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The Use & Misuse of Lingo in Ham Radio

A point was raised by another operator last night about the proper terms to use on the amateur bands. The amateur bands are an inclusive area and a certain amount of freedom to use individual examples of terminology has always been a hallmark of the hobby. Having said that, however, there are good reasons to use a certain amount of standardized terms. Particularly when we are participating in disaster communications, this concept becomes vital. Even in non-emergency communications, however, the use of standard phrases makes the information we are attempting to convey easier to understand.

First, and foremost in my mind, is CLARITY. We want our message, be it a call sign, a name, or a location to be clearly heard and understood by the other operator. If we use terms or phonetics of our own design, we risk having the person listening to us get confused or get the message incorrect. For this reason alone we as operators should learn, use and stick to the accepted phonetic alphabet as published by the ARRL and other radio organizations.

Second, the use of terms peculiar to another service, such as "Personal" when we mean "Name", mark us to other operators, sometimes unfairly. Here again, the ARRL has stated in many publications, that the use of misunderstood "lingo" is poor operating practice. Even the ubiquitous "Q" signs of CW are not appropriate to phone operations. Their original purpose, as a kind of shorthand that shortened the time necessary to send a message in Morse Code, still exists, but ONLY in Morse Code. The use of QRM or QTH may be very frequent on the voice ham bands since most operators know the meaning of these terms, but a few operators insist on using arcane Q signs. All this does is confuse the other operator. If these individuals are doing this to make it appear that they are super hams, they should stop. All it does is irritate the rest of us, and slow the passage of information down due to having to repeat the term in plain English. Why not do it in plain English to begin with.

Third, as the operator who brought the subject up noted, we are under observation very often. Government agencies, relief organizations, law enforcement, fire and EMS entities are the very clients we serve when disaster strikes. We, as radio operators, must be cognizant of how we present ourselves to these agencies. That means being as professional as we can while we do our "thing", Radio Communications.

As a reminder to all amateur radio operators, here is the phonetic alphabet in its proper form, courtesy of the ARRL. ALFA, BRAVO, CHARLIE, DELTA, ECHO, FOXTROT, GOLF, HOTEL, INDIA, JULIET, KILO, LIMA, MIKE, NOVEMBER, OSCAR, PAPA, QUEBEC, ROMEO, SIERRA, TANGO, UNIFORM, VICTOR, WHISKEY, X-RAY, YANKEE, ZULU.

If you are telling someone your name, it is your NAME, not your "personal". If you are telling someone where you live, it is your address, not your QTH, unless of course, you are using Morse Code. Same thing for QRU. You are asking if the other operator has anything for you so just say that. Don't make the other operator puzzle around the shack trying to figure out what the heck QRU means. Same thing for QRL, QRO, QTB etc. These terms are appropriate for Morse Code, not voice comms on FM. Please do NOT use the "10-code" on amateur radio. Not even 10-4! Q-signs or codes have their place in the CW mode, but they are not really appropriate for voice communications. By the way, a frequently heard term on amateur radio is the term "73". Note please that I said "73", not 73's. The term which is shorthand for "best regards" per the latest definition from the ARRL originated with telegraphers in the 19th century. It should not be pluralized. It is "73".

OK, I have made a pest out of myself for long enough. Just remember, the purpose is to get the message across clearly, not to confound us by trying too hard to sound like an old hand. When in doubt, just say it in plain English, that usually works best.



PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

Greetings Club Members,

- ⇒ Can't believe Summer is almost here, and warmer weather has arrived. Your RARC board has been very busy planning summer events. In light of that, at the time of this writing the June 1st Program Night meeting is still "up in the air" but hopefully we will have an in-person meeting at a yet to be determined location.
- ⇒ Please mark on your calendar the Picnic on June 12th at the #2 Stone Shelter at Rowe Park in Onalaska. It will be a bring your own meal event same as last year.
- ⇒ The Club will be hosting Field Day this summer as well at brand new venue, Champions Riverside Resort Campground. Check your members' email for a Field Day announcement that was sent out on May 18th. Also, we have the Onalaska Legion reserved for the Swapfest on August 7th. More info to come on that. Additionally, the Club has also been asked to participate in Irish Fest activities in August. Stay tuned for updates.
- ⇒ Check your email for an update on the Club's 146.970 repeater.
- ⇒ Remember that the RARC Club e-mail "reflector" is out there for all Club members to post an announcement, information, or question related to Ham radio. The address is members@rarc.qth.com.
- ⇒ Everyone is welcomed to join the Saturday morning "ragchew" on the 146.970 repeater at 8:00 AM.
- ⇒ If you have any submissions for the Club Newsletter, The Key, please send them to our editor, Kelley Becker at kellyll23@hotmail.com.
- ⇒ If you shop on-line at Amazon, please remember to try smile.amazon.com and designate 0.5% of your purchase to be donated to your favorite charitable organization, the RARC ! There is no cost to you and you get the same products, prices, and services as regular Amazon.

