

"HOW AND WHY" - THE MECHANICS OF MAKING A CLAIM FOR RSARS AWARDS

Since 1969 RSARS has operated a comprehensive Awards scheme designed to encourage the different modes of operation used by Members and to provide tangible evidence of operating achievement. All the Awards offer engraved trophies for display and most also include certificates upon which progress is recorded by incrementing stickers. Every new member receives a copy of the current Awards Rules with his/her joining literature, and a fresh copy (including any additions/amendments) is included from time to time with 'MERCURY'.

The integrity of the scheme is high and proof of all contacts with currently paid-up members is required with claims - for British Isles members by inclusion of QSL cards and for members outside the British Isles in the form of a certificate confirming thorough examination of QSL cards by two qualified checkers.

How To Go About It:

- First of all, settle down comfortably with a mug of coffee and your copy of the Rules and read them thoroughly. Every effort has been made, short of producing a legal document, to make them clear and understandable. If there is any point you do not understand, the Awards Manager is very willing to help - the purpose of these notes is to elaborate some of the "whys and wherefores" and to explain what happens to your claims.
- **Claims must be made on the RSARS claim form** - this ensures that everything needed is included in the right place. Many members now keep their records on computer - printouts are very acceptable provided that they use the identical format. All claims are required **in duplicate** so that the Awards Manager may keep the original in Society records and return the duplicate, showing any amendments and the claimant's new current scores. A reduced-size claim form is included in this leaflet. Once a first claim has been made, the returned duplicate should be kept and used to ensure that there is no duplication in future claims, and so on.
- The Any Mode Award covers first contacts between the claimant and other paid-up (at the time of the contact) members, and records TOTAL progress regardless of mode - but note that all contacts must be two-way in a single mode and that fact must be confirmed on the QSL card. All SSB (and any AM or HF-FM contacts) are included under this heading.
- All claims are required in strict RSARS Membership number order. Contacts made with RSARS Affiliated Clubs or Special-event callsigns ("F" numbers) and/or "Co-opted" Members ("C" numbers) must be listed in their separate sequences, either at the beginning or end of each claim. This Rule enables a check to be made for valid membership of RSARS against the current membership printout; if this is negative, the Awards Manager has past printouts covering many years so that he can check as at the date of the claimed contact - he also has comprehensive information showing alternative callsigns used by any particular member. Because many members have several alternative callsigns, membership numbers are the obvious common denominator for claims.
- You may decide not to make your first claim until you have amassed a considerable number of contacts on more than one mode, and you may therefore have received cards for each mode from a given member. If this is the case and (for example) you have cards for SSB and RTTY contacts - disregard the SSB card and QSO completely, listing only the RTTY contact. This is because the contact counts for both RTTY and Any Mode and you tick both columns on the claim form. If you then have another card from the same member confirming yet another different mode (say CW), then you list the CW contact on the next line and tick the CW column - but leave the "Any Mode" column blank, because you have already claimed credit for that score. Any one of these contacts may also (for members in the British Isles) qualify for Overseas credit, so that column is also ticked - but for the first contact with that callsign ONLY - there is no additional Overseas credit for a different mode.
- The "Special" Award (for which there is no certificate) is designed to encourage the use of CW and contact with our Overseas members, and requires that a stated percentage of contacts claimed (at each stage of the Award) must have been made using that mode and with members outside the British Isles. For Overseas Members, the Award requires only the use of the CW mode to the required percentage. Eligibility for this Award is checked automatically by the Awards and Contests Manager as he handles each claim. Similarly, he keeps a watchful eye on progress for RSARS-WAC qualifications and progress towards the Overseas Century Award.

- At the same time that membership validity is being checked, the QSL cards submitted will also be checked to ensure accuracy of callsign, mode and membership number. Do be careful with membership numbers particularly because many cards also show membership numbers in other Societies! Overseas Members should be quite clear in explaining to their checkers that each card **MUST** be checked for callsign, membership number and mode. During the membership validity check it may well be that a few claimed contacts will be disallowed and will be marked as "archived" i.e. the member was not paid-up at the time that the contact took place. As with many other Societies some of our members "come and go" for a variety of reasons - if a particular contact is disallowed it does not bar the claimant from re-claiming later for another confirmed contact which may then be perfectly valid, following re-admission to membership.
- The next check that will be made is for duplicates from previous claims - and at the same time a check will be made to ensure that there is no duplication under different callsigns within the British Isles. All these points will be clearly shown on your duplicate copy and you have the right to challenge any disqualification - but the Awards Manager's decision will be final.
- The last sheet of your claim will show your total scores brought forward from your previous claim, the totals to be added from your current claim, and your new running totals. Your first claim sheet will be "Sheet 1" and every sheet of that claim and all subsequent claims will be numbered in a single continuing sequence - this enables cross-reference, for example when duplicates are found, so that you can check them for yourself.

Summing Up – DO's and DON'Ts.

DO read and understand the Rules before you start your claim - if you don't - then please **ASK** the Awards Manager for help.

DO use RSARS claim forms - this is required in the Rules, but you may use the identical format on computer. If you are hand-writing your claim it is a good idea to write the top and then photo-copy the whole lot for the duplicate - it saves effort and prevents any copying errors.

DO ensure that you have assembled all your cards in **CORRECT** sequence *before* you start listing - and **DON'T** tag on any last minute arrivals at the end - leave them for your next claim.

DO include return postage with **ALL** claims or correspondence with the Awards Manager, and don't forget that the package that comes back to you might be a little heavier if it includes new certificates and boards to ensure that they reach you in good order. Trophies are a Society expense, but postage costs must be paid by the claimant. Any surplus postage **WILL** be credited to you.