

Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of)	
)	
Amendments to the Amateur Service)	WT Docket No. 95-57
Rules Including Amendments for)	
Examination Credit, Eligibility for a Club)	RM-8301
Station License, Recognition of the)	RM-8418
Volunteer Examiner Session Manager, a)	RM-8462
Special Event Call Sign System, and a)	
Self-Assigned Indicator in the Station)	
Identification.)	

REPORT AND ORDER

Adopted: March 20, 1997

Released: April 1, 1997

By the Commission:

I. Introduction and Executive Summary

1. In this *Report and Order*, we revise our rules to implement minor amendments requested by members of the amateur service community. Our regulatory goal is to serve our licensees more effectively by improving license processing, increasing operational flexibility, and minimizing regulation where appropriate. By this *Report and Order*, therefore, we act on the five unrelated proposals we addressed in the *Notice of Proposed Rule Making ("Notice")* in this proceeding.¹ Specifically, we amend our rules to (1) improve eligibility standards for a club station license, (2) recognize the role of the volunteer examiner ("VE") teams and session managers, (3) establish a special event call sign system, and (4) authorize a self-assigned indicator in the station identification announcement. We decline, however, to allow examination credit for licenses formerly held.

II. Background

2. This proceeding was initiated by three petitions for rule making. The American Radio Relay League, Inc. ("ARRL") requested in Petition RM-8462 that the rules be amended to increase to four persons the minimum number of members required to constitute an organization

¹ *Notice of Proposed Rule Making*, WT Docket No. 95-57, 10 FCC Rcd 5014 (1995) (*Notice*).
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eligible for a club station license. The National Conference of Volunteer-Examiner Coordinators ("NCVEC") filed Petition RM-8301 seeking amendment of the rules to provide for a VE on-site team manager at a license examination session. In Petition RM-8418, ARRL requested that a former licensee be allowed to obtain a new amateur operator license without passing the requisite qualifying examinations. In the *Notice*, we also proposed rules for a special event station vanity call sign system. Finally, we proposed a rule amendment that would provide licensees with greater flexibility when an amateur station is using self-assigned indicators with its call sign. These unrelated minor proposals were combined into this single proceeding. Twenty-five comments and reply comments were received in response to the *Notice*.

III. Discussion

A. VE Team and Session Manager

3. *Proposal.* In the *Notice*, we proposed to amend the amateur radio service rules to reflect an evolution in the volunteer-examiner coordinator ("VEC") system that would give recognition to the VE manager function.² We observed that some VEs form themselves into teams and rely upon a VE session manager to ensure that the testing process runs smoothly.³ The rules for the VEC system, however, were established with the view that the same three VEs would carry out all aspects of administering an examination to an individual.⁴ Consequently, our rules do not provide for teams and managers who would take care of the myriad details in connection with administering an amateur operator examination. We process annually amateur operator license applications resulting from over 100,000 test elements prepared and administered by VEs.⁵ They prepare five written and three telegraphy test elements. The combination of test elements that the examinee passes determines the class of operator license for which the person may apply. When the examinee passes the elements required for the operator license sought, the administering VEs certify on the application document that the applicant is qualified for the license.⁶

² There are sixteen VECs that coordinate the efforts of the VEs in preparing and administering examinations for amateur operator licenses. See *Volunteer-Examiner Coordinators in the Amateur Service*, Fact Sheet PR5000, Number 204, November, 1996 (lists the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the VECs).

³ See *Notice*, 10 FCC Rcd at 5015. In our 1993 Financial Inquiry, we solicited information from sixty VEs. The responses of the VEs indicate that many VEs have organized themselves into teams locally and that a team tends to answer to a team leader.

⁴ See *Report and Order*, PR Docket No. 83-27, Fed. Reg. 445653 (1983).

⁵ See *Notice*, 10 FCC Rcd at 5014.

⁶ See 47 C.F.R. § 97.509(i) (outlines certification requirement).

