



AREC info

Monthly newsletter of
Amateur Radio Emergency
Communications

SEPTEMBER 2020

AREC Membership Database

Our membership database work is now complete, all known AREC members will have received a copy of this newsletter. If you did not receive it directly, and want to check your details have been correctly recorded, please contact admin@arec.nz

Thank you to Lindsey ZL4KS and Darren ZL2DAZ for all their work getting this database up to date.

@ AREC.nz

Some may have noticed that @arec.nz e-mail addresses are now being used for some officers. This is part of the IT refresh that AREC Wellington District Manager and AREC Project Coordinator John Murphy ZL2XJ is leading.

“The move to AREC branded, roles-based email addresses is key to improving AREC’s community profile and recognition, and about making it easier for communications with AREC Volunteer members” says John. “We have got the new e-mail addresses up and running for National officers and District Managers - now we are moving on rolling them out for Section and Group Leaders.”

Membership Cards

You will read elsewhere in this newsletter that Deputy National Director, North Andy Brill ZL1COP is leading a re-branding exercise for AREC.

“Having a easily-recongisingable brand identity is an important next step for us” says Andy, “when this is complete”, we will be ready to roll the presses on the new ID cards.”



A reminder to remain vigilant and follow Government COVID-19 guidelines through this ever-changing situation. Our last issue featured advice from AREC National Director Don Robertson about how to stay safe while conducting activities during this time.

Back issues of this newsletter are online at arec.info

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

A highlight of the month was our AREC 2020 Summit and Forum, held at Wellington at the beginning of this month.

Every year, the AREC management team meets for at least a day as part of NZART Conference. With conference being cancelled due to COVID-19 this year, we took the opportunity to coincide our meeting with the NZART AGM which took place at the Brentwood Hotel on the 5th of September.

District Managers, their deputies, regional and national office holders met over three days to discuss, agree and cement the roadmap that will help deliver the AREC of the future.

We also presented our annual AREC Forum presentation to members who stayed on after the NZART AGM. It is always good to present to our peers in the hobby and hear their feedback.

It was a really good few days – with plenty of debate and discussion of new ways of doing things. As we all know, change is inevitable – those with a long history in AREC may see where we are going as “different” but we need to evolve to stay relevant and it was refreshing that we all ended up on the same page!

Also refreshing was that there was very little discussion at the formal sessions about technology (not to be confused with the chats over dinner – we are all Amateur radio operators after all!). This is a reflection that we are investing our time and energy into our organisation and our people. People are what makes AREC what it is.

This issue includes an overview of the summit – please read it and let me know if you have any questions.



Don Robertson ZL2TYR, AREC National Director

AREC Section Leaders Net

Third Monday of each month

Now on 3.550MHz USB at 20:30hrs, and AREC DMR Network ZK Talkgroup at 21:00hrs

AREC Health, Safety & Welfare Injuries, Incidents & Issues Reporting

By Dave Wilkins, ZL1MR

AREC has an obligation to deliver a competent, efficient, safe and effective service to our partner agencies. We all want to avoid injury and damage whilst delivering that service, however occasionally things happen through oversight, changing circumstances or 'Acts of God'. In addition, we can also spot near misses where we narrowly avoided a problem and can use that as a warning to ensure we avoid any future problems.

Until such time as we get a national reporting database system in place can you please report any injuries, incidents and issues to: HSW@arec.nz.

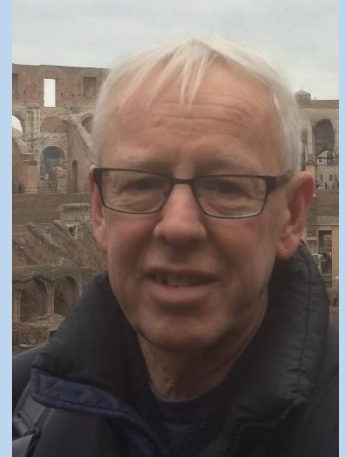
When sending a report, please answer the following questions:

What is/was the issue?

