

Who may apply for a Notice of Variation?

Amateur Radio (Full) licence

Most licence variations authorise the licensee to do something that is not expressly covered in the licence (for example to use an additional call sign, such as a Special Event Station callsign) or to relax a limitation in the licence (for example installing equipment for general unsupervised use by other licensees, such as repeaters and beacons). We limit their availability to Full licensees only. This is for two reasons:

First, Full licensees have demonstrated the highest levels of competence. This reduces the risk of mistakes and consequently of causing inadvertent harmful interference due to inexperience or limited technical ability.

Second, we are keen to see standards and levels of competence maintained at the highest possible levels across the hobby. If some privileges are available only to holders of the Amateur Radio (Full) licence, we hope that this will provide an incentive for those who hold a Foundation or Intermediate licence to progress to the highest level. Higher overall levels of competence, we believe, will reduce the risk of inadvertent harmful interference to other users.

Amateur Radio (Intermediate) licensees

In the past, the spectrum regulator exercised its discretion and, exceptionally, permitted the variation of some Intermediate licences. We are phasing that out, as we wish to re-establish the position where variations are available to Full licensees only. This is for the reasons given above.

The sole exception is variations for Simplex Gateways. Historically, the spectrum regulator decided that these variations should also be available to Intermediate licensees. We shall maintain this extraordinary privilege.

Apart from Simplex Gateways, therefore, we shall not grant new variations to Intermediate licensees and existing variations will not be renewed when they expire. This will restore the normal position where only Full licensees enjoy these privileges. This typically involves variations for repeaters and beacons.

General exceptions

Where a variation is made generally available, for example to enable licensees to participate in a national celebration (such as the 2012 Games) the variation may not be restricted to holders of the Amateur Radio (Full) licence. We shall publish details of availability with each such variation.