4. *Comments.* The comments generally support our proposal to include in our rules recognition of the VE session manager function.⁷ The comments also show that many VEs find it more efficient to function as a team, with one member organizing activities at an examination session and carrying on liaison functions with the coordinating VEC.⁸ Additionally, some VEs find it more efficient to call upon other VEs to administer test elements for them. For example, the NCVEC states that several groups of VEs are required to administer test elements at examination sessions where there are large numbers of examinees. Each group concentrates on administering one particular test element.⁹ The W5YI-VEC suggests that the Administering VEs' Report¹⁰ be revised to require only the VE session manager to sign the certification statement on the examinee's license application document.¹¹ The ARRL, however, disagrees. It sees no reason why three VEs should not each continue to be held jointly and severally responsible for the proper conduct of each examination administered.¹² The Anchorage Amateur Radio Club, Inc. ("AARC") states that having only one person responsible at the examination session eliminates any liability on the part of the other VEs.¹³ Wilton Helm, also a VE, opposes any change that places a greater legal burden on a single person.¹⁴

5. *Discussion.* It is in the public interest for the VEC system to function efficiently and effectively. As a voluntary, privatized examination system, it provides greater flexibility and more convenient opportunities for persons wanting to take an examination for an amateur operator license.¹⁵ We believe, therefore, that our rules should provide flexibility for VEs to tailor their activities in ways that allow them to administer examinations most efficiently. An examinee may request the VEs to administer between one and eight elements during an examination session. Many VEs find it is more efficient to function as a team, rather than as three individuals, when many examinees want different combinations of the test elements administered at the same examination session.

⁷ See, e.g., Comments of Western Carolina Amateur Radio Society/VEC, Inc. at 2 and the W5YI-VEC at 2.

⁸ See, e.g., Comments of Steve Putman at 1.

⁹ Comments of NCVEC at 5.

¹⁰ The Administering VEs' Report is a section of FCC Form 610, Application for an Amateur Operator Station License.

¹¹ Comments of W5YI-VEC at 3. The statement reads: "*I certify that I have complied with the administering VE requirements in Part 97 of the Commission's rules and with the instructions provided by the coordinating VEC and the FCC.*"

¹² Comments of ARRL at 9.

¹³ Comments of AARC at 2.

¹⁴ Comments of Wilton Helm at 1.

¹⁵ Prior to the VEC system, the examinations were administered only by Commission employees at our field offices on a few specific days each year.

6. With respect to the suggestion that only the VE session manager sign the certification statement on the examinee's license application document, we point out that the VEs are not required to use a VE session manager. Additionally, all VECs do not support the suggestion. The ARRL believes that three VEs must each be held responsible for the proper conduct of each examination administered.¹⁶ Another VEC believes that having only one person sign the certification statement would eliminate any liability on the part of the other VEs.¹⁷ Our view is that the signed statement of the three VEs helps ensure that only qualified persons receive amateur operator licenses. We are not persuaded, therefore, to adopt this suggestion.

7. The amended rules, therefore, emphasize: (1) the three VEs who sign the certification statement are jointly and individually accountable for the proper administration of each examination element reported on the examinee's license application document; (2) these VEs may, but are not required to, delegate to other qualified VEs the actual administration of test elements; (3) VEs may, but are not required to, form themselves into teams; (4) a VE team may, but is not required to, select a VE session manager to organize activities at an examination session and conduct liaison functions with the coordinating VEC; (5) the VEC is responsible for resolving discrepancies appearing on the license application document and verifying that the VEs' certification statements are properly completed. These amendments will improve the licensing process by providing the VEs with the flexibility to implement efficient testing procedures, yet retain a key safeguard against improperly administered examinations.

