

THE REPEATER

Newsletter of the North Shore Emergency Association

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www.NSEA.com

FCC GMRS DATA

Total Active GMRS Licenses = 87,891
Total Active GMRS in Illinois = 2,475
Number Issued in November = 2,733
Number November in Illinois = 62

NSEA DATA

Regular Voting Members = 16
Probationary Members = 1
Auxiliary Members = 11
Applicants = 16
Affiliated GMRS Users on Roster = 51
Added on Systems - Last 3 Months = 7
Added on Systems - Last 30 Days = 5

FOR REPEATERS PERMISSION

Click this link:

https://nsea.com/index_files/Contact.html

FOR FCC RULES

Copy & paste:

https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=b7b411dcef7e2b190049b5ebfc58be1c&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title47/47cfr95main_02.tpl

Or click FCC RULES & REGULATIONS link @ www.nsea.com

FOR NSEA RADIO PROCEDURE

Click this link:

https://nsea.com/index_files/Radio%20Procedure.pdf

TRAINING FOR GMRS OPERATORS

WEATHER SPOTTING

Skywarn online training:

<https://www.weather.gov/oun/skywarn-spotter>

For Reporting: (800) 692 – 2110

FCC CUTS GMRS FEE TO \$35!

There is **HISTORIC** news in the GMRS world today. The Report & Order (“R&O”) is out for MD Docket 20-270, and the bottom line is, the fee to process a GMRS Application is being reduced to \$35.00 for 10 years. This marks a huge step in correcting the gross inequity which has, for almost 22 years, forced GMRS applicants to pay way more than our fair share of these fees, resulting in us paying to defray costs for various other services completely unrelated to GMRS.

As you may remember, the FCC released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking at the end of last August addressing Application Fees for a wide spectrum of services, including GMRS. Ever since 1986 all of these fees had been set by Act of Congress as a matter of federal law, and were beyond the jurisdiction of the FCC. The inequity in the GMRS fee really became gross in 1999 with the adoption of the Universal Licensing System (ULS) and radically simplified GMRS licensing. Prior to that time GMRS licensing was identical to other Land Mobile Radio Services, such as public safety, land transportation, and Business Band in that the same Application Form and technical detail and technical review were required for GMRS.

The gross inequity in GMRS fees was further exacerbated by the congressionally mandated *automatic* cost of living increases. But, finally, Congress has returned jurisdiction to the FCC to set fees with Congress’ adoption of Ray Baum’s Act. FCC MD Docket 20-270 was the Commission’s reaction to their newly restored authority to set fees. A vital part of Ray Baum’s Act was its requirement that fees be set “to recover the costs to process applications”. Therefore, the Commission’s authority prohibits services, like GMRS, to be charged for supporting other, unrelated services.

MD Docket proposed to set the new GMRS application fee to \$50.00. In looking at the discussion in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), I felt strongly that this amount was inconsistent with the mandate in Ray Baum’s Act to set fees to recover the actual costs to process GMRS applications. I wrote 10 pages of comments explaining my reasons for making such an assertion and urged the Commission to reduce the amount to more closely conform with the actual cost in view of “highly automated” processing of GMRS applications. And I filed these comments in the official Electronic Comments Filing System (ECFS) on September 30th.

The Commission received over 3,900 Comments, the vast majority of which addressed the new fee for Amateur (Ham) Radio. The R&O stated that the Commission did “consider ‘relevant and significant’ public comments” as required by the Administrative Procedures Act. It also stated “Staff individually analyzed the vast majority of these filings in an effort to identify any unique, relevant, and significant issues, which we address in this Report and Order.”

I am very happy to report that the R&O specifically recognized my comments regarding GMRS as meeting such standards and specifically responded to them by cutting the GMRS application fee from \$50.00 to \$35.00. I believe this level meets the standard of Ray Baum’s Act by much more closely reflecting the likely true costs of processing GMRS applications. This is highly gratifying as GMRS users have been pursuing this goal for almost 20 years.

DISASTERS (FEMA)

IS-100.c - Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS);

IS-230.d – Fundamentals of Emergency Management; and

IS-700.b – An Introduction to the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

<https://training.fema.gov/is/>.

