

UNESCO and Morse code

Application for Morse code recognition by UNESCO

Since 2010 former professional operators of the maritime radio service and amateur radio operators make efforts to have the Morse code recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage. A suitable proposal at the regional conference of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Region 1 in 2011 was adopted. The appropriate Recommendation SC11-C3-16 reads:

„*To safeguard Morse Code as an Intangible Heritage*“. On request of the IARU Conference assembly, German Amateur Radio Club (DARC) accepted to carry out the necessary detailed elaboration of a typical example of the relevant UNESCO forms. A group of experts drafted texts at great length and collected other necessary information to be included in a UNESCO application. At end 10 required pictures were provided representing some visual context to Morse code. All drafts and pictures are available on internet : <http://www.doese-apprt.de/draft/liste.html> and <http://www.doese-apprt.de/draft/piclist.html>

In August the whole documentation was sent by DARC to the many Region 1 member societies as well as to the overall President of IARU and the Presidents of Region 2 and 3. The intention is to encourage also Region 2 and 3 to act accordingly, since Morse code was used worldwide from the mid 1830's on. We like to draw the attention to one important point regarding the application procedure. **No** IARU member society, not even the IARU as a whole can file a proposal at UNESCO. Only the UNESCO committees of those countries are entitled to do so, which have ratified the applicable „Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage“ (effective date 2006). In the documentation a list of those countries is included (File: UAI_countires.doc) which are both member societies of IARU and which have signed the above mentioned UNESCO ICH Convention as well.

The whole effort aims at two major targets. First step is to have Morse code recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage and subsequently be included in the official „Representative List“. This is the almost only aim of the present application. After Morse code officially is recognized it will be easier for countries to launch safeguarding programs for collection of data and possibly hardware etc. In no way it is the intention to argue for a reintroduction of Morse code in any radio service.

The participants of this googlegroups forum are invited to contact their amateur radio societies and offer co-operation in preparing an own proposal containing national peculiarities.

For the German interest group on the Morse code heritage

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