

NERG Inc QSLing

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What is a QSL?

It is a confirmation that a QSO was made. This can be a physical card or an accepted electronic confirmation.

Why do we need them?

The main reason is for those chasing DX awards, such as DXCC. DXCC is the DX Century Club and is an award bestowed on an operator who can provide evidence of QSOs with 100 DX "Entities". This award was established by the ARRL in the late 1940's. You can still apply to the ARRL for your DXCC or the WIA is also running a DXCC program. The WIA system is easier to navigate and is free to WIA members.

Should I send QSL Cards?

Some say that sending a QSL is the final courtesy to a QSO. Unless you have made it absolutely obvious on your QRZ.com page that you will never QSL then I believe that you should respond to every QSL request you receive. But there is no need to be out of pocket!!

How are QSLs sent?

Perhaps before we even look at this we should consider what information we need to keep about our QSOs and the Log keeping requirements.

The minimum information required is the date and time of
The QSO (in UCT) the band and the mode.

Most operators these days find that a computer logging program is the best solution.

Logging Programs

There are a number of logging programs in general use

We will talk more about clublog later but their stats show what percentage of users, with more than 200 DXCC entities worked, use the following logging programs:

LOGGER32	38%
DXKEEPER	20%
HAMRADIODELUXE	20%
N3FJP'S AMATEUR CONTACT LOG	12%
UR5EQF_LOG	10%

LOG40M does not appear in these figures but this maybe because clublog cannot identify it (not sure)

Logging software

No matter which logger you choose to use the important thing is to have CAT control between the rig and the logger

This way you can be sure that you capture the Band and Mode data.

LOCATION

Within your logging program make sure you have recorded the location from which you are operating, a minimum would be your Maidenhead Grid Square. Most other details can be determined from there.

QSL Cards

There is a standard size, make sure your cards are this size!! If they are not it can make life difficult for everyone!! The standard is 140mm X 90mm. I think the standard is actually 5.5in X 3.5in, which actually fits in a standard 11B envelope.

QSL Cards

The info on the card should include, the Callsign you used for the QSO, the callsign of the station you worked, The UTC Date and Time of the QSO and the band and mode used. You should also include your Maidenhead locator, CQ and ITU Zones, IOTA No (if applicable – Australia is OC-001). I also include the “Shire” for those chasing VK Shires.

NOTE: For IOTA QSOs the Island name and IOTA number must be printed on the card, not hand written!!

QSL Cards

You must also have "Confirming Q50" or similar somewhere on the card.

There are various card suppliers one of the best is UX5UO Print, See <http://www.ux5uoqsl.com/index.php?lang=en&page=products&cur=usd>

For luxury Cards US\$62 per 1000 cards

Note: You need to set your location on this site before the prices show.

QSL Cards – Sending yours out

Sending cards, there are a number of methods:

Direct – do this if you want to get the confirmation reasonable quickly .

Bureau – do this if you don't need the confirmation, or to reply to a bureau card.

QSL Manager – If you are a high volume user this would be the best solution.

QSL Printing and distribution service – expensive but little effort.

QSL Cards – Receiving Cards

There are several methods of requesting cards from your QSO partner.

Direct – do this if you want to get the confirmation reasonable quickly .

Bureau – ask the other operator to send you a card via the bureau or just send them a card and ----- wait!

OQRS – This is a service which allows you to request cards over the internet, paying with paypal and having the card delivered via post. No need to send a QSL

QSL Cards – Receiving Cards

OQRS is used by most dxpeditions and saves those of us chasing cards some money – no card to send, no outgoing postage, no envelope etc etc On some sites you can request a bureau card for free via OQRS

You can set up OQRS your self on club log – more latter.

QSL Cards – Direct

To send cards direct – you need to include the following:

Your card, A self addressed envelope, and some way of covering the cost of postage – either “green stamps – US\$” or an International Reply Coupon (IRC)



QSL Cards – Direct

It pays to check if the receiver of the card accepts IRCs – some countries are phasing them out. Also IRCs expire, I have several Dec 2017 expiry ones, that are now useless. The one on the previous page is current till 2021.

