



QSL Cards via the Bureau

By Rick Danby VE3BK

Ways to send QSL cards (this was information I sent a new Ham) by Rick Danby VE3BK

1. **The Incoming Bureau:** They get your card from all over the world. You get the majority from the USA and Germany, if you work many there. They have volunteers they get your cards and file them for you, until you send them money for postage and envelopes to mail them to you. There are volunteers for every letter of 3 letter calls and one for all 2 letter calls like mine. I have 2 different volunteers as I have my original call as well as my 2 letter call, so I had to send them money and addressed labels to both calls, so that they would mail me the cards. This service is done by volunteers (Hams) and is free, but you have to pay for the postage and envelopes. This link is probably the only one you need for both Incoming and Outgoing: <https://www.rac.ca/qsl-bureau/>

2. **Outgoing Bureau:** You have to be a RAC member to use this. You send cards to whoever you want to send out to, for all over the world and the USA to the outgoing bureau. You put in one envelope, put postage on it to mail to the Outgoing Bureau and they mail it to other Incoming Bureaus in different Countries of the World. This service is free to any member of Radio Amateurs of Canada. Check out the link to find out limitations on number and size of cards and envelopes that can be mailed at a time. QSL cards should be a standard size and the amounts they want you to mail them are all on the RAC website.

3. **Direct Mail QSOs:** These are the ones to you direct in the mail, sent to you by whoever you worked on the radio. You are at the mercy of the Post Offices, here and there, as to how fast you get them, or how fast the ones you send out are received. I usually find that the snail mail is not as bad as some people make out. So, I usually mail out any I get direct mail as soon as I can, and the ones I get via the Bureau, I send back via the Bureau. The guys you work, like DX stations you really want a card from, you would usually send them a card direct, with a return addressed envelope and US greenbacks (USA dollar bills) or an IRC from the post office. Keep in mind that we are not supposed to send money via mail, but all Hams do it for QSLs. Usually 2 greenbacks to the USA and maybe \$5 us to South American countries or Europe, but you may consider IRCs (International Return Currency) instead for those places. You get IRCs from other hams mailing you cards or you buy them from the Post Office, or sometimes other Hams might be selling them. They are usually pretty expensive, because they really take care of any postage from anywhere in the World. The Ham that gets one, can go to the post office and get a one stamp to mail back a card to the guys that sent him the



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IRC. If go to cash one in at the Post Office, the best you can do is a stamp good for an Overseas mailing or International Stamp. I think they are much more than a local stamp, but IRCs are more expensive than one of these stamps. Also you have to keep in mind, IRCs usually have an expiry date of them, so this is why many Hams use greenbacks.

4. **eQSL** (Electronic QSLs): You can join eQSL for free to send out generic electronic QSLs, or you can pay for membership, so that you can use your own designed card and receive one card in the mail every month. This is what I have for myself and for our Clubb. You can go to:

<https://www.eqsl.cc/QSLCard/Home4G.cfm> to read all about it. When you work someone, you can send in your ADI file from you logging program or your contest program and the other guy does the same, then you both confirm the contact in you inbox and after you confirm it, it goes into an online archive. I get them to send me a hard copy, every few months, after I have let it go a few months, so they can send me a few cards at a time, privilege of my Gold Membership to eQSL. A lot of Hams use this, but many don't like this one, they either don't like electronic QSLs or they use the other ones. You can check me out at:

<http://www.eqsl.cc/Member.cfm?VE3BK>

5. **Log Book of the World**: This is done via the ARRL. You have to download special software for this, and I am not sure if you have to be an ARRL member to have this or not. I do not personally use this one as I started using eQSL as it was available first, plus I didn't really like the idea of installing more software on my computer. Some of the Contesters I know, think this is the only way to go because of the many contacts they make contesting. Some of the logging programs will go directly into this. I am not sure how it really works, but if you want to check it out, go to: <http://arrl.net/searches/results>

6. **QRZ.com**: This is where most Hams go to find a call:

<https://www.qrz.com/lookup/ve3dc> but you have to have a login to get all the information available. QRZ has an online logbook, which works as a way to do Electronic logging too. They started this after eQsl and LOTW. Some Hams think that this is the way to go and use it all the time. Personally I don't use it, even though I have an online log that they started me with, for that and the Club callsign. If you have an account there, you can check out the logbook of VE3BK and VE3DC to see some of the electronic cards we received. I did confirm a few of them, but gave up as too much, we use eQSL, Bureau and direct, That is plenty.



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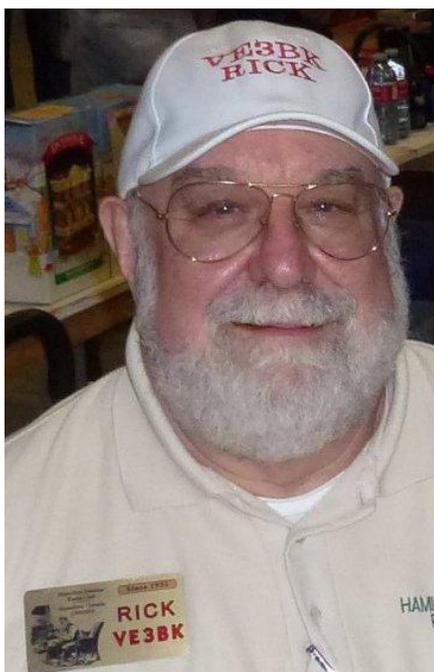


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Notes: There are other places like QRZ you might want to check out, like:
World Lookup when not in QRZ <https://hamcall.net/call> Canadian Calls
[https://apc-cap.ic.gc.ca/pls/apc_anon/query_amat_cs\\$.startup](https://apc-cap.ic.gc.ca/pls/apc_anon/query_amat_cs$.startup) or
<https://hamster.foxtollow.ca/ccd/?keywords=Panopoulos&searchType=1&db=1995-08>
or the US FCC one
<https://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsApp/UlsSearch/searchAmateur.jsp> With these,
you can lookup to see if they are legit Hams and get their address

I personally like the Direct QSL cards or Bureau QSL cards, because I have something in my hand to look at and read. I save them up in a photo album, which is perfect for this, available at most Walmart stores. It has plastic sheets with pockets in them that readily holds a standard size QSL. You can put in 2 in one pocket if they only have writing on one side, one backwards to see it on the opposite side of that page. They work great. I quit putting them in the holders to hang on the wall as I have too many QSL cards for that, even though some hams do it that way still, and have their shacks wallpapered in QSLs, not for me hi hi.

OK, we covered a lot, any questions, email me back. Hope this explains QSLing for you. This is something no one teaches, you learn on your own after you become a Ham, same as many things in Ham Radio.



73 Rick VE3BK

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