

LETTERS

CHANGING THE RULES

Sir, I have enjoyed electronics and radio on the constructional side for years and try to avoid the black box syndrome wherever possible. Your first issue is a good practical mag; I trust you'll keep it up and not cloud the issue with nebulous articles like some others I could mention.

I waited in eager anticipation for my licence having sent away my eight quid, pass certificate and evidence of nationality the next day. In October I chased a fellow at Waterloo whatsit about my licence and he sent me a form to fill in (don't they all?) I sent it back. Blow me if next week I didn't get a second. Still at least this time it showed my callsign, and they returned my pass certificate. To date no licence has appeared.

The point is that if I wanted a licence for my TV or Charlie Brown (sic) you can go to the Post Office and they give it to you straight away. It is high time the authorities had a re-think.

A statement such as 'we like to encourage the prospective radio amateur' is a joke. When you finally get your class B, you realise that you are a second class citizen with a third class allocation. Fine if you're into VHF and UHF but I don't have the room to put up a whopping 100ft tower. Devon is not particularly good for two metres. A bloke in our local radio club says that Plymouth to St Austel is DX. I can do better than that on 27MHz FM.

The answer is simple. Every radio ham should pass the RAE and an operators test to see if he can speak properly on the air and use the correct procedure. Class B should be allowed 28MHz and upwards; class A, the rest of the HF bands. The morse test should be for all frequencies below 28MHz.

Incidentally, I'd put CB licences up to £30 and give them 26 and 27MHz all-mode to FCC standards and no restriction on aerials except in respect of planning permission. Amateur radio standards would not deteriorate as long as there was a sensible practical exam plus the RAE of course. Unfortunately the bureaucrats, the RSGB and the 'Fine Business Old Man' set will ensure that things don't change.

As for me, I'll have to learn morse I suppose... I shan't play around with a handheld and rubber duck at radio rallies. I'm QRT and QSY.

PETER G6NSU

An interesting letter. Rather long and punctuated with rubbish, but interesting. The HO is a bureaucracy and the RSGB a gerontocracy. However the HO is seriously overstretched (it didn't anticipate the boom in amateur radio) and the RSGB should be changed from within rather than knocked from without. I believe that both organisations are out of touch with the movement they represent. Get to it and make them listen - Ed

PROFANITIES

Sir, I read the comments about self control on the letters page of the January issue with interest. I am a newly licenced amateur after passing the May 82 examination.

I transmit within the licencing regulations and consider myself to be in full control of what I say or do. Plenty of amateurs over the age of 18 do not transmit within the regulations and to quote 'belch profanities over the air'. When talking on the air it is difficult to tell the age of amateurs unless they offer the information. Several times I have made the mistake of reducing peoples' ages by two or three decades! I can't be blamed for everything. I am sure other young amateurs would agree with me. Perhaps some newly licenced amateurs are simply following the examples of people who have been licenced for 20 or 30 years.

I would like to point out that I am 15 years old, still at school and about to take my 'O' levels in the coming year so, if the suggestion to increase the licence age to 18 years was taken seriously, I would be prevented from enjoying this hobby for another 2½ years.

Kathryn Jackson G6LHY

PS After thoroughly reading my licence conditions I wonder if G3WPO knows his licence? Mine states that (section 9/2) 'The callsign shall be sent for identification purposes at the beginning and at the end of each period of sending, and whenever the frequency is changed. When the period of use exceeds 15 minutes, the callsign shall be repeated (in the same manner) at the commencement of each succeeding period of 15 minutes.'

Interesting. I'll tackle G3WPO about it - Ed

DEAD SQUARE

Frank, So you've decided to open a new ham radio magazine? Good, there's always room for a new'un. BUT, please, could I ask ever so gently: - not to attempt further assaults on the poor battered body of the English language.

One example, from the first issue: 'disinterested' is not the same as un-interested - see any dictionary. You wouldn't want your new mag to become the 'Grauniad' of ham radio, would you?

-don't try to boost circulation by knocking the RSGB. We all know it has its problems, as does any organisation, but the ham population in this country is not large enough to support two organisations, and anyway there are already enough scatterbrained ideas about to need a sobering influence. It's all happened before - remember Autin Forsyth's campaign in Short Wave Magazine in the Fifties? - and it didn't boost his circulation. - and for Heavens' sake don't start putting nudes on the front cover. I know that it's all the rage, and the ex-CB'ers are used to it, but couldn't we have just one mag. that didn't have vast acres of T&B (sic)?

It would be nice to think that your mag. was so good it didn't need artificial circulation boosters.

Your first issue shows signs of a good spread of interest and I look forward to the next - and the next - and the next.

By the way, you are absolutely at liberty to label me dead square, or even dead, if you wish. My 19 year old son does, why not you?

WALLY BLANCHARD G3JKV

Like it, Wally. Actually I'm thinking of running a readers' wives column... Ed

NOVICE CW LICENCE

Sir, Thanks for a magazine with a new syle. I hope that it will continue.

A novice licence would be a good idea - say a test at seven words per minute. However it is hoped that the advocates for this do not see it as a shortcut to HF, allmodes. If such a licence is authorised then it should be for CW only until such time as the magic 12 words per minute is obtained and the PO test passed.

12 words per minute does not make anybody 'superior' or a better operator. The pre and immediate post war system of CW only could be brought back with advantage.

I wonder - what the superior 'A' type operators (you hear a lot them on the bands with SSB) would say if it was required that they should be re-tested after, say, three years?

The remarks in various magazines and on the air regarding the 'simplicity' of the RAE and the corresponding numbers of new licences gains strength from month to month. It is because some people are upset that what was once a fairly exclusive club is now being enlarged. This surely cannot be a bad thing for amateur radio.

I sat the new style RAE and did find that it was easy but then I have, despite my young' call, been associated with amateur radio for some 44 years. I do not presume that I am any better than anybody else but I have seen a lot of water and sour grapes flow under the bridge!

R DALY G8VYJ

There has to be some mechanism to limit the number of HF band users. The real question is about what form the limiting mechanism should take - Ed

BLACK BOX

Sir, I'm fed up with all the ballyhoo, flannel, bull, and price of the modern rig together with its decor sporting a vast array of knobs, switches pushbuttons, etc. On the very latest model, I tallied up 47!!

I still get by nicely thank you on HF with 50W of SSB/CW all around the world utilising only 12 knobs.

A PHELPS G4FLK

I couldn't agree more - Ed