

SSTV Signal Reports

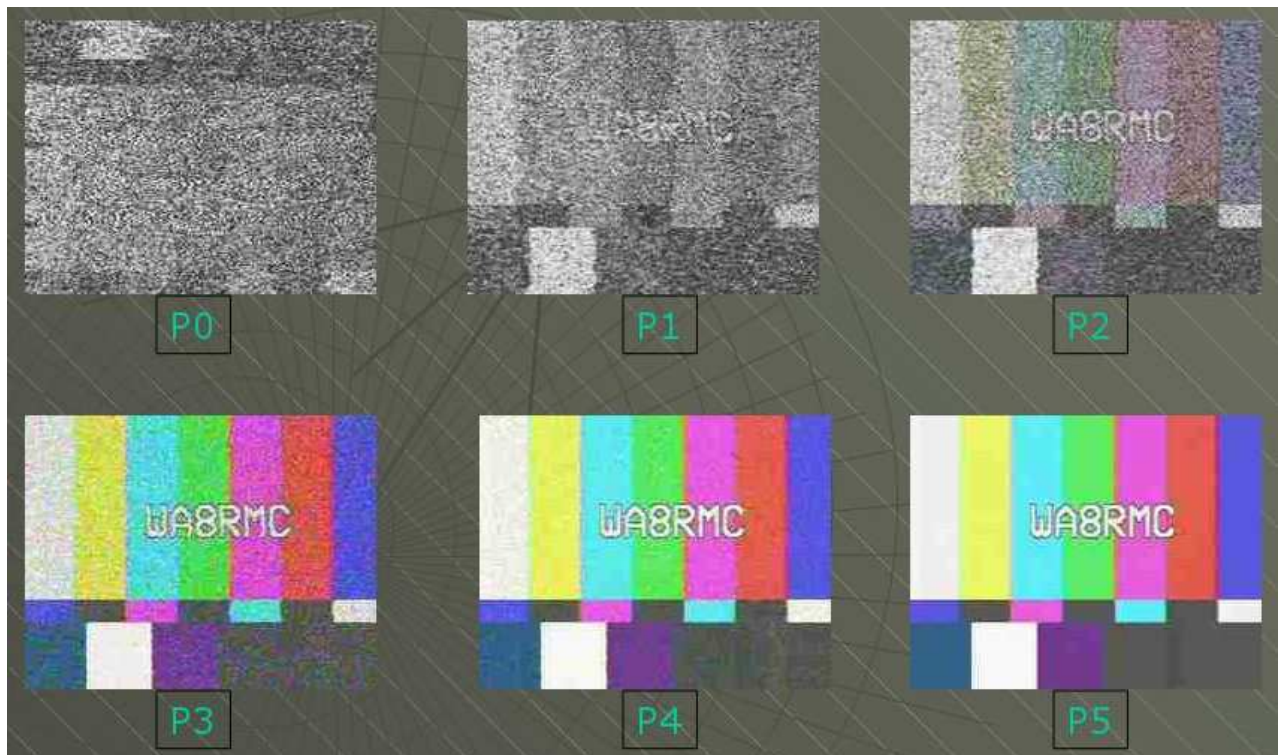
Most hams use an RSV (readability, strength, video) system for communicating analog SSTV signal reports, but if you ask some hams, like Johann W5CST who has been using this mode for decades, they prefer the P (picture quality) scale. So let's begin with that.

P stands for picture quality level on a scale from 0 to 5 (best). As with any reporting system, your report is based on experience and there certainly is subjectivity involved.

Johann likes to use **P5** to denote “**broadcast quality.**” The other reports on the scale can denote:

- P4 = typical quality with slight or minimal noise
- P3 = usable but somewhat noisy
- P2 = barely usable with lots of noise
- P1 = barely see the text
- P0 = unusable

Here are examples of P-quality as shared by WA8RMC.



However, you won't find the P-scale used by many hams, so let's take a look at the more common RSV signal reporting system.

Readability is on a 5-point scale with 5 denoting perfectly readable. **Strength** is on a 9-point scale with 9 reserved for extremely strong transmissions. **Video**, or the quality of the received SSTV picture, is placed on a 5-point scale and 5 means perfectly viewable. This would correspond to P5, or broadcast quality.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Unreadable. 2- Barely readable, occasional words distinguishable. 3- Readable with considerable difficulty. 4- Readable with practically no difficulty. 5- Perfectly readable. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Faint signals, barely perceptible. 2- Very weak signals. 3- Weak signals. 4- Fair signals. 5- Fairly good signals. 6- Good signals. 7- Moderately strong signals. 8- Strong signals. 9- Extremely strong signals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Unreadable. 2- Barely Viewable, just distinguishable. 3- Viewable with considerable difficulty. 4- Viewable with practically no difficulty. 5- Perfectly Viewable.

Let's take a look at some examples. Many come from a 2 meter net which I host once a month as Net Control Station for the Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club (FCARC). I would give a solid 595 report to this first image. Next to it is a good image. As hams, we'd probably give that a 595 report, but with some noise (QRN) in the video. Or you might argue: This transmission is not quite as readable and/or viewable and you might score it a little lower for your signal report.



But sometimes even in the quiet of 2 meters, the signals get worse. I gave the one on the left a 464 report and just a 221 for the transmission that I received on the right.



Other things happen which deserve special signal reports. Often you will see a station with noticeable slant in their transmission. Or, you may see something strange happen when the received picture shifts as it is being sent. The shift you see in the middle was due to a computer software problem in one of my computers. Or you may get slant, shift and noise!!



A ham will sometimes find their SSTV software hiccups during transmission. That may create a break in the image as viewed on the left. Or it may be caused by outside interference. Look closely at the picture on the right. Just past the half-way point you see noise lines. In this instance it was caused by QRM interference from the 2 meter repeater IDing!!



You may even encounter a ham sending you a less than picture-perfect quality image, even though you received it about the best you could. The following image is grainy. It is grainy because the photo this ham chose to transmit was itself grainy.



Hopefully you won't encounter too many transmissions like the following. For all of us who prefer to copy the pure transmission with Auto-slant OFF, this station is not likely to get a call.

