

ARCC C-Notes

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What Brings the New Year?

ARCC Has Gone Paperless. No . . Really!

We hope that we will be paperless in the forthcoming year with the only paperwork handled being hand-signed applications and letters of appointment and other non-form driven communications;

- Our application forms are now all computer-filled PDF forms; we no longer accept handwritten forms.
- We receive all forms electronically
 - o Those that are properly digitally signed do NOT require an additional paper follow-up
 - o Those not properly digitally signed require a hand-signed paper copy in addition to the unsigned electronic copy
- We now issue construction and coordination certificates as digitally signed PDF documents
- We hope to complete all communications via E-Mail

The ONLY paper documents you should see from us in the future will be “bad news” - when we can’t successfully communicate electronically, and that paper document will likely be a notice of Pending Action against your coordination.

We “hope” to be able to offer replacement PDF coordination certificates later in the year but PLEASE bear with us; we will probably place an initial limit of 10 requests per month till we get the process automated.

Digital Signatures Redux

I recently looked at permitting the use of digital signatures other than those provided by the ARRL LoTW program. Unfortunately there is so much inconstancy among CAs, especially those that issue “free” certificates that I must continue to insist on approving ONLY digital signatures made with an ARRL LoTW cert.

Folks, it’s FREE with NO obligation to the League. You don’t even need to be an ARRL member to get a cert. ALL you need is a ham license and a mailing address.

There is absolutely NO reason why we NEED to receive, handle and store paper forms simply for the sake of a handwritten signature.

Reminder re: Mode Changes.

ARCC will no longer accept “casual” notification of changes in emission and mode. Changes in ANY coordinated parameter revert to the submission of a properly completed and signed modification form. Reminder; emission and mode are coordinated parameters. Uncoordinated changes result in the invalidation of your coordination.

Database Scrub

I’ve spent the last several months cleaning up the ARCC coordination database tables. My initial focus is to insure that the coordinates for all coordinated repeaters and links **are accurate to the limit of the resolution provided by Google Earth**. The coordinates of a repeater are the singular, most important parameter used in coordination. An error in coordination can result in coordination not being granted. Worse, that error could later lead to a new repeater being denied coordination or even worse, granted coordination when it shouldn’t have been granted.

ACCURATE COORDINATES ARE CRITICAL TO SUCCESSFUL COORDINATION!

Already, a few of you have heard from me on this topic and more of you are on the list to be contacted. To make contact I am using the E-Mail addresses of record; those shown in our contacts table for the holder, primary and secondary contacts in the repeater table.

When that doesn’t work out, your coordination is in immediate jeopardy for failure to maintain communications and maintain accurate contact information. In lieu of sending out “nasty grams” I’m going to maintain a “Contact Us” list on our web site – providing the holder and contacts an additional 30 days to touch base with us. When a repeater makes that list they will owe us, at the least, a modification and contact update form. You DON’T want to be on that list.

ARCC No Longer Participating With ARRL Repeater Directory

With the recent action by ARRL to “sell out” repeater database listing collection to a for-profit entity: RFinder, and facing the possible loss of control of our and your data, ARCC has not renewed our agreement with the League to provide directory listings of coordinated repeaters.

What does this means to you?

You will need to manually update your listing in the for-profit RFinder database when needed. **NOTE: UPDATING RFINDER DOES NOT CONSTITUTE OR SUBSTITUTE FOR THE FILING OF A COORDINATION MOODIFICATION OR CONTACT UPDATE FORM WITH ARCC. FAILURE TO MAINTAIN TIMELY AND ACCURATE INFORMATION WITH ARCC CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR DECOORDINATION. ARCC NEITHER COOPERATES WITH NOR SUBSCRIBES TO RFINDER.** We WILL continue to periodically update the listing found on the ARCC website and, with some programming assistance, hope to dynamically generate updated listings on a monthly basis.

Forthcoming Actions

Nominations and Elections

Who Can Nominate? Any Member in good standing or any coordination holder in good standing.

Who can be nominated? Nominations will be accepted for any ARCC member in good standing except that nominees for a Regional Rep or Assistant need to reside in that region.

What obligations do Board positions carry? Board members represent both the ARCC members and coordination holders to ARCC as well as representing ARCC back to their constituents. As such, Board members are expected to be active within their amateur community as well as demonstrate interest in ARCC matters. Board members are expected to attend ARCC Board and general meetings, participate in ARCC matters discussed in E-Mail, attend club meetings and hamfests in their regions to represent ARCC and collect questions and concerns regarding ARCC and coordination matters in general.

What positions are up for nomination? All Board Positions EXCLUDING the Executive Board (who are nominated and elected by the Board): Band Coordinators and Regional Representatives and their Assistants.

Who Can Vote? Every Member in good standing as of the opening of the balloting period is eligible to vote. Clubs having more than one vote must also provide a list of active member names, call signs and E-Mail address, signed by the Secretary of the club.

When is this going to happen? Expect to see the announcement on the ARCC Web page sometime in the 1st quarter. That announcement will contain the full requirements, rules and dates for the nominations, elections and announcement of the results.

Periodic registration being considered

Due to the extremely poor quality of our contacts table, getting in touch with coordination holders via E-Mail has become an exercise in futility. In a database table of over 800 contacts fully 10% are invalid due to cancelled or expired licenses. A further 200 have NO E-Mail address and 20 more have been identified with invalid E-Mail addresses. Phone numbers? HA!

IT IS SOLELY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COORDINATION HOLDER TO MAINTAIN THEIR CONTACT DATA ON A TIMELY BASIS!

ARCC can't be expected to keep track of your callsign, address, phone and E-Mail changes. We have a form for YOU to fill out and send us when YOUR contact data changes.

So . . . What can we do to “induce” you to maintain your contact data?

Current thoughts are leaning toward requiring all coordination holders to periodically submit a contact update form, one for each coordinated repeater. Failure to file in a timely manner would be cause to issue a Notice of Proposed Action against that repeater.

However, we have nobody to handle the ARCC end of the process and, to date, there has been more than a little push back from those holding coordinations for multiple repeaters. So far it's just one idea.

What do you think? How can ARCC “induce” coordination holders to keep their contact data updated?

C-Notes is a monthly publication of the ARCC and is provided as a communications channel between ARCC and our members and coordination holders. Opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author.