

Type of Decision									
Meeting Date	Friday, March 24, 2017				Report Date	Friday, March 17, 2017			
Decision Required	X	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
Direction	x	Information Only			Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed
REPORT TITLE									
Amateur Radio Exemption Report #24/03/17/1203									

Subject: Request from Local Ares group to support an increased exemption to the distracted driving legislation for radio operators.

RECOMMENDATION: As a formality, Council is required to adopt the following resolution supporting the position of the Canadian Amateur Radio group in requesting an exemption for amateur radio operators.

**WHEREAS** the Radio Amateurs of Canada has requested support in its position to request that the province of Ontario extends its exemption from the *Highway Traffic Act's* distracted driving requirements aimed at the use of handheld phones for amateur radio operators operating hand held microphones;

**AND WHEREAS** in Head, Clara & Maria's Emergency Management Plan the municipality relies on amateur radio and hand held radios for potential communications during specific emergency events;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Council of the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria does hereby acknowledge that there is a difference between the use of hand-held microphones for amateur radio operators and the use of cell phones by members of the public and agrees to forward a request to the Provincial Government supporting the position of the Radio Amateurs of Canada in asking that the exemption for amateur radio operators in the *Highway Traffic Act* is extended;

**BACKGROUND/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The following has been provided by **Allan Boyd, VE3AJB, Director, Ontario North/East, Radio Amateurs of Canada**

"The use of hand held microphones on radios in vehicles has never been a distraction issue like phones, however the Traffic Act doesn't differentiate between them. However, there is a temporary exemption for Amateurs.

The following is an excerpt from an email sent by RAC (Radio Amateurs of Canada).

In Ontario, a temporary exemption for Amateurs in Ontario is due to expire on January 1, 2018. RAC Ontario South Director Phil McBride, VA3QR and RAC North/East Director, Allan Boyd, VE3AJB, have obtained some letters of support, but more are needed. They are

looking for additional letters of support from organizations that support Amateur Radio communications.

We need to show our Provincial governments the importance of Amateur Radio and why we require the ability to communicate from our vehicles for public service events like parades, walk-a-thons, bike rallies and, most importantly, for emergency communications and Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) activities that support first responders like Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

We have been in touch with the Minister of Transportation's policy advisors and a meeting has been scheduled for this spring to explain our position and these letters are needed to provide additional support. We would appreciate it if you would please forward them to your Regional Director listed below. We have received word that the Ontario Government is considering the Amateur Radio exemption issue.

RAC will continue to provide additional information about distracted driving regulations on the RAC website (rac.ca) as it unfolds. If you have any questions or concerns or you would like to send a letter of support, please feel free to contact our regional Director at any time at the address shown below.

Options/Discussion: - none

Financial Considerations/Budget Impact: - none

Policy Impact:

Others Consulted:

Approved and Recommended by the Clerk

Melinda Reith,

Municipal Clerk

*Melinda Reith*