What have you done about it?

What do you think we ought to do next?

The HSW Advisor will aim to get a reply back to you as soon as possible to acknowledge the issue has been received and something is happening.



A Challenge from the AREC National Director!

I am looking for a solution that can be used by groups nationally with Tait TM8000/9000 radios:

- Needs to allow one operator to use a headset and footswitch operate multiple radios. The operator would be able listen to all radios through one headset and then be able to select a specific radio to transmit.
- It should also allow a second operator position (for listening and recording into the log, but also able to transmit if needed).
- Have the ability to run "quiet" (i.e. only through headsets)
- Able to support extension speaker/s (with long extension cable if required) with independent volume control to allow monitoring by IMT
- This could provide combined audio from all radios and potentially be able to select to listen to a specific radio's audio.
- The ability to record audio in/out if required



In Wellington we often use three, and sometimes four, radios each on a different channel. So ideally handling four radios would be best.

I have seen some very expensive devices from off-shore that might be able to do some of this. However, if we could design and build such a unit, I am sure we could distribute them to those AREC groups who are active in SAROPs and SAREXs.

Please let me know if you have a solution or if anyone would be interested in creating one?

Meet the Team ...

This column is to introduce you to the real AREC, that is the individuals that share a common interest and passion that make up our organisation.

AREC Deputy National Director, South Island – Lindsey Ross, ZL4KS

“The Deputy National Director roles are the glue that connects our regions to what we are doing at AREC National” explains AREC National Director Don Robertson. “We are very lucky to have two exceptional individuals holding these roles for us currently, Andy Brill ZL1COP who looks after the Upper North Island, and Lindsey Ross ZL4KS who looks after the South Island” he says.

In this issue, Lindsey Ross explains what got him into Amateur Radio, why he is passionate about AREC and where the future lies for his patch.

After getting hooked on radio via CB and listening to my scanning receiver I decided to sit the Amateur exam in 1992.

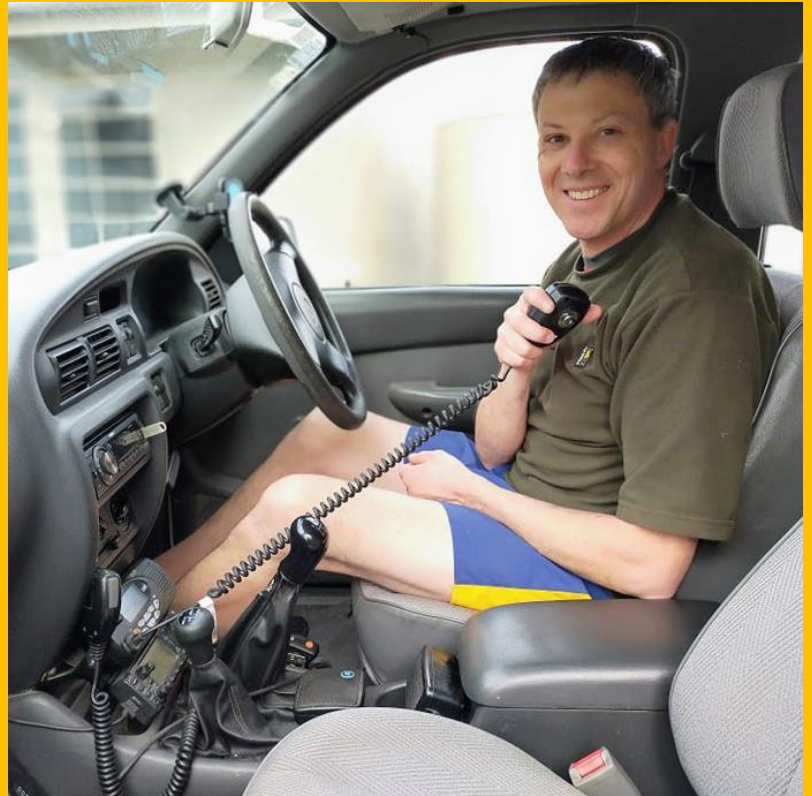
My passion is portable and mobile communications and my AREC involvement started early on when I would go out to the start or finish of a stage of the Rally Otago each year.

