

WRTC 2026 Competition

Questions and Answers

This document provides additional context and clarification to help competitors and referees clearly understand the rules. Where contest related questions have been asked and answered on the WRTC 2026 email reflector, they can be added here so there is an easier to navigate single document to refer to. If a question has been asked and answered privately, where it would be beneficial for all competitors and referees to be made aware, the detail will also be added here. This document will be updated as needed as we get closer to the competition in July 2026.

Operating

A1: May I use the ability to jump from signal to signal in the spectrum display window, which is supported by N1MM Logger+?

Yes, this is allowed. Use of logging software to change frequency, based on data from spectrum scopes is allowed.

A2: Can we use synthesized voice messages such as Piper supported by N1MM not only for my own call sign and reports but also for the call sign of the other station during SSB QSOs?

Yes, this is allowed. Synthesized speech would not provide any competitive advantage.

A3: If one operator is away from the radio, for example taking a comfort break, can the other operator in the team operate both radios at the same time if they wish?

Yes, this is allowed. The SO2R-like skills involved should be expected for WRTC operators and does not require additional technology or station design to implement. As both Radio A and B can transmit at once a single operator will be less effective than both operators, so two radio operating is expected to be minimal.

One operator operating both radios is considered compliant with Rule 17.3 "Operator A can change position (chair) with Operator B at any time" / "Operator A can share audio at any time with Operator B"

A4: Can a SDR monitor the whole of the active band for example 15m, or must it only monitor the active band mode segment of the radio VFO A i.e. 15m CW ?

An SDR can monitor the whole of the active band.

A5: Can an SDR monitor a different band to their respective radio ?

No. An SDR for radio A should only show a waterfall / bandscope display for the current operating band of radio A.

A6: How can a CW QSO be ended?

You can send any standard TU that does not identify yourself as an individual. Example: TU, TNX, EE. Also be mindful of rule 5.3 that says each station must identify themselves by sending their callsign at least every 3 QSOs.

A7: Can we use alternative phonetic code other than NATO/ICAO?

Yes – this is allowed. Commonly used other English language ‘DX’ / radio’ phonetics can be used: e.g. Boston, Kilowatt, Radio, Mexico, United. Any other form that might identify the team is not allowed (e.g. Wilhelm Eins Anton Wilhelm).

A8: Which bandplan will be provided? Explain the bandplan rules to be followed.

As per contest rule 2, the IARU Region 1 bandplan should be followed. https://www.iaru-r1.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/hf_r1_bandplan.pdf

No SSB is allowed in the CW (or narrowband all mode) band segments.

All of LSB and USB transmissions need to be within band edges in reality 3603, 7053, 14347, 21447 are the limits.

Contest preferred segments can be ignored. This means activity is allowed above 14300.

Using CW in a ‘SSB segment’ is not a band plan violation as it is a ‘all modes’ segment.

A9: Should competitors log the exchanges that they hear, even if they know they are incorrect e.g. a CQ Zone, or a serial number?

Log what you know to be correct.

If you log a contact with the station's callsign recorded correctly, and the ITU zone recorded correctly, you should expect to receive credit for that contact.

If a station transmits something other than their ITU zone during the part of their response that you expect to hear the ITU zone, you should be able to recognize that it is not the correct zone, and take action needed to get the correct ITU zone.

This may be as simple as realizing that "59 Pennsylvania" means that 59 08 should be logged. It may involve a more complex exchange of questions and answers.

If your log contains a contact with GW8XYZ at noon on 80 meters logged in zone "01", do not expect to receive credit for it.

Should there be some unusual case involving transmitted zones, the judging committee expects to take action which we perceive will be fair for all the competitors.

A10: What is meant by “time period” in this rule 16.2.4.? If Radio A is on 15M SSB, Radio B is not allowed on 15M SSB or 15M CW during the same time period.

Both radios cannot “flip flop” between bands. If Radio A makes a contact on 15M, Radio B cannot make a contact on 15M until radio A makes a QSO on another band.

Example:

RadioA 2305z QSO: 21007

RadioB 2306z QSO: 14250

RadioA 2307z QSO: 21008

RadioB 2308z QSO: 21250

RadioA 2309z QSO: 21009 <<<<<<<< Not allowed!

Radio A must change bands now. This rule is also valid if Radio A or Radio B operate in an intermittent fashion on different bands, e.g. single op uses two VFOs.

A11: Is it permitted for Radio B to go the same band as Radio A to work multipliers while Radio A is running (assume they are interlocked so there is only one signal transmitted at a time)?

No, you cannot transmit on the same band as the other radio. If Radio B makes a QSO on the same band as Radio A, the next QSO on that band must be made by Radio B. Radio A must go to another band, or not transmit. Additionally, they may not share the same antenna. (No alternate CQing etc. on the same band with the same antenna.)

