

ARRL Announces New DXCC Fee Structure

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The *DX Century Club* is the premier operating award today. It is available to hams around the world. Tens of thousands of awards have been issued since 1945 under the modern award program. In 2012, the DXCC program is not only still thriving but is growing in participation and in numbers of award options. The addition of *Logbook of the World* and soon, the addition of an *Online DXCC Application* utility will continue to help the program grow. ARRL continues to add new and exciting twists to the old DXCC platform, including a special 75th anniversary “*Diamond DXCC Challenge*” award for 2012. The DXCC Challenge, which counts total entities confirmed on 160 through 6 Meters, has proven to be extremely popular as a competitive supplement for everyone that complements the lifetime achievement of the DXCC Honor Roll. The ARRL web site continues to add to the fun with many pages of award statistics and information including DXCC standings for each award that are updated daily. Inside *Logbook of the World*, each user can see which records are stored in the DXCC system for all of his/her entities on each band and mode. In 2011 DXCC will have processed more than ten thousand DXCC applications and endorsements. There is much more to add, and we can’t wait to get to it.

As a direct result of the terrific popularity of the DXCC program, customer service has not been as good as we would like. We all know that when the end-of-year deadline is reached, the load on staff is quite heavy and the turnaround time increases to more than ten weeks. We want to provide better service and will continue to try. The old fee structure is one of the culprits that increased the workload. Most participants submitted one or two applications each year, and each of those applications was frequently loaded with at least 120 QSOs and included a Logbook application component as well. One of the reasons these applications were so large is that for many years DXCC charged extra fees for 2nd and subsequent applications each year. And application fees were waived for LoTW applications if they were tied to a paper application, which adds a large amount of work for the staff as they try to match up applications. Frequently, there are hundreds of applications on both the paper application side, and on the LoTW side, waiting for their “hybrid match” to arrive, which greatly delays processing and sets the whole operation back.

For applications received in 2012 and beyond we are changing the fee structure for several reasons:

- Promote more frequent applications;
- Remove the “hybrid application” problem;
- Simplify the price structure for DXCC;
- Raise the rates slightly to help offset ARRL’s increased costs; and
- Improve customer service.

The rates for DXCC have not changed since 2003. While the rates are going up, for those who continue to submit multiple applications each year the costs will probably be less. In stopping the “hybrid application” we are also lowering the per QSO fee for using credits in LoTW and adding a small application fee. We want participants to use LoTW as often as they can and like. LoTW applications are easier for everyone to process and remain the “way of the future” to participate in awards programs. As in the past, US participants must be ARRL members to receive a DXCC award.

And as indicated earlier, we plan to launch an Online DXCC application. This new tool will allow the client to supply the data from traditional, paper QSLs in a digital form, so that DXCC staff will not have to perform the data entry. In a nutshell, the way the Online Application will work is the participant can select the cards that he/she would like to have checked by a Card Checker and at his/her convenience, type that data into a form (which can be saved and returned-to at any time until submitted) and make an application for DXCC. When the application is finished, the participant will be able to print the list of cards, and take the list and the cards (in the same order that they are entered into the form) to a Card Checker, who will check the cards, note any changes, and send the form to HQ. The Card Checker’s job is exactly the same as before except he/she does not need to collect a payment (unless the participant has worked that out with the Card Checker) as the client can pay online. At HQ, DXCC staff will be able to access the file submitted by the client, quickly make any changes noted by the Card Checker, and process the application. The Online DXCC Application will have rates that are half those of a traditional paper QSL application that is sent to HQ.

For 2012, here is what the DXCC fee structure will look like:

- No more hybrid applications. Each DXCC application, be it paper QSLs, LoTW, or online, will be considered separate applications with separate application fees.
- There are no limits on the number of applications that can be submitted. There will be no more surcharges added to the 2nd or subsequent applications.
- A traditional, paper QSL application will have an application fee of \$15 for ARRL members and \$25 for non-members, and will be allowed to include up to 101 QSOs. Additional QSOs in such an application will continue to cost 15 cents each.
- A DXCC application submitted using LoTW will have an application fee of \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members. There are no limits on the number of QSOs that can be included as part of a LoTW application. Each QSO used in LoTW for an award will cost 12 cents – down from a minimum of 15 cents in 2011.
- We will not mail any paperwork for LoTW applications (credit matrix, or application summary) as all application information will be available online in the LoTW User account.
- An Online DXCC Application will have an application fee of \$7.50 for members and \$12.50 for non-members and will be allowed to include up to 101 QSOs. Additional QSOs will cost 8 cents. This application is primarily intended to be used in conjunction with Field Checkers.
- Certificates will still cost \$14 delivered in the USA, and \$16.50 delivered outside the USA. Pins will continue to cost \$7 delivered anywhere.
- There will no longer be a “First DXCC” pricing break.
- There will no longer be a free, printed *DXCC Yearbook*. A free, digital version will be available, as well as a printed version at additional cost.