I also enjoy Tramping and always take my Mizuho 80M Transciever along and enjoy an evening sked with my friends back in Dunedin.

After listening into many searches from home and debriefing the communications aspect with our Section Leader at the time, Dave ZL4SB, I was invited to take part in a SAREX and eventually became one of the AREC First response Team. I spent the next 20 years living and breathing AREC.

I became one of the drivers of the Dunedin Civil Defence Communications Unit and enjoyed taking it out on public service events such as JOTA, the Jock White Memorial Field Day as well as supporting SAR events.

In 2007 I took over as the AREC Section Leader of Otago Branch 30 NZART and in the coming nine years I enjoyed leading the Dunedin Team during many public service events such as car rallies and Search and Rescue. I particularly enjoyed the planning for car rallies and thrived on the pressure of providing the radio communications for Searches. In Dunedin the management team like to run all searches from the Dunedin Central Police Station and a search could be very local or more than an hour drive away at places such as Middlemarch, so there was always challenges providing radio communications back to the comfort of the Station.



More recently I moved into management roles within AREC and enjoyed a period of being the Southern District Manager before stepping up to Deputy National director.

These days my passion is less about being operational and more about supporting the team, so I appreciate the opportunity and support our national director Don ZL2TYR has given me to develop the skills to work at this level. I am heading up the Volunteer Strategy and am excited about the future of AREC.

Left: Lindsey ZL4KS receiving a certificate acknowledging his more than 20-years supporting LandSAR.

AREC SUMMIT 2020

Over three days in September, your AREC National team met at Wellington to discuss, debate and agree the strategy and priorities for our organisation over the next 12-months and beyond.

Special Presentation:

Gareth Bradshaw, ZL3VP

Gareth was recognised for outstanding AREC service at a special presentation during the AREC Forum. Gareth has been involved in AREC for over 50-years and has recently stepped down as AREC Treasurer. Due to COVID-19 precautions, Gareth wasn't able to make the meeting in person but was able to attend via Zoom. Close friend, former AREC National Director, and current Christchurch District Manager Geoff Chapman ZL3PX accepted the award on Gareth's behalf.



Above: Gareth Bradshaw ZL3VP (left) listens to AREC National Director Don Robertson ZL2TYR (middle) talk about Gareth's long association with AREC. AREC Christchurch District Manager Geoff Chapman ZL3PX received the awards on behalf of Gareth.

Right: The awards presented to Gareth included a plaque, certificate and AREC medal. These awards were designed by AREC Central District Manager Brian Purdie ZL2ADL and Tasman Manager Paul Rennie ZL2RE.



Paul Rennie commented "Gareth has made a huge contribution to AREC and it is great we can recognise him in this way. Brian and I have been doing a lot of work to bring these awards to life and we are both thrilled with Gareth's presentation on the weekend".

LandSAR MOU Signing

A highlight of the weekend was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between LandSAR and AREC by Carl McOnie, CEO of LandSAR and AREC National Director Don Robertson.

“LandSAR are a key partner of AREC” explains Don. “We were privileged to have Carl spend the weekend with us as the SAR Sector representative on the trust. I would like to thank Carl for his time at the summit and also for his ongoing support of AREC”.



MOU

To establish and promote collaborative working relationships between LandSAR and AREC in order to work together on matters related to Land Search and Rescue Information Communication Technology (ICT) and offer advice to each other on matters related to the same.

