

**Contest Advisory Committee
Semi-Annual Report**

**For the American Radio Relay League
Board of Director's Meeting**

January 2021

**Dennis Egan, W1UE
Chairman, CAC**

COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS

Tasking 2020.1(Multi-Operator Club Scores) has been completed. Copy attached.
Tasking 2020.2 (Single Band Scores ARRL DX) has been completed. Copy attached.

Tasking 2020.3 (Digital Contest 6M) has been completed. Additional Info: Two possible weekends have been found that an ARRL Digital Contest could be held on with minimal conflict with other contests: 3rd weekend in May, or the 1st weekend in September

Tasking 2020.4 (ARRL DX MS Band Changes) has been completed.

Additional Taskings, second half of 2020:

Tasking 2020.5 Social Media and ARRL Contests

Tasking 2020.6 Revision of SS start times. Not settled yet.

Tasking 2020.7 Proposed Rule Change, ARRL Family Rule

CHANGES IN CAC MEMBERSHIP

There were two changes in the CAC membership during the first second half of 2020. The CAC members as of January 1, 2021 are:

- Atlantic – Charles D. Fulp, Jr, K3WW; k3ww@fast.net
- Central – Craig Thompson, K9CT; Craig@K9CT.us
- Dakota – Dr. Scott Wright, K0MD; DrScott.Wright@gmail.com
- Delta – Stan Stockton, K5GO; wa5rtg@gmail.com
- Great Lakes –
- Hudson – Zev Darack, N2WKS; zevdarack@gmail.com
- Midwest – Dr. Glenn Johnson, W0GJ; w0gj@arrl.net
- New England – Chairman -
- Northwestern – Jim Cassidy, KI7Y; ki7y@arrl.net
- Pacific – David B. Ritchie, W6DR; w6dr@arrl.net
- Roanoke - Don Daso, K4ZA; k4za@juno.com
- Rocky Mountain – Kenneth “Mike” Fatchett, W0MU; W0MU@w0mu.com
- Southeastern – Charles Wooten, NF4A; NF4A@knology.net
- Southwestern – Glenn Rattmann, K6NA; k6na@cts.com
- West Gulf – James K. George, N3BB; n3bb@mindspring.com
- Radio Amateurs of Canada – Samuel A. Ferris, VE5SF; ve5sf@sasktel.net

Great Lakes member is open due to the SK of Dave Pruett K8CC. The New England Division member and the Chairmanship are both open due to the resignation of Dennis Egan, W1UE, due to medical reasons.

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Tasking 2020.1 - CAC Tasking Proposals.

The PSC requests that the CAC analyze, study and provide more details on the following CAC proposals for potential new tasking's.

1. ARRL Affiliated Club (Gavel) Competition - Multioperator Station Score Apportionment - in the ARRL CW/Phone DX Contest:

Under current ARRL Contest Rules, where eligible members of US/VE Affiliated Clubs are operating from a DX entity during the ARRL DX Contest, 100% of a Multioperator Station's Score may be allocated to just one club toward the Affiliated Club Competition.

Task: Discuss how to apportion percentages of a Multioperator Station's score to more than one eligible affiliated club. Considerations:

- A. Allow the apportionment to multiple clubs (does the existing Club Competition allocation rule need to be changed)? Yes or No?
 - i. If yes, how many clubs can/should the apportionment be available/limited to?
 - ii. Must/should the club's receiving such allocations all be in the same club size/territory category (that is, all be in the Medium vs Unlimited category)?

Can/should one multioperator-station affiliated-club member (of the potential several operators at the station) be able to contribute 100% of his/her score allocation to say two clubs in different affiliated-club competition categories?

NOTE: At least part of this exact question was answered in the CAC January 2020 report, specifically:

“2. Should a Dxpedition Score be split according to the % of members of a club that participated (current rule is if one club has more than 50% of the operators, that club gets the entire score).

CAC Poll- 10 Pro, 1 Con”

3. Should guest ops, operating anywhere in the USA or Canada, have their score count for their chosen club?

CAC Poll- 10 Pro, 1 Undecided

4. Should Multi-op scores be apportioned back to clubs in a % relative to the % of ops in different clubs, regardless of their location?

CAC Poll- 10 Pro, 0 Con

5. Should ARRL DX have a Foreign Club competition?

CAC Poll- 7 Pro, 2 Con

There are several other parts to this tasking, as discussed below.

