

ANNEX D – APPLYING ON-LINE WITH ELECTRONIC CONFIRMATIONS

ELECTRONIC CONFIRMATION OF QSOS

1. In recent years the radio amateur community has come to expect the issue of award credit through the electronic confirmation of contacts by the matching of QSO details with a central database of logs. Most will agree that the advantages are obvious. As this has now a proven record in terms of the technology, it's undoubtedly the way to go in the next stage of IOTA development.

2. IOTA has since 2007 offered electronic confirmation of island contacts made in an IOTA Contest after 2003 where details match with the contest logs uploaded to the IOTA database. No cards need to be submitted or obtained. By early 2017 this type of electronic confirmation should be available generally where IOTA QSOs match logs in Club Log and the island operators allow a match to be made.

IOTA Contest QSO Matches

3. Many amateurs prefer to start their applications after logging in by going straight to the 'IOTA Contest QSO matches' option as this saves effort in searching for QSL cards. Either manually enter the QSO information on the input form provided or upload your log in Cabrillo format as indicated there. Note that the other operator must have submitted his / her contest log for this to work, and the QSO must have been adjudicated as OK for the contest (i.e. no busted call signs, reports or exchanges). If you upload a log and receive an error message stating that a particular header is missing, then use a text editor to add the missing line to the Cabrillo file. Where a successful

match occurs, the QSO is added to the list of pending contacts for submission to your Checkpoint. Follow the instructions given.

Club Log QSO Matches

4. The new software is scheduled to be launched in early 2017. However, certain facilities will be introduced on the existing software platform in mid-2016. This will include the provision of credit where QSO matching occurs and the contacts are with stations in DXCC entities which equate with a single IOTA group. For example a matched QSO with Ascension Island ZD8 will be accepted for credit since all ZD8 stations count for AF-003. See Annex E for a list of just over 100 such entities.

5. As at April 2016 we were planning for this to be extended to operations known to us from data on our database, most of which had hitherto come from contacts credited from QSL cards. It may take some time to get this into the form that you and we want, so please bear with us. Do not email us about particular operations asking whether they can provide a match. The system will tell you.

6. One thing to remember, we will insert a time gap between the date of a contact or operation and the date when credit on the basis of a matched QSO can be given. This is to allow time for any necessary validation to be obtained and for any problems to emerge.

7. Further information will become available in time on the IOTA web-site.

RULE CHANGES

You will find very few rule changes in this Directory. However, when the system of Paperless QSLing, is fully launched, there may be some small amendment to the procedures.

Five changes are worth mentioning:

- a. The discontinuation of the issue of paper certificates. Given ever-increasing postal charges and technological advances IOTA Management has decided that now in the 21st century all certificates should be sent electronically. Exceptionally, if this causes real problems, you can ask for certificates to be sent by post but this will attract an extra charge. (Rule C.5.12 and Annex B)
- b. The discontinuation of giving credit for VHF / UHF contacts in the Standard Category of Application. Previously this was allowed but it made for awkward

complications in the crediting of contacts in the two categories of application affected (Standard and VHF / UHF), and since the incidence of credits gained this way was so small, it was felt that this change would have very little effect on applicants. (Rule C.3.5)

- c. Charges have been increased and the regime has been simplified in the interests of clarification. All certificates will be charged separately. (Annex B)
- d. The threshold figure defining a "rare" IOTA group has been raised to cover those groups which 20% or fewer participants (previously 15%) have credited to their scores. Recent activity from a number of rare IOTAs has reduced the number of groups in this category. (Rule F.3.1)
- e. The Directory provision about the liability of the RSGB, Island Radio Awards Limited and IOTA Management has been strengthened. (Rule H.2.2)

IOTA CONTEST

Participation in the annual IOTA Contest is an effective way of increasing your IOTA score as a large number of IOTA groups are regularly active. The contest takes place over the last full weekend of July each year. In 2016 this will be 30/31 July from 12:00 to 12:00 UTC. Full rules are at <http://www.rsgbcc.org/hf/rules/2016/riota.shtml>.

Why not organise your own DXpedition? Check the IOTA list to select an island that attracts your interest and prepare for an exciting weekend. As long as you can put out a reasonable signal, you should have pile ups calling. Always give some advance publicity to the DX bulletins and operate near IOTA frequencies. (Annex G and FAQ).