LandSAR agrees to assist AREC with:

- The provision of technical advice on all matters pertaining to Land Search and Rescue and where applicable research and development to enable best practice and future planning
- The collaboration in the development and delivery of land search and rescue training to personnel within the AREC
- Any other radio communication projects as reasonably required by AREC as agreed by both parties
- To pay any cost for the provision of services to LandSAR (agreed in advance by both parties)

AREC agrees to assist LandSAR with:

- The management, maintenance, and administration of the LandSAR VHF radio channel plans including auditing to ensure RSM compliance
- The programming of LandSAR VHF radios with approved channel plans and radio configuration including SARTrack operability where appropriate
- The collaboration in the development and delivery of radio communications training to personnel within LandSAR
- The provision of technical advice on all matters pertaining to radio and or electronic communications and where applicable research and development to enable best practice and future planning
- The provision of technical advice to ensure compliance and operability of HF radio
- Any other radio communication projects as reasonably required by LandSAR as agreed by both parties

SAR Sector Partner Presentations

We were fortunate to have guest speakers from the SAR sector, both to explain their role and also to help us understand where AREC features.



Nic Brown

Acting Superintendent Nicholas (Nic) Brown, NZ Police Senior Sargent Pete Theobald, NZ Police

Nic is currently leading the Response and Operations Group, Police National Headquarters and Pete is the Coordinator, Search & Rescue.

Nic and Pete delivered an insightful presentation on the changing role of Police in New Zealand and the move to a “prevention first” philosophy.



Pete Theobald

Pete talked to the strong relationship between Police, LandSAR and AREC, and reminded us of why it is important to know our local counterparts in those organisations.

Of interest to the group was discussion about a new Civilian Assistant District SAR Coordinator positions supporting SAR reduction, readiness, response and recovery.

Duncan Ferner, Manager of New Zealand's Search and Rescue (NZSAR) Secretariat

Duncan provided a strategic overview of the Search and Rescue sector in New Zealand, and spoke of Government's commitment which organisations (including AREC) have benefited from through increased funding.

Duncan explained the process that we need to follow in order to access the funding – and encouraged us to move quickly to deliver what we have promised through the submissions.



He also explained the governance structure that exists across the sector, and highlighted the role played by volunteers who make up approximately 94% of operational SAR response.



Mike Hill, Manager Rescue Coordination Centre, Maritime New Zealand

Mike spoke to the role of the Rescue Coordination Centre and how it works with and alongside SAR sector participants.

The 24/7/365 Lower Hutt based centre coordinates all major maritime and aviation search and rescue missions within New Zealand's 30 million square kilometre search and rescue region, and coordinates all land-based missions arising from someone activating a distress beacon.

Mike has extensive experience, from his five-years with Maritime New Zealand and his previous 26-years with NZ Police.

Carl McOnie, CEO LandSAR

Carl provided a very informative overview of LandSAR, explaining that they are a national volunteer organisation providing Land Search and Rescue services to the NZ Police and Rescue Coordination Centre.

His talk included an interesting and entertaining history of how he first became involved as a search volunteer and how that unique perspective helps him represent his teams at an all of SAR level.

He shared that in 2019/20, LandSAR volunteers assisted 1086 people who were at risk, including saving 28 lives.

The discussion also included the MOU between our organisations and how we need to continue to work together for our mutual success.



Amateur Radio Emergency Communications

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Deputy National Director	Andrew Brill, ZL1COP	022 354 6451	DeputyDirectorNth@arec.nz
Deputy National Director	Lindsey Ross, ZL4KS	021 116 1686	DeputyDirectorSth@arec.nz
National Training Manager	Steve Davis, ZL2UCX	027 436 1796	Training@arec.nz
Health & Safety Advisor	Dave Wilkins, ZL1MR	021 185 7903	HSW@arec.nz
Newsletter Editor	Soren Low, ZL1SKL	021 813 541	newsletter@arec.nz

