

THE ARRL OUTGOING QSL SERVICE

Exchanging paper QSL cards to confirm a two-way contact is a tradition that dates back to the beginning of Amateur Radio. Today, many amateurs prefer to confirm QSOs electronically with Logbook of The World (LoTW); however, there are those who like to swap paper cards. Exchanging QSL cards directly with your QSO partner can be very expensive. If you calculate the cost of postage to send an envelope overseas, plus any money enclosed to cover the return postage, a single QSL card request can cost up to five dollars or more. Confirming QSOs electronically through LoTW is a rapid and cost-effective way to earn QSO credit for awards, but for the paper card collector, the QSL Bureau offers an alternative to the direct QSL method.

To use this service, you only need to provide proof of ARRL membership and pay the fee according to the schedule below. Cards sent via the Bureau are sorted by the Outgoing QSL Service staff, who handle approximately 300,000 each year. Cards are shipped from HQ twice yearly.

The Service ships QSL cards to QSL Bureaus throughout the world, which are typically maintained by the national Amateur Radio Society of each country. (Please be advised that the ARRL QSL Service cannot be used to exchange QSL cards within the 48 contiguous states [US to US].) Sending QSL cards via the Bureau takes a little longer than mailing them directly, but keep in mind that what you might lose in speed is more than made up in the convenience and savings of not having to address and mail each QSL card separately.

You may also send QSLs via the bureau to any QSL manager who manages a non-US call sign. However, you must look up the QSL manager and clearly indicate the QSL manager's call sign on your outgoing card. For example:

Example 1: 8P8P via NN1N. Sort this card in with other cards going to US managers.

Example 2: 6Y1V via OH3RB. Sort this card in with cards to Finland.

There are many sources of QSL information, including **QRZ.com**, logging programs, the GoList, **www.qslinfo.de**, and the *The Daily DX* website at <http://www.dailydx.com/routes.html>.

How To Use The ARRL Outgoing QSL Service

Sorting Cards

Presort your DX QSLs alphabetically by **parent call sign prefix** (AP, CE, DL, ES, EZ, F, G, JA, LY, PY, UN, YL, 5N, 9Y, and so on). Canadian and Australian cards should be sorted by numerical call sign (VE1, VE2, VE3 and VK1, VK2, VK3, etc). Note: Some countries have a parent prefix and use additional prefixes, i.e. G (parent prefix) = M, 2E, 2I, 2M, 2W, etc. When sorting countries that have multiple prefixes, keep that country's prefixes grouped with the parent prefix in your alphabetical stack. Addresses are not required.

Do not separate the country prefixes by use of paper clips, rubber bands, slips of paper, or envelopes. This only slows down processing.

Proof of Membership

Please enclose proof of your current ARRL membership. This can be in the form of a photocopy or cut-

out of the address area from your current copy of *QST*. You can also write the information from the label on a slip of paper and use that as proof of membership. A copy of your current membership card is also acceptable.

Fees and Payment

ARRL members — including foreign members, QSL Managers, or managers for DXpeditions — should enclose payment as follows:

\$3.00 for 1 to 10 cards (this is typically between 1.3 and 1.5 ounces using a #10 envelope)

\$4.00 for 11 – 20 cards (this is typically between 2.3 and 2.5 ounces using a #10 envelope)

Bulk (21 or more cards ~ 3 ounce minimum) \$1.75 per ounce (the minimum bulk charge becomes \$5.25).

You should use an accurate scale to weigh your cards. Most post offices have scales that you may use.

Please pay by check (or money order) and write your call sign on the check. Send cash at your own risk. DO NOT send postage stamps or IRCs. Please make checks payable to: “The ARRL Outgoing QSL Service.”

Packages received with insufficient payment will not be processed until the balance is paid in full. The Outgoing QSL bureau does not keep money on account.

Packing and Mailing

Your package must include:

- Slip with your name, call sign, weight of cards enclosed, and proof of ARRL membership.
- Proof of ARRL membership — Copy of *QST* mailing label or membership card.
- Your payment in the form of check or money order. DO NOT send cash.
- Your QSL cards, sorted as instructed.

Include only the cards, proof of membership, and the appropriate fee in the package. Box the cards securely and address the package to:

ARRL Outgoing QSL Service
225 Main Street
Newington, CT 06111-1494.

It is strongly recommended that you use a traceable method to ship your cards.

Other Helpful Information

Who may use the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service

- Family members may also use the service by enclosing their QSLs with those of the primary member. Include the appropriate fee, and indicate “family membership” on the primary member’s proof of membership.
- Blind members who do not receive *QST* need only include the appropriate fee along with a note indicating that the cards are from a blind member.
- ARRL Affiliated Club stations may use the service to submit club QSLs for its members in bulk (“pooling” their members’ cards together in one package) by indicating the club’s name inside the package. Club secretaries should check their club’s affiliation on the ARRL website to ensure it is current. In a “pooled” package, each club member using this service must also be an ARRL member. Cards should be sorted “en masse” by prefix, and proof of membership should

be enclosed for each ARRL member. QSLs for unaffiliated club calls may also be sent via the Outgoing Bureau to foreign destinations if the trustee of the club call is a member in good standing. The trustee's proof of membership must be included with the club call-QSLs.

