

Inappropriate_use

The potentially rather ugly specter of 'inappropriate use' of the amateur radio spectrum has once again surfaced; with the ARRL Board of Directors leading the charge.

The FCC has now expressed (at the Dayton Hamvention this past May) their interpretation of the usage rule to now apply the use prohibition to employees on behalf of their employer to include our served agencies, in the Emergency Management area along with hospitals and all others.

The ARRL Executive Committee has appointed a committee to research this problem; and report back forthwith to the board, so presumably some form of a Petition for Rule Making can be made.

Some current wisdom seems to thus prohibit emergency management, hospital and all other employees from any use of amateur radio, whether for training or in a bonafide emergency. Obviously the exception for distress and emergency situations still applies; though it might be necessary to defend that use well after the fact and presumably face sanctions if the reviewing authorities see the issue in a different light.

This issue may find our spectrum allocations again under the microscope for expropriation and use by other services, notwithstanding the ITU and IARU allocations on an international basis to the contrary. We may once again see our government take the position that we may ignore treaty obligations in disregard to settled worldwide terms of use.

It would seem that we, as the amateur radio community, need to take a long, hard and realistic look at our local and personal involvement in the area of emergency communications and our commitments to those services that we strive to provide.

Hopefully this situation will be resolved in the best interest of amateur radio.