7O1YGF was a German Amateur Radio activity which took place in Sana’a, Yemen, from 17-26 April 2000. It was initiated and organized by myself, Franz Nieberding, DK1II, when I was working for a German oil company doing business in Yemen.

I visited Yemen many times and made contacts with high-ranking political officials. Using my contacts, I started an initiative to get permission to activate Yemen by Amateur Radio. These initiatives were strongly supported by officials at the German embassy in Sana’a, who also used their contacts to activate Yemen.

Planning
The problem was, and still is, that Yemen has no regulations for Amateur Radio and any activity from this country could only take place with permission, which was eventually given to me from the respective authorities through the German embassy. With this great news, I started to select my DXpedition team. Bernd Krüger, DJ7MG, and Dominik Weiel, DL5EBE, ran the CQWW DX CW Contest every year with me, and all were keen and enthusiastic CW operators. (Dominik was the German champion in high speed telegraphy some years ago.) For the SSB and RTTY modes, I invited Hans Hannapel, DK9KX.

Our plan was to run two HF stations 24 hours a day and split the group into two teams. The equipment consisted of three IC-735 radios (one as a spare) and one IC-706 MK II for 6M plus the respective switching power supplies and a TL-922 linear to guarantee a loud signal. The antennas were two LP5 log periodic 5-band antennas, one R7 vertical by Cushcraft, a 4-element Yagi for 6 Meters and dipoles for 40, 80 and 160 Meters plus enough coax cable for all antennas. The weight of the HF equipment plus our private luggage exceeded 200kg; however, thanks to Lufthansa and the local manager — also a Ham and a good friend of Hans — all equipment and luggage made it on the plane without any further discussions!

Yemen
We arrived close to midnight in Sana’a and our equipment became the main focus of security and Customs. We had to open all our boxes and the radios were studied carefully, but our contact person from the government arrived in time with documents, releasing us within seconds. Only the serial numbers had to be listed. We were told that we could not use the calls 7O1II or 7O1CW which had been applied for; instead, we were told to use 7O1YGF with the suffix standing for Yemen-German Friendship, reflecting the good relationship of our states. Again, we were assured that we would get a written document during our operation or, at the latest, by the end, but were told we could set up the station as planned and start with the operation.

We settled in to the Crown Suites Hotel in Sana’a Haddah, our sleeping

continued on page 3
From the President’s desk

I just returned from the K4M DXpedition to Midway and it was a real blast, to say the least. Fish and Wildlife were great to work with and all 20 of us enjoyed ourselves while handing out Qs to as many of the deserving as possible. Plane problems shortened our time by three days, but we were still able to make over 61,000 Qs on all bands and popular modes.

In this newsletter you’ll find a couple of interesting articles: As you may be aware, 7O1YGF was approved by the ARRL after almost a decade. NCDXF agreed to provide funding to this expedition if and when the league approved it. The league did approve it and we have an article from the organizers of this expedition, along with an article by Wayne Mills, N7NG, who was with the league from 2000-07 as their Membership Services Department Manager. Wayne was, in this position, intimately involved in the DXCC program and he has some interesting insights into the DXCC approval process and explains why one size does not fit all.

We also are introducing WØYK, Ed Muns, as a new advisor to NCDXF. Ed is a well-known contestor, particularly in the RTTY arena, and has a tremendous amount of web experience. Ed will be working with our current webmaster, WW6D, Doug Bender, in improving our website.

We have been received very nicely at WØDXCC, W9DXCC and SEDCO. All of these conventions have generated major contributions to NCDXF with the raffles of ICOM and YAESU radios.

Lastly, if you are receiving this newsletter in printed form, I have to advise you that this will be our last printed version; we are going entirely electronic. The cost of printing and mailing 120 newsletters out of the 1,000 sent every six months is just too high. A full-color newsletter is available by e-mail and it will also be posted to our website. We do appreciate your support and hope that you will continue to do so.

