

THE ARRL OUTGOING QSL SERVICE

Note: The information in the following pages is from the ARRL Outgoing QSL Bureau. I have included the complete article for TARC Member's information and added notes where what is written is different from how we will be working with the bureau at their request. Also, other notes clarifying some of the issues we will run across are included.

Exchanging paper QSL cards to confirm a two-way contact is a tradition that dates back to the beginning of Amateur Radio. Today, many amateurs prefer to confirm QSOs electronically with Logbook of The World (LoTW), however there are those who like to swap paper cards. Exchanging QSL cards directly with your QSO partner can be very expensive. If you calculate the cost of postage to send an envelope overseas, plus any money enclosed to cover the return postage, a single QSL card request can cost up to five dollars or more. Confirming QSOs electronically through LoTW is a rapid and cost-effective way to earn QSO credit for awards, but for the paper card collector, the QSL Bureau offers an alternative to the direct QSL method.

To use this service, you only need to provide proof of ARRL membership and pay the fee according to the schedule below. Cards sent via the Bureau are sorted by the Outgoing QSL Service staff who handles approximately 700,000 each year. Cards are shipped from HQ on a quarterly basis.

Note: Disregard text regarding paying the ARRL fee. TARC will be paying all fees associated with shipping your cards to the Bureau and the Bureau fee.

The Service ships QSL cards to QSL Bureaus throughout the world, which are typically maintained by the national Amateur Radio Society of each country. (Please be advised that the ARRL QSL Service cannot be used to exchange QSL cards within the 48 contiguous states [US to US].) Sending QSL cards via the Bureau takes a little longer than mailing them directly, but keep in mind that what you might lose in speed is more than made up in the convenience and savings of not having to address and mail each QSL card separately.

You may also send QSLs via the bureau to any QSL manager who manages a non-US call sign.

However, you must look up the QSL manager and clearly indicate the QSL manager's call sign on your outgoing card. For example:

Example 1: 8P8P via NNIN. Sort this card in with other cards going to US managers.

Example 2: 6YIV via OH3RB. Sort this card in with cards to Finland.

There are many sources of QSL information, including QRZ.com, logging programs, the GoList, www.qslinfo.de, and the The Daily DX website at <http://www.dailydx.com/routes.html>.

How To Use The ARRL Outgoing QSL Service

(Note: This is the complete instruction bulletin sent out by ARRL. It is presented here for TARC Members information. Watch for notes in the text to clarify how our service will operate versus how the individual service works if you were to send your cards in yourself.)

Sorting Cards

Presort your DX QSLs alphabetically by parent call sign prefix (AP, CE, DL, ES, EZ, F, G, JA, LY, PY, UN, YL, 5N, 9Y, and so on). Canadian and Australian cards should be sorted by numerical call sign (VE1, VE2, VE3 and VK1, VK2, VK3, etc). Note: Some countries have a parent prefix and use additional prefixes, i.e. G (parent prefix) = M, 2E, 2I, 2M, 2W, etc. When sorting countries that have multiple prefixes, keep that country's prefixes grouped with the parent prefix in your alphabetical stack. Addresses are not required.

Do not separate the country prefixes by use of paper clips, rubber bands, slips of paper, or envelopes. This only slows down processing.

Proof of Membership

Please enclose proof of your current ARRL membership. This can be in the form of a photocopy or cut-out of the address area from your current copy of QST. You can also write the information from the label on a slip of paper and use that as proof of membership. A copy of your current membership card is also acceptable. **(Note: For TARC's purpose a slip of paper with the member's callsign, name, and ARRL member number securely attached to your card bundle will suffice.)**

Fees and Payment (Disregard this section. TARC will be picking up the cost of shipping and ARRL's charges for sending our member's cards abroad. TARC will weigh the cards before shipping them.)

ARRL members - including foreign members, QSL Managers, or managers for DXpeditions - should enclose payment as follows:

Effective May 15, 2019:

\$2.00 for 10 or fewer cards in one envelope.

\$3.00 for 11-20 cards in one envelope, or 75 cents per ounce, for packages with 21 or more cards.

(For example, a package containing 1.5 pounds of cards -- 24 ounces, or about 225 cards -- will cost \$18.

No transaction service fees.) You should use an accurate scale to weigh your cards. Most post offices

have scales that you may use.

