



Exam Info

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General Pool Update, FCC Goes Paperless, and Expired License Credit Information

New General Question Pool to Take Effect July 1

On July 1, 2015, a new Element 3 General class question pool takes effect for examinations. VECs and VEs will have new test designs available for use at exam sessions effective that date.

The newly revised pool, released in December 2014 (updated February 11, 2015) by the Question Pool Committee (QPC) of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC), must be in use starting July 1. There is one graphic required for this pool and 462 questions in this pool, up slightly from 456 in the previous pool. Questions G1E10 and G5B08 have been formally withdrawn from use and should not appear on exams. To view the new General class pool, visit the NCVEC website at ncvec.org/page.php?id=364.

FCC Goes Paperless

In order to streamline procedures and save money, the FCC stopped routinely printing and mailing licenses in February.

There are a number of ways a license holder can obtain an official copy of their license. The official license will display the FCC logo, and the watermark "Official Copy" will be printed across each page of an official authorization from the FCC.

1. *Download and Print License:* The licensee can log into the FCC ULS License Manager System (wireless.fcc.gov/uls/) with their FRN and password to download and print an electronic authorization of the official license.

2. *Login and Set Paper Preferences:* The licensee can log into the FCC ULS License Manager System with their FRN and password and set their own paper authorization preferences for future mailings. This option determines whether a user will receive paper authorizations (printed license and

FRN information) from the FCC. The license holder would select either YES or NO and then click SAVE. By selecting YES, you will continue to receive paper authorizations printed and mailed by the FCC. By selecting NO, you will not receive authorizations printed and mailed from the FCC. This preference will affect all granted authorizations on this FRN.

3. *Receive License via E-mail:* When modifying, renewing, or requesting a duplicate copy of the license, a licensee who already has an FCC Registration Number (FRN) and provides a valid e-mail address under "Applicant Information" while logged in to the ULS system will receive an official ULS-generated electronic authorization via e-mail.

The action of adding a valid e-mail address into the FCC system can also be performed by a VEC filing new, upgraded, modified, or renewed licenses on behalf of applicants.

4. *Contact FCC:* Licensees also may contact FCC Support via the web, telephone, or mail to request paper licenses. Please note that the FCC recently stopped using distinctive paper stock to produce hard copy licenses and has been printing these on "standard, white recycled paper." The Bureau noted that the distinctive paper stock it had used was six times more expensive than the plain recycled paper it now uses.

An unofficial "reference copy" can always be printed from the FCC's ULS License database wireless.fcc.gov/uls/.

Expired License Credit Overview

In July 2014, the FCC revised the Amateur Service Part 97 rules to grant partial written examination element credit to holders of expired General, Advanced, and Amateur Extra class licenses. The FCC requires former licensees — those falling outside the 2-year grace period — to pass Element 2

(Technician) in order to be relicensed. To take advantage of the new rule, holders of expired licenses must attend an exam session. There they would present a photo ID and their expired license proof, pay the \$15 exam session processing fee, and take the Technician exam.

Additional information and clarification is located on the VE Resources page, www.arrl.org/resources-for-ves, in the section titled "Exam Element Credit."

Conditional Licenses

Things get tricky when looking for expired license credit using a Conditional license.

FCC rule §97.505(a) for Element credit states that credit must be given to an examinee holding any of the following expired license grants: Amateur Extra, Advanced, General, and Technician granted before March 21, 1987.

As you can see, the FCC did not make provisions for Conditional licensees to receive expired license credit. ARRL VEC can petition the FCC on behalf of a candidate and hope that they will allow the credit.

The candidate will attend an exam session where they would be treated like any other test candidate. At the session, they would present a photo ID, and a copy of the old conditional license proof. They would pay the \$15 session processing fee and, of course, a 605 form would need to be filled out and signed by the candidate and the VE team. The candidate should attach a letter to the paperwork asking the FCC for General element license credit based on the expired conditional license.

If the candidate has a current Technician license, no exams will be taken. If they are unlicensed, then they would have had to pass the Technician exam in addition to submitting the conditional license proof.