

QSLing TV and FM Stations

It's Not The Same As QSLing Shortwave Stations, But It Is Just As Easy . . .

By Frank Aden

Any shortwave DXer who has spent time and money collecting QSLs knows such an endeavor can be a fine art. Getting a station to verify a correct report is not always easy; a DXer has to convince the station he or she *did* hear the station and deserves a verification reply.

Each area of the DXing world; international shortwave broadcast, shortwave utilities, amateur, public service bands (VHF/UHF), TV and FM, all have their "rules and regulations" on how to send proper reports for QSLs. Sending reports to TV and FM stations require techniques that differ considerably from the other areas. This article will cover some of the finer points to this specialized "art".

Many other publications have published articles on TV and FM DXing and usually imply obtaining QSLs from TV/FM stations heard by skip is almost impossible. Yet talk to just about any veteran TV/FM DXer and you will find that is not the case. There are many TV/FM DXers with large QSL collections.

Here's The Solution

The key to obtaining QSLs is convincing the station that it was heard (or seen). With TV and FM stations, the DXer is dealing with a group of broadcasters, most of whom believe their signal is limited to 50-100 miles from their transmitter site and are unaware that long distant skip is possible. The problem is getting the report to someone at the station who *knows* that long-distance reception can and does occur, or who can be informed of such reception. This is complicated by the fact that many broadcast stations have a high rate of turnover in personnel. A station may have a period where the person answering the mail is knowledgeable of skip and another time when they are not.

Even though many TV/FM stations receive DX reports each year, it has to be assumed the person reading the reception

- Q S L -		
CBS NBC	kelo·land	First with the Best
SOUTH DAKOTA USA		
KELO-TV Sioux Falls - 11	KDLO-TV Garden City - 3	KPLO-TV Reliance - 6
KELO-AM - 1320	KDLO-FM - 96.9	KELO-FM - 92.5
TO: <u>Frank E. Aden, Jr.</u>		
Thank you for your report!		
Your reception of	<u>KDLO-TV</u>	on <u>May 14, 1972</u>
is hereby verified	<u>per your tape. Thank you for writing.</u>	
By: <u>Margo Artus</u>	<u>M. Artus, Engr. Secy.</u>	

This QSL from KDLO-TV in South Dakota is in response to a tape sent to the station by the author.

report letter does not know about DX via skip. I have found that enclosing an information sheet on the various types of TV/FM propagation can help the station personnel understand why the distant reception was possible. You can write one up yourself or use those ready made available to members by the DX clubs.

Start the report out in a friendly and polite manner, just like any other reception report. In the introduction mention the frequency or channel, date and time (use the local time of the station). Follow that with an explanation what type of propagation caused the reception to occur and point out how often that type of propagation occurs (I have had some stations reply to my reports with the misconception that the skip was happening all the time, even though it was far outside of their normal broadcast range!) Mention the condition/quality of the signal and also list some of the other stations or areas which were received at the time.

There has been debate for years among AM/FM/TV DXers if return postage

should be included in reception reports. A rule-of-thumb I have found is that it isn't always necessary to do so with larger commercial stations, but is mandatory with small town, educational and religious stations. If enough information is not available on the station to determine its status, then go ahead and include return postage.

Following the signal condition information list the program details you heard. For TV stations running network programming and FM stations running satellite or network services you must try to put emphasis on the *locally transmitted material*. Stations running network feed are allowed several minutes each hour to run their own local commercials (spots). List details of local advertisements, local station promotional announcements, local newscasts or local public service announcements. With local commercials, list names of advertisers, including phone numbers. On promotional announcements, list station slogans and times of upcoming specials.



E.O. LAWRENCE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CENTER
The University of South Dakota
310 East Clark Street
Vermillion, South Dakota 57069 Phone (605) 677-5277

August 22, 1974

Frank Aden, Jr.

Dear Mr. Aden:

We are pleased to confirm your reception report of KUSD-TV, Channel 2, Vermillion, on June 13, 1974. Your description of our station identification slide and announcement were correct and sufficient to demonstrate reception of our video and audio.

KUSD-TV operates from a transmitter located two miles south of Beresford, South Dakota with an authorized visual power of 100,000 watts and an aural power of 20,000 watts. The antenna is a batwing type 657 feet above ground (2,167 feet MSL, 760 feet HAAT).

Thank you for your interest in our station.

Sincerely,

Dennis L. Haarsager
Administrative Services Officer

DLH: mrd

A letter QSL from KUSD-TV in South Dakota.

With local newscasts, give the name of the news program (if any) and list any of the names of the announcers you heard. If a station's sign-off is heard during the reception, list the owners name or the call letters of the station's STL (Studio-transmitter link.).

If only partial details were logged, put them in the report anyway. E skip and Tropo reception can include deep fades, so it might not be possible to receive complete information that would normally be needed to go into a report, but the person reading the letter may still be able to identify the information and you'll have a better chance of receiving a reply. Close the report with a list of equipment used (receivers, antennas, preamps, etc.). Politely request a verification and do not use the word "QSL" as most people in domestic broadcasting have no idea what it means.

The Follow-Up

After a reasonable amount of time has passed and no answer has been received from the station, send a follow-up report.

