

Seventeenth Meeting of the Canadian Amateur Radio Advisory Board (CARAB)

Date: November 13, 2001

Place: Industry Canada Headquarters
Room 1585D
300 Slater Street
Ottawa, Ontario

Chair: Michael Connolly
Senior Director
Radiocommunication and
Broadcasting Regulatory Branch
Industry Canada

Participants: RAC:

Kenneth Oelke RAC President
Dr. Kenneth Pulfer Vice-president, Government and International Affairs
Robert Cooke Regional Director, Ontario South
Rick Lord, P. Eng. Regional Director, Midwest

Industry Canada:

Tom Jones Chief, Authorization, Spectrum Management Operations
Harold Carmichael Program Manager, Certificates and Examinations, Quebec Region
Hubert Pambrun District Director, Eastern Ontario
Darius Breau Manager, Operational Policies, Radiocommunication and Broadcasting
Regulatory Branch

(1) Review and Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as written. Radio Amateur of Canada (RAC) requested that an item regarding the Call Sign Data Base and Morse code qualification be added under new business. Industry Canada requested that an item regarding amateur participation at CARAB be added as well.

(2) Acceptance of the April 26, 2001 CARAB meeting minutes

The summary record of the last meeting was approved as written.

(3) Status Report by Industry Canada Regarding the Policy for Examination of Disabled Amateur Candidates

At the last CARAB, Industry Canada stated that they had used the information provided by RAC as the basis for drafting an information item providing guidance for physicians that would assist them in making a determination with respect to an individual's ability to take the amateur examination in a standard format. Mr. Jones stated that as a result of a number of other more pressing amateur related initiatives, progress had not been made on this particular item since the last CARAB meeting. Industry Canada agreed, however, that it was necessary to finalize this information bulletin and committed to conclude the item by the end of January 2002. The bulletin will likely be incorporated in an existing amateur information circular.

(4) Status Report by Industry Canada to Publish Accredited Examiner List on RAC's Web Site

In order to assist those who wish to become amateur radio operators, a list of accredited examiners had been provided to RAC by Industry Canada and published on RAC's Web site. The list is sorted in alphabetical order by town/city, province and mailing address, followed by the name of the examiner. The language of the examiner, telephone number and, if available, alternate telephone number are also noted.

Industry Canada indicated that this should not be construed as a complete list as some examiners requested their names not be published and are therefore excluded. RAC has indicated this potential exclusion of some examiners on the Web page, and they also direct accredited examiners who wish to make modifications to the list to the Industry Canada Amateur Radio Service Centre.

(5) Status Report by Industry Canada on the Examination Generator and Updating Corrections to the Web Site

Industry Canada reported that the current version of the examination generator to be used by accredited examiners, in order to produce amateur operator examinations, was modified to reflect the comments received as of late last spring and published on the Web site on November 1, 2001. Industry Canada stated that the feedback they received to date regarding this new version has been largely positive; however, some problems still continue to be encountered with respect to certain examination questions. As well, for reasons that currently remain unknown, some examiners are still experiencing problems in the printing process. Industry Canada intends to continue to address any problems that are encountered.

RAC stated that it would be beneficial if a unique identifier was provided with each examination and answer sheet that is generated as this would make tracking specific examinations easier. As well, they suggested that there could be a central reception point in Industry Canada for reception of comments concerning the examination generator and question banks. It appears that several people within Industry Canada were involved, on a temporary basis, in handling queries concerning the examination generator and the question banks, and this was causing some confusion as to how the comments were being

addressed.

Mr. Jones stated that all comments concerning the examination generator should be forwarded to him, and he would advise those involved of any future action that had or had not been taken. Errors that have been brought to Industry Canada's attention concerning incorrect questions or missing answers are being corrected as they are identified.

(6) Status Report Regarding the Possibility of RAC Taking Responsibility for Maintaining and Updating the Examination Generator and Amateur Question Banks

As briefly mentioned at the last CARAB meeting, RAC inquired if Industry Canada would be receptive to RAC taking on responsibility, on a contractual basis, for the maintenance and upgrading of the examination generator as well as the amateur question banks. Industry Canada stated that they are currently doing a feasibility study regarding the potential for contracting the administrative work of the Amateur Service Centre to a third party; however, at this point in time the study is just underway, so there is nothing concrete to report. The initial proposal is to determine the feasibility of bundling all amateur administrative activities, including items such as the examination generator and question bank maintenance, and then selecting one organization to handle this work. At this point, it is unknown if such a proposal is practical, and the work may need to be separated into several succinct functions, which may be more appropriately handled by different organizations.

