

The 2023 Virginia QSO Party Non-Fixed Station Categories–EXPLAINED

Introducing the “Rover” Category (Experimental for 2023)

The 2023 Virginia QSO Party on the weekend of 18-19 March 2023 is fast approaching. To ensure all our non-fixed station operators have equal contest opportunities, the Virginia QSO Party (VAQP) has added a “Rover” category for 2023. The VAQP committee wishes to recognize amateurs whose use of retractable antenna masts, non-mobile support structures, commercial power, or an external operating position would preclude traditional mobile classification. Descriptions of each category and a handy chart follow below. Whichever of the three non-fixed station categories you choose, stations should identify their callsign with /M (not Rover or Expedition) and operators contacting you must log you as /M to earn three points. For complete VAQP contest rules, go to <http://bit.ly/3Y14yXX>

Mobile – A station operating from a vehicle which is capable of operating while in motion and operates stationary in the same configuration. The mobile can travel and move at any time without having to disconnect any wiring or change any antennas. A mobile station is self-contained and is capable of legal motion while operating. Commercial power may not be used. Contacts may be made while moving or stopped.

The Mobile category is like those used in other contests: if the vehicle can always legally and safely be driven in all operating configurations, it is considered mobile. A mobile operator cannot, for example, raise up a mast, or deploy a long counterpoise wire. However, they can, for example, swap out one mobile hamstick with another mobile hamstick to change bands. Or they may change a jumper position on a mobile multi-band antenna that has a band jumper.

Rover (experimental for 2023) – A vehicle that is not a mobile or expedition station. The rover may make contacts while stationary and/or while moving. The rover may change equipment and deploy antenna configurations. The rover may operate from a vehicle and/or off a vehicle. The rover may or may not use commercial power.

Expedition – A station that moves between two or more Virginia non-permanent station locations. All radio equipment, power supplies and antennas must be transported to each operating site. Commercial power may be used. Mobile radios, equipment, and antennas installed in, on or attached to a vehicle wholly for normal mobile operation are not permitted to be used in this class. The vehicle may be used as part of the setup once stopped in the temporary location. An expedition may not make contest contacts (including contest QSO coordination) while moving regardless of origin or destination.

Condition	Mobile	Rover (experimental for 2023)	Expedition
Operates from inside the vehicle	Yes	Optional	Optional
Capable of operating while in motion	Yes	Optional	No
Makes contacts while in motion	Optional	Optional	No
Able to move without disconnecting wires or stowing antennas	Yes	Optional	No
Self-contained	Yes	Optional (may use temporary antenna set-ups)	Optional (may use permanent structures for antennas)
Commercial power	No	Optional	Optional
Operates from at least two different locations	Optional	Optional	Yes
Able to change equipment and antenna configuration	Limited	Yes	Yes

Note: For mobiles and rovers, motion is optional and discouraged during operation, unless there is a separate driver who is not operating while driving.