If we do not have your e-mail, or if you have changed your e-mail address, please contact us at newsletter@ncdxf.org or go to our website www.ncdxf.org/feedback.html.

Thanks for your continued support.

— Bruce Butler, W6OSP

NCDXF welcomes Ed Muns, WØYK

The NCDXF Board of Directors welcomes Ed Muns, WØYK, as an advisor to the NCDXF Board of Directors. Ed’s primary duty, along with Doug Bender, WW6D, will be working with NCDXF’s website, www.ncdxf.org.

Ed became interested in Amateur Radio in high school, working 40-Meter CW into Asia in the hours before school. During college, his license expired, but he rejoined DXing 10 years later. Ed’s interest in DXing quickly morphed into contesting, and all of his Ham radio time today is spent contesting, chasing DX and occasionally joining DXpeditions. Favoring CW, Ed can sometimes be found on SSB as well.

Thanks to his contest club’s (NCCC) campaign to win the club competition gavel in the 2004 ARRL RTTY Round-Up, Ed got started in that mode. He holds the SOHP world record, operating with his P49X call sign, having broken the world record in 2006, 2007 and 2009. In CQ WPX Round-Up
site for the rest of the DXpedition, and the next morning we went to the local office of Halliburton, a well-known oil and gas service company. I had selected this QTH during a previous business trip because we could use an abandoned versa tower on the office site. This office was in the diplomatic quarter of Sana’a, which was not usually affected by power failures, but, just in case, a strong power generator was on standby. The house also had a flat accessible roof, ideal to set up antennas; Halliburton had given us use of their facilities and they were great hosts. A big “Thank you” to the Halliburton people.

In a spare office with two desks we set up the radios while Dom mounted the R7 vertical. Soon the first station was ready and, as the DXpedition leader, I was the first one to call CQ, and immediately started the never-ending pileup.

Overwhelming response

On our 10th day of operation, I was called to the German embassy for an arranged meeting at the Ministry of Communication. At the ministry we were informed that Amateurs from all parts of the world were calling or faxing their office and that it was impossible to do their normal work; everything was dealing with our operation as 7O1YGF. Lots of questions were raised; some about why we were allowed to operate and others about the legality of our operation. Due to the fact that the officers couldn’t perform their normal job duties, we were asked to stop our operation, to which we complied. Our operation was based on verbal permission and it was an experiment because the officers didn’t know much about Amateur Radio at that time, and they didn’t expect such a large number of requests and complaints.

Unfortunately, we had to terminate our operation and we were unable to present a document which would satisfy ARRL for a long time.

QSO Statistics

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Belated recognition

After all these years, we are happy and grateful to ARRL for recognizing the 7O1YGF operation for DXCC. I would like to thank all the Hams for their continuous support in getting this activity recognized. And last but not least, a big “Thank You” to NCDXF for supporting our activity after almost 10 years.

My good old friend Bernd, DJ7MG, working the CW pileup. Bernd passed away in April 2003.

The 7O1YGF crew: Dom, DL5EBE; Hans, DK9KX; Bernd, DJ7MG (SK), and Franz, DK1II.
Authenticating 7O1YGF

— Wayne Mills, N7NG

Most of you were probably very happy to see 7O1YGF finally authenticated after over nine years of waiting. Although the books were never closed on this case, I suspect many DXers had long ago given up on ever being able to add it to their DXCC count. Why did it take nine years?

Documentation

Determining how to authenticate the operation of Amateur Radio stations has always been something of a mystery. Do we, as DXpeditioners need to provide documentation? Never in my pre-ARRL days did I ever learn a formula that revealed exactly what was required and how to provide it. I know that being aware of the documentation requirements beforehand is essential, since it can be difficult to obtain the necessary documents after leaving the area of operation. Pre-approval for an operation, on the other hand, can be very risky for the award sponsor and must be handled with great caution. The pre-approval of P5RS7 was such an example.