Under this alternative approach, contracting RAC to maintain, update and deliver the examination functions would certainly be a possibility. Until the first proposal has been investigated more thoroughly, it is not possible for Industry Canada to comment on the RAC proposal.

(7) Status Report by Industry Canada on the Canadian Wireless and Telecommunications Association (CWTA) Municipal Affairs Committee and Follow_up on Discussion of Proposed "Prudent Avoidance Policy," in Toronto

As discussed at the last CARAB meeting, a report commissioned by the City of Toronto has recommended that, as a proactive measure, Radiofrequency Fields (RFF) emitted by radio stations in metropolitan Toronto should not exceed 1% of the level outlined in Safety Code 6. The City of Toronto had requested Industry Canada to perform an RFF measurement study in Toronto and, in the interest of facilitating a clearer public understanding of this technically complex subject, Industry Canada agreed to do so. Industry Canada has completed the initial study, whereby they performed measurements to determine the Radiofrequency Fields at approximately 60 different locations randomly selected in urban areas of Toronto. In all cases the level of RFF measured was significantly below the Safety Code 6 limits and in many cases too low to be measured as it was below ambient Radio Frequency noise levels.

The Board of Directors of the CWTA have created a committee to deal specifically with

municipal issues and to monitor municipal activities related to various antenna siting policies. They have been working cooperatively with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) on basic principles for establishing of a general consultative process related to the installation of antenna support structures. These discussions, however, were put on hold pending the outcome of the City of Toronto's Economic Development Division's proposed "Prudent Avoidance" policy. Industry Canada still believes that the development of mutually acceptable antenna protocols by land-use authorities and the wireless industry is the best way to proceed.

Industry Canada stated that they will continue to closely follow developments in this matter and will consider continued participation in associated activities deemed appropriate.

Status Report by Industry Canada Regarding the Policy for Examination of Disabled

(8) Status Report by Industry Canada - Enforcement of Regulations

As mentioned at the previous CARAB, RAC has published an FAQ (frequently asked questions) document on their Web site to assist amateurs in dealing with enforcement cases entitled, "*Enforcement of Amateur Regulations.*" The document appears to have been well received within the amateur community, however, RAC feels that situations still occur where Industry Canada must be prepared to take appropriate action in order to correct the problem.

Industry Canada noted that it is the local Industry Canada office which determines if it is prepared to apply resources to such investigations. Therefore it is necessary that the amateur community can visibly demonstrate to the local Industry Canada office that enforcement action is necessary to deal with the non-compliant behaviour and that the amateur community has done their best to deal with the matter pro-actively. As workload tends to be a dynamic variable among the various local Industry Canada offices, resources may not always be available to deal with these types of situations on a consistent basis across the country. Where it can be demonstrated, however, that flagrant disregard for regulatory compliance by amateur operators has consistently taken place, Industry Canada is prepared to take the necessary compliance action.

RAC also inquired if the *Contraventions Act* had been approved by all provinces and Territories in Canada thus allowing tickets to be issued for *Radiocommunication Act* and *Radiocommunication Regulations* offenses. Industry Canada replied that to their knowledge there were still one or two provinces that had not yet ratified *Contravention Act* regimes, and they would determine the details of the situation and advise RAC accordingly.

(9) Status Report by Industry Canada - Reciprocal Operating Agreements - Thailand, Hong Kong, Mexico and IARP

Due to representations by RAC, Industry Canada had approached the administrations of Thailand and Hong Kong to determine if they were interested in establishing a reciprocal operating arrangement with Canada for amateurs. In the case of Thailand, their administration had previously indicated that such reciprocal operating agreements would require approval through diplomatic channels, and Industry Canada is continuing to pursue this using the formal diplomatic process. RAC indicated that such a reciprocal operating agreement existed between Thailand and the United States and that perhaps this agreement could be used as a reference in order to expedite the process.

Regarding Hong Kong, Industry Canada indicated that they had received an acceptance of our proposal from the Government of Hong Kong and the onus was on Industry Canada to conclude the procedure. The proposal is currently being examined within Industry Canada and Mr. Jones stated that the legal services staff requested some clarification of the text in the agreement before proceeding with approval. Hopefully this would be finalized very shortly.

With respect to Mexico, it was pointed out that they concluded a reciprocal operating arrangement with Canada many years ago when Mexico acceded to the Lima Convention. While Mexico does have a reciprocal operating agreement with Canada via the Lima Convention, it is not a signatory to the Inter-American Amateur Radio Service Convention (IARP), which allows permit holders to operate in signatory countries without prior authorization. Therefore, until the Mexican administration accedes to the IARP, Canadian amateurs will require to apply for permits to operate in Mexico prior to their arrival.

