque. If this became a burden, responsibility would be delegated to ease that burden. Currently there is no burden and it is not foreseen.

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.*

Answer 9.

Agree. Extra licensing documentation is required for NoV Implementation. A reasonable administration fee is to be expected.

Any other Comments

Will the authorities apply this to the Television licence fee? I don't think so. They know the very same principle of a damaged and unreliable customer database would soon reflect little of the truth. It would become worthless, just like the amateur radio licence and amateur radio services if deregulation exists. I am now going to the Post Office to renew my car's Tax Disc using the form received through the post annually. I will use my M.o.T. certificate that I have to renew annually and my car insurance certificate that is also renewed annually through the post. Why do these documents require annual checking and renewal? The answer is that they require control for database Integrity. The same way an amateur licence requires regulation and not deregulation.