

Fifth Meeting of the Canadian Amateur Radio Advisory Board (CARAB)
Friday September 22, 1995
390 Brant Street, 2nd Floor
Burlington, Ontario

Chair: Mike Connolly

Participants:

RAC

INDUSTRY CANADA

Pierre Roger	Darius Breau
Jim Dean	Tom Jones
Bill Gillis	Merrill Moore
Ken Pulfer	
Farrell Hopwood	

1) Review and approval of the agenda

The agenda was accepted as written.

2) Acceptance of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of April 20 were accepted as written.

3) Update on Amateur Delegation Initiatives

a) Acceptance of the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU)

The last draft of the MOU was presented. Discussion took place with respect to the role Industry Canada would play in the Board of Directors of the not for profit corporation and the extent to which the corporation would be accountable to the amateur community. The point was made that the corporation must take all reasonable means to represent the views of all amateurs. Separate from this issue are the contractual obligations that the corporation will assume under the agreement with Industry Canada.

It was pointed out that how the corporation is constituted is important as it is necessary that amateurs will view the corporation as working in their interests. The RAC pointed out that the corporations role is that of a service organization and this function should not be confused with the performance of an advocacy role for

amateurs. It was agreed that the MOU, after a few minor editorial changes was acceptable to both parties.

b) Progress Report on Amateur study and pilot project

The contract between Industry Canada and RAC for the amateur study was concluded this summer and is well underway. The detailed plan was completed and interviews with delegated examiners, amateurs and Industry Canada staff is also underway. A draft discussion paper will be produced by the end of the month. The RAC mentioned that they greatly appreciate the assistance Industry Canada has provided, with special thanks to Jim Cummings for his efforts.

The contract between Industry Canada and the RAC with respect to the pilot project is currently being drafted. The purpose of this project is to develop a transitional plan that will provide for the future implementation of delegated activities. Part of the work that needs to be done, is to examine what is required in order to incorporate and run a not for profit corporation. Both the RAC and Industry Canada feel that a not for profit organization will be necessary to provide the delegated services and this needs to be finalized as soon as possible.

c) Business Case update and status of General licence

Jim Dean gave a presentation on how the delegation process and the business case has developed since the last CARAB meeting. Industry Canada is pursuing the concept of the General Licence and is drafting up a regulatory proposal. It was pointed out that it is imperative that the regulatory mechanism for authorizing some type of general licence be developed as this item is central to the success of the delegation initiative.

4) Review of Ongoing Activities

a) Antenna and Antenna Structures - update

Industry Canada released the final version of the client procedures circular at the end of June. The RAC noted that they have been encountering less problem in this area recently and the public and municipalities seem to have a better understanding of the situation. What has started out as confrontation in many instances has turned into mutual cooperation. It was agreed that since this situation seemed to be under control there was no need to keep it on the agenda as a standing item.

b) EMCAB2

The RAC government liaison representative met with the Director General, Spectrum Engineering last summer to discuss the EMCAB2 issue. They were told that any comments they wished to submit, as a single RAC position, would be considered. The RAC are currently putting together their position and will submit it to Industry Canada. The RAC are also of the understanding that EMCAB2 will only be used to

resolve what are otherwise irreconcilable situations and it will not be applied until all other avenues have been exhausted. Industry Canada indicated that this is the case and our procedures are clear that EMCAB2 measurements will only be taken in cases when other avenues for resolution have been exhausted.

c) International Amateur Radio Permit

Canada has acceded to the convention and will now recognize this permit as authority for foreign amateurs to operate in Canada.

d) CARAB "Action List "

The list of action items arriving from previous CARAB meetings was reviewed.

e) 220-222 MHz sharing arrangement with FCC

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has agreed in principle to the draft sharing arrangement tabled by Industry Canada and is awaiting the approval of the National Telecommunications Information Agency (NTIA) before finalizing their agreement. Once they have NTIA approval they will accede to the sharing arrangements. At this time, Industry Canada and the RAC should ensure that they work together to inform amateurs of any new operating requirements.

