

## New Technician Question Pool Released

By Lyle Hamilton, AB8SH

The National Council of Volunteer Examination Coordinators (NCVEC) has released a new question pool for Element 2, the Technician Written Exam. The NCVEC has been receiving considerable input from its member Volunteer Examiners (VE's) about the relevancy of some of the questions that have traditionally been included in the pool and has produced a new pool which I think more closely resembles what a "present day" Tech looks like.

The NCVEC is made of up fourteen organizations that have been approved by the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau to recruit and credential VE's in the United States, its Territories, and Possessions. Many VE's from all fourteen organizations have been asking the NCVEC to make a Technician Question Pool that is more reflective of what the individuals passing Element 2 are likely to do once they get their licenses, and it appears that they have done just that.

There were a considerable number of questions relating to HF propagation and operating practices, even some regarding QSL cards. Let's face it, most people who pass Element 2 do not take the 5 wpm Morse Code Exam until they want to upgrade to General, so all of the questions about HF, QSL Cards, and calling CQ in morse code were really getting in the way of getting these people licensed according to many active VE's. Most new techs will use the FM Repeaters, Echolink, and maybe APRS. They will do this with radio equipment and antennas they will buy, not make. In light of this, does it not make better since to educate and test them according to what they'll actually do on the air?

I can hear the "old timers" and CW lovers out there groaning in pain and saying that the Tech Exam has been "dumbed down", but folks, the American Ham is changing, and so is the Hobby. Given that, it makes sense to be in front of the wave, and not get drowned by it. The new test drops all of the HF and CW theory and procedure, and replaces it with questions about Echolink and IRLP, APRS, and practical questions about selecting and properly operating FM equipment. We can teach them and test them for HF and CW theory and procedure when they take the Element 3 General Class Exam.

For more information about the NCVEC, its member organizations, and how the VE system operates, visit [www.ncvec.org](http://www.ncvec.org) . If you are not a VE and would like to become one, I would strongly encourage you to pursue that goal by contacting the ARRL/VEC on the web at [www.arrl.org/arrlvec/](http://www.arrl.org/arrlvec/) to get started. All you need to do is fill out an application, take an open book exam (at your own pace), and send it in! It does not cost anything, and I can personally guarantee that you will leave your first session with a sense of meaningful volunteerism as those happy people leave with a smile and a CSCE...

73 DE AB8SH

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