Update on Logbook of the World
Report to ARRL Board of Directors, July 2015

2015 represents the third year of existence of the Logbook Study Committee (LSC). Logbook continued to make steady progress in 2015. Here are a few updates for the Board on the status of Logbook projects.

One of the two new programmers who started in May 2014 resigned to take his "dream job." The process to replace him is underway. We are looking for a web developer as his replacement, since the database re-design for LoTW has almost been completed. Early in 2015, we asked for a volunteer amateur who is also a web developer, but we received no response.

Testing of the rewritten version of the database is nearing completion. When complete, the update will remove a major item of the "technical debt" under which LoTW has had to operate. It would also facilitate a transition to an open source database if we choose.

The second hardware instance of LoTW has been used offline for some time. On April 29, LoTW was cut over to the new hardware without fanfare and without any problems. This new instance has more storage than the original. The original instance is now being used for testing, and will soon be upgraded to match the "second" instance.

Dave Bernstein AA6YQ has continued to update the new documentation for LoTW, and new topics have been added to fill gaps. The new Help is available on the Logbook web site, prior to login (lotw.arrl.org). We are in the process of making a transition to HQ for continuing documentation support and updates. A contract resource with experience in the ARRL web environment has been identified, and a transition to that person is beginning.

TQSL 2.0.3 has been fully productive for some time. Some additional work has been aimed at improving accessibility for users who use screen readers. In addition, code has been added that will allow local language versions of TQSL to be supported. This version (2.1) has been in beta test. The TQSL group is managing this carefully, so that new language versions do not overwhelm the capabilities of the LoTW servers. We have also begun to consider alternative easier ways of authentication for non-US stations to obtain LoTW certificates.

ARRL IT has put in place several "alarms," to alert staff when LoTW is down or stuck. For the recent past, we have very low hours per month of LoTW outage.

The recent audit of ARRL computer security included some components which affect LoTW. No significant issues on LoTW were discovered.   The report will be discussed in a separate IT security report to A&F.

The Committee is starting to consider the architecture for the support of other awards. The direction the committee is taking is to provide interface methods by which other awarding organizations could query LoTW, but would maintain their own award definitions. Our plan is to use the pending 2016 ARRL operating event as a test instance of the award interface. We are seeking ways to supplement current staff on a short-term basis for implementation of this interface, since it is largely autonomous from LoTW server.

Following the end of the Centennial year, FSRS re-designed certificates for WAS, along with some other changes in award definitions. This resulted in a hold on issuing new certificates in the early part of the year.   The delay in issuing the awards in 2015 was not the result of any problems in LoTW. Awards are again being issued.

de KØGW, for the Logbook Study Committee
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