



# International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

Europe, Middle East, Africa and Northern Asia

Founded 1950



## General Conference, Davos, 11 to 16 September 2005

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>The RSGB International Amateur Radio Examination</b>		
<b>Society</b>	<b>RSGB</b>	<b>Country:</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>C3</b>	<b>Paper number:</b>	<b>27</b>
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### a. INTRODUCTION

Some PTT administrations, particularly in smaller countries, have used external examining bodies in qualifying their prospective Radio Amateurs; however the withdrawal of some of these bodies from the field of Amateur Radio, and the general deregulation of PTT services in many administrations, mean that a number of countries now do not have a structure which can be used for licensing purposes. The Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB), has developed an examination system which can be adopted by any administration, and which is based on a fair and rigorous application of HAREC principles: these examinations began in March 2005, and are being held twice a year in an increasing number of countries.

### b. BACKGROUND

In the United Kingdom, the quasi-governmental administrative body responsible for Amateur Radio has gradually been withdrawing from involvement in the hobby. In particular, the testing of prospective Radio Amateurs has been devolved to the RSGB. This is the beginning of a process whereby the RSGB will take over all aspects of administration and licensing of Radio Amateurs in the UK.

Resulting from this, the RSGB has developed an organisation which has had several years experience in running an examination system for the UK. Volunteers and staff have created a testing methodology and associated services which provide access for anyone who wants an Amateur Radio licence in the UK.

The three-level qualification is based on three syllabuses requiring both academic and practical study. There are textbooks, web-based learning systems and tutorial presentations, based on a network of enthusiastic instructors around the country.

The impetus which led to the RSGB's close involvement in education is paralleled by a development in another field. The organisation which has been appointed since 1946 to run examinations on behalf of the UK licensing authority, known as "City and Guilds of London" (C&G) decided that it would no longer offer Amateur Radio examinations, so the last of these was held in 2003.

An unforeseen consequence of the new situation has become apparent. Many countries were using the C&G examination as a qualification for their own Radio Amateurs. Since 2003, they have had to choose between creating their own syllabus and examination system, or finding an organisation which can provide an equivalent. For smaller countries, this is a burden which has led (in some cases) to a steep decline in new licensees. When combined with deregulation (which sometimes means the lack of interest of a PTT in Amateur Radio altogether), in some countries there has been a complete cessation in the issuing of new Amateur Radio licences.

Thus, the RSGB identified an approaching problem, and decided to discuss the possibilities of an RSGB examination with some of the national societies and administrations involved. The experience of the RSGB in Albania, where “Project Goodwill” was able to qualify many Radio Amateurs using RSGB resources, was very valuable. This showed that the Society had the ability to create a new system, since much of the syllabus, textbook and examination material had been developed by RSGB personnel to assist UK amateurs.

### **c. KEY POINTS AND PROPOSAL**

The countries that now need a replacement for the examinations previously provided from the United Kingdom have generally expressed a wish for a “one-stop” system. That is, they would like to use a single examination as a qualification for Radio Amateurs, rather than a two-level or three-level approach often used by larger countries. The reason is that the administrative infrastructure will frequently not support anything more complicated, particularly as the number of Radio Amateurs passing through their systems is generally quite low.

The RSGB has therefore taken the best elements of its own three level structure together with the approach and style of the old C&G examinations, and created the “International Amateur Radio Examination” (IARE). This is backed up by a HAREC-compliant syllabus and a multiple-choice examination which can be given anywhere in the world

Along with the associated Code of Conduct and other paperwork, there are appropriate textbooks for candidates’ study. Web-based instruction and practice examinations are available, so that suitably equipped students can learn on their own, or use the material in support of a formal course.

The syllabus is largely academically-based, and has been designed so that it can be used in any jurisdiction, with eight broad sections:

- Electronic Principles and Practice
- Receivers, Transmitters and Transceivers
- Antennas and Feeders
- Propagation
- Electromagnetic compatibility
- Operating Procedures and Practices
- Safety
- Measurements

The only topic which cannot easily be treated on a worldwide basis is Licensing Conditions. The RSGB will create a separate section based on the local licence on request; otherwise it is recommended that the national society prepare a simple test of around ten questions to be given to candidates at the same time as the IARE. The latter is the option that has been adopted by administrations so far.

The examination itself has 55 questions, and a time limit of 2.5 hours is allowed. Rigorous standards of performance and inspection are laid down for the conduct of the examination, so that countries can have confidence in the suitability of the system. Marking is carried out in the UK by the RSGB Examination Board, with results and certificates transmitted to candidates within 28 days.

The IARE has been endorsed by several administrations since its launch at the beginning of 2005, and it is expected that more will follow. In the inaugural examination, March 2005, 30 candidates were examined. The cooperation and goodwill created has already been considerable.

It is proposed that the Conference take note of the RSGB International Amateur Radio Examination, and suggest its use by administrations that require a licence qualification system.

**d. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Conference is requested to:

**Acknowledge the launch of the RSGB's International Amateur Radio Examination; recognise the suitability of the Examination and associated material for use worldwide; suggest adoption of the Examination by administrations which need a qualification system for Radio Amateurs that they cannot easily supply themselves; support future developments by the RSGB relating to associated educational initiatives.**