Recommended QSL card dimensions

The efficient operation of the worldwide system of QSL Bureaus requires that cards be easy to handle and sort. Cards of unusual dimensions — either much larger or much smaller than normal, or printed on thin paper (i.e., copier paper) — slow the work of the Bureaus, most of which is done by unpaid volunteers.

A review of the cards received by the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service indicates that most fall in the following range:

Height: 2-3/4 to 4-1/4 in. (70 to 110 mm)
Width: 4-3/4 to 6-1/4 in. (120 to 160 mm)

IARU Region 2, which includes the United States, has suggested the following dimensions as optimum:

Height 3-1/2 in. (90 mm)
Width 5-1/2 in. (140 mm)

Cards in this range can be easily sorted, stacked, and packaged. Cards outside this range create problems.

In particular, the larger cards often cannot be handled without folding or otherwise damaging them. In the interest of efficient operation of the worldwide QSL Bureau system, it is recommended that cards entering the system be limited to the range of dimensions given.

Countries Not Served By the Outgoing QSL Service

Approximately 150 DXCC entities are served by the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service, as detailed in the ARRL DXCC List website. This includes nearly every active country. As noted previously, cards are forwarded from the ARRL Outgoing Service to a counterpart bureau in each of these countries. In some cases, there is no Incoming Bureau in a particular country and cards, therefore, cannot be forwarded. However, QSL cards can be forwarded to a QSL manager, e.g., ZB2FX via G3RFX. Most operations from places without a QSL bureau have a QSL manager.

Countries that currently deliver QSL cards only to members of that country's national radio society include the following:

Belarus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Monaco, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Zambia.

Additional Information

We do not hold cards for countries with no Incoming Bureau. Only cards indicating a QSL Manager for a station in these particular countries will be forwarded. Undeliverable cards will normally not be returned.

When sending cards to *foreign QSL managers*, you must sort these cards using the manager's call sign, rather than the station's call sign. SWL cards can be forwarded through the QSL Service.

The Outgoing QSL Service **CANNOT** forward stamps, cards inside envelopes, IRCs or "green stamps" (cash) to the foreign QSL bureaus.

Please direct any questions or comments to the ARRL Outgoing QSL Service, 225 Main Street, Newington CT, 06111-1494. The Outgoing QSL Service can be reached at 860-594-0274. Inquires via email may be sent to buro@arrl.org

Information regarding the Incoming QSL bureaus can be located at: <http://www.arrl.org/incoming-qsl-service>.

3B	Agalega, Mauritius, Rodrigues	CO	Cuba	TL	Central African Rep
3C	Equatorial Guinea	D2	Angola	TN	Congo
3C0	Pagalau Island	D4	Cabo Verde	TT	Chad
3DA	Kingdom of Eswatini	E3	Eritrea	TU	Cote d'Ivoire
3W	Vietnam	E4	Palestine	TY	Benin
3X	Guinea	E5	North & South Cook Is.	UA	Russia
4J, 4K	Azerbaijan	ET	Ethiopia	UR	Ukraine
4L	Georgia	H4	Solomon	V3	Belize
4S	Sri Lanka	HH	Haiti	V4	St. Kitts & Nevis
4W	Timor – Leste	HV	Vatican	V5	Namibia
5A	Libya	J5	Guinea-Bissau	V6	Micronesia
5R	Madagascar	J8	St. Vincent	V7	Marshall
5T	Mauritania	KG4	Guantanamo Bay	VP2E	Anguilla
5U	Niger	KH0	Mariana Is.	VP2M	Montserrat
5V	Togo	KH1	Baker & Howland Is.	VP9	Bermuda
7O	Yemen	KH4	Midway Island	VQ9	Chagos Diego Garcia
7P	Lesotho	KH5	Palmyra & Jarvis Is.	XU	Cambodia
7Q	Malawi	KH7K	Kure Island	XW	Laos
8Q	Maldives	KH9	Wake Island	XZ	Myanmar
9L	Sierra Leone	KP1	Navassa Island	YA	Afghanistan
9N	Nepal	KP5	Desecheo Island	Z2	Zimbabwe
9U	Burundi	ON	Belgium	ZA	Albania
9Y	Trinidad and Tobago	P2	Papua New Guinea	ZK3	Tokelau
9X	Rwanda	P5	North Korea		
A3	Tonga	PZ	Suriname		
A5	Bhutan	S0	Western Sahara		
A6	United Arab Emirates	S7	Seychelles		
A9	Bahrain	T2	Tuvalu		
C2	Nauru	T3	Kiribati		
C5	Gambia	T5	Somalia		
C6	Bahamas	T8	Palau		
CN	Morocco	TJ	Cameroon		