



ARRL Programs and Services Committee (PSC) Report to the Board of Directors – January 2023

The Programs and Services Committee is pleased to present this report to the ARRL Board of Directors covering PSC activities for the second six months of calendar year 2022. The PSC met live in Windsor, CT on July 14, 2022, and via a Zoom virtual call on October 24, 2022.

ARRL By-law 39:

The Programs and Services Committee shall:

- Create and modify services and programs, and advise the Chief Executive Officer re same, that address and support DX awards, contests, radio sport, W1AW, W1AW services, Logbook of The World and the incoming and outgoing QSL bureau services;
- Create and modify services and programs, and advise the Chief Executive Officer re same, that address and support, volunteer examiners, Volunteer Counsel, Volunteer Consulting Engineers, and educational initiatives;
- Evaluate and recommend awards recipients to the Board for outstanding volunteer service or outstanding achievement;
- Recommend the creation or modification of Board policy that relates to or affects matters for which the Programs and Services Committee has responsibility.

Voting PSC members for 2022:

Director Lippert, AC0W (also Board CAC Liaison)
Director Luetzelschwab, K9LA (also Board DXAC Liaison)
Director McIntyre K6WX
Director Ritz, W7VO, (Committee Chair)
Director Zygielbaum, K0AIZ
Vice Director Grady, N2SRK (PSC Secretary)
Vice Director Propper, K2DP
2nd Vice President Vallio, W6RGG, (PSC Officer Liaison)

Non-Voting PSC members for 2022:

Mr. Jahnke, W9JJ, Radiosport Manager

Mr. Naumann, W5OV, (Staff Liaison, and Secretary (January 2022 to April 2022))

The following are highlights from the two PSC meetings held during the period:

Awards:

The majority of the ARRL awards are vetted and awardees selected during the July PSC meeting, and this meeting was no exception. What was unusual was the outcome of the vetting. There were three award nomination packets that came to the PSC for vetting: The "ARRL Technical Innovation Award", the "ARRL Technical Service Award", and the "ARRL Microwave Development Award". What was unusual this go-around was that the PSC deemed that none of the applicants for any of these awards were worthy.

It is interesting to note that these were the only three awards that had any applicants at all, including several of the most prestigious ARRL awards. The PSC recommended that the ARRL Club Newsletter be used to encourage more nominations for ARRL awards. The ARRL Awards Program certainly needs more publicity to members from ARRL staff.

CAC/Contesting:

The PSC continues to be working cohesively with the Contest Advisory Committee, (CAC). This is due in part to the fact that it continues to be under the steady hand of Craig Thompson, K9CT, with Director Lippert, AC0W capably serving as the ARRL Board Liaison. I am personally very happy with how the CAC is currently functioning, and the CAC e-mail reflector remains very active as they discuss the issues among themselves.

It is recommended for further information on CAC current activities, please reference January 2023 Board meeting Document #22, "*Contest Advisory Committee Semi-Annual Report*".

Field Day:

As a result of discussions during the July 2022 PSC meeting, an ad-hoc Field Day Subcommittee was formed with the purpose of providing recommendations for possible "Post COVID-19" rule changes for Field Day events to be conducted in 2023 and beyond. The sub-committee consisted of the following members:

Director Ritz, (Chair)

Director McIntyre

Director Zygielbaum

Vice Director Propper

Vice Director Grady

Mr. Jahnke

The sub-committee met via Zoom on October 19th, and presented recommendations to the full PSC during the October PSC Zoom meeting. The full PSC was to review the sub-committee's recommendations and it is expected that during the January 2023 PSC meeting the final rules set for Field Day 2023 and beyond will be formalized.

DXCC/DXAC:

The 2022 DX Advisory Committee Chair is Chris Shalvoy, K2CS, and the Board DXAC Liaison is Director Luetzelschwab, K9LA. Several action items were sent to the DXAC by the PSC for consideration during the period, none of which were returned as “approved” by the DXAC.

