



AREC.info is the newsletter of Amateur Radio Emergency Communications, the public service arm of the New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters. AREC.info is published monthly (except January).



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Cover:

AREC CEO Don Robertson ZL2TYR demonstrating how to operate safely in these COVID times.



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COVID-19

As I write this, we are in COVID-19 lock down as a result of the new Delta variant spreading throughout Auckland and Wellington. I am sure you will all be acutely aware of what this means for you and your family but would like to mention a couple of things that affect us in AREC.

Firstly, AREC is an “essential service” as we support Search & Rescue alongside other community organisations. However, two important things to note:

The first is that, if called out, only respond if you can do so safely and doing so will not put yourself, your family or others at risk. The second is that you are only to respond if you have actually been called out (if you know there is an operation on – check-in with your local coordinator and don’t jump in your car and head down “just in case”).

As we discussed last time around, COVID-19 restrictions provide us an opportunity to get together “on the air” and also practise running a virtual IMT. Please become familiar with AREC’s COVID-19 guidelines.

District Training Roadshows

We will soon be starting the district training roadshows, the plan was to kick-off in Southern on the 21st of August, followed by Canterbury soon after. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 these will need to be re-scheduled.

Management Changes

You will read elsewhere in this issue that Geoff Chapman ZL3PX is standing down from the Canterbury District Manager role, and Gareth Bradshaw ZL3VP from the Deputy District Manager role.

Both Geoff and Gareth have been long-time AREC supports and I would like to thank them for their long service.

Don McDonald ZL3DMC will be picking-up the District Manager role and Geoff has agreed to take on the Deputy role in the meantime. Welcome to the team Don!

Until next month, stay safe!

Don, ZL2TYR

Chief Executive Officer, AREC



AREC on Facebook

AREC is on Facebook!

The page is looked after by AREC’s administrator, Annalise Mokalei-Smith who is always on the lookout for photos and content about AREC people and activities.

“Facebook is a great way to connect” says Annalise, “especially with younger people who want to keep up to date with things as they happen.”

You can contact Annalise on admin@arec.nz

Annalise Mokalei-Smith



AREC - Amateur Radio
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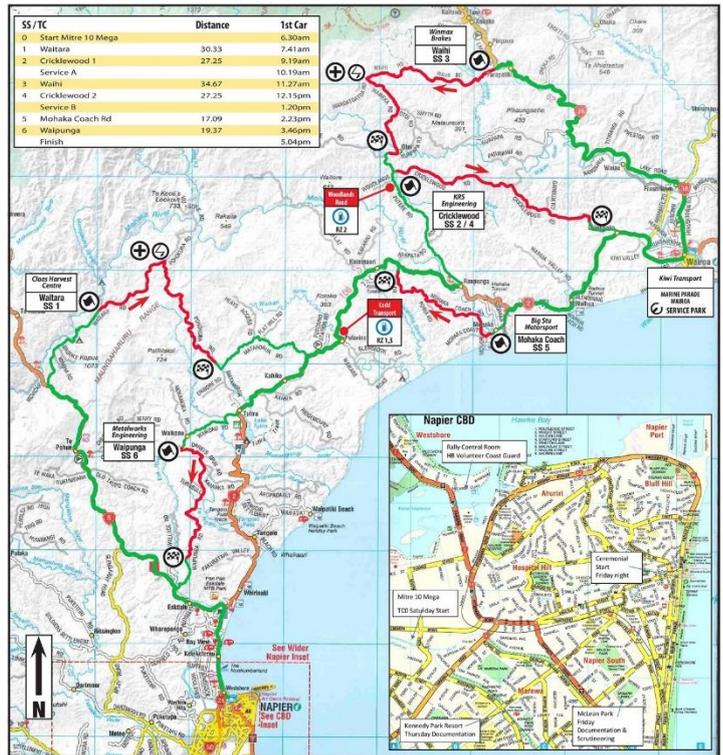
This year's Hawke's Bay Rally took place on Saturday the 24th of July and covered around 450km's over six stages.