Feel free to contact me with any other comments or suggestions at rck-olter@gmail.com.

73 for now,

Rick KD9GVS 

Are you ready for the new RF exposure evaluation regulations?

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

On Tuesday, April 27, Dan, W1DAN, ARRL Eastern Massachusetts Section Technical Coordinator, gave a Zoom presentation on the latest FCC regulations on RF exposure evaluation. These are spelled out in FCC -1926A1 (<https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-maintains-current-rf-exposure-safety-standards>), "Proposed Changes in the Commission's Rules Regarding Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields; Reassessment of Federal Communications Commission Radiofrequency Exposure Limits and Policies." The document is as long as the title might suggest—159 pages—but W1DAN boiled it down, focusing on what these changes mean for radio amateurs.

A recording of the presentation can be viewed by going to https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_qlGZhHyMrha-axJt87Dcu0UZuJO0t8F.

After explaining how RF exposure can be harmful, Dan explained how the rules are changing: The biggest change, he notes, is that amateur radio's categorical exclusion has been eliminated. What this means is that now every radio amateur will have to perform an RF exposure evaluation of their stations. This now includes mobile and portable stations, including HTs, SOTA/POTA stations, and Field Day and special event stations.

He noted that you must be able to prove that your station is safe. This includes not only performing the evaluation, but also documenting these evaluations, should this data be requested by FCC personnel.

One thing that's not changing are the maximum permissible exposure (MPE) limits. These are spelled out in FCC OET Bulletin 65 (https://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Engineering_Technology/Documents/bulletins/oet65/oet65.pdf), "Evaluating Compliance with FCC Guidelines for Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields." The FCC published this document in August 1997, but it's still the Bible when it comes to RF exposure. If you don't have a copy, or have never taken a look at it, you really should do so.

Be careful, though, when reading it. It contains a table (Table 1 on p. 21) that contains a list of output powers at various frequencies. If your station exceeded those limits, then you were required to perform an RF evaluation. Now, however, all amateurs (and other radio services, for that matter) must perform RF exposure evaluations if their output power exceeds 1 mW. We are no longer categorically excluded from performing these evaluations.

OET Bulletin 65 goes on to give guidance on how to calculate or measure exposure levels. Explaining how to do this is outside the scope of this article, but again, you'll want to refer to the bulletin for more information.

Besides the elimination of the categorical exclusion for amateur radio stations, what else is new is the dates on which amateur radio stations must perform evaluations. They are:

May 3, 2021(!!) for new and modified stations

May 3, 2023 for stations that complied under the old rules.

Having said all that, the ARRL's RF Exposure page (<http://www.arrl.org/rf-exposure>) has a lot of resources to help you understand this topic and perform your own RF exposure evaluations:

An RF-exposure FAQ (<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Technology/RFsafetyCommittee/RFXFAQ.pdf>) to help hams understand the new rules.

"Learning to Live with RF Safety (http://www.arrl.org/files/file/protected/Group/Members/Technology/tis/info/pdf/QST_Mar_2009_p70-71.pdf)," *QST* March 2009 pp. 70-71.

RF Safety at Field Day (<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Technology/tis/info/pdf/9906048.pdf>) *QST*, June 1999, pp. 48-51. A case study of Field Day with NSRC in a public park

RF Exposure Station Evaluation and Exemption Worksheets (http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Technology/tis/info/pdf/rfex1_2.pdf)


RF Exposure and You (<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Technology/RFsafetyCommittee/RF%20Exposure%20and%20You.pdf>). This 8 Mbyte PDF file contains the text of the entire book by Ed Hare, W1RFI.

Chapter 5 References (<http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Technology/tis/info/pdf/RF%20Exposure%20Chapter%205.pdf>) needed for filling out worksheet.