B. Club Station Eligibility

8. *Proposal.* In the *Notice*, we proposed to increase the eligibility requirement for a club station license to four club members. We stated that it is important to determine that the applicant for a club station license is a legitimate radio club and not just a person seeking to acquire additional call signs. A club station license makes it possible for members of amateur radio clubs -- such as those meeting in schools -- to have a station operated under a unique call sign. Currently, the minimum number of members required for an organization or group to be eligible for a club station license is two members.¹⁸ An individual amateur operator may obtain only one call sign,¹⁹ but individuals posing as clubs could obtain additional call signs in contravention of our rules. Moreover, unless the call signs are requested under the vanity call sign system, call signs can be obtained without paying a fee.²⁰

¹⁶ Comments of ARRL *supra*.

¹⁷ Comments of AARC *supra*.

¹⁸ See 47 C.F.R. § 97.5(a)(2) (outlines requirements for a club station license).

¹⁹ See 47 C.F.R. § 97.5(a)(1) (outlines requirements for a operator/primary station license).

²⁰ Currently, the fee for a vanity call sign is \$30.00. There is no fee for a call sign assigned under the sequential call sign system.

9. *Comments.* The comments support our proposal to increase to four the minimum number of members that can constitute an organization eligible for a club station license.²¹ The ARRL states that the current two-member test fails to distinguish a legitimate club from any two individuals who simply want to obtain more call signs, but who do not really function as an amateur service club.²² Richard A. Stalls²³ and W5YI-VEC²⁴ point out, however, that raising the number of members does not, in itself, guarantee that an application for a club station is from a legitimate amateur service club.

10. *Discussion.* It is in the public interest to prevent abuse of the amateur radio club station licensing system. We believe the amateur service community appreciates the club station license privilege and will call to our attention any abuses thereto.²⁵ We agree that raising the eligibility requirement to a minimum of four members would not, in and of itself, guarantee that a license application is from a legitimate amateur radio club. In conjunction with other provisions of the rules, however, it may help deter the filing of license applications by bogus clubs. For example, the club applicant must have a name, a document of organization, management and a primary purpose devoted to amateur service activities consistent with our rules for the service. We are amending the rules, therefore, as proposed. These amendments will improve the effectiveness of the amateur service licensing process.

C. Self-Assigned Indicator

11. Our rules currently provide that a self-assigned indicator may be included with the call sign during the station identification announcement.²⁶ This provision enables an amateur operator to call attention "on-air" to his or her unique situation -- be it operation at some exotic location, participation in an unusual event or other atypical station operation -- such that other amateur operators may become more inclined to enter into communications with the station. This rule, however, specifies that the indicator must be transmitted *after* the call sign. In response to several informal requests, the *Notice* proposed to allow the station identification to include a self-assigned indicator *before*, *after*, or *both* before and after, the assigned call sign.²⁷ The location of the indicator in the station identification does not prevent a person overhearing the

²¹ See, e.g., comments of Robert A. Scupp at 3.

²² Comments of ARRL at 7.

²³ Comments of Richard A. Stalls at 4.

²⁴ Comments of W5YI-VEC at 7.

²⁵ As of October 31, 1996, we have set aside the assignment of nine vanity call signs as a result of complaints by interested amateur radio operators.

²⁶ See 47 C.F.R. § 97.119(c).

²⁷ See *Notice*, 10 FCC Rcd at 5015.

announcement from determining the identity of the station licensee. For example, under the proposal, these four options would be available to Connecticut amateur station W1AW when transmitting from the Virgin Islands: W1AW, KP2/W1AW, W1AW/KP2, or KP2/W1AW/KP2.²⁸ In each instance, a listener could determine that the assigned call sign of the station is W1AW for the purpose of accessing the data base to learn the identity of its licensee. The comments generally support this proposal because it allows greater flexibility to a station operator wishing to use an indicator.²⁹ We agree and adopt this proposal to provide greater operational flexibility for amateur radio operators.

D. Special event call sign system

12. *Proposal.* In the *Notice*, we requested comments on a proposed special event call sign system to be administered by the Commission.³⁰ We had previously reserved the block of call signs having the rarest of all formats -- the 750 one-by-one call signs³¹ -- for temporary use by amateur stations during events that are of special significance to the amateur service community.³² A special event call sign aids amateur operators in calling attention "on-air" to their participation in the event as well as helping to bring public notice to the event. For example, we have recently received requests for one-by-one call signs to be used by amateur stations in conjunction with a wide variety of events such as conventions, festivals, dedications and anniversaries.