QSL Cards – Bureau

The QSL bureau in Australia is run by the WIA, in Victoria in co-operation with Amateur Radio Victoria.

You must be a member of one of these organisations to be able to use the bureau.

To receive cards from the bureau you need to register with them by sending a form to the bureau. See me later for a copy. On that form specify your collection point as "The MERG" and cards will be sent to us and available for collection at Radio Cafe and meeting nights.

QSL Cards – Bureau

To send cards via the bureau, batch them up sorted by Preferred prefix (see list), write the preferred prefix on the top right hand corner of the card, and post them to :

*WIA Outwards QSL Bureau
PO Box 66
Boolaroo NSW 2284*

For AR Vic members post them to:

*VK3 Outwards QSL Bureau
40G Victory Boulevard
Ashburton VIC 3147*

QSL Cards – Bureau

The current standard postal rate of \$1 allows for 5mm thick pack so make sure you don't overfill the envelope.

Electronic QSLs

There are currently 2 electronic QSL system that are accepted by the WIA for DXCC confirmations, in addition to cards.

LOTW (Logbook Of The World) from the ARRL, and

eQSL - this is run by a volunteer group and allows for users to confirm contacts and gain eQSL awards.

Electronic QSLs - LOTW

If you are chasing the ARRL's DXCC award then they only accept LOTW and card confirmations.

It is free To sign up for LOTW follow these steps: (See: <https://lotw.arrl.org/lotw-help/getting-started/>)

1)Download the TQSL application from the ARRL

2)Request your callsign certificate and LOTW account password

3)Mail a copy of both your radio licence and a government issued identification doc, driver's licence etc to the ARRL

Electronic QSLs - LOTW

You will receive a callsign certificate, which you accept and then you are ready to go.

Make sure you set your station location correctly including grid square and CQ and ITU zones!!!

You can set up as many station locations as you want for all those SOTA etc activations. Ensure that your logging program can log the location. Log4OM and dxlabs do, I assume logger32 will too. They all will upload QSOs to LOTW and eQSL

Electronic QSLs - LOTW

Once your log is uploaded, LOTW will compare your QSOs with those uploaded by other stations any matching QSOs will then be confirmed.

Note once a QSO has been uploaded to LOTW it is there forever. You can check your progress towards DXCC and other awards such as WAS (Worked All States) by logging into your LOTW account. If you want to apply for an award there is a charge.

Your logging software will also allow you to check on confirmed QSOs and indicate these in some way.

Electronic QSLs - eQSL

The eQSL system is very similar except you can see where someone has claimed a contact with you, even if there is no matching QSO in your log. You do not see non-matching QSOs in LOTW

EQSL have a number of fantastic awards and they have a system of 'Authenticity Guaranteed' I found it easier to register with LOTW first and then use that to gain Authenticity Guaranteed on eQSL

Chasing awards - WIA

The WIA has a fantastic system for verifying QSOs for awards.

You log on and upload your log to their website.

Check the validity of QSOs using clublog.org

Check for confirmed QSOs using eQSL

Check for confirmed QSOs using LOTW

Physical cards can also be checked and confirmed

You can then check all the various award status and claim awards. Once an award has been approved you can download a .pdf file of the certificate.

Note: when asked to supply your eQSL and LOTW passwords DO NOT click the update password option.

Clublog.org

This is a free system that allows users to check other station's logs to see if they are "in the log" and in some cases request a QSL either direct or via the bureau.

It is used by most Dxpeditions, and also provides for "leaderboards" and propagation indicators.

Originally designed to provide a facility for clubs to run DX tally competitions etc the NERGF is one of these. Once you have registered for clublog click on "Settings" then "Clubs" and then find NERGF and request membership

Clublog.org

All the previous mentioned logging programs will upload your log to clublog and usually have settings to allow contacts to be uploaded as they are made or as a batch at the end of operating session.

You can check your DXCC progress etc on clublog and also marathon progress and this can help you see where QSLs are required. Your logging program will also do this as well as the WIA awards website!!