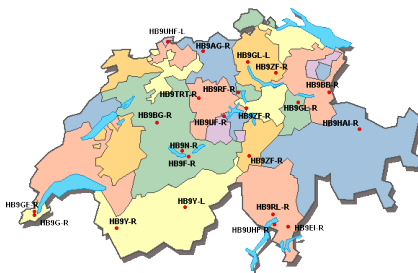
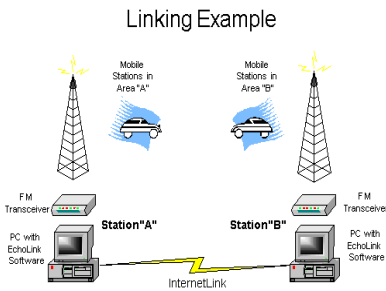


Echo Link

EchoLink® (<http://echolink.org/>) is an internet service for licensed amateur radio users. The software - that can be downloaded free of charge - enables you to communicate with other ham radio users virtually worldwide. This can happen between single radio stations or via VoIP (through internet). There are roughly 200'000 registered users in over 160 countries. However, to use this service, you have to send in an official amateur radio license. Once you have passed the exam for such a license, the doors will open to a new (communication) world. It is then possible to chat around the globe through respective relays stations with internet capabilities without any costs. It goes without saying that the reverse is also possible. You can connect to your family and friends wherever you are, provided you find a respective relays station with internet connection. As some nice side effect, it is also possible to connect to NASA and listen to the communication during space missions. Radio freaks maintain lists of relays station around the world. You just have to google for them. For Switzerland, you can find them under <http://www.satszene.ch/hb9dww/>.



In Switzerland, amateur radio licenses are provided by the Governmental agency for Communication (BAKOM - <http://www.bakom.ch/>). Preparation seminars are provided by a variety of vendors (eg <http://ilt.ch/>). A course for a beginner's license in Switzerland (HB3 – max 100W output power, no self-contrstruction of transmitters) lasts about 6 months and will cost you around 700 CHF. For a professional license (HB9 – max 1000W output power with permission to self construct a transmitter) double the price (and study time) is due. If you are interested, you can retrieve detailed information also under the 'Union of Swiss radio amateurs' (<http://uska.ch>).