13. *Comments.* The few comments received regarding our proposal show no consensus as to the nature and types of special events that the amateur service community considers warranting the use of one-by-one call signs. Barry Hampton suggests, for instance, a broad range of events that are of significance to individual licensees, such as birthdays.³³ The AARC suggests that a larger block of call signs would be needed to accommodate requests for special event stations in Alaska, the Caribbean Insular Areas, Hawaii and the Pacific Insular Areas.³⁴ Another commenter suggests that special event call signs be available only to Amateur Extra Class

²⁸ KP2 is a prefix assigned to amateur stations having mailing addresses in the Virgin Islands. It is common practice to use for an indicator the prefix for a region visited.

²⁹ See, e.g., Comments of Richard A. Stalls at 6, W5YI-VEC at 8, and Robert A. Scupp at 4.

³⁰ See *Notice*, 10 FCC Rcd at 5015.

³¹ A one-by-one call sign consists of a single prefix letter (K, N or W), the region number (0 to 9), and a single suffix letter (A to W, Y and Z).

³² See *Report and Order* in PR Docket No. 93-305, adopted December 23, 1994, 10 FCC Rcd 1039 (1995), at para. 13 (set aside the one-by-one format call sign block for a special event call sign system).

³³ Comments of Barry Hampton at 1 and 2.

³⁴ Comments of AARC at 3.

operators.³⁵

14. *Discussion.* Although the comments do not provide the licensing criteria that would be needed for us to administer a special call sign system, the numerous and varied requests that we have received for call signs from the one-by-one format block indicate that there is a widespread demand for some type of special event call sign system. Moreover, we believe that a special event call sign system can be best utilized in a self-administered fashion. We are amending our rules, therefore, to authorize the licensee of an amateur station operating in conjunction with a self-determined special event to substitute for its assigned call sign a self-selected call sign from the block of one-by-one call signs. The station must also announce its assigned call sign at least once each hour during such operation so that listeners can determine the identity of its licensee.

15. We observe that the amateur service community provides on-line license data base information through the Internet.³⁶ We are confident this experience can be used to coordinate the short-term use of special event call signs. The rules adopted herein, therefore, delegate authority to the Chief, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau to certify volunteer entities to serve as amateur station special event call sign data base coordinators. Such entities would coordinate, maintain and disseminate a common on-line data base for the block of special event call signs. We will announce by Public Notice when entities may propose to volunteer their services. Special event call sign coordinators will be selected on the basis of their ability to coordinate, maintain and disseminate world-wide a common on-line data base. This amendment will serve our amateur service licensees by simplifying and improving the efficiency of our licensing process.

16. We see no need to limit special event call signs only to stations licensed to Amateur Extra Class operators, as suggested by one of the commenters, *supra*. The operation of a special event station does not require additional skill. Nor does a special event call sign authorize any operating privileges. It simply allows an already-licensed station to temporarily use a different call sign in the identification announcement that helps attract greater attention to the on-air presence of the station. Further, we do not agree that a larger block of special event call signs would be necessary to fully accommodate the demand. Moreover, we do not have additional call signs to assign for this purpose given that any such call signs would have to be taken from the sequential and vanity call sign systems, thus denying them to amateur operators who want them assigned to their primary and club stations.

E. Examination Credit

17. *Proposal.* Our *Notice* proposed to allow examination credit for persons whose

³⁵ Comments of David B. Popkin at 3.