It was also noted that at the recent meeting of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) it was proposed that a procedure be developed with the European Radiocommunications Committee (CEPT) for the mutual recognition of amateur radio operator permits. RAC asked if Canada would support such an agreement and if ratified, would this cause changes to the current situation, whereby RAC has been delegated by the Minister of Industry to issue CEPT permits and the IARP.

Industry Canada stated that as Canada already participates in CEPT T/R 61-01 and has acceded to the Inter-American Convention on the IARP, this proposed agreement between CEPT and CITEL would be of little consequence to Canada. However, Canada would certainly not oppose such an agreement. Therefore, since Canada is already a party to both reciprocal operating arrangements, our main concern would be that any CEPT/CITEL agreement not adversely affect privileges currently held by Canadian amateurs when operating abroad. Until the administrative details of such an arrangement had been finalized, it would be difficult for Industry Canada to comment on how such an arrangement might affect RAC's function of issuing CEPT permits for amateurs and the IARP.

(10) New or Other Business

(a) Participation at CARAB:

Mr. Carmicheal indicated that a concern had been communicated to Industry Canada regarding participation at meetings of CARAB, and as RAC is the organization representing all Canadian amateurs, RAC must ensure that the views of all Canadian amateurs are being represented.

RAC indicated that the current terms of reference for CARAB stipulate that the group should consist of eight members, with equal representation from RAC and Industry Canada. RAC stated that they always strive to ensure that the views of all Canadian amateurs are being represented at the CARAB.

Industry Canada stated that they rely on RAC to formulate their representations in order to ensure that they reflect the views of all Canadian amateurs. Industry Canada encourages the amateur community to unite and voice their concerns at venues such as the CARAB.

(b) Morse Code Qualification:

RAC mentioned that some amateurs expressed concerns about the recent change in the amateur call sign database where the Morse code qualification for all amateurs was modified to indicate 5 Words Per Minute (W.P.M.) rather than 12 and 5 W.P.M. RAC understands that the purpose of publishing the amateur call sign database is to ensure that amateur operators have a readily available means of verifying that those in Canada, with whom they communicate, are qualified to operate on the amateur frequency bands being used. They also understand that with the modification to operating privileges which came into force last spring, the actual code speed attained by amateurs, be it 15, 12 or 5 w.p.m. is no longer a relevant factor with regard to prescribing privileges for operation in the amateur bands. However, the fact that Industry Canada modified the amateur call sign database to reflect all amateur code qualifications as 5 w.p.m. Morse code, has undoubtedly, contributed to the perception by some amateur operators that their existing amateur certificate qualifications had been reduced with respect to the code speed at which they had originally demonstrated their ability.

Industry Canada stated that, in retrospect, it is understandable that the manner in which the call sign database was modified may have unfortunately caused confusion and perhaps may have been perceived by some amateurs as an insensitivity on Industry Canada's part to the amateur community. Industry Canada wanted to ensure RAC that this was certainly not their intent and they had learned a valuable lesson for handling future initiatives of this type. In order to address such situations quickly, Industry Canada mentioned that this incident underlines the benefit of maintaining a close working relationship with a national amateur association.

Recognizing the sensitivity of this matter, Industry Canada stated that, in consultation with RAC, it recently modified the amateur qualification information in the call sign database to indicate simply a "Morse code" qualification, without any reference to the actual code speed attained. With this modification to the call sign database amateurs will

still be able to verify that those with whom they communicate are appropriately qualified. At the same time this modification should not be interpreted as diminishing the past accomplishments of amateur operators.

(11) Preparation for the 18th CARAB Meeting - Date, Time and Place

RAC indicated that they will be holding their next board meeting in April of 2002 and therefore suggested that this would be a good opportunity to hold the next CARAB meeting. Industry Canada agreed with this suggestion. Therefore, the next CARAB meeting will be held on April 25, 2002 at 9:00, at Industry Canada's Headquarters, in Ottawa.

(12) Adjournment

Before adjourning the meeting RAC, President Mr. Ken Oelke pointed out that he understood this was to be the final CARAB meeting for Mr. Darius Breau of Industry Canada as Mr. Breau would be retiring from the Federal Public Service at the end of this calendar year. On behalf of RAC, Mr. Oelke wanted to take this occasion to thank Mr. Breau for his efforts on behalf of amateurs over the past number of years and wish him the best in his future endeavours.