A12: Is it permitted for Radio B to go to the Radio A band just to tune around and fill up the band map on that band?

Yes, Radio B can listen anywhere at any time. However, it cannot use the same antenna as Radio A (no splitting of RX line). For this competition, the Tribander is considered as 3 separate antennas for 10/15/20 Meters. Radio B may also listen to the audio of Radio A if desired.

A13: I understand that rule 16.2.4. requires each radio to operate on a different band. Is it OK for Radio A to be on 15m and use 2nd VFO to work guys on 20m, while Radio B is on 40m and work guys on 80m using the 2nd VFO of Radio B?

Yes, this is allowed and it is not a violation of rule 16.2.4. as it basically is a fast and frequent band change. Both radios do not share the same band and do not flip-flop between bands. Of course only one receiver is allowed per radio.

A14: Which VFO's are allowed to be used in each radio?

You may switch between VFO's on each radio at any time. What is not allowed is use of a sub receiver. You must receive on only one frequency at any time. No VFO-A in left and VFO-B in the right ears and no mixing of channels. While this may be possible for the operator, it becomes too confusing for the referee to follow. You may switch VFOs at any time.

A15: Am I allowed to use the A=B button to save a frequency in VFO B? I would not be on 2 VFOs at the same time."

Yes, you can use VFO A and VFO B, or any memories to save frequencies. You are not allowed to receive on both frequencies at the same time. You can switch VFOs or memories at any time.

Station Setup

B1: We are thinking about possibly a slightly unusual arrangement maybe even employing some kind of partial sound barrier between the ops (like cardboard or a blanket hung from the ceiling) or maybe just arranging our tables in an unusual way (not the usual side-by-side), perhaps a vee formation.

This is allowed within reasonable limits. The referee should have visibility of both stations in their field of view. A vee shape should be fine. Having the two stations on opposite sides of the tent may not. Sound barriers can be used as long as the referee's visibility of both stations is not affected i.e. a referee should be able to see both competitors and their stations without needing to move, or significantly move their head.

B2: In prior years there was a way to borrow or rent monitors locally rather than bring them over in our suitcases. Will there be a comparable plan this year?

May 2026 update: Yes. A monitor rental option was announced in February 2026 with many competitors requesting monitors to hire. This request period has now closed. For those that completed the request process, monitors will be available to pick up from WRTC HQ on Friday 10th July before departure to sites for the site testing day.

B3: Backup computers are allowed, and they may be powered up. In case of computer failure, it would be quicker to start using the backup computer if it was networked and already contained the contest log. Can backup computers be networked?

Following review with the WRTC Sanctioning Committee, the conclusion is additional computers are permitted in the tent and can be powered up to allow quick replacement of a failed computer, but cannot be networked with the two logging computers.

Additional networked computers are not needed for the contest operation. Audio recording can be completed with an additional computer that is not connected to the network.

This approach simplifies the station design, reduces ambiguity and any risk to the WRTC goal of testing operator skill.

Similarly, the referee may not add a computer to the network to view a read only version of the competitors' log.

B4: Is it allowed to use any previously prepared additional information regarding band condition predictions or band schedule based on log analyses during the contest? Can this information be shown on PC-A and PC-B, and printed or written papers?

Yes, information that forms operating strategy planning can be stored and shown on the operating computers, and/or be kept on paper. There is no limit to the type of information allowed on paper. For computer-based information, the use of search and lookup functions in databases or software is not permitted, outside of the logging software with its permitted record of logged QSOs and additional lookup of only IARU HQ abbreviations.

B5: Are additional batteries or UPS power supplies allowed to be used to keep computers and radios powered in case of a generator failure?

The WRTC 2026 Organising Committee discussed allowing additional batteries or power banks as backup power, given the different approaches taken at WRTC 2018 and WRTC 2022.

It was felt that if some teams were to bring extra batteries or backup power solutions, others might feel obliged to do the same in order to avoid being at a disadvantage. This could present

difficulties for teams travelling by air. In the interests of fairness and equal conditions for all competitors, it was decided that external backup batteries will not be permitted.

Devices with integrated batteries, such as laptops, are allowed. The generators provided will be new, and an auxiliary fuel tank will be used to ensure safe refuelling and to extend operating capacity.

B6: May the referee bring a table?

With the expectation that many referees may use a clipboard or notebook to make notes, or use a laptop only periodically on their lap, a table for referees is not provided as standard equipment. Referees may bring a small side table if they wish, as long as it does not interfere with the competitors in the space available in the operating tent.

B7: May competitors use a groundsheet or tarpaulin

Yes. This will not be considered as an authorised alteration to site equipment.

Logging

C1: Do we need to submit two Cabrillo files which are generated by each operator even though those two files are identical? In the N1MM logging software case, one Cabrillo file contains both operators' logs with the indicator which transmitter made the QSO according to Cabrillo format.

