

**Program and Services Committee (PSC)
Report to the Board – July 2015**

ARRL Bylaw 39. The Programs and Services Committee shall: Guide development of service delivery mechanisms, evaluate services, and recommend program priorities; Advise Chief Executive Officer on services provided to individual members other than publications, including but not limited to contests and awards, information services including Logbook of the World and W1AW, and incoming and outgoing QSL bureau services; Advise Chief Executive Officer on volunteer programs, including but not limited to the field organization, affiliated clubs, volunteer examiners, Volunteer Counsel/Consulting Engineers, and educational initiatives; and Evaluate and recommend awards recipients to the Board for outstanding volunteer service or outstanding achievement.

PSC Committee members: Tom Abernethy W3TOM, David Norris K5UZ, Dick Norton N6AA, Doug Rehman K4AC, Art Zygielbaum KOAIZ, ARRL Field Services and Radiosport Manager Dave Patton NN1N (Staff Liaison), Brian Milesosky N5ZGT (Chairman)

The Programs and Service Committee (PSC) is pleased to provide this report outlining a number of accomplishments over the last six months.

The committee met in Newington last January and once again last April by teleconference to address a number of topics. ARRL Regulatory Information Manager Dan Henderson N1ND assisted as recording secretary. A brief overview of our progress follows:

Contest Advisory Committee (CAC) recommendations. PSC tasked CAC with a number of research topics this last year and, as their findings were delivered, we considered the recommendations that accompanied them. Briefly, CAC was formally tasked with:

- Researching the feasibility of potential mobile HF contesting categories. (PSC accepted CAC's recommendation to not implement such categories.);
- Researching a possible 24-hour category in the ARRL International DX contest. (PSC accepted CAC's recommendation to not implement such a category.);
- Reviewing scoring topics pertaining to the ARRL 160-meter contest. (PSC accepted CAC's recommendation to not modify the contest's scoring system.); and
- Researching the pros and cons of making logs submitted for ARRL contests public once the submission deadline has passed. (PSC accepted CAC's recommendation to publish logs and implement a number of related recommendations made by CAC.)

Remote operations and DXCC. After careful deliberation and giving due consideration to both tradition as well as the need to embrace and manage inevitable advancement in technology, PSC recommended modifications to ARRL's DXCC rules that clarify the utilization of remote operating technologies. PSC also developed and recommended a new section to the rules that emphasize high ethical standards and responsibility while pursuing DXCC, especially with respect to the use of emerging technologies. These recommendations were provided to the Board, which adopted them at its January meeting.

National Traffic System and ICS-213. PSC approved the use of the ICS-213 as an additional official NTS traffic format, and requested that NTS leadership develop policies and procedures to incorporate the ICS-213 format into the NTS system by January 1, 2016. Top NTS leadership, led by its three Area Staff Chairmen, have completed project scoping, established a schedule with milestones, and are underway.

Ad Hoc Committee on VHF and Above Contest Revitalization. Staffed by Kermit Carlson W9XA (Chairman), Dave Patton NN1N, Marty Woll N6VI, Doug Rehman K4AC, and Joel Harrison W5ZN, PSC's ad hoc Committee on VHF and Above Contest Revitalization continues its thorough review of ARRL's VHF and above contesting program and developing key recommendation to the program to increase the level and breadth of participation in these contests. Last January, after soliciting and receiving abundantly positive feedback from the VHF and above community, the committee delivered its initial batch of recommendations to PSC which generally:

- Removed the current prohibition on the use of certain forms of assistance for all operator categories, with such use having no impact on entry category;
- Removed the current prohibition on self-spotting for all operator categories; and
- Allowed single operators to transmit on more than one band at a time.

PSC unanimously approved these recommendations and forwarded them to the Board which likewise adopted them. Feedback received from participants of the June VHF Contest, the first League contest that incorporated these recommendations, indicated that they have been well received within the VHF and above community. The ad hoc Committee on VHF and Above Contest Revitalization is presently engaged in its next phase of research, and we look forward to receiving their findings and recommendations.

Additional topics. PSC took action on a number of additional topics:

- 160-meter QSL card checking. PSC formally recommendation that ARRL staff develop careful guidelines and expand the 160-meter card checking program to the Board, which was adopted at its January meeting.
- ARRL Volunteer Instructor database. PSC recommended to the Board that the development of a Volunteer Instructor database be elevated to high priority

- status with a completion date by end of CY15. The Board adopted this recommendation at its January meeting.
- ARES and NTS Handbooks. PSC approved the discontinuation of ARRL's Public Service Communications Handbook, which contained both ARES and NTS topics, many of which were very dated. In its place, a modernized and comprehensive ARES Handbook was created and published, thanks to the hard work of a working group composed of Section Managers, Section Emergency Coordinators, and government representatives led by Mike Corey. NTS Area Staff Chairmen have likewise been engaged and asked to create/update NTS content that would fill the pages of a modernized and comprehensive NTS Handbook.
 - Field volunteer reporting system. PSC continues to track the status and development of a web-based reporting system to gather information on activities performed by field volunteers, directed by the Board at its July 2014 meeting.
 - Electronic administration of ARRL VE exams. We remain excited for staff's effort to develop an electronic VE exam administration and grading capability.

As Chairman, I wish to express my personal gratitude to each member of the PSC, members of its ad-hoc committees, and those of the League's advisory committees for their diligent work and dedication to tackling a range of important topics that impact ARRL, its membership, as well as amateur radio in general. *Thank you.*

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Mileschosky N5ZGT
Chairman, ARRL Programs and Service Committee