FEMA SID number:
<https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>

NSEA & COOPERATING REPEATERS UNIT NUMBERS

- 1-99: Never used
- 101-199: Original CB unit ID’s, (KRK 4227), now unused
- 200-400: Other Public Service GMRS Groups, now defunct
- 501-579: NSEA Regular Members
- 580-589: Auxiliary Members
- 590-99: Probationary Members
- 601-649: Former Northbrook ALERT & NSEA owned radios)
- 650-699: Probationary & Auxiliary NSEA Members
- 701-710: Former APOLLO REACT
- 711-799: Authorized repeater users not NSEA members
- 800-849: Reserved for CERT
- 850-899: Unassigned
- 900-999: Former NW REACT now defunct
- Unit 500: Any NSEA member on the air
- Unit 1,000: Any authorized repeater user on the air
- 1,001-1010: Rugged 575 repeater users
- Township & similar names: Base/control stations

YOUR ARTICLE FOR THE REPEATER COULD APPEAR HERE!

The new fee will go into effect once Notice to Congress has been completed, as required by law and, publication of the new rule is made in The Federal Register. This could take a month and a half or so.

SPOTLIGHT ON FCC STAFF FRIEND OF GMRS

Some of you may be aware that, in mid May of 2011, I travelled to Washington to meet with FCC Staff members in person to discuss licensing and other vital issues in WT Docket 10-119. I strongly urged the Commission to retain traditional licensing, among other issues. In addition to 3 staff members from the Wireless Mobility Division, also present for my in person meeting was Roland Helvajian, from the FCC’s Managing Director’s Office.

He was very aware of the fact that a pair of low power consumer grade walkie-talkies could be purchased for far less than the cost of getting an FCC license and that this encouraged wide spread illegal operation without a license. He mentioned the need to correct the situation.

Remember at that time the total cost to obtain a GMRS license consisted of 2 parts, the Application Processing Fee, and the Regulatory Fee. The total cost at that time was therefore a whopping \$90.00! While the FCC could not, at that time, address the Application Fee amount, it did have jurisdiction over the Regulatory Fee portion. True to his word, Mr. Helvajian did continue to pursue relief regarding the cost of obtaining a GMRS license in subsequent MD Dockets 13-140 and 14-92.

Ultimately, in May of 2015, in MD Docket 14-92, the Commission did eliminate the Regulatory Fee altogether for GMRS. This cut the cost of a GMRS license from \$90 to \$65. As I recall Roland Helvajian was identified in The Federal Register as the FCC Contact for both of these Dockets.

Now, at last, we have a dramatic reduction (fully cut in half!) to a reasonable amount for the GMRS Application Processing Fee (MD Docket 20-270). And, once again, Roland Helvajian’s name appears in The Federal Register as the FCC Contact in this Docket. GMRS users truly owe a debt of gratitude to this FCC Staffer!!

PROCESS FOR JOINING NSEA

Applicant: Register each of your radios and receive unit numbers for portables and mobiles, and township identifiers (or similar) for base/control stations. Unit numbers assigned in the 700 series. Make your best effort to check into the Sunday Evening Radio Net each week. Become familiar with NSEA Radio Procedure. Give serious consideration to signing up in the NSEA Notification System.

NSEA Notification System is activated whenever severe weather net is opened, or, on rare occasions, when communications assistance is requested or likely in an unplanned situation. Tested weekly on Sunday to remind operators of the Weekly Radio Net.

Meet with our Executive Board and make a mutual decision whether to move up to:

Probationary Member: Maximum of 12 months. Eligible for ID Card, radio unit nos. in 590/690 series. We hope you can attend meetings. We expect you to be part of NSEA Notification System. We hope you can participate in pre-planned projects. Give serious consideration to completing *Skywarn* weather spotting training. Continue to attend meetings and check in weekly on Sunday evening Nets.

Again meet with Executive Board and make joint decision whether to advance to either:

Full Regular Voting Member or Auxiliary Member.

We believe this process gives you a chance to get to know us, and us a chance to get to know you.

Would you like to contribute to The Repeater? Submissions are encouraged. Send to Randy@NSEA.com.