



W1 QSL BUREAU

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Letter Sorter General Procedure

Procedure Number:	LS-02	Owner:	Eric Williams KV1J
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Introduction

This document describes the overall process for the Letter Sorters. Variations to this common practice will likely exist as this document is introduced. This document enables the W1 QSL Bureau management to understand those differences and have a common terminology for managing the Letter Sorting process.

For the purposes of this document, the term “Bureau Program” refers to the Windows based QSL Bureau Accounting Program or its DOS based predecessor. Some features described may not be available in the DOS version.

Overview of the Letter Sorting Process

The Letter Sorter is responsible for sorting and delivering the QSL cards for their assigned letter. The assigned letter refers to the first letter of the suffix of the call sign.

The basic steps for Letter Sorting are as follows:

- 1 – Receive a shipment of cards for their letter from the Letter Sort Manager.
- 2 – Receive notifications of credits and address updates from the Administration Manager. A check and accounting summary is generally included with the shipment of cards.
- 3 – Update the Bureau Program with any credits for funds received and address changes from the client Hams. See [Letter Sorter Finance Procedure](#)
- 4 – Sort the cards into bundles for each client Ham.
- 5 – Ship the cards and their account balance to the client Hams using the Bureau Program.
- 6 – Send notifications to Hams who have cards but with insufficient or no funds.

Shipping Cards

After sorting the cards, the next step is to determine the shipping. Any unshipped cards from previous sorts should also be included in the consideration.

Shipment should be made to client Hams that have sufficient funds in their account.

As a general rule, you should wait until the client Ham has 5 or more cards before shipping.

If the client Ham has not had a shipment of cards in over 1 year, they should get a shipment regardless of how many cards they have. This is generally done during the last sort of the calendar year.

If the client Ham has a newly funded account, they should get a first shipment even if it is less than 5 cards.

If a client Ham has a multiple ounce shipment but not enough funds for the shipment, ship what you can with the remaining funds and include a notice to send more funds. If it is a regular client Ham, it is ok to go slightly negative to get the shipment done. You can use your own judgment on this. Be sure that they get a notice to send more funds.

For each shipment, you should also include a notice indicating their account balance.

See also - [Handling Undeliverable QSLs](#)

Notify

The Bureau Program handles sending notifications for cards received but no account or insufficient funds. Notifications may be done by Email or postcard. A sample set of postcards is available on the [W1 QSL Bureau Sorters](#) web page.

If cards are received but the Ham does not have an account, they should receive a notification. First verify that it is a valid call and also that it is a plausible QSO. For example, if it is a 20M QSO but the Ham holds a Technician license, it is probably a busted QSO. Remember that Technicians have CW privileges on 80M, 40M and 15M and CW/SSB on 10M.

They should be notified if they have 5 or more cards. You may notify at fewer than 5 cards at your discretion.

If they continue to receive cards, a second notification should be sent. Before you destroy cards, it is recommended that the second notice be done by postcard unless you have confidence that the email message was received by the Ham.

See also - [Handling Undeliverable QSLs](#)

If after sending a notification you receive a message from the Administration Manager that they sent in funds, send the cards to them. Be sure the status label shows the new balance including the funds they just sent in.

“No Bureau” Accounts

Some Hams do not want to receive cards from the Bureau. The Administration Manager receives and verifies the requests. They are then forwarded to the appropriate Letter Sorter and the calls are published on our web page. When receiving these notices, you should make a note in the account data for the Ham and let the Administration Manager know if the Ham has any account balances. Any cards received for these Hams can be destroyed.

Silent Key and Inactive Accounts

Special handling of Silent Key and Inactive accounts is required to ensure the tracking of funds.

Within the Bureau Program you should create two administrative X accounts using the following as the call signs:

X*1SK and X*1INA where * is the letter that you are sorting.

For example the A Letter Sorter would establish accounts XA1SK and XA1INA.

Periodically, the funds in these accounts will be transferred to accounts in the bureau operations.

Remember to go into both the Ham's account and the X account to record the transfer when using the Bureau Program. For example, if you are transferring \$2.00 from W1ABC to the Inactive account, first go into the W1ABC account and transfer \$2.00 **to** XA1INA, then go into the XA1INA account and transfer \$2.00 **from** W1ABC.

Note: This feature of setting up these special X accounts will not work using the DOS version of the Bureau Program.

Silent Keys

When you receive notice that a Ham is a silent key, or find the call listed as SK in QST, you should change the status of the account as such in the Bureau Program. If the account has \$10.00 or less and we have received no other instructions from the family, transfer the remaining funds to the X*1SK account.

If there is over \$10.00 in the account, the Administration Manager will contact the family to determine if they want the funds sent to them. If so, the Administration manager will write the check to the family and notify the Letter Sorter of the account debit. Otherwise, the Administration Manager will instruct you to transfer the funds to the X*1SK account.

See also - [Handling Undeliverable QSLs](#)

Inactive Accounts

For accounts that are still active calls in the FCC database but have had no activity, no cards received, no funds received, or no special instructions, for a period of at least 15 years, the account is determined to be "Inactive". If the call shows in the FCC database as Cancelled or Expired then the inactivity period criteria is 5 years. Any remaining funds from that account should be transferred to the X*1INA account. Contact the Administration Manager first if the remaining funds are over \$10.00.

If the call was changed, the funds are generally transferred to the new call. Depending on the on-the-air activity of the Ham, some funds may be left in the old call for those cards to cycle through the system. The Administration Manager will process the transfer of funds if the transfer is between two different sort letters. See also - [Handling Undeliverable QSLs](#)

If, at a later date the Ham notifies us that they want to activate their account, the funds can be reinstated to their account using the records in the Account History function of the Bureau Program.

References

[W1 QSL Bureau Web](#)

[QSL Bureau Accounting Program Documentation](#)

[Letter Sorter Finance Procedure LS-04](#)

[Handling Undeliverable QSLs LS-03](#)

[Sorting Program Manual V2.0](#)

Revision History

Revision	Description of Change
11-Jun-2013	Initial Release
18-Apr-2014	Added "No Bureau" and account balance notices
14-Apr-2015	Updated Notify final notice