

LoTW Update—January 2020

Logbook Committee

Logbook of the World Status**1,119,597,674** QSO records have been entered into the system.**218,600,894** QSL records have resulted.**124,989** Users are registered in the system**181,938** Certificates are active**24,295,796** User files have been processed

Since our July report, there are 60 million additional QSO records, resulting in 15 million additional QSL records. We have 5000 additional registered users, and have processed almost 3 million additional user files.

New digital modes such as FT8 result in extremely high confirmation rates, compared to traditional modes, and this is contributing to Logbook's popularity.

Logbook availability exceeds our 99% uptime target. You can always find the realtime status report at: <https://status.lotw.arrl.org/> In the last 30 days (as of 1/3) we had 99.991% uptime, with 2 minutes of downtime. The downtime seems to be due to network reachability issues, which affect the uptime monitor, and which are out of our control. Our monthly meetings always begin with a review of any security or downtime issues, to ensure they receive prompt attention.

At its July 2019 meeting, as reported in Minute 12, A&F authorized hiring 2 additional software resources to enable continued progress on Logbook's evolution, especially Logbook 2.0. The Logbook committee has prioritized the specific tasks that will be undertaken, as resources come off other projects.

The current version of TQSL is 2.5.1, released in November. Recent updates focus on simplifying the certificate request process and ensuring that users understand that process; see further detail below. We continue to add localization in other local languages.

Our discussion group ARRL-LOTW has begun its 17th year; there are now 4918 members of this group. Many questions are answered here, which helps relieve the workload on the ARRL Help Desk. There are a significant number of DX stations which participate in the group, which provides them access to help despite the time difference between their local time and US time.

More friendly Logbook

The committee continues to work on de-complicating Logbook, to make it more accessible to non-computer and computer-phobic users. These same improvements also reduce the likelihood of the occasional errors that even experienced users sometimes make.

We continue to emphasize to DX stations that it is no longer necessary to send physical copies of authenticating documents to register on Logbook. This new process is seeing steady success. High participation from DX stations makes Logbook more valuable to all its users.

A recent improvement changes the program flow in TQSL so that users do not needlessly add password protection on non-public, non-shared computers, which is what most users are using.

We are also changing the language used around the validation key that U.S. users receive via postcard to establish their initial accounts. Previously, this was called a “password” which users then confused with their login to ARRL.org.

TQSL now uses ULS license data published by ARRL to pre-set the user's likely grid square and county when a new location is established, and using this is now the default. This means that, over time, more records in Logbook will include these geographic indicators, thus becoming useful for additional confirmations and additional awards.

The decision logic for issuing user certificates has been improved, which results in faster response to requests, and also cuts down on need for the Help Desk to review requests that really do not require validation. Recently expired certificates are now acceptable authentication on which to request replacements, eliminating significant paperwork for re-authorization, especially if users forget to renew certificates before they expire.

We continue to update available online Help, to reflect improvements to Logbook, to simplify the descriptions in Help, and to remove outdated material from earlier editions.

All in all, Logbook continues to progress at addressing the needs of active amateurs. We anticipate working on a few high-value short-term tasks early in 2020, before moving on to Logbook 2.0. And we are excited by the possibilities we envision for Logbook 2.0, and are looking forward to digging into the tasks required to create an improved system. The Committee thanks A&F and the Board for their continuing support.

Submitted by,
Greg Widin, KØGW, Chair 2019
for the Logbook Committee

Members: AA7A, K3DGB, K7GM, KØGW, W3IZ, W9JJ, K1MK, K1MU/4, K6WX, Doug Haney