After joining ARRL as Membership Services Manager in May 2000, and being put in a position of helping to make these decisions, I learned that one major reason for the uncertainty was the fact that not one size fits all. Licensing situations vary greatly around the world. Governments in many countries simply don’t issue licenses like those from the FCC in the USA or OFCOM in the UK. Many governments haven’t even formally recognized Amateur Radio.

Authorization

This was the case in Albania, until the spring of 1992. ZA1A was active in the fall of 1991 under a provisional authorization; there were operations prior to 1992, but none were authorized under any specific law. This is NOT to say that these operations were unauthorized or illegal, however. During the spring of 1992, legislation was written providing for Amateur Radio, which was subsequently adopted by Parliament, allowing Amateurs easy authorization ever since.

Unless a particular activity is specifically disallowed, the government is probably free to authorize it. At the same time, they don’t care that the ARRL or RSGB requires written documentation stating that a certain operation was approved.

So, the question still arises: “Do I need to submit documentation for my operation?” The answer depends on a number of factors, including 1) the relative difficulty of traveling to the destination, and 2) the relative difficulty of obtaining permission to operate. Note the use of the word “permission.” It is central to the accreditation issue to state that a license, in written form, is NOT always necessary in order for an operation to be accredited. Obviously, the existence of authentic, written documents is desired and makes the award sponsor’s job easy. What is necessary, though, is tangible information that an operation is NOT unauthorized or illegal.

Evidence

Actually, the most important accreditation criterion is not related to authorization at all. It is simply evidence of a physical presence within the geopolitical boundaries of the particular DXCC entity. It is implicit in the game that two-way contacts are made with stations located within the geopolitical boundaries of particular entities. Since location is the most important factor, it is fortunate that location is also the easiest information to verify. All sorts of documents lend themselves to the precise determination of location.

Establishing whether permission to operate has been granted is another matter. Radio transmissions are generally regulated, at least where the emissions cross international boundaries, usually to prevent interference between users. Regulations are issued by governments according to International Telecommunications Union (ITU) treaties, and generally achieved through consensus. There is no enforcement by the ITU, however; enforcement is the responsibility of the governments involved.

Since Amateur Radio has no inherent pecuniary interests, in general, it is always easy for government officials to deny an activity that affects few individuals, and brings the government or its people little to nothing in return. The value of Amateur Radio operators to Western nations is apparent; to developing nations, it is often less clear. Approval sometimes comes in the form of, “Yes, you may operate, but you will NEVER receive authorization in writing.”

So, how does the ARRL determine whether a particular operation is acceptable for the purposes of its awards?

In most cases, licenses are “issued in the normal manner,” and care only needs to be taken to verify that any documents are in order and not forged. This is usually determined.
in a straightforward manner. It these cases, the organizer may require only proof of actual travel to the physical location. In most cases, for locations that are not particularly rare, only travel documents are required.

For locations in which obtaining authorization is typically difficult, greater care must be taken. First of all, it could be useful to know the past policy, if any, of the government in question. It is helpful to know for example, whether written authorization has been issued in the past. This would indicate something about the lack of written authorization in a subsequent situation. On the other hand, it is unlikely that a policy of never issuing a written document would ever be adopted in writing or voiced by a government or its officials. In the latter case, a no-written-document policy would be tacit and unwritten — it would be simply “understood.”

Two such operations occurred in the last nine years. One was the nearly one year operation in the Democratic People’s Republic of North Korea (DPRK) by Ed Giorgadze, 4L4FN, as P5/4L4FN. The other was the 10-day operation of 7O1YGF in Yemen. Authorization in each of these cases was believed to be in order, but absolutely no documentation, official or unofficial, was ever available in writing from either of the governments involved. Operation in a country like the DPRK for nearly a year would tend to suggest that unwritten authorization had, indeed, existed. The operation in Yemen, operating for 10 days, would seem somewhat less likely to have been authorized, so additional information was necessary.

A license per-se is not necessarily required, but satisfactory and tangible evidence that the operation was/is not unauthorized or illegal must be available. If a paper license is available, it covers the requirement. How might information be obtained where no “official” authorization is available? One possibility is from credible and disinterested third parties.