To answer the specific questions that were asked in the 2020 Tasking:

1. Should a Multi-operator score be apportioned back to individual clubs?

Yes.

2. How many clubs should it be apportioned to?

One club per operator

3. Should all the receiving clubs be in the same Club Category?

No

4. Should an operator be allowed to split his part of the point total to more than one club?

No-One club per operator

Current ARRL DX Contest Rule 8.7: For Multi-operator Stations, the score may only count for one club, and at least 50% of the operators must be members of the club receiving the score and meet all other criteria.

Proposed ARRL DX Contest Rule 8.7: Multi-operator scores may be allocated to multiple clubs as a percentage of the number of club members participating in the operation. The log entry must spell out the full club name (and club allocations if multi-op).

For example, I go on a Dxpedition and the breakdown of club members is 25% PVRC, 25% FRC, 25% YCCC, and 25% NCCC. Under the current ARRL rule, no club would get credit for the score, as no club meets the 50% member threshold. Under the Proposed ARRL rule, the score would be split 25% PVRC, 25% FRC, 25% YCCC, and 25% NCCC.

CAC polling indicated 13 Pro, 0 Con.

TASKING 2020.2: Addition of Power and Assisted Categories for Single Band ARRL DX Only

In the ARRL DX Contest (which includes Single-Band competitions), currently ARRL Contest Rules limit Single-Band competitors to a single band category with no differentiation for power or assistance.

Should the Single-Band competition categories be expanded to include:

- Assisted and Unassisted categories?
- By allowing three power-level categories?
- Or both of the above? If all of the above are adopted, the following categories would be added to the event:

Assisted	Non-Assisted
QRP	QRP
Low	Low
High	High

This would add 30 categories to the contest, (36 added, 6 removed), and when multiplied by the number of states/provinces (63) would create 1890 possible new awards. The concept the CAC worked under is that, to create the 1890 possible new awards for the categories, would require a one-time cost to set up the computer program to print the online certificates, and that no additional mailing or printing cost would incur to the ARRL.

One CAC member voiced the opinion that we're moving into the arena of participation trophies here, but the majority opinion was that this would foster participation. There are many small station contesters that could compete in

some of these additional categories, increasing participation, and that anything that increases participation is a good thing for contesting. Many ops are proud of any certificate that they can win - no one gave that certificate, even if they were the only station in their category- they still had to go out and win it.

The CAC polled 12 pro, 1 con for this proposed change.

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CAC TASKING 2020.3- Adding 6M to Digital Contest for Proposed ARRL HF/6 Digital Contest for 2021.

Task: The ARRL requests further clarifications from the CAC, based on the following criteria.

Background: The PSC’s original intent was to add a new HF plus 6 meter digital event. The comments previously offered by the CAC did not appear to consider adding 6-meters to the event. Would you please review your previous work and include the possibility of adding 6-meters to the proposed event?

If the PSC’s original intent was that the contest included 6M, I am not aware of it. Regardless of that, the committee (it was composed of 2 CAC members and 4 ad hoc members) did deal with the 6M question and made a deliberate decision not to include it. Reasons for not including 6M are as follows:

1. We’re looking at a contest date in March or April. How many 6M openings are there in those months? Not many.
2. The scoring is distance based. If there aren’t any 6M openings, ops won’t go to 6M because all their Qs will be low point (local) Qs.
3. The multipliers are the first 3 characters of a grid square, counted once during the contest. There is little competitive advantage in going to 6M if you’re not going to work other than low point Qs and nearby grids.
4. It would tip the “competitive advantage” to those in high density areas.
5. Techs can use 80-40-15-10M bands for digital modes. Adding in 6M really does not foster additional participation.

For the above reasons, the Digital Committee polled 4-2 against including 6M in the Digital Contest, and it was not included as a permitted band. If the contest was held in June, July, or August, the answer may have been different.

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CAC TASKING 2020.4- ARRL DX MS changing the Band Change Rules

This topic was submitted by one of the CAC members, in response to conversations that he had with several Dxpeditors in ARRL DX earlier this year.

Current: Most ARRL Multi-Single entries use a Run and a Multi-transmitter. They are limited to 8 band changes per hour, and both transmitters can't transmit at the same time.