³⁶ For example, the amateur service licensee data base is provided on the Internet by several parties including The University Of Arkansas at Little Rock Amateur Radio Club (<http://www.ualr.edu/~hamradio/callsign.html>).

amateur operator licenses have lapsed.³⁷ Our objective was to encourage former amateur operators to become involved again in the opportunities provided by the amateur service. We proposed to authorize VEs to give examination element credit for any examination that the examinee previously passed in obtaining a license formerly held. We also solicited comments concerning the criteria that we should use to allow any other qualified persons similarly situated (such as former and current holders of other types of operator licenses issued by the Commission, other United States government agencies, and foreign governments) to obtain examination credit, without examination, for licenses previously or currently held.

18. *Comments.* The comments generally oppose allowing examination credit for amateur operator licenses formerly held. Gary David Gray, however, states that such examination credit would benefit his friend who passed an operator license examination in 1931, but inadvertently allowed the license to lapse years later and now has difficulty in taking examinations.³⁸ In opposing the proposal, Richard A. Stalls argues that persons who do not renew their operator licenses within the two-year grace period following the expiration will probably never do so. He points out that renewal of an amateur operator/station license is required only every ten years and is a process that should take no longer than five-minutes to complete. Further, he states that, even if they do file belatedly, it is not likely that they will have maintained an acceptable level of expertise.³⁹ Winford H. Guin also opposes our proposal. He states that the fact amateur operators are not retested for license renewal cannot be equated with relicensing persons who were tested many years ago. He argues that the level of knowledge of the Commission's rules by the two groups would not be comparable.⁴⁰ In lieu of the Commission's proposal to give examination credit, ARRL suggests that the operator license be valid for the lifetime of the holder.⁴¹ No comments addressed the matter of allowing examination credit for other types of licenses held.

19. *Discussion.* In view of the opposition expressed in the comments, we decline to adopt our proposal to give examination credit for licenses formerly held. Persons who allow their amateur operator license to expire will have to pass the requisite examinations if they later decide to obtain another amateur operator license. We do not believe that attending an examination session is a hardship. The VEs provide abundant examination opportunities.⁴² They must, moreover, accommodate an examinee whose physical disabilities require a special examination

³⁷ See Notice, 10 FCC Rcd 5014.

³⁸ Comments of Gary David Gray at 1.

³⁹ Comments of Richard A. Stalls at 3.

⁴⁰ Comments of Winford H. Guin at 7.

⁴¹ Reply comments of ARRL at 6.

⁴² The VEs prepare and administer examinations on operating procedures, radio wave propagation characteristics, amateur radio practices, electrical principles, circuit components, practical circuits, signals and emissions, antennas and feed lines, radiofrequency environmental safety practices, and telegraphy.

procedure, including administering examinations in the home.⁴³

20. We believe that our procedures provide ample notification and opportunity for license renewal. The license expiration date is shown on our licensee data base, so that it can be obtained through the Internet even if the license document is lost. Providers in the private sector often use this information to remind licensees that expiration is about to occur. For those persons who inadvertently fail to renew, a two-year grace period is allowed.⁴⁴ At the conclusion of the grace period, the record of the former licensee is purged from the data base and the call sign becomes available for reassignment in the vanity call sign system. Further, we have made the license renewal process as simple as possible by expanding our electronic filing procedures to include license renewal.⁴⁵ With respect to the lifetime operator license suggestion, the operator would still have to renew the station license every ten years.⁴⁶ We would, therefore, have to develop and maintain a separate data base specifically for the purpose of maintaining indefinitely records of amateur operators who allow their station license to expire. It would not be in the public interest to expend resources for such increased record retention.⁴⁷

IV. Procedural Matters

F. Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

21. In the *NPRM*, the Commission certified that the rules it proposed to adopt in this proceeding would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.⁴⁸ No comments were received concerning the proposed certification. However, some comments were received that generally concerned the impact of the proposed rules on small entities.⁴⁹ For the reasons stated below, we certify that the rules adopted herein will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.⁵⁰ This certification

⁴³ See 47 C.F.R. § 97.509(k) (requires VEs to accommodate examinees having physical handicaps).

⁴⁴ See C.F.R. § 97.21(b) (specifies a two-year grace period following expiration for license renewal).

