
From: Indy Rosser <indy.freightlink@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, 7 February 2021 6:47 PM
To: SLPSConsultations
Subject: Class Licensing For Amateur Radio Operators

To Whom It May Concern,

I wish express my concern and express my opposition to the proposal known as "option 3 (class licences for Amateur Radio operator).

To be perfectly honest, this scares the tripe out of me.

NOTHING is "free" in this life, and there's always a hidden cost to anything so offered. It may not be in dollars and cents, but it will always result in some sort of cost, most likely in kind. For example, I would foreshadow future loss of privileges..... we've all seen how hungrily commercial interests have been looking at our broad bandwidths. We might lose having an arbiter (ACMA) available should an interference problem come to bite us on the arse whether "supposed interference" we may cause someone else.... you know, "it's that ham bloke down the road with the big antenna", despite the fact, as happened to me, that I was over a thousand kilometres away in the truck when I supposedly caused it.

With the help of the then radio branch we were able to ascertain in was a rogue VHF transmitter on a nearby hill..... a COMMERCIAL site. Another time I was accused that the complainant could not only hear my transmissions through his TV, but ALSO the Yank I was talking to was emanating from the TV. Curious, huh?

Then, of course, how do we go for protection FROM those dirty UHF "weather stations" that Elders (I think) were giving away to farmers..... made in China and broad as a barn door AND radiating much more than the supposed milliwatts..... and so it goes on. These are far from isolated examples.

What about constructors, if we are relegated to just type approved gear? I'm sure the department is aware that in the past, a great deal of that which we take for granted today was pioneered by Radio Amateurs, from simple CW, through to Television, various digital modes and the list is almost without end. Whilst many may THINK this is all in the past, the reality is that people experimenting and testing and broadening of knowledge base is either done, legitimately within the bounds of our hobby, OR many people glean their interest or sharpen their minds and skills sets due to this hobby.

The Devil is ALWAYS in the detail and where there is NO details (other than "as deemed by the ACMA from time to time" to paraphrase) in proposal/option 3, then I start to see an awful lot of Devils and not too many benefits

I would hope that the ACMA has not forgotten the enormous contributions Radio Amateurs have made during major emergencies. Many think that the "systems" (such as trunking radios etc) that have been created have negated the need for us "hams", but NO other service (including the military and I'm ex military, so I have some knowledge) can deploy equipment and highly skilled and trained radio communicators, with their own gear, rapidly and effectively should something bring down the network..... as I am fully aware has already happened, through my personal contacts in the Rural Fire Service and NSWSES. I am absolutely sure of just how important it is to have this back up to the established services through personal, although dated experience.

Personal, because I was there, and dated because my occupation now precludes much involvement with the likes of WICEN.

In 1994, during the terrible bushfires on the Central Coast of NSW, I (as a WICEN operator) was initially pressed into service with another radio ham, ostensibly to provide a Coombs link from Hilton Moore Park to the emergency

comms base at Erina (this was prior to the new setup at Kariong). As soon as I arrived, the site OIC asked me one question....."Are you a radio Amateur "?

On confirmation he delegated me the task NOT of providing a ham link to Erina, but as ground controller for the up to 18 helicopters providing water bombing, intelligence etc for the disaster. It was just 2 of us Amateurs, neither of whom had EVER heard air traffic in our lives before, essentially being the only ground to air comms, and later we were including in pre flight briefings as WE had far better knowledge of obstructions that might be encountered on each sortie than anyone else, and far better knowledge than the available maps and charts. Local knowledge cannot be under estimated.

After some week or so (I forget now how long) the powers that be wanted to bring in professional ground controllers from, I think, RAAF Base Richmond..... I cannot recall exactly where they were to come from, but I do know they were RAAF personel. Both Jeff and I (the other radio Amateur assigned) were quite prepared to stand down and let the "pros" take over, but the pilots actually had a meeting of which I was privy and essentially insisted we remain and the pros NOT be brought in, simply based on our rapport AND local knowledge. Don't think very similar things could never happen again. The work of volunteers with both technical and local knowledge, as well as daily communications experience is beyond quantifying.

In order to retain and encourage folks like Jeff and I, Radio Amateurs and prospectives NEED to feel we are both recognised, and not be just thrown essentially at the whims of future Governments.

Option 3 is essentially, to me, what was foisted upon the UHF CB users.

That's worked well for CB NOT! You don't see it much here in Griffith, but in my job I am forever encountering drongos either being horses arses and transmitting crap 🐵 OR you have businesses just taking over channels, because they can. Between the various fertiliser sheds, and surrounding quarries in Geelong, for example, there is something like 40 channels "occupied" by industry, often multi million dollar companies, too cheap to get designated frequencies.

The list goes on forever.

If we cannot have option "A" (leave it alone), we NEED option "B", as option "C" is absolutely untenable and, in my view, herald the death of our hobby, and with it the unimaginable loss of experience and technical knowledge

Kindest regards

Indy. (VK2XB)

Sent from my iPad so expect stupid autocorrect errors!!!!