

mail order licences are possibility

The Federal Communications Commission has notified U.S. Senator Ted Stevens that is re-examining newly established regulations covering the use of examinations by mail for applicants for amateur radio licenses who reside in rural Alaska.

Stevens had contacted the Commission after learning that the new regulations had been adopted restricting the future availability of amateur radio service operator examinations by mail. The regulation requires that all Alaskans desiring any class of amateur radio license must travel to FCC field offices to be tested.

In a letter to FCC Chairman Richard Wiley, Stevens pointed out the great hardship this presents for rural Alaskans. "The great distances involved, and the great expense of travel, all of which must be done by air, present an unfair and unworkable situation in Alaska," Stevens said.

The Commission has now advised Stevens that they are now actively examining new ways of dealing with the unique situation Alaska presents. Among the possibilities are the establishment of additional testing sites in rural Alaska and the creation of a special amateur license available by mail but valid only in Alaska. A Commission spokesman said that until action is taken by the full Commission, the FCC will extend special consideration to residents of rural Alaska on a case-by-case basis.