Individuals knowledgeable of the situation, who were associated with well-known organizations or governments, willing to document their information on organization letterhead, could provide information sufficiently credible for the purposes of validating an operation would constitute a “credible third party.”

In both cases cited, North Korea and Yemen, input was sought from credible third parties indicating that the operations were indeed authorized and/or allowed by the proper authorities.

So, why did it take over nine years to approve 701YGF? 701YGF organizers were frequently prodded to come up with something tangible that could lead to the accreditation of the operation and in 2006 there was a suggestion that some government-issued equipment import documents might be available. No such documents ever materialized.

Information from a credible third party was used in the accreditation of PS/4L4FN. To the best of my knowledge, information from a credible third party was also used in the case of 701YGF, which was available at the end of 2006; it is unclear why no decision was made before mid-2009.

Were these the correct decisions? Probably. Will this method of accreditation always work in these cases? Probably not. But all of these avenues should be investigated where there are no alternatives. It is in the best interest to accredit legitimate Amateur Radio operating where at all possible. It is NOT in the best interest of these organizations or Ham radio in general, to reject operations on the basis that the world everywhere operates the same as we in the West.

Editor’s note: Due to space considerations, it was necessary to edit Wayne Mill’s informative article. To download a pdf of the full article, click here.

Ed Muns, WØYK
continued from page 2

Ed also holds the SOHP world record, having broken it in 2007, 2008 and 2009. In 2008, he operated the CQWW RTTY contest, winning SOHP.

Ed was on the YK0A team in 1994 and has operated as 6YØA and 6Y4A as well as holding the 7J1ACJ call sign. From Aruba, where he holds a permanent visitor license as P49X, he has operated nearly a dozen times, primarily CW and RTTY contests. He has operated from the HC8N mega-station in a M2 operation in the CQWW RTTY, winning the world. He recently joined the Radio Expeditions team, of VP6DX fame, on the management team with specific focus on funding.

Ed has taught the RTTY curriculum at Contest University at Dayton in 2008 and 2009 as well as at Contest Academy at Visalia in 2009. He is the contest manager and log checker for the NCC CQ RTTY Sprint and both CQ RTTY contests: CQWW and CQ WPX. He serves on the CQ Contest Advisory Board. For the NCCC, Ed manages the NCCC, CQP and NCCC Sprint websites as well as the club’s various email reflectors. He has published several articles in the NCJ.

We think Ed will have a lot of insight for what will be needed to keep the NCDXF website dynamic and useful for DXers.

Contributions
The Northern California DX Foundation relies heavily upon the generosity of its members to fund various projects. We urge each member to consider making an annual contribution of US$50 or its equivalent in foreign currency. However, we do not wish to exclude anyone from the Foundation for financial reasons. If $50 is not within your budget, then please give what other amount you can. Naturally, we welcome contributions in excess of $50! The NCDXF is an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and all contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law for U.S. taxpayers. Send your contribution to: Northern California DX Foundation, P.O. Box 2012, Cupertino, CA 95015-2012, USA. You may also contribute and order supplies online via our secure server, visit www.ncdxf.org/donate.
From 9-25 October 2008 an international team activated Willis Island, a rare DXCC entity northeast of Australia, where more than 95,000 contacts were made.

Best plans go awry
Everything had been planned: three of us would receive the gear that was shipped by sea freight to Cairns, purchase any additional equipment and get everything on board the MV Floreat, our transportation to Willis. The other operators would fly in, get to the boat and we’d all set sail. Fortunately Dale McCarthy, VK4DMC, and Robert Lusnia, SP5XVY, who joined us a few days later, supported us.

Of course, it all turned out completely different. Our shipment from Germany did not arrive in Brisbane where our Customs documents were filed. Instead, it went to Sydney and was stored in the dock area without any documents for Customs clearance. After numerous phone calls and subtle pressure, the lady from our freight forwarder in Brisbane put her best efforts into solving the problem. The shipment was found in Sydney, loaded onto a truck and hauled to Brisbane and arrived in time to be loaded on board.

