



W1 QSL BUREAU

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Handling Undeliverable QSLs

Procedure Number:	LS-03	Owner:	Dennis Egan W1UE
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Introduction

As a letter sorter, I found that, in most cases, I hated to dispose of QSLs. This document is to provide guidance to Letter Sorters as to reasons for a QSL being undeliverable, and permissible time frames for the disposition of undeliverable QSL cards. From the ARRL Board of Directors Standing Order #84: "QSL cards on file which are unclaimed for a period longer than 90 days may be destroyed by the Bureau Manager (or Sorter) without further authority."

Procedure

Silent Keys (SK) - If there are specific instructions from the SK's family, follow them. If no specific instructions have been received, QSLs can be disposed of 90 days after you learn of the SK. The date of the SK should be noted in the QSL Bureau Program. SK cards should be disposed of locally; they should not be sent back to the sender, nor bundled and returned to the Final Sort Manager.

Bad Calls - They can be disposed of immediately. They should not be returned to sender. I would not spend a lot of time researching calls that don't appear to be valid.

Unclaimed Cards - There are two categories of unclaimed cards:

1. **No Account Cards**- For up to 5 cards, no attempt at notification of an op is necessary. Over 5 cards, at least one attempt at notification should be made; an attempt can be made by either email or a postcard. If an email is returned, a postcard will need to be sent. If the Postcard is returned as undeliverable, the attempt has been satisfied.
2. **Insufficient Funds**- If an op has an account, but has insufficient funds, he should be notified at least once of the account status. Same notification requirements as in No Account Cards.

If an op does not respond to an "Insufficient Funds" notification or the "No Account" notification, the card becomes an unclaimed card. Unclaimed cards can be disposed of locally 90 days after the last notification has been sent.

Changed calls - 4 possible scenarios:

1. Operator requests that cards for old call continue to be sent directly to him, and maintains funds. Do so.
2. Operator has no specific request for old call cards to be sent directly to him, but continues to receive a large amount of cards for old call and there are sufficient funds to send them to him direct. Continue to do so.
3. Operator receives a small amount of cards, no specific instructions, insufficient funds to send direct. Return these with your missorts to the Final Sort Manager for redirection to the new call.
4. Operator receives a small number of cards, has never had an account with your letter. Return these with your missorts to the Final Sort Manager for redirection to the new call.

Missorts - Missorts are cards you receive that are not for your W1 letter, for another US Bureau, or for an overseas call sign. They can be bundled up and returned to Final Sort Manager, who will resort them to the proper destination. It is suggested that, after you are done sorting the cards for your letter, that you bundle the forwards by new call and send them, with the missorts, back to the Final Sort Manger for resorting. This case would include a call like KH2/K1KP, that has a forward to a callsign in Japan; this would be forwarded through the ARRL Outgoing Bureau.

Note to Sorters: Most of you probably have your own system of retention and disposal of cards. Any system that you use that complies with the above time lines can be used, but we don't want accumulations of 20ft of cards for any letters.

My Example: When I did a letter, every December I did a complete mailing; any call with 1 card or more got an envelope and a status notification. The ARRL Guidelines do state that "One card should NOT be allowed to sit for an unreasonable amount of time, i.e. six months unless specified by the user", so I was probably not in strict compliance with that guideline. I never received any complaints by using that system. This now prepared by "2012 Live File" to become my "2012 Dead File". When I get a new customer or a changed call during 2013, I would go my "2012 Dead File" and my "2013 Live File" and send out all the cards that the op had pending. In January 2013, I would dispose of my 2011 Dead File, and in January 2014 I would dispose of my 2012 Dead File. That helped keep the amount of cards I had on hand to a reasonable amount. YMMV.

References

[W1 QSL Bureau Web](#)

[Letter Sorter General Procedure LS-02](#)

Revision History

Revision	Description of Change
24-Jan-2013	Initial Release