
Support needed for VA14_C3_40 “Conflicting CW Procedure”

VA14_C3_40 “*Conflicting CW Procedure*” (copy available at fists.co.uk/docs/iaru/VA14C340.pdf) is a paper being submitted to the IARU Region 1 Conferenceⁱ 20–27 September 2014 (Varna-Albena, Bulgaria) written by the Association of Icelandic Radio Amateursⁱⁱ. The paper’s purpose is for the IARU to endorse correct CW operating procedure, relating to misunderstandings in the document “*Ethics and Operating Procedures for the Radio Amateur*” (EOPRA). (An English version of EOPRA is available from the ARRL website—search for ‘ARRL ethics’.)

FISTS CW Club fully supports the VA14_C3_40 paper.

How can I help?

Contact clubs that you are a member of, local and national, and tell them you want them to support the paper by contacting the Association of Icelandic Radio Amateurs (email ira@ira.is) and, best of all, if the club is to be present at the IARU Conference, to support VA14_C3_40 there.

What corrections does VA14_C3_40 discuss?

- K means “invitation to transmit”
- A station ending a transmission with $\overline{\text{AR}}$ alone is not inviting callers.
- K is the correct ending of a general CQ call
- Putting $\overline{\text{AR}}$ or PSE ahead of K is acceptable
- CL is an abbreviation, sent as two separate letters
- $\overline{\text{KN}}$ is sent as one symbol
- $\overline{\text{AR}}$ is used as separator between the message part of a transmission and formalities at the end

Why not ask the authors of EOPRA to correct it?

Extensive negotiations with the authors failed to bring about corrections.

Did the IARU intend to change CW procedures by endorsing EOPRA?

No—the IARU has informed the Icelandic Association that they did not intend to change CW procedures.

Why is this important?

K, $\overline{\text{KN}}$, and $\overline{\text{AR}}$ have been documented in amateur radio publications for at least 70 years and stood the test of time because it’s important to know when a transmission is ending, when callsigns are to follow, and if a reply is required and from whom. There needs to be a common understanding of these procedures so that everyone can communicate effectively. However, due to EOPRA, a minority of operators are omitting ‘K’ at the end of CQ calls, resulting in

confusion on the air; it's rather like having someone decide that on traffic signals a red light means "go" while everyone else knows that green means "go"—chaos follows when there is not a common understanding.

It's noticeable that EOPRA is causing further confusion; some operators have started omitting the K from 'normal' overs too—a further demonstration that correct operating procedure needs to be followed; K is an invitation to transmit, and if K, \overline{KN} , or BK is absent, a reply is not wanted.

Surely procedures can evolve over time?

Procedures can, and do, change, but change occurs gradually where it adds value and is accepted by the CW community. An example is that \overline{CT} is now rarely heard.

Is it contradictory saying that PSE as in 'PSE K' should be allowed?

EOPRA bans the use of PSE in 'PSE K' because it is 'unnecessary'. Unlike the other EOPRA items discussed above, many operators have been using 'PSE K' on-air for very many years and it does not cause procedural problems (because it is—or should be!—followed by a K). The discussion is about conversational (non-contest) QSOs where time is not of the essence and omitting PSE at 18 wpm saves all of 1.7 seconds!

Where can I read more information about VA14_C3_40?

The Icelandic Association has provided a short document with links to all the background information and research. We strongly recommend reading this. It's available here: <http://bit.ly/MGrcRj> *Please also pass this link on to others.*

ⁱ IARU Region 1 Conference jarur1con2014.bfra.bg

ⁱⁱ Association of Icelandic Radio Amateurs www.ira.is