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Lindsey Ross ZL4KS, Regional Manager, South and Don Robertson ZL2TYR, AREC CEO at AREC Conference.



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NZART Amateur of the Year

This year's winner of NZART's *Amateur of the Year Award* was Don Robertson, ZL2TYR for the work he has done to build AREC into an organisation for the future.

This is an annual Award to be made to the radio amateur who in the preceding 12-month calendar year (January to December) has given outstanding service to Amateur Radio.

NZART President Mark Gooding ZL2UFI talked to the work that Don did leading up to NZSAR making a significant increase to funding of AREC in 2020. "Don had the vision and drive to pull together a plan, and deliver a business case to NZSAR that articulated why AREC's work is important and how it fits in to the wider SAR environment."

Well done Don – a well-deserved achievement!

Right: Warren Harris ZL2AJ, NZART Vice-President awarding Don with NZART's Amateur of the Year Award.



NZART Conference 2021

Queen's Birthday Weekend saw Amateur's from around the country descend on Napier for NZART's annual conference, this year hosted by Branch 25, Napier Amateur Radio Club. This year's venue was the East Pier Hotel, situated on the waterfront at Ahuriri.

The event included the annual AREC meeting on Friday, the NZART annual general meeting and AREC forum on Saturday, and a wide range of talks on the Sunday.

As usual, the AREC management team (national and district managers) met together on the Friday. The day was a mix of interactive discussion and talks from our partners in the SAR Sector. "It is very important that we spend time together" says AREC CEO Don Robertson, "as we have got a lot to achieve and we need to be connected as a team to deliver on the commitments we have made to NZ SAR and our partner agencies."



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 practise and future planning
- The collaboration in the development and delivery of land search and rescue training to personnel within AREC
- Any other radio communications projects as reasonably required by AREC as agreed by both parties
- To pay any costs 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 SARTTrack 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 to enable best practise 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 and agreed by both parties

Above: Carl McOnie, CEO of LandSAR, presenting on his organisation and the MOU in place between LandSAR and AREC.



Duncan Ferner NZSAR Secretariat Manager (left) and Michael Basset-Foss Board member, Water Safety New Zealand, and independent member on the NZ SAR Council (right) provided an overview of the NZSAR Secretariat, how Search and Rescue is organised and why Government have invested in AREC.



NZSAR has an excellent website <https://nzsar.govt.nz/>, their Annual Report and quarterly *Link* magazine are excellent reading.



We are also joined by Peter Mygind who is the New Zealand Police ICT District Service Engineer based at Gisborne.

As well as his day job with Police, Peter is a member of Gisborne LandSAR. He had a very interesting story of how he became involved in SAR – are more recently of the challenges in his area around radio communications with many of the legacy analogue repeaters becoming end-of-life and progressively being removed.

Peter he also talked about how local radio dealer Colvins Communications has allowed Gisborne LandSAR to access their DMR Tier 3 network across the Hawke's Bay which has been very helpful in getting teams mobilised quickly.

He also talked to us about ICT in Police, emerging technologies and the need to stay up-to-date with what is happening around us.

The key focus of the session was the future of AREC. "Our people are our future" explained Don, "we need to build an inclusive organisation that celebrates and supports our volunteers".

"Attracting a diverse membership is important to us" adds Lindsey Ross ZL4KS who leads our volunteer strategy. "Young people are great at picking-up new technologies but research tells us that they volunteer for short periods of time. And retired members can often be available at short-notice for callouts so it is important that we have a mix". "Greater female and wider ethnic participation are also important for us" adds Don.

There was a lot of workshopping done during the day to challenge our thinking around where we are now and where we need to get to.



"We discussed what AREC needs from its management team" explained Don, "in the past our managers have been heavily focussed on looking for opportunities to get us involved in the community to share our skills and experience to provide radio solutions. While this remains important, our managers have an increasingly important role with engaging and shaping our volunteers through mentoring and training.

"We have made some good progress since we met a year ago" concludes Don, "but we still have a way to go."

AREC Forum

Following the NZART Annual General Meeting at each year's Conference, AREC hosts an annual *AREC Forum* where we provide an update of things AREC to anyone who wants to attend.



AREC CEO **Don Robertson ZL2TYR** opened with an update on progress over the last 12-month and our key focus areas going forward.

Auckland District Manager **Richard Gamble ZL1BNQ** talked to the work he was doing on the National AREC Communications Plan.

This documents the primary frequencies in use by each branch as well as ZK callsign allocations. It has been a while since this was updated and there is some work to do to bring it up to date.

AREC Project Coordinator **John Murphy ZL2XJ** presented on several of the projects underway including the adoption of Xero as our accounting software and the new online membership system both of which are due to go live soon.

The membership system will allow members to update their own information as well as access AREC resources. In the background, this system will also allow newsletters and other communications to be sent directly from the system including easily targeting specific areas or interests.

AREC Training Advisor **Steve Davis ZL2UCX** provided an update on the competency matrix, the development of training materials to help support members gain the required skills, and the on-boarding of a Learning Management System that will both allow competencies to be recorded as well as allow the delivery on on-line learning and other content.

Steve also spoke about how AREC members can access training delivered by LandSAR and other organisations.





AREC Health, Safety & Wellbeing Advisor **Dave Wilkins ZL1MR** (left) spoke to the issues we need to be aware of in the current legislative environment, as well as pointing out that health and safety is simply common sense.

He followed this up with a demonstration of the AREC Safety Dance: Stop, Think, Plan, Communicate, Act.