5) New Business

a) Call sign assignment policy

Due to the regional allocation of call signs prefixes, certain areas of the country have greater access to two letter call signs than others. This causes a situation where large provinces, such as Ontario and Quebec, have lesser availability of two letter calls and amateur operators view this as an inequity in the call sign assignment process. The Ontario office of Industry Canada has requested that additional call sign blocks be made available to Ontario amateurs.

It is recognized that the current situation exists because of the regional prefix policy for call signs. The RAC recognizes that this issue needs to be addressed and it would be preferable to come up with a definitive call sign assignment policy prior to delegation. However they believe that to properly examine the process and propose alternatives, consultation will need to be done on a national basis. The RAC proposed that a national group be constituted to discuss this issue and provide recommendations on what procedure should be applied. Industry Canada agreed with this approach and offered to participate in facilitating the meetings of this group.

The assignment of "Q" series call signs was discussed. Due to the international significance of the QST suffix the RAC had requested that Industry Canada refrain from assigning this identifier. However, Industry Canada advised that at their

discretion, district offices could assign other "Q" series calls if requested by amateurs.

b) Discussion of the petition brought forward by RAQI with respect to harmful interference.

At the last CARAB meeting the Radio Amateurs of Quebec (RAQI) presented Industry Canada with a petition of more than 1000 signatures from amateurs in Quebec as well as the Atlantic provinces and Ontario. The purpose of the petition was to inform Industry Canada of problems in the amateur bands with respect to malicious interference being caused and request that ways of solving these situations be investigated. RAQI had a subsequent meeting with the Industry Canada Regional Office in Quebec and several courses of action were proposed. It was decided that, as the RAC was the national organization representing amateurs, the elements of these discussions should be brought to the CARAB for their consideration. Discussion followed on the following points.

I) Training

With the restricting of the amateur service the number of licensed amateurs has almost doubled in the last five years. This has led to situations where many new amateurs have commenced operation without the benefit of guidance from other experienced amateurs.

As well, most amateur courses focus on subject matter that will allow candidates to pass the examination, which is mainly of a technical rather than an operational nature. Consequently, it was agreed that the RAC should begin an awareness campaign for new amateurs to demonstrate the importance of using proper operational procedures. This campaign could be initiated at the local amateur club level to promote responsible amateur station operation. In addition, experienced amateurs should be encouraged to assist new licensees in their initial operations.

It was also discussed that perhaps ways of recognizing excellence within the amateur community could be developed. There currently exists a life time achievement award for outstanding service in amateur radio however this award is issued very seldom and only in extremely special cases. The RAC will examine the potential to issue a certificate of merit for amateur radio that could be awarded under less stringent conditions.

II) Divulging Certificate Information

Industry Canada has always relied upon amateurs to be self regulating however there is no way for individual amateurs to verify the competency of other operators. Although the majority of the information contained in the certificate data base is not of a confidential nature, certain elements, like place and date of birth are. As a result the data base is not available to the public. As well, amateur certificate and call sign records are currently contained on two separate Industry Canada data bases with no provision for data matching.

It was decided that Industry Canada should make available to the public, perhaps by using the internet, certificate information on amateurs in order that operating privileges could be verified. Industry Canada will discuss this with their automated systems group in order to determine how this could be accomplished.

III) Code of Ethics

Discussion took place regarding the proposal that a code of ethics be developed for amateur operators such as has been done by the American Radio Relay League in the United States. The RAC will further investigate this proposal.

IV) Participation by Amateurs in Interference Investigations

Industry Canada requires amateurs to become involved in the mitigation of their interference problems. In order to assist clubs or individuals in solving interference cases Industry Canada should institute pro-active measures such as offering training in identifying and detecting interference sources. As well a brochure and video could be produced which outlines the techniques used to detect interference sources.

In cases where prosecution action has been instituted by Industry Canada due to intentional interference to amateur and other radio services, Industry Canada should continue to make the amateur community aware of the results of the proceedings.

- 6) The meeting was adjourned and a tour of the Acton Spectrum Service Centre was given.

Date of Next Meeting

The next CARAB meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 17, 1996 at Industry Canada Headquarters in Ottawa.