



The Amateur in You

What have you been pondering?



Call sign self-assigned indicators

At one point or another, you might have heard an amateur station append a “/” (slash or slant or stroke) to an assigned FCC call sign. Repeaters are probably the most common stations that announce their call signs this way. The 146.760 repeater IDs with “W7SP/R” and the 146.620 repeater with “W7SP/RPT” and the 448.200 repeater with “K7UVA/L” for example. So, what exactly do those slashes mean, and how important or necessary are they?

Characters following a slash are collectively called a [self-assigned indicator](#). That means, if it’s your call sign, then you are the one who assigns the indicator; not the FCC or anybody else. Are these indicators necessary? The following three (previously four, including /AA) are required [Part 97.119(f)], but only under specific circumstances:

/KT = Novice who passed a Technician exam

/AG = Has passed the General exam

/AE = Has passed the Amateur Extra exam

In each of these cases, the operator is required to append the indicator to his or her call sign if the upgrade has not posted in the FCC database and the operator is transmitting on frequencies permitted only by the upgrade. Once the upgrade appears in the database, it’s no longer necessary to announce the indicator.

The rest are optional, except as noted, but because some choose to use them, I thought this abbreviated guide might help:

KNØJI/KR5LYS = My call sign is KNØJI, but I’m using the privileges of KR5LYS, an Extra (once required, but no longer)

KNØJI/K7T = My call sign is KNØJI, but I’m transmitting in behalf of special event station K7T (once required, but no longer)

KNØJI/7 = My call sign is KNØJI, and I’m transmitting from the “7” calling area (pronounced *portable 7*, once required, but no longer)

KNØJI/VE = My call sign is KNØJI, but I’m transmitting from Canada (required in some countries...see a [list of country prefixes](#))

/R = This station is a repeater

/RPT = This station is a repeater

/B = This station is a beacon

/M = This station is mobile*

/MM = This station is maritime mobile

/QRP = This station transmits five watts or less

/L = This station is linked with another station using (possibly) the same call sign

/P = This station is portable*

* *Whatever you think that means*

/SK = This station’s operator is deceased (silent key)

/other = Almost anything you want to add, provided it does not conflict with a country prefix [Part 97.119(c)].

It’s also permissible to prefix your call sign with one of these indicators, as in **M/KNØJI** for mobile operation, or **W4/JR1AQN**, meaning My call sign is JR1AQN, but I’m operating in the US “4” calling area.

By the way, there are some who feel that /R for a repeater is not legal, because it conflicts with the assigned Russian country prefix. The fact is, Russian prefixes are RX, in which the X is any single digit from 0 to 9. So, /R4 is not legal as a repeater suffix, for example, but /R and /RPT are perfectly legal.

— Noji KNØJI