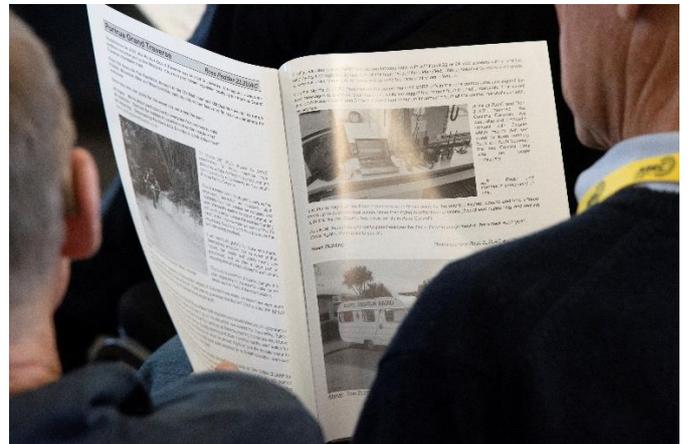
AREC Regional Manager North **Andy Brill ZL1COP** (right) then provided an



update on the AREC PPE rollout. Andy explained that the order for SAR responders has been placed based upon the information received from Group Leaders, and that further rollout would be made as funds permit. All members are currently being set-up in the vendors system; we will all be able to purchase items directly and there will be a policy around what reimbursements will be made.



Training Advisor Steve Davis ZL2UCX and Project Coordinator John Murphy ZL2XJ enjoying the Napier weather between sessions.



Snapped during the AGM – a fellow Ham enjoys Ross Pedder ZL2UAC's article on the Porirua Grand Traverse as re-printed in *Break-In*.

Situations Vacant

AREC Regional Manager



AREC currently have a vacancy for the role of Regional Manager for the Lower North Island, Central Region.

As one of three, the Regional Manager provides leadership and direction to the District Managers, provides coordination with and between districts within the assigned geographical area.

If you would like more information or are interested in this role, please contact Annalise admin@arec.nz

The International Rally of Whangarei

Run by Rally New Zealand, the International Rally of Whangarei is an annual three-day event that sees competitors cover 264 kilometres over 18 Special Stages through Northland.



Above: Richard Gamble ZL1BNQ operating base.

Photo: David Karesh ZL1DK.

This year's event ran from Friday 14 May through to Sunday 16 May. The event was officially opened at 6pm on Friday and the Special Stages kicked-off just after 8am on Saturday morning.

Rally Base was set-up in Semenoff Stadium at Okara Park in Whangarei. Saturday's stages were north and a VHF STSP repeater was set up at Ruapekapeka, 40 kilometres north of Whangarei as there were no suitable fixed repeaters in the area. On the second day, the Brynderwyn 560 repeater was used and provided excellent coverage over the stages south of the city.

As well as base, there were ten teams of two that manned the 5km points. There was a good turnout of operators from Northland and Auckland. "Getting people along is critical to us being able to support rallies like this one" said organiser Richard Gamble ZL1BNQ. "NZART Whangarei Branch 28 has been a long-time supporter of the rally, they are always there to provide operators and use of their repeaters – they are a big part of the events success and I want to pass on my thanks to them and all our operators."



"Coming along with an experienced operator is a good way for people new to the game to learn how it's done. We need to build our capability to ensure we can continue to support these events into the future" adds Richard.

Left: John Henry Wilson ZL1JHW at the International Rally of Whangarei with Andy Brill ZL1COP in the background.

Photo: John Henry Wilson



Above Left: Bruce Barton ZL1ATV improves view lines before the start of Special Stage 11. Photo: Graeme Barton ZL1GMB.

Above Right: A behind-the-scenes photo of rally base showing an assortment of coffee cups, lollies and biscuits (oh, and a radio or two). A tough gig. Photo: David Karesh ZL1DK.



Above: Graham Barton ZL1GMB, Bruce Barton ZL1ATV and Soren Low ZL1SKL packing up at the end of the second day.

We have started to accumulate some issues in the AREC HSW issues register.

The latest item concerns an older AREC member on a car rally event in a forest. In this case the member was sending back results when suddenly his messages became confused. The rally stage was stopped and the member was brought back to base.

An ambulance was called and he was taken to hospital with what has been reported to be a Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA), otherwise known as a mini-stroke. This occurs when a blood clot occurs in a blood vessel in the brain. This temporarily reduces or stops blood flow leading to issues with brain function hence the confusion. Strangely a person having a TIA or stroke may not even notice that something is wrong!

Anyway, after talking with the member involved a week or so later it was apparent that he hadn't been feeling right on the day before heading out. Unfortunately, he felt he needed to go as there was a shortage of operators that weekend and he didn't want to let the team down.

It is these sorts of incidents that can occur to all of us especially as we get older. That's why we need to be aware of our health situations before we head off on an AREC, or any other significant activity, especially if it involves driving a vehicle. If we aren't feeling well then best be conservative and go see the Doctor, who knows what might be happening. Don't worry about the team, your health and wellbeing is far more important.

Thankfully in this case the member has recovered a lot of function and was able to explain to me how he felt and what happened from his perspective.

If you want to reach out any anytime, drop me a note or give me a call.

David Wilkins ZL1MR
AREC Health & Safety Advisor



Reporting

If you have any feedback from the frontline that may help others, or have an incident, near miss or injury to report please email the details with your contact number to HSW@arec.nz

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.