**Ad hoc Trademark Committee**

There has been some recent interest in the subject of ARRL trademarks. Besides copyrights, trademarks represent ARRL’s most basic intellectual property assets. At the March 2017 meeting of the Executive Committee, I proposed the formation of an ad hoc committee to:

1. Review and inventory existing trademarks
2. Identify potential additional trademarks
3. Propose a strategy for ongoing trademark policy for ARRL
4. Develop guidelines or style manual for trademark labeling for ARRL

The Trademark Committee was identified by President Roderick on May 11, and includes the following individuals:

Rod Blocksome (PSC)

Dan Henderson (HQ)

Chris Imlay (Legal)

Rick Niswander (A&F)

Greg Widin (chair, EC)

The committee met for the first time the evening of 21 July and mapped out the process described above.

After the formation of the Trademark Committee was approved by the EC, Mr. Imlay requested a high-level overview of ARRL’s trademark situation by Day Pitney LLC (DP). Their review is attached to this summary.

Essentially, Day Pitney finds that though there are possible technical improvements to our trademark registrations, there is nothing requiring urgent revision.

The important thing to keep in mind when considering ARRL’s trademarks, and which DP cannot review, is the appropriate *identification* of the names to be used as trademarks. Registration is ***not*** necessary to obtain protection, but marking of the appropriate terms ***is*** necessary for them to be considered trademarks and so obtain protection. Unregistered trademarks, appropriately displayed, can still be enforced against use by others. Registration provides some advantages in the case of infringement, as DP describes, but this is only obtained when legal proceedings are initiated. ARRL is unlikely to bring a suit for damages against someone using our trademarks, but we do want to be able to enforce them against use without our permission. All this means that identification of our trademarks is critical to their proper display and hence protection.

Identifying our current and possible additional strategic trademarks is the purpose of the ad hoc Trademark Committee. Please consider the attached DP memo in that light—it describes the technical aspects of our registered marks, but tells us nothing about whether these are the proper terms to register, nor whether we have fully identified the appropriate opportunities for trademark marking.

-Greg Widin, K0GW, for the Ad hoc Trademark Committee