Proposal: That the Band change rule be waived when the Mult station is working a new multiplier. This also has two variants; should the run station not be allowed to transmit when the Mult station is transmitting, or should the run station be allowed to continue to transmit when the Mult station is working the multiplier.

Discussion: The CAC was totally against the idea of BOTH the Mult and Run stations transmitting at the same time (as CQWW allows), so that variant was immediately off the table. Only one transmitter is allowed on the air at one time.

Should unlimited band changes then be allowed, provided that the Mult station work mults only? There was no support from the CAC for this proposal- no one saw any benefit from it. Several thought it would make it too close to the CQWW contests, and they liked the variation in rules. MS, in particular, has gotten to be a horsepower race in past years, as he who has the most equipment wins. The CAC poll was 0 pro, 13 con.

One aspect of the discussion that did meet with the CAC approval was to change the number of band changes per hour from 8 to 10. This would allow stations to work one additional multiplier over what they can work now, so would not make a major difference. The CAC poll was 13 pro, 0 con.

CAC TASKING 2020.5-Contesting and Social Media

Ham radio contesting was never envisioned to be a spectator sport any more than the Friday night poker game but, that was then, and this is now. In a world dominated with Twitter, Facebook Live and selfies it was only a matter of time before these technologies found their way into the ham shack. Station operators are streaming their activities over the internet or reporting contest scores in real time. All of this adds another level of enjoyment and excitement to ham radio and can possibly attract new players to the game. With so many eyes watching the competitors they have an incentive to be stricter when it comes to the rules. There are some who believe competitors could gain an advantage if we don't set some guidelines for this activity so I have made some bullets for consideration to amend the general contest rules that would accommodate streaming technology while contesting.

In order to avoid the streaming station from gaining any advantage the following guidelines should be considered:

- Cannot display operating band or frequency.
- Cannot announce the listening frequency when calling CQ split. This would involve some sort of muting of the audio stream when announcing this information on the air.
- May display total score without showing number QSOs, multipliers, or band breakdown.
- May display QSO rate if it does not show which band is active.
- Chat windows must be muted because the streaming station cannot control what viewers post. This could possibly be allowed if technology is used to censor post before they are displayed.

The CAC did not make headway on the above topic.

CAC TASKING 2020.6-Revision of SS Start Times

The CAC has discussed this several times in the past several years. A consensus has not been reached that any changes will increase activity in either mode.

CAC TASKING 2020.7- ARRL Family Rule

Current rule:

Currently, Section STTN.1. reads as follows:

"A transmitter used to contact one or more stations may not be subsequently used under any other call sign during the contest period, except for family stations where more than one call has been issued, and then only if the second call sign is used by a different operator. (The intent of this rule is to accommodate family members who must share a radio and to prohibit manufactured or artificial contacts.)"

Proposed rule:

“No Operator or Station shall manufacture contacts using several calls for the purpose of aiding another station or club score.”

FAQ

1. A Remote Station can now be officially be used by more than one op during a contest.
2. A station that is big enough, i.e. an existing MM station, could be used by two ops at the same time during a contest.
3. One op would be able to use a call sign for the first 12 hours of SS, then use a different call sign for the second 12 hours of SS, i.e "fresh meat".

4. Any station sharing through this revised rule will most likely not be a competitive entry.

5. Station previously used under the "Family Rule" would also have to modify their operations to conform to this rule.

5. "Manufacturing contacts" refers to operating practices that inflate contact totals

a) by passing the microphone around to other ops that "may be" sitting there,

b) one or more ops alternating contacts using different call signs,

c) one op using a second call sign to work his "friends" during a contest,

d) one or more ops using different call signs to benefit another op or club score.

This proposal was sent to the PSC for their November meeting, and was forwarded on to the Contest Branch.

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This will be my last semi-annual CAC report. I was diagnosed as having had a heart attack last summer, although subsequent testing has revealed that to be false. In any case, I feel that the time has come to let someone else carry the baton.

I'd like to thank everyone involved with the CAC, from the various HQ staffers to the numerous PSC liaisons that we've had. The one thing I've found most important in getting CAC proposals heard is to have an active contester be the PSC Liaison, someone that has an interest in the topic. When that person isn't an active contester, the CAC loses their voice.

Thank you for a fun 3 years as CAC Chairman, and I'll see you in the contests!

Dennis Egan, W1UE
CAC Chairman