

Museum Ships Weekend FAQ

1) **What information do I need to provide with my request for a certificate?**

Answer: As a minimum, a list of the ships worked, the ship names, their call signs, date and time of QSO **in UTC**.

Please insure that your call sign is on each of your log sheets.

Please limit the number of non-log pages. There is no need for pages giving sworn evidence that you worked all the listed stations. The extra pages just cost you more postage to mail them to us and they only add to the size of the paper work pile in Margaret's office.

2) **Why provide time in UTC?**

Answer: Universal Coordinated Time (UTC) is suggested by the Ham community for all HF contacts in an effort to prevent logging problems. If you use your local time and the other station uses his local time, how is anyone going to find a match for the contact? This is especially important when your call is logged as a "busted call". ie, WA2TVS is logged by the other Ham as WA2EBS. No computer program is going to find a match, so it takes Margaret many minutes of her time to look for each possible combination of busted calls. With a common time frame, UTC, a match might be found in less than a minute. Most rejected claimed QSOs are the result of a busted call without a proper UTC time stamp.

Unlike most groups or operating events that do not allow for a busted call sign, we go to great lengths to find the QSO. Please work with us by using UTC time and date.

PLEASE visit our section on UTC time keeping, no matter how long you have been licensed.

3) **What size return envelope should I send with my certificate request?**

Answer: NONE, The suggested dollar amount covers all costs for the certificate including the 9 x 12 return envelope and postage.

4) **Should I include a return address label?**

Answer: Only if your mailing address is different from that listed at QRZ.com.

5) **How long should I expect to wait for the certificate to be at my front door?**

Answer: It will be sometime in November before the certificates will be at your front door.

6) Why does it take so long to mail the certificate for an event that happens in early June?

Answer: The cross checking of your certificate request against the ship logs can not happen until all the ship logs are received by the checker. The time for the ship logs to reach us depends on the volunteers at the ships, do they use a computer or do paper logs, If using paper logs then someone has to copy the logs before sending them to us. Once in hand, the logs are entered into a common electronic database before crosschecking can happen. Unlike the “big guys”, our cross checking of logs is performed by hand, one QSO at a time. Once all the logs have been crosschecked the certificates can be printed and mailed.

7) We plan to operate from our non-ship club station. Can we get a certificate for the club and each operator?

Answer: How you operate your club station is up to your own rules. But, as a comment, we find it hard to swallow the idea of all operators getting an individual certificate when only one of them is operating at a time. A question for you is how does the operator at a ship handle a request to break his time operating a pileup so that non operators can give their name and call? If he does not enter each of your operators into his log how can we cross check the claimed QSO?

8) I'll be operating with a group from a ship. Can I apply contacts I make while at the ship towards a certificate for myself?

Answer: How your group operates the station is between you and the FCC. But we believe that the group comes before an individual, meaning all contacts should go to the group, not copied to an individual log. Besides, you would have a huge advantage over non-ship operators. But, the final answer belongs with your group.

Note from the Chief Engineer of NJ2BB: For more than a dozen years I have not been able to do much MSW event operating from home because I was at the ship having a great time. In 2013 an illness kept me away until Sunday afternoon when I was able to manage the drive to the ship. After all these years I finally have a certificate, but I would rather have been at the ship operating.

9) I've heard ships calling CQ on the WARC bands. Is this legal, considering that contesting is not allowed on the WARC bands?

Answer: True, no contesting is allowed on the WARC bands. I've checked with several well respected contest Hams, my former ARRL Section Manager and a few other Hams in general. They all agreed that this coordinated grouping of many special event stations is not contesting.

10) I received my certificate, thanks for all the work involved, but my count is less than submitted, Why?

Answer: The most common reason for a reduced ship count is a busted call being placed in a ship's logbook. Margaret will spend many minutes trying to find your call, but sometimes it just can not be located, especially if a proper UTC time is not included by one of the parties.

The second most common reason for a reduced ship count is dupes, which is when you claim a ship more than once. We count a ship as worked only once, regardless of band or mode,

11) Can you tell me which of my claimed ships were not accepted?

Answer: Currently we have a large pile of submitted logs covered in check marks. We will only browse the pile should a change in credits affect the top operator for the event. In the future we may be able to add the checklist in your certificate envelope, but that would increase the cost of return postage.

12) I attempted to activate my home station as a memorial to my former Duty Station Afloat, as the Navy calls them, but was rejected by the organizers of the event, why?

Answer: The name of the event is Museum Ships Weekend, therefore the need to be a museum, which is defined as available to the public for a visit and an educational experience. Some limited exceptions have been allowed but only on a one by one case when there are very special conditions involved. As a private note from this writer, my two Stations Afloat are long gone. If someone creates an event for all ships, whether they are still afloat or have gone to the scrap pile, I'll be there representing my two homes at sea. GO Wilkinson! GO Finback!

13) I included a QSL card with my submission for a certificate but did not received one in exchange. Why not?

Answer: We reply to all QSL request. However, the submitted card must be filled with data. A number of the certificate request do include empty QSL cards, which we assume were included as a form of call sign / address verification. Any completed card inside a cert request envelope is answered in kind.