There are also links to FCC web pages with information on RF exposure.

I'm sure we'll all be hearing more about this in the days ahead. Hopefully, someone will come out with a simple way to do the modeling or make the calculations. As always, play safe.

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Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the author of the KB6NU amateur radio blog (KB6NU.Com), the "No Nonsense" amateur radio license study guides (<https://KB6NU.Com/study-guides/>), and often appears on the ICQPodcast (<https://icqpodcast.com>). When he's not RF exposure evaluations, he teaches online ham radio classes and operates CW on the low end of the HF bands. 

Its been a long haul...

It appears like this COVID-19 thing is nearing its end. At least those who have been completely vaccinated seem to be able to breath much easier. The mask requirement has been lifted by the CDC and I for one am much relieved. For far too long we have had to be extra cautious when moving about among the general population. All of this business of hand sanitizing, frequent hand washing and especially wearing a protective mask has been a real challenge for many. There has been much discussion and opinions put forward about these guide lines. Not everyone saw the need for such measures.

In fact, the debate still goes on with lots of “information” on the internet about the precautions that many have been using to protect themselves and those around them. Oh yes, the discussion has been rather heated at times. The media has had a field day with it. The reporting of this topic has been front and center for far too long and it is a relief that it is finally winding down. Whatever your personal opinion on this subject might be, I'm sure that it has taxed your patience to some degree or other.

There has been information and mis-information by the boat load to keep the pot stirring, but to what avail? Some say that this pandemic never happened. That it was all a hoax put forth by politicians to frighten the general public. Many say that there were no deaths due to COVID-19, some say that many of the deaths attributed to it were falsely made and that it really wasn't as bad as all of the reports. All that I can say to that is tell it to Brazil. Tell it to Africa. Tell it to India. See what they say about it. We are very fortunate in this country to have the kind of expertise that enabled vaccines to be produced so quickly. So quickly in fact that there are many who doubt their efficacy and fear their potential risks. History will have to play its part in this as there is too much in the news for a rational person to filter through and make logical sense of.

When this all started to unfold, we looked to our leaders for guidance, but got little of value from them. The politicians were just that, politicians. They didn't seem to know what was really happening and relied on their own opinions to guide them. They didn't trust the scientists, for they painted a far too dark a picture of what was going on. This just couldn't be happening. Things like this doesn't happen here. Whether this approach was correct or not is a matter of debate. We are so good at debate. The result is often grid lock as a result. Just when we needed leaders who were willing to guide us through these terrible times, we got mostly people who had their own agendas that they wished to pursue over the needs of their constituents. It seems that we have the best government that money can buy, and so it has been sold down the river for special interests. I know that some of those reading this will say that this is just my opinion, and I guess that it is, but I don't think that I am alone in that assessment of the situation.

73 de KC9HDS, Carl (member contributor) 

RIVERLAND AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Monday, May 17, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting was called to order at 6:37 PM at Perkins in Onalaska, WI.

Officers Present: Rick Kolter KD9GVS, Dave Peters KB9EWG, Drew Neve AB9NE, Ronald Severson, KD9OHQ, Carl Thurston, KC9HDS, Steve Becker, W9DXE, Shawn Hicks, KD9KGQ, Dan Abts, AB9TS.



Approval of April 2021 minutes: Motion to Approve April Minutes was made and seconded. Minutes Approved as published.

Treasurer's Report was made by Drew, motion to approve was made and seconded. Report Approved as made.

Officer's Reports: None.

Committee Reports: None.

Old Business:

- Newsletter Articles – for “The Key” should be sent to Kelley by the 26th of the month to make it into the newsletter.
- Review of Scott Cross's KB3MKD proposal for a monthly member contest. Motion made and seconded to table this proposal for future consideration. The motion was approved.
- Picnic is June 12th. The Club Picnic is scheduled to take place at the Rowe Park in Onalaska, Shelter House Number 2. The time is 11 am to 4 pm. It is a Bring your own food event and will practice safe meeting protocols.
- Field Day 2021, June 26 & 27: A motion was made and seconded to hold the 2021 Field Days at Champions Riverside Resort and Campground, after discussion the vote was taken and approved to proceed with the new location.
- Onalaska Community Days: Carl KC9HDS reported that no information has been forthcoming, the event is under different organizers and they have not responded.
- Swapfest August 7th: The Onalaska Legion has been reserved and the event listing is out on ARRL website. Roger Reader will distribute flyers beginning of June and door prizes are being acquired.

