

IOTA RULE CHANGES 2011

The new IOTA Directory, published in April 2011, contains the following main rule changes, to take effect immediately:

1. NEW CERTIFICATE – at **A.1.1** the 1100 Islands certificate has been added to the list of certificates. It will attract the normal certificate fee.

2. REMOTE OPERATION – a new rule about remote operations has been added. An increasing number of stations are now setting up remote location facilities. Although this may be said to be at the margins of IOTA because most activity is on HF as distinct from LF and VHF, instances have occurred that require the current gap in the rules to be covered. The following changes have been made:

- addition of a new second sentence at **C.3.2**: 'The location shall be defined as the location of the operator.'
- addition of a new paragraph at **C.3.8**: 'Contacts made using a single remote receiving or transmitting site are permitted if the site is land-based, is contained within a 500 metre (0.31 statute miles) radius circle and is not located more than 50 kilometres (31 statute miles) from the operator's location, and the control system relies on radio for all linkage (i.e. no internet or non-radio links). The operator and the remote site must be located within the same DXCC entity. IOTA qualification shall be determined by the location of the station operator and the transmitter – to count they need both to be on one or, if a remote transmitter, a maximum two qualifying islands for the same IOTA group. They will not count if either is on the mainland. Use of multiple remote sites or a network using multiple sites is not permitted.'

3. PENALTY FOR EXCESSIVE MISTAKES – although we dislike having to do it through the charging mechanism, we need to do more to encourage careful completion of applications. The second sentence in **C.5.7** has been replaced with 'It may be subject to a higher administration charge if it contains more than 10% careless errors that involve checkpoints or IOTA Centre in corrective work. In a worst case scenario the application will be rejected.'

4. ONCE A YEAR UPDATE POLICY DISCONTINUED – the text in **C.6.2** has been replaced with 'You may update your record whenever you wish - there is no limit on the number of times per year. However, the system will not allow you to update at a time when a previous application or update is still being processed. Once you have pressed the key sending the submission, it's closed. Do not attempt to get your Checkpoint to add in manually late cards just received.'

5. INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM QSO THRESHOLD TO CONFIRM A PROVISIONAL NUMBER – an amendment has been made to **E.2.3** to raise the minimum QSO threshold for confirmation of a provisional number from 200 QSOs in 3 continents to 1000 QSOs in 5 continents. The figure 200 was set in year 2000 and IOTA has grown up since then! The pile-ups are now such that 1000 Qs is well within the capabilities of DXpeditioners to new groups. A much higher figure will encourage a greater degree of planning for the remaining new ones in the list and hopefully a move towards DXpeditions with more operators, better equipment and longer stays.

6. DISCOURAGEMENT TO CONTINUAL ISLAND ADDING – the following new paragraph has been added at **E.3.3**: 'As all islands listed as qualifying for an IOTA group count the same for the purposes of the IOTA Programme, there is no special advantage for the IOTA chaser in a DXpeditioner's activating one island rather than another. The Directory lists more than 15,000 islands and most groups have ample qualifying islands. The processing of every request for an addition to the list takes valuable time, and this is becoming increasingly difficult to justify in cases where the IOTA group already has numerous qualifiers. The Committee will continue to process deserving cases but will now institute a practice of normally holding over requests to add islands to groups with more than 25 qualifiers to a twice-yearly review, in April and October. Folk hiring a holiday or contest event cottage should note and act in good time but first consider whether or not going to a listed island is just as good.'

7. POLICY CHANGE ON DELETED ISLANDS – the last sentence of **E.5.5** has been amended to read 'In the event of an island DXCC entity group being deleted, the IOTA group number will be archived and score credits will normally be moved on request to the IOTA group to which the island or islands are transferred.' The previous policy of withdrawing credits which was applied in the case of the Penguin Islands (previously AF-055), Jabal at Tayr (previously AS-034) and Abu Ail (previously AS-035) is recognised as sitting uneasily with the practice of other award programmes to allow credit to stand when there is a change of sovereignty (in the case of DXCC on a Deleted Entities List where credits count towards a range of award scores). There is evidence also that it was inconsistent with practice in the very early days of the IOTA Programme when change of sovereignty had no effect on credits earned. With immediate effect cards for contacts with the Penguin Islands (Penguin and Seal) and the Red Sea Islands (Jabal at Tayr and Abu Ail) may be submitted for credit to AF-070 and AS-009 respectively. There are no other cases.

Roger Balister, G3KMA
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