

A PROCESS TO TRANSFORM RAC

A presentation to HARC on 15 September 2010

INTRODUCTION

1. For many years there has been an obvious need to reform RAC
2. I think that all of us know how this has manifested itself in declining membership; poor service; secretive control and unhealthy concentration of power; poor management; weak financial structure; apparent disregard for members; and on and on.
3. We have two former RAC Regional Directors in our Club who know better than anyone about these shortcomings.
4. With such a list of problems, it is a relief to say that now our RAC Board is demonstrating a very genuine desire and effort to confront this decline head on. Moreover, the RAC Board has not only recognized the problems with new openness and condor, but they are actively pushing ***A Process to Transform RAC.***
5. It is this topic that I want to address and to open up for discussion tonight.

A FEW KEY FACTS

6. There are a few key facts about the organization that we need to know
7. Size of the ham population in Canada
8. Distribution of hams in Canada
9. RAC membership data
10. Status of RAC
11. HARC support for RAC

BACKGROUND FOR ACTION

12. Permit me to begin by bringing you up-to-date with a number of developments that are relevant to our discussion.
13. In early 2008 John Bartlett, VE1OZ/HK3OZ became RAC VP for Public Relations and began immediately to promote a process for transforming RAC. However, his sudden return to Columbia in the summer of 2008 meant that the initial probe in the direction of change ground to a halt.
14. John is still in Columbia but has very energetically, by invitation from the RAC Board, undertaken a second run at the task. Given at this moment a RAC Board that is largely new, differently composed and more open, the process has moved ahead, although it still needs to gather momentum.
15. You can view on the HARC website copies of John's approach to the task. In a minute I am going to present a concise version of his process.
16. Since RAC was scheduled to hold its AGM in Halifax during the MDF, they used the opportunity to confirm their new openness and to initiate the process of change. By the way, the MDF's intentional focus on talks stressing innovative approaches to amateur radio really supported their presentation. All the feedback I received suggested that our new RAC leadership was very happy with what HARC did to support their efforts.
17. OK, at this point the RAC Board has owned up to the many mistakes of the past; promised a new openness and attention to the input of members; encouraged a number of voices to set things in motion, e.g. John Bartlett and Peter West (current VP for Public Relations; and encouraged a RAC Blog where all are welcome to criticize, comment and make suggestions.
18. Starting this month, a number of clubs across Canada are holding one or more meetings intended to engage both members and non-members of RAC in a discussion about its future.

19. In October there will be a more than one day meeting – of the Board, I think – to process all the material from across Canada, and to begin putting together a new plan for RAC

THE PROCESS: A SUMMARY

20. The process for achieving transformation of RAC is basically one of strategic planning. Despite it being a common organizational tool, it comes in a number of variants.

21. These are the essential steps in this one:

- Acknowledge past failures and recognize the current state of RAC
- Engage the membership at the grassroots and avoid a top-down process
- Start by imagining (dreaming) how you would like RAC to be
- Given a dream about your ideal RAC, consider what steps would need to be taken in order to create it
- Create priorities that recognize what steps need to be done first
- Create and implement an **Action Plan**

22. The **first two steps** have already been taken. Thinking about our desired future for RAC and thinking about the steps necessary to achieve it is the phase we are starting to address tonight. **The last two** will depend upon what we as interested parties – members and non-members come up with. The various inputs will be handled by the RAC Board from a management view point. HOWEVER, this is not to say that there is not a vital role for the membership in developing the action plan. Our comments are always welcome and we will have an opportunity to comment on any action plan formulated, PRIOR to it being implemented.

23. At this point, let's open up the floor to discussion, keeping as best we can the process in mind. We have several people taking notes so we

can later sift through them and see if we can formulate a HARC position to report back to RAC.

HARC'S NEXT STEPS IN THE PROCESS

24. Many of us need more time to think about RAC's future and to formulate a response. I suggest that you do this either alone or in your own small groups (at Timmy's?) Next either e-mail me or snail-mail me your comments. These can be anonymous. To help you, I have outlined the process and some key questions to think about. There is space under each question for you to put your thoughts, but you can also carry over to the back and on to additional pages.
25. Once we have pulled all the material received, I will try formulating a response to RAC and circulate it for everyone's consideration. It would be great if we could have another meeting discuss our submission prior to sending it away.