It is recommended for further information on DXAC activities please reference 2023 Board Document #23, “*DX Advisory Committee Semi-Annual Report*”

LoTW:

No activity in the preceding six months related to LoTW. LoTW is currently under the direction of the separate LoTW Committee under Chair Widin, KOGW, and ARRL Board Liaison Baker, N4MB

The Clean Signal Initiative Committee

The *ARRL Clean Signal Initiative* was formally adopted by the full ARRL Board in January 2022, and the first meeting of the Clean Signal Initiative Committee (CSIC) was finally held via Zoom on August 17, 2022. Director Ritz was appointed by committee Chair Ed Hare, W1RFI to be the PSC liaison for the committee.

There were two additional CSIC meetings held via Zoom, the first on October 27th, then following on December 8th. So far, not much has happened as a result of these meetings other than informal discussions, as not all committee members have been present during any one meeting, and no formal agenda beyond the first introductory meeting was supplied. There has been no formal committee secretary assigned, and as a result, communications among committee members have been sparse. The CSI e-mail reflector has been silent between meetings. Mr. Hare, in an e-mail has indicated that he is deliberately “taking it slow” with the committee in an effort to reduce the possibility of scaring away manufacturers. As stakeholders, their participation is vital in this effort.

With the impending possibility that Mr. Hare may cut back his involvement with the ARRL in April, how he will continue to be involved with the CSIC moving forward is undetermined. Director Ritz will be meeting with both Ed and David Minster prior to the January Board meeting to discuss the future of the CSIC, and help to devise a plan to move the committee along in 2023.

ARRL participation in the President’s Volunteer Service Award program:

Last year the PSC approved ARRL staff looking into whether or not it would be feasible for ARRL to become a certifying organization in the *President’s Volunteer Service Award* program.

For the uninitiated, a program description from their website: <https://presidentalserviceawards.gov/>:

“In 2003, the *President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation* founded the *President’s Volunteer Service Award* to recognize the important role of volunteers in America’s strength and national identity. This award honors individuals whose service positively impacts communities in every corner of the nation and inspires those around them to take action, too. The PVSA has continued under each administration, honoring the volunteers who are using their time and talents to solve some of the toughest challenges facing our nation.

Led by the AmeriCorps and managed in partnership with Points of Light, this program allows Certifying Organizations to recognize their most exceptional volunteers.”

After being brought to the PSC by a member of the NW Division in 2021, it was determined by both the PSC and ARRL staff that the program was both worthwhile and feasible. That said, actual implementation of this program by HQ has been lagging. The reasons provided in prior PSC meetings have been related to Personify implementation and IT bug priorities, however, it is expected that Bob Naumann, W5OV will be providing the PSC a new update on where this is as an agenda item during the January 2023 PSC meeting.

New 2023 ARRL Operating Event: Volunteers on the Air

Subsequent to the January 2023 PSC meeting, several ARRL Directors requested that the ARRL look at establishing a major operating event to invigorate the membership into getting “on the air”. In the April PSC meeting, Mr. Naumann reported that there were several proposals under consideration, and that updates would be forthcoming.

In the July 2023 PSC meeting, Mr. Jahnke brought to the PSC a proposal for a year-long operating event entitled “*Volunteers on the Air*”, (VOTA), as part of 2023 being declared “*The Year of the ARRL Volunteer*” by the League. The proposal stated that this event would be crafted from rules adopted for the very successful 2014 *ARRL Centennial* operating event, with a few modifications (such as no QSL cards, just LoTW confirmations!). After a review and discussion, the PSC wholeheartedly approved the proposal, and staff was given the go-ahead to proceed.

The “*Volunteers on the Air*” event officially began on January 1, 2023, and will run through Dec 31, 2023.

(As an aside, Director Ritz made an effort on January 8 to test the VOTA waters while his station was also involved with the ARRL RTTY Roundup contest. Put to use was a second operating position, focused on VOTA SSB running during the day-time hours on the General and Technician allowed areas of the high bands (10, 15 and 20 meters). The team worked 681 eager VOTA hams during the weekend, and handed out some 387,000 VOTA points (RTTY and SSB stations combined). The SSB pileups for VOTA were HUGE, and comments on the event from members were extremely positive.

Many thanks to ARRL Staff for putting this together so quickly, and to Vice Director Tharp, KB7HDX, for his valuable assistance in getting the W1AW/x efforts moving along.)

Respectfully submitted:

Mike Ritz, W7VO, PSC Chair