⁴⁵ See *Order*, In the Matter of Electronic Filing of License Renewal and Modification Applications in the Amateur Radio Service, released July 17, 1996.

⁴⁶ See C.F.R. § 97.25(a) (specifies a 10-year term). It is a policy of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau to issue amateur operator and station licenses for a 10-year term.

⁴⁷ A combined operator and station license is granted. Each entry in the licensee data base contains information on both license grants.

⁴⁸ See *Notice*, at n.1, *supra*.

⁴⁹ Comments of AARL at 7 and 9. See also, comments of NCVEC at 5 and comments of W5YI-VEC at 3.

⁵⁰ 5 U.S.C. § 605(b).

conforms to the Regulatory Flexibility Act ("RFA"), as amended by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 ("SBREFA").⁵¹

22. The *Notice* certified that no regulatory flexibility analysis was required because the promulgation of the proposed rule amendments would not create a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities because the amateur stations that are the subject of this proceeding would not be authorized to transmit communications for a pecuniary interest.⁵² However, the rules that we adopt in this Report and Order apply to small amateur radio organizations, some of which may be small entities.⁵³ Consequently, we cannot certify that no regulatory flexibility analysis is required for the reasons set forth in the *Notice*.

23. Nonetheless, we may still certify that no regulatory flexibility analysis is necessary here. Even if a substantial number of small entities, namely, amateur radio service organizations, were affected by the rules, there would not be a significant economic impact on those entities. The rules we are adopting do not impose economic requirements. Instead, they relate to the administration of the amateur radio service.

24. We certify, therefore, pursuant to Section 605(b) of the RFA, that the rules adopted in this Report and Order will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. The Commission will publish this certification in the Federal Register, and will provide a copy of the certification to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the SBA.⁵⁴ The Commission will also include the certification in the report to Congress pursuant to the SBREFA.⁵⁵

G. Ordering Clauses

25. IT IS ORDERED that (30 days following publication in the *Federal Register*), Part 97 of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. Part 97, IS AMENDED as set forth in the Appendix. Authority for this action is contained in Sections 4(i) and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i) and 303(r).

⁵¹ 5 U.S.C. §§ 601-611. SBREFA was enacted as Subtitle II of the Contract with America Advancement Act of 1996 ("CWAAA"), Pub. L. No. 104-121, 110 Stat. 847 (1996).

⁵² *Notice* at 5015.

⁵³ The Regulatory Flexibility Act defines "small entity" as "having the same meaning as the terms "small business," "small organization," and "small governmental jurisdiction." 5 U.S.C. § 601(b). The term "small organization" means "any not-for-profit enterprise which is independently owned and operated and is not dominant in its field" 5 U.S.C. § 601(4).

⁵⁴ 5 U.S.C. § 605(b).

⁵⁵ 5 U.S.C. § 801(a)(1)(A).

26. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this proceeding is terminated.

Contact Person

27. For further information, contact Maurice J. DePont, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, 202-418-0690 or e-mail mdepont@fcc.gov.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

William F. Caton
Acting Secretary

APPENDIX

Parts 0 and 97 of Chapter I of Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended as follows:

Part 0 - Commission Organization

1. The authority citation for Part 0 continues to read as follows:

Authority citation: Sec. 5, 48 Stat. 1068, as amended; 47 U.S.C. 155, 225, unless otherwise noted.

2. Section 0.131 is amended by adding new paragraph (p) to read as follows:

§ 0.131 Functions of the Bureau.

(p) Certifies, in the name of the Commission, volunteer entities to coordinate, maintain and disseminate a common data base of amateur station special event call signs, and issues Public Notices detailing the procedures of amateur service call sign systems.

Part 97 - Amateur Radio Service

1. The authority citation for Part 97 continues to read as follows:

Authority citation: 48 Stat. 1066, 1082, as amended; 47 U.S.C. §§ 154, 303. Interpret or apply 48 Stat. 1064-1068, 1081-1105, as amended; 47 U.S.C. §§ 151-155, 301-609, unless otherwise noted.