A short time later, the rest of the team — Markus van Bergerem, DJ7EO; Heye Harms, DJ9RR; Christian Janssen, DL1MGB; Dietmar Kasper, DL3DXX; Thomas Koglin, DL5LYM, and Josh Fisher, W4WJF — cleared Immigration at Cairns airport and were on their way to meet us. After a brief welcome, we met the Floreat’s crew: Marcus, our skipper, Gordon, his father and Susie, our cook.

Voyage to Willis
Around 9 p.m. Floreat took course toward Willis Island. Steam-ing through the protected waters of the Great Barrier Reef was calm; it became more difficult on the other side of the reef when the boat fought against swells and wind as we made our way east. An Elecraft K3 was connected to a 17M antenna, giving us the chance to show the world that we were en route to Willis.

The following day did not bring anything spectacular, but early the next morning we reached South Islet. After breakfast, we went ashore to visit the Mets crew. Since the early 1900s, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology operates a weather station there; it is a crucial part of Australia’s cyclone early warning and monitoring system.

We had considered operating from this location as most DXpeditions did in the past, but were concerned that our radios would interfere with the sensitive meteorological equipment. A final decision was made to operate at Mid Islet, a small cay covered with shrubs and grass, rising only about three to four meters above sea level at high tide.

Landing and setting up
Three team members went ashore at Mid Islet to find the best locations for our tents, generators, station and antennas while three others stayed on board to help with unloading. Landing was a bit rough but without any incidents.

Thousands of birds call Mid Islet home, in addition to a large number of little crabs; turtles came at night to lay their eggs — the birds gave us a noisy welcome, flying around at close distance.

Because of the nesting birds, we had a very small area to set up. Our main focus became the narrow sandy beach about 15 to 100 meters wide that stretched around the island. We also had to take into account a constant easterly wind, blowing most of the time at 6 Beaufort. The big question was where to place a shelter on an island rising just three meters above sea level. We found a few suitable spots along the sand strip near the vegetated area. Antennas had to be erected in closer proximity to each other than what was planned, which fortunately didn’t cause interference between the stations.

It took almost two days to set up everything: the beverages weren’t functional until the third day. DL1MGB made the first QSO on 17M on Thursday, 9 October 2008 at 0954 UTC; after that we were on the air with four complete stations with another station up two days later.

Stations and antennas
We operated with five stations in two camps, each equipped with a K3, an ACOM-1000 linear amplifier and a microHAM MKII interface as well as a notebook. All stations used Wintest as logging software and were connected to each other via WLAN. In addition, we established a satellite Internet connection that was, unfortunately, a bit unstable. On the other hand, all our radio gear performed flawlessly with a few minor exceptions that could all be fixed instantly.

As for antennas, we decided on a 100% vertical concept, which turned out to be a great choice. Our four squares for 80M, 40M and 30M showed superb directivity and surprisingly a real good front-to-back ratio. When working JA or W/VE, VK sta-
tions could not work us from the back side as we simply did not hear them. When switching the antenna toward VK, we heard them loud and clear.

On 160M we used a well-proven V160 antenna from Titanex for which DJ9RR had built a new tailor-made matching network. For the high bands we erected so-called vertical dipole arrays (VDA). DL1MGB and DL8WPX took the vertical dipoles used by the Ducie DXpedition (VP6DX) as a basis for a new development of dipole arrays that could now be switched between four directions instead of two.

Experiences from Ducie, Norfolk (VK9DNX) and now Willis clearly demonstrate the advantages and superior performance of vertical antennas over three-element Yagis at 10 meters above ground when erected near saltwater.

**Finally on air**

The pileups were simply terrific. The needle of the S-meter went up to S9+10 and stayed there. We instantly faced a single wall of undistinguishable noise, more than 10 kHz wide and only occasionally topped by some voice fragments or CW tone bursts. From time to time some big guns went through, at least enabling us to copy some call fragments. In the first few days, running big rates was challenging, at least in CW and almost impossible in phone. The worldwide need for Willis Island was just tremendous.