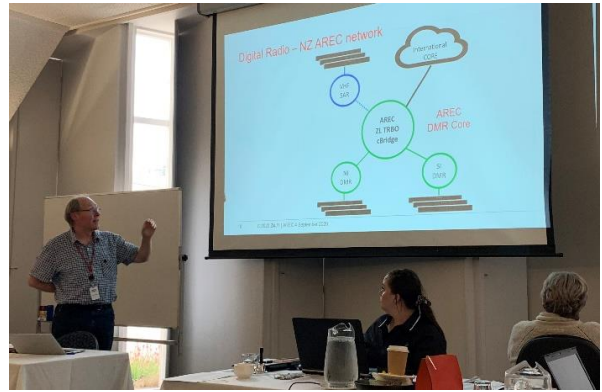
Further information about AREC, including regional contacts, can be found online at arec.info

John Yaldwyn ZL4JY, AREC Technical Director

John provided us with a thought-provoking technical update covering such topics as the AREC DMR network, the remote HF radio project, and some projects that he has been up to with potential AREC applications.

John also spoke of the microwave network that has been set up to link the Wellington area DMR repeaters to allow operation in the absence of the internet.

Don Robertson spoke of the important role that AREC has in leading technical conversations with our partners and how the AREC Technical Advisor role was critical to ensure successful outcomes.



Getting down to Business!

The key reason for this annual summit is to set the direction of AREC. With the recent funding increase, this year was no exception. An overview of the business discussed follows.

Strategy & Objectives – Don Robertson, ZL2TYR

Don discussed that we need to update our AREC Vision, Purpose / Mission and Primary Objectives to ensure they are relevant to the needs of our organisation today, and the partners we work with. “In most cases, these are simply updating and refining what we have to make sure they make sense and support what we need to achieve” he said. “We are working through drafts currently and hope to finalise over coming months.”

SAR sector, SLA’s, and AREC Commitments – Don Robertson, ZL2TYR

Don went on to talk through the Search and Rescue sector in New Zealand, and the SLA we have with NZSAR and Coordinating Authorities (Police and Maritime New Zealand). This discussion included the significant increase in reporting now required to meet Government audit requirements and how we will access the money that has been made available.

AREC Funded Initiatives – Don Robertson, ZL2TYR

Next, Don provided an update on the AREC funding budget that has been made available through SARNZ. “While we have been approved to spend the money, we still need to provide a business case for each initiative before money will be released” says Don.

NZSAR have invested in AREC building management capability through funding the following roles:

- 75% of the cost of an Administrator (via NZART)
- 100% of the cost of a National Manager
- 50% of the cost of a Training Manager
- 25% of the cost of a Health & Safety Advisor
- 50% of the cost of a Service / Project Coordinator
- 25% of the cost of a Treasurer

Funded Budget	2020/21	2021/2022	2022/2023	Total
General Funding	\$ 65,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 65,000	\$ 195,000
Management Meetings	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 75,000
Remuneration	\$ 311,000	\$ 317,000	\$ 323,000	\$ 951,000
IT Systems	\$ 50,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 67,000
Marketing & Fundraising	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 21,000
Training	\$ 83,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 22,000	\$ 128,000
Volunteer Management	\$ 40,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 70,000
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	\$ 30,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 52,000
H&S Signage and PPE	\$ 28,000	\$ 28,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 66,000
Innovation & Technology	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 45,000
Total	\$ 655,000	\$ 513,000	\$ 502,000	\$ 1,670,000

AREC Governance – Don Robertson, ZL2TYR

Don has been working with NZSAR and NZART to understand what changes we need at a governance level to ensure we are set up for the future. “There is some work we need to do to get the governance right” he says, “this will likely include changing the existing trust to be incorporated as a Board of Trustees with possible expansion from five to seven members. This will require a change to AREC’s rules as well as NZART’s constitution so won’t happen overnight”.

Duties of Officers – Don Robertson, ZL2TYR

We then had a good discussion about the various roles in AREC and Don walked us through drafts of duties he has been working through with others. The intention is to formalise and communicate these so we all know what is expected of us in our various roles.

