

# The Fine Art of QSLing

# Why QSL?

1. You have received a QSL – Please always respond to these even if you have to hand write it on a blank card. Local post cards are nice for this purpose if you don't have formal QSL cards.
2. You want a memento of a particularly memorable QSO, Special Event station, etc
3. You like to collect the cards
4. You wish to earn awards

# QSL Methods

1. Pre-printed, home-made, or handwritten QSL cards.
  - Months should be listed using alphabetic characters to avoid confusion with foreign formats. I.e. 13-Sep-2006 not 9/13/06 (US style) or 13/9/2006 (European style)
2. ARRL Logbook Of The World (LOTW)
  - Sean, K8KHZ, has given an excellent presentation on LOTW in the past so this discussion will focus primarily on cards.
3. eQSL via [www.eQSL.cc](http://www.eQSL.cc)
4. Electronic cards attached to Email

# Advantages / Disadvantages

- Paper Cards
  - Permanent memento of QSO
  - Good for awards sponsored by almost all organizations worldwide
  - Not accepted for awards sponsored by eQSL
  - Take up storage space
  - May get damaged in the mail
  - Postage can get costly if you do a lot.

# Advantages / Disadvantages

- Logbook Of The World
  - Designed to facilitate earning DXCC and now WAS
  - Can combine LOTW confirmations & cards for awards
  - Functions as a “backup” to your log
  - No cards to store
  - Saves postage
  - Cannot print out a “card”
  - Takes a little time to set up. Easy if you follow the directions exactly but difficult if you don't.
  - Not everyone is signed up for LOTW

# Advantages / Disadvantages

- eQSL
  - Can print out “cards”
  - Can store paperless form (hard drive or CD)
  - No cards to store if you don't print them
  - Functions as a “backup” to your log
  - Saves postage
  - Accepted only for eQSL awards & a few other organizations. ARRL does not accept them.
  - For eQSL's own awards, cannot get credit for any paper cards
  - Not everyone is signed up for eQSL

# Advantages / Disadvantages

- Email
  - Can print out “cards”
  - Can store paperless form (hard drive or CD)
  - No cards to store if you don't print them
  - Email address may be difficult to track down
  - Generally not accepted for any awards

# QSL Cards - Domestic Stations

- Card sent as postcard
  - Only if you don't care if you receive a response
  - Only if your cards are heavy enough they won't get damaged in the mail
- Card sent in an envelope w/o SASE
  - Only if you don't care if you receive a response
  - If you wish to protect your card in the mail
- Card sent in an envelope with an SASE
  - If you want to receive a response
- Cannot be sent through the ARRL bureau.
  - Some organizations (eg FISTS) have member bureaus



# Domestic Special Event Stations

- Check for QSL info when you work the station or on <http://www.arrl.org/> under special events.
- Determine if they are sending cards or certificates
- Include appropriate SASE. Use 9x12 for certificates if you want it unfolded.
- QSL as soon as possible. It may be difficult to find the contact info if you wait too long, especially for 1x1 calls since they are recycled.
- For past events using 1x1 calls, you can find the sponsor contact at <http://www.ncvec.org/1x1.php>. This may not be the QSL contact but is a place to start tracking down the contact information.

# QSL Cards - Foreign Stations

- The Bureau (means ARRL bureau on the US end)
  - For incoming and outgoing bureau information see <http://www.arrl.org/qs/qslin.html> and <http://www.arrl.org/qs/qsout.html>
  - Saves postage and envelopes
  - Make take months or years before you get a return
  - Not all countries are served by bureaus (see info on the ARRL outgoing bureau site listed above)
  - In some countries, their bureaus only serve members
  - All US hams may receive cards via the bureau
  - Only ARRL members may send cards via the bureau
  - You may send your cards directly to foreign bureaus
    - See <http://www.iaru.org/iaruqsl.html> for addresses
    - Your card will then come back via the ARRL Bureau

# QSL Cards - Foreign Stations

- Direct QSL (sites with QSL info listed on last slide)
  - Enclose Self Addressed Envelope
  - Do not include US stamps.
  - Include IRCs or “green stamps” (US dollars)
  - Alternatively there are websites where you can buy foreign stamps
  - Theft can be a significant problem outside the US, Canada and Western Europe
    - Make sure that the IRC or “green stamps” cannot be seen
    - Do not put call signs on the envelopes
    - Return addresses that look like business addresses are said to help sometimes prevent theft
    - If desperate for the confirmation and you don’t mind the cost, a registered letter may be the solution

# QSL Cards - Foreign Stations

- QSL via QSL manager (info sites listed on last slide)
  - Foreign station with US manager
    - Similar to QSLing a domestic station
    - Send card to the QSL manager with SASE
  - Foreign station with foreign manager
    - Send card to foreign manager using the same guidelines as listed for direct QSLs
    - Send card via bureau
      - List QSL manager's call sign somewhere on card. i.e.  
QSL Manager: xxxxx
      - Follow guidelines for QSL via the bureau

# Sources – QSL Information

- <http://www.qrz.com/>
- <http://www.eham.net/>
- <http://www.hamcall.net/call>
- <http://ac6v.com/callbooks.htm>
  - This site has extensive ham radio information in all categories not just QSL information
- <http://www.ng3k.com/Misc/adxo.html>
  - Excellent for both past and future DXpedition information
- Also try entering the call sign into a search engine if all else fails