



Do You Know?

On May 9, 1913 the Department of Commerce published instructions regarding the use of call signs.

- By international agreement the United States was allowed to issue call signs within the following blocks of letters (Note: AA-AL was not granted to the USA at this time):

KDA to KZZ
NAA-NZZ
WAA-WZZ

- All combinations beginning with the letter N are reserved for Government stations and in addition, the combinations from WUA to WVZ and WXA to WZZ are reserved for Stations of the Army of the United States.
- The combinations KDA to KZZ, with a few exceptions, are reserved for ship and coast stations on the Atlantic coast and Gulf of Mexico.
- The combinations beginning with W (except WUA to WVZ and WXA to WZZ as already indicated) are reserved, with a few exceptions, for ship and coast stations on the Pacific coast and on the Great Lakes.

In addition, the Department of Commerce created districts for managing radio stations across the country.

District	Headquarters	Area
1	Boston, MA	Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont., Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut
2	New York, NY	New York (county of New York, Staten Island, Long Island and counties on the Hudson River to and including Albany, Rensselaer, and Schenectady), and New Jersey (counties of Bergen, Passaic, Essex, Union, Middlesex, Monmouth, Hudson, and Ocean)
3	Baltimore, MD	New Jersey (all counties not included in second district), Pennsylvania (counties of Philadelphia, Delaware, all counties south of the Blue Mountains, and Franklin County), Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, District of Columbia
4	Savannah, GA	North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Porto Rico.
5	New Orleans, LA	Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas
6	San Francisco, CA	California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, Arizona
7	Seattle, WA	Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming

8	Cleveland, OH	New York (all counties not included in second district), Pennsylvania (all counties not included in third district), West Virginia, Ohio, Michigan (Lower Peninsula).
9	Chicago, IL	Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan (Upper Peninsula), Minnesota, Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota

The call letters for amateur stations in the United States were awarded by **radio inspectors**, each for his own district, according to the following system:

- The call consists of three items:
 - Number of the radio district (1-9) as described above and
 - Two letters of the alphabet.
 - The first letter may not be X, Y, or Z.
- This results in 598 possible call signs for each district
- Thus, the call of all stations in New England (which comprises the first district) will be the figure "one" in Continental Morse, followed by two letters (1RF); in California (in the sixth district) the figure "six" followed by two letter (HF); in South Carolina the figure "four" followed by two letters (4MQ); in Missouri the figure "nine" followed by two letters (9PZ), etc.
- If the entire 598 calls have been exhausted, radio inspectors were authorized to issue additional calls, consisting of the figure of the district followed by three letters (1FDQ, 6TNS, 4OMG, 9RLR, etc.).
 - The following combinations must be excluded:
 - The combination SOS, and PRB,
 - All three-letter combinations beginning with QR or QS,
 - All combinations involving the repetition of the same letter three times (e.g., GGG),
 - Three-letter combinations beginning with K, N, W, X, Y. Z. and
 - Other combinations, which for various reasons, international, national, local, or individual, may be objectionable.
 - With such exclusions, over 10,000 calls will remain for each district.

Now you know.