

Email response received 21 July 2005 from Mr K P Werner G7RTI:

General:

I have been holding my amateur radio licence (now Advanced – Call G7RTI) since 1993 and before that I was active in the hobby of Amateur Radio as a shortwave listener. I am a member of the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) the national society representing UK radio amateur.

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

Generally I am in favour, however, serious attention must be paid to the validation and security of examination content and results validation. Also, no one should be discriminated or penalized financially for not having access to a computer or the Internet.

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.*

No – I would argue for the retention of licences for a particular period it is issued for. This enables the database of licences to be reasonably up to date. The period of validity in my view can be more than one year, but not exceeding five years. Life time licencing without periodic validation devalues the licence itself as viewed both by the licensee and the authority.

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

No – we must retain some way of valuing the licence - this can only be done via an examinations based process and periodic validation through paying a licence fee.

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.*

Yes - but this charge must not be exorbitant.

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

Yes – as far as I understand the WT Act requires radio amateurs to hold a licence and to abide by frequency allocations, power levels, interference standards, etc. Also it could mean that UK radio amateurs could no longer operate abroad under the various agreements, both international and bilateral ones.

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

Without the regulatory framework Amateur Radio would operate in a regulatory vacuum. Also (as mentioned above) unless foreign administrations go the same way it would spell the end of operating abroad.

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.*

As per my answer to Question 2 I would support any proposal for renewal periods between one and five years. In my opinion, five years is the absolute maximum, to avoid the licence requirement "disappearing from the radar". Just like voting in our democratic elections is an affirmation of our right and responsibilities I see renewing my licence as a reminder and agreement to the regulatory framework governing the hobby of Amateur Radio.

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

Disagree – on balance the licencing system is probably not over-burdensome (depending on who defines this). With electronic means of applying, renewing and maintaining the licence the administrative burden becomes easier, always with the proviso that persons are not discriminated against for not having electronic means to do this.

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.*

I am not familiar with this topic but I think there is already a cost involved in this. As long as the charges are fair and reasonable I don't see a problem with this.