2. Section 97.3(a)(11)(iii) is added to read as follows:

§ 97.3 Definitions.

- (a) The definitions of terms used in Part 97 are:

(iii) *Special event call sign system.* The call sign is selected by the station licensee from a list of call signs shown on a common data base coordinated, maintained and disseminated by the amateur station special event call sign data base coordinators. The call sign must have the single letter prefix K, N or W, followed by a single numeral 0 through 9, followed by a single letter A through W or Y or Z (for example K1A). The special event call sign is substituted for the call sign shown on the station license grant while the station is transmitting.

The FCC will issue public announcements detailing the procedures of the special event call sign system.

3. Section 97.5(b)(2) is revised to read as follows:

§ 97.5 Station license required.

(b) The types of station licenses are:

(1) ***

(2) A club station license. A club station license is granted only to the person who is the license trustee designated by an officer of the club. The trustee must be a person who has been granted an Amateur Extra, Advanced, General, Technician Plus, or Technician operator license. The club must be composed of at least four persons and must have a name, a document of organization, management, and a primary purpose devoted to amateur service activities consistent with this Part. The club station license document is printed on FCC Form 660.

4. Section 97.119(c) is revised and a new Section 97.119(d) is added to read as follows. Current Section 97.119(d) through (f) is redesignated as Section 97.119(e) through (g).

§ 97.119 Station identification.

(c) One or more indicators may be included with the call sign. Each indicator must be separated from the call sign by the slant mark (/) or by any suitable word that denotes the slant mark. If an indicator is self-assigned, it must be included before, after, or both before and after, the call sign. No self-assigned indicator may conflict with any other indicator specified by the FCC Rules or with any prefix assigned to another country.

(d) When transmitting in conjunction with an event of special significance, a station may substitute for its assigned call sign a special event call sign as shown for that station for that period of time on the common data base coordinated, maintained and disseminated by the special event call sign data base coordinators. Additionally, the station must transmit its assigned call sign at least once per hour during such transmissions.

5. Section 97.509(a) and (i) are revised to read as follows:

§ 97.509 Administering VE requirements.

(a) Each examination element for an amateur operator license must be administered by a team of at least 3 VEs at an examination session coordinated by a VEC. Before the session, the administering VEs or the VE session manager must ensure that public announcement is made stating the location and time of the session. The number of examinees at the session may be limited.

(h) ***

(i) When the examinee is credited for all examination elements required for the operator license sought, 3 VEs must certify on the examinee's application document that the applicant is qualified for the license and that they have complied with these administering VE requirements. The certifying VEs are jointly and individually accountable for the proper administration of each examination element reported on the examinee's application FCC Form 610. The certifying VEs may delegate to other qualified VEs their authority, but not their accountability, to administer individual elements of an examination.

(j) ***

6. New Section 97.513 is added to read as follows:

§ 97.513 VE session manager requirements.

(a) A VE session manager may be selected by the VE team for each examination session. The VE session manager must be accredited as a VE by the same VEC that coordinates the examination session. The VE session manager may serve concurrently as an administering VE.

(b) The VE session manager may carry on liaison between the VE team and the coordinating VEC.

(c) The VE session manager may organize activities at an examination session.

7. Section 97.519(b) is revised to read as follows:

§ 97.519 Coordinating examination sessions.

(a) ***

(b) At the completion of each examination session, the coordinating VEC must collect the FCC Form 610 documents and test results from the administering VEs. Within 10 days of collecting the FCC Form 610 documents, the coordinating VEC must:

(1) Screen each FCC Form 610 document;

(2) Resolve all discrepancies appearing on the FCC Form 610 documents and verify that the VEs' certifications are properly completed; and

(3) For qualified examinees, forward electronically the data contained on the FCC Form 610 documents, or forward the FCC Form 610 documents to: FCC, 1270 Fairfield Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325-7245. When the data is forwarded electronically, the coordinating VEC must retain the FCC Form 610 documents for at least 15 months and make them available to the FCC upon request.