The competitors have the responsibility to reconcile their two logs and submit a single log in the 30 minutes after the contest has finished. (Rule 14.4 *It is the sole responsibility of the competing teams to create a Cabrillo-compliant log.*)

C2: When HQ callsign is entered into a logging software, is the HQ abbreviation prefill allowed? For example, when "GR2HQ" is entered into a logging software, is it allowed that "RSGB" is prefilled into the exchange field of the logging software?

Yes, this is allowed. Although use of Super Check Partial (SCP) to populate callsigns is not allowed in the competition, WRTC 2026 continues with the rule from previous WRTC and allowing HQ abbreviation prefills. A printed table of HQ abbreviations is also allowed.

Further clarification: Prefilling the HQ exchange from a database (even at first QSO with a callsign) IS allowed. However – the full list of available HQ abbreviations and calls should only be in paper (printed) format. This behaviour aligns with rules from previous years, the rules as written for 2026, and the behaviour of the existing WRTC profiles for DXLog, N1MM+, Win-Test and WriteLog.

C3: Are zone prefills allowed in the logging software?

Yes - the logger is allowed to use CTY.dat to identify the DXCC country information, which can also include ITU Zone information. This info can be shown to you, and prefilled in the received zone field automatically in the logging program.

C4: Is a reverse lookup allowed? i.e. If you hear RSGB on air, and enter that into the log, should GR2HQ be automatically added to the callsign entry field?

Yes, but with the consideration this function should only work when that HQ station has already been logged at least once previously.

C5: What additional requirements exist for the Cabrillo-file and its logging?

The Cabrillo should follow version 3.0 (2.0 is accepted as well). The frequency should be provided with an accuracy of 1 kHz, i.e. CAT-control is mandatory. This is also necessary for the SSB automated spotting facility. At the beginning of the contest the time and date should be accurately set in UTC. Access to public NTP on port 123 should be available over the network connection, but do double check your clocks against an accurate source of timing such as a smartphone. Participants should download the latest CTY-data before the contest – internet access will not be available on the contest network - in order to provide correct claimed scores for public viewing. This is valid for Radio A and Radio B.

Other**D1: Will there be an automated SSB DX spotting solution?**

Yes, the plan is for automated SSB spots, triggered by the online scoreboard system from World Radio League. The scoreboard will be collecting data for each QSO in real time. After the 2nd SSB QSO made on the same frequency, a DX spot will be sent. In order that the solution remains fair, if any of the WRTC stations temporarily loses connectivity to the scoreboard network for a significant period of time - then where possible the auto DX spotting will be stopped for all stations, until everyone is back online.

Competitors must log only genuine QSOs as they occur. Callsigns that were not actually worked on air - including duplicate QSOs or fabricated entries - must not be added to the log in an attempt to trigger an automated SSB DX spot sooner.

If a competitor remains calling CQ on an SSB frequency, an additional DX spot will be generated every 10 minutes. This aligns with CW Reverse Beacon Network functionality.

A competitor must QSY by at least 3 kHz and complete QSOs with two stations on that new frequency in order to trigger a new automated DX spot. (i.e. No back and forth change between 14.249.99 and 14.250.00 to trigger spots)

D2: What size will the USB memory sticks provided for collecting logs and audio recordings be?

16 GB USB memory sticks will be provided. 2 x 44.1 kHz mono 16 bit WAV for 24 hours = 14.8 GB. MP3 recordings are expected to be smaller, possibly 1.5 GB. If the total size of audio recording is expected to be larger than 16 GB competitors should bring their own USB memory stick which can be returned to them.

Version History

15 November 2025	Initial version	G0MTN
22 November 2025	B3: Networked computers question	G0MTN
22 November 2025	C1: Revised answer	G0MTN
4 January 2026	A3: SO2R if one competitor away A4: SDR covers whole band A5: SDR on non-operating band B2: Revised answer on monitor hire	G0MTN
20 March 2026	B4: Strategy / propagation info C3: Zone prefills	G0MTN
8 May 2026	A6: Ending a CW QSO D1: Automated SSB spotting	G0MTN
10 May 2026	B2: Update on monitor hire B5: Backup / UPS power	G0MTN
12 May 2026	A7: Alternate phonetics C2: Revised answer to consider 'all possible IARU HQ mults' C4: Reverse callsign lookup	G0MTN
24 May 2026	A8: Clarification on bandplan rules B4: Clarification of allowed information on paper and on the computer	G0MTN

B6: Referee table
C4: Reverse lookup revised answer
C5: Cabrillo: 1 kHz frequency accuracy /
CAT control requirement
D2: USB stick capacity

1 June 2026

A9: Log what you hear, or what is right? G0MTN

9 June 2026

B7: Use of groundsheet or tarpaulin G0MTN
A10 – A15: Clarification of band change
rules and VFOs using Q&A answers from
WRTC 2014 and 2018