AREC IT Systems – John Murphy, ZL2XJ

John provided a very comprehensive overview of the current state of AREC’s systems (antiquated, mostly manual, no longer for purpose) and the need to update them for the future. John, supported by Felix Five, a contract business analyst, has been working to deliver a project plan (supported by detailed requirements and costings) to drive this forward. John also pointed out that there were significant synergies to be gained by having common systems across NZART and AREC, and this work would include NZART where it makes sense.

Core Systems - Tranche One (first priority)

Office Productivity – Microsoft 365 (desktop and cloud-based tools, AREC branded, MS Teams for collaboration and communication, MS Sharepoint for document management and reporting)

- **Online Membership System** (to support volunteer management, recruitment and retention)
- **Financial Accounting System and Reporting**
- **Online Project Management and Reporting**

Tranche Two

- Learning management and content distribution system
- Activity reporting and reporting system
- Asset recording, allocation and reporting
- Health & Safety tracking and reporting

Branding, PPE/Clothing, H&S Signage – Andy Brill, ZL1COP

Andy provided an overview on the work he has been leading over the last few months.

Branding

Andy updated that there is work underway to create a new brand for AREC. While most members understand that AREC is short for Amateur Radio Emergency Communications, our reality is that most of the people we work with don’t know this and simply refer to us as “A-REC”. Andy has done some work and identified that yellow / black is a colour combination not used in the SAR sector and provided some mock ups of possible branding ideas.

The next step is to further develop these with an external marketing company.

Clothing and H&S Signage

Andy has done some work to identify the types of clothing that members may need to use as they complete AREC activities. Four categories were identified; Base operations, Field operations, Specialist protective equipment and semi-formal or business clothing.

Depending on how far we can stretch the budget, we would like to give all active AREC members some basic clothing (possibly a cap and polo shirt) with other specialist equipment being available for clubs where required (or available for members to purchase). Health & Safety signage (such as road cones, “danger” tape etc.) would be supplied to clubs who require it.

Newsletter – Soren Low, ZL1SKL

Soren thanked those who had contributed to the AREC newsletter and encouraged everyone to consider submitting information about what has been happening in their area. Photos of members taking part in activities, accompanied by notes or bullet points are all that is required. “There has been plenty of positive feedback about the newsletter” commented Soren, “with most saying they really enjoyed seeing what people were up to – there is plenty going on in AREC so please consider a few photos and words so we can share this with others”.

Don thanked Soren for his great work in editing the AREC monthly newsletter, “this is a quality publication that is all down to Soren’s great work” he said.

Marketing & Fundraising – Don Robertson, ZL2TYR

“While the SAR funding will make a big difference to AREC, there is still a need to improve our marketing and fundraising efforts as we build towards the future” says Don Robertson. “Marketing is important to ensure we reach out to new members, and customers for our services” he says. “Fundraising will give us the opportunity to invest in technology, both at a national and branch level” he adds.

“The work that Andy is doing with a brand, and Soren with the newsletter – are key parts of building our brand that connects us internally and externally” Don says.

Volunteer Strategy – Lindsey Ross, ZL4KS

Lindsay provided an update on the work he has been leading on the Volunteer Strategy. “We have made some really good progress over the last six-months to identify the gaps we need to close” says Lindsey “but there is still lots to do. Don is really challenging us to build leadership capability that is all about understanding the needs of our volunteers, and working with them to keep them engaged and involved for the long term”.

“A key focus for us remains diversity” he comments. “Having volunteers that represent the community is something we aspire to and are working through strategies that will help”.

Training – Steve Davis, ZL2UCX

Steve took us through an update on the work underway in the competency and training space for AREC.

Competency Assessments

Following on from Dave Wilkins ZL1MR’s initial *Break-In* article, we have worked through a number of iterations and are nearly at the point we can lock this down. “Understanding the competency pathway is important as it creates the learning framework that we need to build our training programme” says Steve.