New Business:

- Program night for June 1st. Rick is going to work on a program and a possible live meeting location, please standby for more information when it becomes available.
- Irish Fest Proposal August 13th-15th: Shawn Hicks KD9KGQ proposed that the RARC participate in the 2021 Irish Fest as a Special Event Station. After discussion a motion was made, seconded, and approved. Shawn will investigate the event further and work to set up the Special Event status.

Motion to Adjourn @ 8:26

* *Anyone who is a member of the Club are welcome to attend the RARC Board meetings.*

UPCOMING Events for June 2021

- ♦ RARC Sunday Night 2Meter Net is held on the 146.970 repeater at 8:00 PM. Net control operators for December are:

June 6, 2021	Shawn kd9kgq
June 13, 2021	Mark kb9ofk
June 20, 2021	Carl kc9hds
June 27, 2021	Rick kd9gvs

- ♦ Saturday morning Ragchew, weekly on the 146.970 repeater, 8:00-9:00 AM
- ♦ **June 1**...Program Night, Time: 07:00 PM, <https://zoom.us/j/99796168272> or possibly in person. Details are still being worked on.
- ♦ **June 12**....Club picnic is at the #2 Stone Shelter at Rowe Park in Onalaska. Bring your own meal.
- ♦ **June 20**...Trustee Meeting, Time: 06:30 PM, Onalaska Perkins.
- ♦ **June 26 & 27**....Field Day 2021 at Champion Riverside Resort & Campground. Camping is available. Call Rick Kolter for reservations.



BUY-SELL-TRADE-ISO

- ISO I'm looking for a Yaesu FTM-100DR Dual Band rig. Email: w9gm@arrl.net, Ken W9GM

* Send your Amateur related classified ad to Kelley, NLT the 27th of each month to kelleyLL23@hotmail.com

CLUB INFORMATION



Riverland Amateur Radio Club

PO Box 621

Onalaska, WI 54650

- * The Key is published monthly and e-mailed to members and friends of the Riverland Amateur Radio Club by the 28th of each month.
The newsletter focuses on news, announcements and activities of the Riverland Amateur Radio Club. It may also consist of news and information of interest to the Amateur Radio community as a whole. Guest editorials and articles related to Amateur Radio are welcome. Contribution articles should be submitted NLT the 26th of the month.
Address any correspondence or anything that should be included in the newsletter to: Kelley Becker at KelleyLL23@hotmail.com.
- * The Riverland Amateur Radio Club maintains a website at rarc.qth.com. More information about the club can be found there as well as past copies of The Key.
- * RARC also maintains a Facebook page where members add information and share their Amateur Radio adventures. Please friend us at Riverland Amateur Radio Club—RARC.
- * RARC maintains a repeater that is located on the WXOW television tower above La Crescent, MN. 146.970 pl 131.8.
- * RARC holds a weekly 2meter net on Sundays at 8:00 PM on the 146.970 repeater.
- * Trustee Meeting is held the 3rd Monday of the month at Perkins Restaurant, 9428 State Road 16, Onalaska, WI 54650 at 5:30 PM, all club members are welcome.
- * Program evening is held the 1st Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM, elmer session at 6:30 PM at 401 West Avenue in La Crosse.
- * Weekly "Breakfast Club" Ragchew on the 146.970 repeater on Saturday's from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM. Stop by to say "hi".

Below are listed your RARC 2021 Board of Trustees and contact information.

President.....Rick Kolter, KD9GVS Email...rckolter@gmail.com

Vice-President.....David Peters, KB9EWG Email...kb9ewg@gmail.com

Secretary.....Ron Severson, KD9OHQ Email...ronaldhseverson54@gmail.com

Treasurer.....Drew Neve, AB9NE Email...ab9ne@yahoo.com

Trustee.....Carl Thurston, KC9HDS Email...kc9hds@gmail.com

Trustee.....Steve Becker, W9DXE Email...sbecker54656@yahoo.com

Repeater Trustee.....Shawn Hicks, KD9KGQ Email...eistim68@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor.....Kelley Becker, KD9LQW Email...kellyLL23@hotmail.com