

**Report of the President
ARRL Board of Directors
July 2018**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure to provide this Report to you as President. It continues to be a great honor to serve as an Officer of the League.

The Next Generation for Amateur Radio

I started out my two previous reports with this same heading. It seems appropriate to do so again. I've mentioned the next generation, the new generation, for ham radio many times as you may recall. It remains my foremost concern for this great hobby. The landscape is changing. The Amateur Radio industry is contracting.

As the Second Century of Amateur Radio, which began in 2014, continues to take shape, I am continually aware that ham radio is experiencing a paradigm shift, driven by what I call this "new generation ham." This new generation is everywhere, making themselves known at hamfests and conventions, on social media platforms, in the emails and letters received by ARRL Board members and at ARRL Headquarters. Likewise, the research ARRL has conducted about the needs and interests of today's hams confirm these changing times. The League must continue to work hard at addressing the future, the changing landscape of Amateur Radio. To grow and survive, we must do better at addressing these changing times. Let's honor our past ways but let's be leaders and move forward embracing the future.

We Have a Disconnect

Should we be worried about the state of the hobby? Yes, we should.

We have a serious problem addressing these changing times. How do we market ham radio in today's times? How do we capture that millennial generation, the generation that grew up with smartphones, internet, social media, and expectations that are so different than we have ever seen before?

Yes, we have a disconnect. For example, Technician Class Amateurs make up only 16% of ARRL membership yet they represent over half of the FCC licensees. Think about that. The largest licensee group, over 50%, make up only 16% of our members. That is not a good future outlook. That is not a good statement of our representation of Amateur Radio. We've got to target new groups, adapt to the next generation, and accept change which in itself is a real

challenge for a hobby that is made up of traditionalists. Our proposal to FCC to modernize and enhance the Technician Class license is a positive initiative to address and adapt to the changing times of our hobby, to attract and retain new Amateurs and to hopefully attract younger candidates into Amateur Radio, but we have much more to do.

The comprehensive approach we are attempting to take with Lifelong Learning is another good example where we are trying to better connect with the new generation and changing expectations. Yes, it is costly and will be time consuming, but to continue the path we have been on is not working. This project is not about our web site. It's about how we address the Amateur Radio community. It's about adapting to changing times and needs. It's about remodeling how the ARRL presents itself. It's about how the League can add value to its members in a more comprehensive manner. I suspect many hams who are not members of the League view the League as offering them no value. Those are hard words, but someone prove to me that's not part of the "disconnect" we have, for example, with only 16% of the Technicians being League members. I strongly recommend that the Board continue this project.

OO Study Committee

The Board will consider the recommendations of the OO Study Committee. I recommend we adopt their recommendations.

This project to revitalize the OO program has taken considerable time to complete. It's a very important project. Enforcement has been a core issue for as long as I can remember. Upon the closings of many FCC Field Offices in 2016-2017, it was apparent that the League would have to step up and help. The FCC needs the work of our volunteers to provide the information necessary for enforcement action to be taken.

I want to thank Vice Director Hollingsworth and his Committee for their hard work on this effort. We must keep an open mind when considering their recommendations which will require major changes to our existing program. I strongly recommend that the Board adopt their findings and recommendations.

Public Services Enhancement Working Group (PSEWG)

The PSEWG has completed a comprehensive study of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES). I was on a number of the telephone conferences the Committee held. I was highly impressed with their efforts and teamwork. This was a huge undertaking, and I want to thank Director Williams and the Committee for their hard work and diligence. They did an impressive job

in evaluating the current program, the needs of our served agencies, in seeking input, and then designing an essentially new ARES program.

Their recommendations for the ARES Strategic Plan are now before the Board and I strongly recommend adoption. Granted, it will mean change, especially for our field volunteers, and there may be some resistance, but adopting the Plan is a necessary step in upgrading ARES to changing times.

The Future

This is a special year for me in Amateur Radio. It was 50 years ago that I became a ham, and this wonderful hobby has brought so many good things into my life. I can't imagine what I would do without ham radio. I love Amateur Radio. I've seen a lot of changes in our hobby over those 50 years, especially now with the ever fast changing times we have. The wants and needs of the new generation hams are very different from those of "traditional" hams — of which I consider myself one. That paradigm shift is underway and we've got to embrace and meet the challenges of new technological developments and operating trends of the next generation. It's a different landscape than when I started. ARRL is there to support and promote these new things as outlined in our mission statement — to advance the art, science, and enjoyment of Amateur Radio.

Each one of you helps to shape ham radio and its future. You are leaders. You care about this great hobby. You wouldn't be on the Board of the ARRL if you didn't. Don't underestimate your ability to make an impact, a positive impact. It's worth saying again. Let's honor our past ways but let's be leaders at embracing the future. And that may mean it's time to make some changes in what ARRL offers the Amateur Radio community and how we address our members.

Staff

Our Headquarters Staff continues to do a fantastic job. I remain so proud of them and the job they do. That goes for all of the volunteers as well. Thank you!

I also want to thank the Board for your work and devotion to Amateur Radio and the League. I'm proud to serve along side you.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Roderick - K5UR
President