Training

There has been good progress made working with others in the SAR sector on how they have developed and delivered their training to get good ideas on what could work for AREC. “Our learning has to be a mix of one-on-one, online, and e-collaboration platforms such as Zoom or MS Teams” says Steve. “We want all of our members to be able to participate – regardless of where they live and how many AREC members locally want or need to learn the same skills”.

“The intention is to have a training catalogue that includes our own, other SAR sector, and even third-party training courses that meet our needs and are accessible to our volunteers” says Steve.

Health, Safety and Welfare – Dave ZL1MR

“My job isn’t about writing volumes of manuals and policies” started Dave “it is about supporting our members with common sense and practical tools they can use in our environment and giving them somewhere to go when they need advice or want to report an incident or opportunity”.

Dubbed the *AREC Safety Dance* by Don Robertson, Dave demonstrated a simple set of actions that help bring the AREC safety message to life:

1. Stop
2. Think
3. Plan
4. Communicate
5. Act

“And don’t forget about welfare” adds Dave. “We need to think about getting the rest we need, eating the right things, making sure we have enough water to drink, having people to share the load – we don’t always think about this when the phone rings and we are asked to help out with a search at short notice”.

AREC Group Activity Reporting – Don Robertson, ZL2TYR

One area that we need to put in some effort is to record the work that we all put in on behalf of AREC. This includes time spent at meetings, training, exercises and searches / events. Planning, writing up the minutes, developing materials is all time that our people give to AREC and we need to capture this.

This helps us at AREC National understand what level of activity groups are seeing, but is also used to report back to NZSAR to justify how active we are and help justify their return on investment.

All District Managers have taken an action to check-in with each group in their area and ensure that the leader knows what to do and how to do it. The system we use is pretty straight forward – for most people is simply a case of remembering to do it!



Geoff ZL3PX, Daniel ZL4DE, John ZL2XJ and Steve ZL2UCX accessing the AREC remote HF network.



NZART HQ's new office assistant Annalise Mokalei-Smith and NZART General Secretary Debby Morgan ZL2DL.

The Final Word – NZART President Mark Gooding, ZL2UFI

At the NZART AGM on Saturday, and during the three days, Mark Gooding spoke of the excellent work AREC National Director Don Robertson has done since taking on the challenge.

“Don had a vision, and has worked hard with his team to develop a compelling business case which has been endorsed financially by NZSAR” commented Mark. “AREC in New Zealand has a proud history, but we all know times are changing and technology isn’t standing still. Despite our role having changed since the Napier earthquake, there is a real place for AREC and Don’s leadership will see that place cemented for the future”.

“NZART Council and myself remain committed to AREC and wish to thank Don and all of the AREC membership for their on-going efforts” concludes Mark.

AREC Summit 2020 – Group Photo!



Back row: Paul Rennie ZL1RE, Lindsey Ross ZL4KS, Andy Brill ZL1COP, Steve Davis ZL2UCX, Brian Purdie ZL2ADL, Soren Low ZL1SKL, Karl Hunt ZL3RUM, Daniel Erickson ZL4DE.

Middle row: Geoff Chapman ZL2PX, Carl McOnie (LandSAR CEO), David Bray ZL2BA, Don Robertson ZL2TYR (AREC National Director), Richard ZL1BNQ, John Newson ZL2VAF

Front row: Debbie Morgan ZL2DL, Dave Wilkins ZL1MR.

Absent: John Murphy ZL2XJ.

Health and Safety is the responsibility of us all

Remember to:

STOP – In your mind you need to be constantly pausing and evaluating no matter the task or the location.

THINK – You need to think about what you see. Identify Hazards and associated Risk (the chance of it going wrong)

PLAN – Talk to others, compare notes, make a plan

COMMUNICATE – Brief the plan and plan to brief others as they arrive.

ACT – Execute the plan, monitor and review progress.

As required – STOP again and then re-Think, re-Plan, Communicate & re-Act.