Please pay by check (or money order) and write your call sign on the check. Send cash at your own risk. DO NOT send postage stamps or IRCs. Please make checks payable to: "The ARRL Outgoing QSL Service." If you would like to know that your cards were received at the ARRL QSL Bureau, include your e-mail address and we will notify you. Notifications will only be made by e-mail.

Packages received with insufficient payment will not be processed until the balance is paid in full. The outgoing QSL bureau does not keep money on account.

Packing and Mailing (Note: For TARC's purpose send all of your cards in one bundle sorted as listed above with no paper, paper clips or rubber bands separating the sorted cards. Please do use rubber bands for the entire bundle, if appropriate, as each bundle will be placed into a single shipping container and it is important that none of the bundles loosen up during shipment.

Your package must include: (See Above)

- Slip with your name, call sign, weight of cards enclosed, and proof of ARRL membership.

Include your e-mail address if you wish to be notified that cards were received.

- Proof of ARRL membership - Copy of QST mailing label or membership card.
- Your payment in the form of check or money order. DO NOT send cash.
- Your QSL cards, sorted as instructed.

Include only the cards, proof of membership, and the appropriate fee in the package. Box the cards securely and address the package to:

ARRL Outgoing QSL Service 225 Main Street Newington, CT 06111-1494.

It is strongly recommended that you use a traceable method to ship your cards.

Other Helpful Information Who may use the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service • Family members may also use the service by enclosing their QSLs with those of the primary member. Include the appropriate fee, and indicate "family membership" on the primary member's proof of membership.

- Blind members who do not receive QST need only include the appropriate fee along with a note indicating that the cards are from a blind member.
- ARRL Affiliated Club stations may use the service to submit club QSLs for its members in bulk ("pooling" their members' cards together in one package) by indicating the club's name inside the package. Club secretaries should check their club's affiliation on the ARRL website to ensure it is current. In a "pooled" package, each club member using this service must also be an ARRL member. Cards should be sorted "en masse" by prefix, and proof of membership should be enclosed for each

ARRL member. QSLs for unaffiliated club calls may also be sent via the outgoing bureau to foreign destinations if the trustee of the club call is a member in good standing. The trustee's proof of membership must be included with the club call-QSLs.

Recommended QSL card dimensions The efficient operation of the worldwide system of QSL Bureaus requires that cards be easy to handle and sort. Cards of unusual dimensions - either much larger or much smaller than normal, or printed on thin paper (i.e. copier paper) - slow the work of the Bureaus, most of which is done by unpaid volunteers.

A review of the cards received by the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service indicates that most fall in the following range:

Height: 2-3/4 to 4-1/4 in. (70 to 110 mm) Width: 4-3/4 to 6-1/4 in. (120 to 160 mm) IARU Region 2, which includes the United States, has suggested the following dimensions as optimum:

Height 3-1/2 in. (90 mm) Width 5-1/2 in. (140 mm) Cards in this range can be easily sorted, stacked, and packaged. Cards outside this range create problems.

In particular, the larger cards often cannot be handled without folding or otherwise damaging them. In the interest of efficient operation of the worldwide QSL Bureau system, it is recommended that cards entering the system be limited to the range of dimensions given.

Note: Just to be clear about the business side of the card it will vary depending on the type of card you use. Typically a card with a picture of the member's ham shack or some other view would be on the front with the station callsign and perhaps some other information such as the county and perhaps local address. On the back side would be the qso information in a box or series of boxes. Some hams use computer printed stickers. The callsign of the destination station should be printed in the upper left hand corner and if the card is going to a QSL manager it should read the callsign of the destination station followed by "via xxxxx, the callsign of the Qsl Manager. This is the business side of the card and it should face forward in the bundle of cards. On some cards all of the information may be on one side of the card with a blank back side. Do not sort cards with blank sides forward.

Countries Not Served By the Outgoing QSL Service

Approximately 225 DXCC entities are served by the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service, as detailed in the ARRL DXCC List. This includes nearly every active country. As noted previously, cards are forwarded from the ARRL Outgoing Service to a counterpart bureau in each of these countries. In some cases, there is no Incoming Bureau in a particular country and cards, therefore, cannot be forwarded.

However, QSL cards can be forwarded to a QSL manager, e.g., ZB2FX via G3RFX. Most operations from places without a QSL bureau have a QSL manager.

