



The **GEARVAKf**

"The 'f' is silent" **Bulletin**

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FCC to Change Amateur Call Letter Assignments

The FCC today announced the cancellation of the call letter ID system, and will replace call signs with distinctive letter and number groups as part of the upgrading of the FCC computer system. The new system, known as GALIS (Geographically Aided Locator Identification System), is expected to greatly simplify the licensing process. Amateurs possessing call signs such as W1ABC will be receiving new call letter assignments within 90 to 120 days, and should begin using them upon receipt. Amateurs residing in states east of the Mississippi will have call identifiers beginning with numbers 1 through 9. Those living west will have identifiers beginning with 10 through 20. The second part of the call assignment will be the two-letter state identifier, a number sequence consisting of the last four letters of the licensee's social security number, followed by the telephone area code and zip code, and the class of licensee. For example, an amateur now living in Cincinnati, OH, with the call sign K8TRQ, will now be assigned a call sign of K3OH7644451345310AE09. The original "W," "K," "A," or "N" designator is placed before the east/west identification number. The OH is for Ohio; the 7644 is the last four numbers of the amateur's Social Security number; and it is followed by the area code and licensee's zip code; AE for Amateur Extra; and 09 for the last two numbers of the license expiration date. The FCC's amateur bureau stated that system would make it much easier for amateurs to determine where another station is located, rather than having to look it up in a callbook. When the amateur changes residence, his call sign will also change. In its rulemaking, the Commission cited a large number of complaints that amateur call signs no longer indicated where amateurs are located, since they are allowed to transport their old calls into new areas when moving. Under the new system, the call signs would make it considerably easier to procure information about the station and the operator. Amateurs should be filing a new FCC Form 608B to get their new number. All present call signs will expire on December 31, 2000, but amateurs should begin using their new calls as soon as they are received. Originally, the FCC intended to completely do away with the "W," "K," "A," and "N" prefixes but were reminded by DXers that the prefixes are required by international law. This should alleviate some worries in the DX community. The new call sign system will be part of the "CORES" upgrade to the recent ULS (Universal Licensing System). Those already registered under ULS will not have to re-file under CORES or GALIS, but will be automatically entered. Present licenses will then be canceled and replaced with the GALIS identifiers.

-- N8JR & GEARNEWSf via the Internet

Late Braking News! 13 & 20 WPM Code Reinstated!

The new 5 wpm credit for General, Advanced, and Extra Class upgrades has been rescinded! Hams who successfully passed VE exams under the 5 wpm rule must be re-tested at 13 or 20 wpm before 2003 or revert to their previous class of license. See page 2 for details.