As time went on a routine was established. Focus shifted to the low bands during the local night and to the high bands at morning and afternoon. Hottest primetime was the greyline period during dusk and dawn. Noon went always very slow, with only “local” Asian and Oceania traffic. On the other hand, European signals came in on 10M and 12M at local dusk, with minimum signal level and barely readable. The signals from America and Europe on 160M were buried somewhere deep in the mud of topical QRN. QSOs were still possible, but only in CW.

**Rookies and visitors**

During early planning it became clear that the M/V Floreat would not be able to carry a sufficient amount of fuel for our generators, thus we decided to charter a second vessel for a replenishment trip halfway through our expedition and, with the M/V Rum Runner, we even found a suitable motor sailing yacht.

This opened the door for a completely new idea: give interested parties a unique opportunity to visit an ongoing operation at a remote place. After a team member dropped out on short notice, DJ7EO offered two young DXers the rare opportunity to participate, free of charge (excluding their flight to Cairns). Within two weeks of the announcement, we got applications from more than 20 candidates from all continents. We selected two rookies: Josh Fisher, W4WJF, and Rhy Louw, ZS6DXB. They far exceeded our expectations in terms of performance and endurance, bravely diving into even the deepest SSB pileups and participating with their full share in our daily routine on this remote spot.

**Going home**

According to our plan, the CW WWDX SSB should have been the final highlight, but our skipper informed us about some bad weather approaching. Getting the equipment and the team safely back aboard was his main concern and we decided to leave a day earlier than planned. That gave us only about 20 hours of contest operating time but still enough to hand out this very rare multiplier.

Sunday morning at dawn we finally closed down and started dismantling and packing everything. By the afternoon, all 10 operators and more than two tons of equipment were back on board; we left nothing but footprints on the island.

We thank all the stations on the other side of the pileups for their cooperation and understanding. We also thank all the many people, companies and DX organizations for their financial assistance and hardware support, without which this DXpedition certainly would not have taken place: Northern California DX Foundation, Lake Wettern DX Group, EUDXF, GDXF, CDXC, INDEXA, DDXG, SDXF, CDXC, GMDXG, VERON, LSDXA, MHDXA, CVCC, TCDXA and MDXA as well as Spiderbeam, microHAM, Titanex and appello.
The whole ham family
When my daughter Melissa Johnson, K1MJ, married Roland Holcomb, KJ4HRA, in Bemidji, MN, the Hams got together for a photo. From the left, David West, NØDTL (bride’s uncle), Paul Johnson, WØPJ (bride’s brother), Carrie Johnson, NØCMJ (bride’s sister), the bride and groom, Vivien Johnson, KL7YL (bride’s mother), Glenn Johnson, WØGJ (bride’s father) and Mark Johnson, NØMJ (bride’s brother). Missing is Maynard Johnson, WDØGOS (bride’s grandfather).
—Glenn Johnson, NCDXF Vice President

DXpedition Lending Library
The Northern California DX Foundation has a number of VHS/DVD videos and Microsoft® PowerPoint presentations on CD-ROM available for loan to organizations wishing to show them at their meetings. There is no charge to use the programs in the Foundation’s library, but clubs borrowing materials are responsible for postage in both directions. To view the complete listing of programs available for your club’s use, please visit our website, www.ncdxf.org, and click on “Videos.”

Show your support for NCDXF
NCDXF offers several ways to for you to show your love for DXing! Impress your friends with a gold-tone lapel pin ($7), show up at your next hamfest sporting the NCDXF hat ($12) or don a NCDXF T-shirt ($15) to set up your Yagi on Field Day. Send out your QSLs with an NCDXF label (roll of 500, $7) or rubber stamp ($7). Mail in the attached form or visit www.ncdxf.org to order today.

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| ____ Rubber stamp @ $7 each ..........$__________ |

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