3B	Agalega, Mauritius, Rodriguez	D2	Angola	T2	Tuvalu
3C	Equatorial Guinea	D4	Cape Verde	T3	Kiribati
3C0	Pagalau Island	E3	Eritrea	T5	Somalia
3D A	Swaziland	E4	Palestine	T8	Palau
3W	Viet Nam	E5	North & South Cook Islands	TJ	Cameroon
3X	Guinea	ET	Ethiopia	TL	Central African Republic
4J, 4K	Azerbaijan	HH	Haiti	TN	Congo
4W	Timor-Leste	HV	Vatican	TT	Chad
5A	Libya	J5	Guinea-Bissau	TU	Cote d'Ivoire
5R	Madagascar	J8	St. Vincent	TY	Benin
5T	Mauritania	KG4	Guantanamo Bay	V3	Belize
5U	Niger	KH0	Mariana Island	V4	St. Kitts & Nevis
5V	Togo	KH1	Baker & Howland Is.	V6	Micronesia
7O	Yemen	KH4	Midway Island	VP2E	Anguilla
7P	Lesotho	KH5	Palmyra & Jarvis Is.	VP2M	Montserrat
7Q	Malawi	KH7K	Kure Island	VQ9	Chagos Diego Garcia
8Q	Maldives	KH9	Wake Island	XU	Cambodia
9L	Sierra Leone	KP1	Navassa Island	XW	Laos
9N	Nepal	KP5	Desecheo Island	XZ	Myanmar
9U	Burundi	P2	Papua New Guinea	YA	Afghanistan
9X	Rwanda	P5	North Korea	Z2	Zimbabwe
A5	Bhutan	S0	Suriname	ZA	Albania
A6	United Arab Emirates	S7	Seychelles		
C2	Nauru	S9	Sao Tome & Principe		
C5	Gambia	ST	Sudan		
C6	Bahamas	SU	Egypt		

CN	Morocco				

Countries that currently deliver QSL cards only to members of that country's national radio society include the following:

Belarus, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Monaco, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Zambia.

Additional Information We do not hold cards for countries with no Incoming Bureau. Only cards indicating a QSL Manager for a station in these particular countries will be forwarded. Undeliverable cards will normally not be returned.

When sending cards to foreign QSL managers, you must sort these cards using the manager's call sign, rather than the station's call sign. SWL cards can be forwarded through the QSL Service.

The Outgoing QSL Service CANNOT forward stamps, cards inside envelopes, IRCs or "green stamps" (cash) to the foreign QSL bureaus.

Please direct any questions or comments to the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service, 225 Main Street, Newington CT, 06111-1494. The Outgoing QSL Service can be reached at 860-594-0274.

Inquires via e-mail may be sent to buro@arrl.org Information regarding the Incoming QSL bureaus can be located at: <http://www.arrl.org/incoming- qsl-service>.

Revised - May 15, 2019

How to get the maximum benefit when using the outgoing QSL service.

- Opening packages, sorting, slotting and packing OSL cards takes a lot of time and manpower. Here are some things you can do to keep the process running smoothly and efficiently.
- Send larger packages of OSL cards. Opening and sorting small envelopes of cards is slow and labor intensive. It is much easier for ARRL staff to open and record one large package than it is to open several small envelopes. This saves you money also.
- The OSL bureau ships freight quarterly on large pallets so sending small envelopes every month just increases the cost of handling and your cards will not arrive at their destination any sooner.
- Print clearly using block-style letters---no script---sharp points, straight lines, tails, slashes.
- Sort cards in alphabetical order according to parent and alternate prefixes. This is important for slotting the cards and eliminates returns because cards went to the wrong bureau. Keep all country prefixes together. Example: The prefix 2E belong to England so these cards will go with your G cards for England. The prefix TM is France so these cards will go with your F cards.

- Check to see if your OSO partner uses a QSL manager.
- Sending direct to a QSL manager will get you a return much quicker however the OSL bureau will still deliver cards to QSL managers. If a card is going to a QSL manager clearly write the word "via" then the QSL manager's call sign next to the station call sign. Our staff is trained to look for this information next to the station call so having it elsewhere on the card may get overlooked.
- If you write the station call sign on the back of the card, use upper-left hand side; and flip cards forward facing the same direction. Business side up with no blank sides facing forward.
- Do not separate the cards with slips of paper, rubber bands, etc. This only slows down handling of the cards.
- Include your e-mail address with your membership information and payment.
- No US to US except Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, Guam and USVI. Send direct.
- Check <http://www.arrl.org/outgoing-qsl-service>

Note on Incoming QSL Card Service

For information on incoming QSL card service please click on the following link.

www.arrl.org/incoming-qsl-service