Include all of the details from the original report and add a comment stating this is a follow-up report. I usually include an audio tape in follow-up reports. This is one reason for always having a tape recorder running when DX is coming in. The tape should be a standard cassette (reel-to-reel used to be the standard but is rarely seen now). Radio stations use cassettes for news-gathering and sales presentations. I also include return postage in all follow-up reports.

Since VCRs are now commonplace, sending a VHS tape is another way to convince a TV station they were received. Many local electronic stores sell T-5, T-15 and T-30 VHS tapes that are cheaper to mail (being lighter in weight) than the regular T-120 but they are about the same price as T-120. A cheap source for T-5 or larger VHS tapes is thrift stores. It is not unusual to find promotional/informational video tapes for less than a dollar. Just place some cellophane tape over the record-guard on the left side and the tape can be used. The C-05 and C-10 cassettes are also great for sending reports to FM stations and even audio portions to TV sta-

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A SERVICE OF LUNDE CORPORATION

February 21, 1973

Mr. Frank E. Aden, Jr.

Dear Mr. Aden:

Your letter of last June has just crossed my desk. Please accept my apology for the lack of a prompt reply.

We confirm your reception of KLFM on 6/8/72. Your enclosed tape did, indeed, contain commercials from our station, one of them recorded by myself.

This is the farthest reception we've ever had reported to us, and we've jokingly referred to it in some of our dealings with sponsors who inquire about our coverage area.

With your permission, we will keep your short tape for our records.

If you receive our signal again, we would enjoy hearing from you about it.

For your records, we are enclosing our "normal" coverage map.

Yours truly,

Mark R. Lunde
Operations Manager, KLFM

The author's reception of KLFM back in 1973 was the farthest reception reported to the station.

tions. If a photograph is taken of a TV station's identification, it can be used in a report, especially a follow-up report (I have had several TV stations verify after sending a photograph in a follow-up reception report).

Finding the Station's Location

If you heard or saw the call letters of a station via Eskip, Tropo, or meteor skip (the most common forms of TV/FM DX) but do not know the station's location, you will need help from one or more of the available TV and FM station directories. For FM, the *FM Atlas* by Bruce Elving is the best and is published yearly. It's available through most of the major shortwave electronic retailers or can be ordered direct

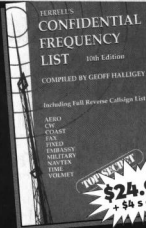
from: FM Atlas, P.O. Box 336, Esko MN 55733-0336.

The Worldwide TV-FM DX Association usually has information on available TV station lists. If you have access to the Internet, you can run a call search on: Elliot Broadcast Services, <<http://www.radiostation.com/fccdata/fmcallsql.html>> or the Federal Communications Commission at: <<http://www.fcc.gov/mmb/asd/amq.html>>. From there you can access FM and TV station information (including AM).

Getting addresses of TV and FM stations can be a problem. Local libraries may have out-of-town phone books and even some of the broadcast industry annuals which contain addresses. Unfortunately most of the current TV and FM guides published by DXers and clubs do not contain station addresses. A short

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FM Queries follow. AM, QRS and TV Query are also available.



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FCC HOME PAGE Headlines Commissioners Bureau, Offices Finding Info



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Mass Media Bureau -- Federal Communications Commission

3rd Floor -- 1919 M Street NW -- Washington, DC 20554

April 18, 1997

FMQ FM Radio Database Query

The FM Database is updated every morning at 5:00 AM and contains the transactions of the previous day.

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Query by Call Sign

When submitting a query by Call Sign, *do not enter the suffix*. For example, WZZZ-FM would be entered as **WZZZ**

By Call sign:

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Query by File Number

When submitting a query by file number, *do not enter the prefix*. For Example BPH960425AQ would be entered as **960425AQ**

By File Number

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Questions on the FM Queries may be referred to Bill Ball at (202)-418-2660.

Jump to:

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Filing an Application, Application Information, AM, FM and FM Translators & Boosters, Decisions, Links Within FCC.

FR00007 ■ Web Resources: FMQ FM Radio Database Query Program (FCC) -- USA (<http://www.fcc.gov/mb/asm/fmq.html>) Page 1

A look at part of the FCC's Web site where you can find a radio station's location.

"The Worldwide TV-FM DX Association usually has information on available TV station lists."

phone call to a station is also a way to obtain an address. It's easy to get out-of-area phone numbers by calling 1-area code-555-1212. There is usually a small charge for this by the local phone company. And for those who have access to the Internet, getting both phone numbers and addresses is easy. Lycos has an on-line phone directory at: <<http://www.lycos.com/pp/fndr.html>>. If long-distance phone rates are not a concern, a

phone call report is another way to obtain a QSL and or act as a follow-up report. Some DXers are now sending reports by E-mail. Station E-mail addresses can also be found via Lycos.

If you're new to TV/FM DXing and would like more information about the hobby try the Worldwide TV-FM DX Association, the only club currently specializing in TV/FM DX in North America. Write them at P.O. Box 17333, Asheville NC 28816. They have a Web page at <<http://www.users.sccoast.net/daustin/wtfdx.html>>.

Putting together a collection of TV and FM stations QSLs can be a fun and rewarding part of the DXing hobby. Success can be obtained by following the above tips. Good luck and good listening!