It ran through pretty wild and woolly country and we covered it by using four fixed repeaters and a STSP in a small covered trailer. There were three VHF repeaters and a UHF repeater that the STSP fed into to get coverage back to the Rally Control.

The trailer belonged to Warren Harris ZL2AJ and he offered it to us and we are setting it up for future operations. The trailer has batteries and a solar panel as well as the wiring to connect our STSP already set up. It also has fixtures so a mast can be set up on the side of it by one person. CD have a rather large "portable" repeater that will probably end up being used in the trailer as well.

Being the second week of school holidays, it was difficult to find operators but eventually we were able to round-up the 12 required. Most were locals with two from Auckland, one from Masterton and one was from our CD group, working with me. Thanks to everyone who helped out.

The Rally was run from the HB Coastguard building in Napier which we use for LandSAR operations. It has several fixed antennas already set up, all we had to do was plug into them. It was a great setup and included a kitchen off to the side so anyone was within hearing if needed.



Above: Rally Base with the radio operators on the right.



Situations Vacant

An exciting opportunity to represent NZART/AREC on the international stage as....

IARU Region 3 Disaster Management Coordinator

- Are you interested in the chance to liaise and build international relationships with IARU member societies?
- Share best practices in emergency communications?
- Explore and exercise with digital HF data transmission?
- Are you interested in seeing how IARU functions elsewhere, what we can learn and bring back to AREC & NZ?

If you have said yes to any of the above, email AREC's Administrator Annalise admin@arec.nz to find out how to apply.

Welcome Aboard the IT Team!

John Murphy ZL2XJ

The AREC IT Systems are moving ahead. We are in the final stages with the implementation of Friendly Manager (the membership system) and Xero (the financial system).

A further key component of our IT systems is the Office productivity, communications, and document storage solution using Microsoft 365 for Business.

This delivers the Microsoft office applications along with Teams and SharePoint. Teams and SharePoint are vital platforms in transforming AREC online and provides a platform for communications across the organisation with online meetings and collaboration. Additionally, the suite allows for the storage and publication of documentation.

Further there will be apps for activity tracking, incident report, asset management, and training.

To date Microsoft 365 with AREC email addresses has been rolled out to National Officers, District Managers and their Deputies. The next step in the rollout is the onboarding of some 60+ Group Leaders and their Deputies.

As the use of the Microsoft 365 platform grows AREC needs to put in place support arrangements to assist AREC volunteers through the onboarding process and any support issues ongoing.

To deliver on this need we would like to say a big "Hello!" to the IT Team [<https://www.theitteam.co.nz/>], a national New Zealand organisation based out of Christchurch.

The IT Team will provide AREC with a range of I.T. related services and support. Primary these are:

- Microsoft 365 Implementation assistance with Teams and SharePoint
- Teams / Exchange onboarding of Group Leaders and their Deputies
- Managed IT Support Services for Microsoft 365 for business

The IT Team are excited to be coming aboard as AREC's new I.T. support provider, and are look forward to getting to know you over the coming weeks. They are here to help you with any issues or requests related to your use of the AREC Microsoft 365 toolset.

In the coming weeks AREC Group Leaders and their Deputies will receive welcome emails from the IT Team and instructions on how to connect to and use your AREC Microsoft 365 tools.

Look out for these and action the instructions to enable your AREC email address and connect to Teams. Each District will have its own Team setup with channels within the Team created for each AREC group in that District.

Canterbury Leadership Changes

Lindsey Ross ZL4KS

I would like to announce changes to our management team in Canterbury. District Manager Geoff Chapman ZL3PX and Deputy District Manager Gareth Bradshaw ZL3VP are stepping down from their roles. Both Geoff and Gareth have been involved with AREC for a very long time; you will recall that Geoff stepped up as our National Director following Jeff Sayer's passing and Gareth was recognised for his long service (over 50 years!) at our AREC Summit last year.

Don McDonald ZL3DMC has agreed to take on the position of District Manager. Don is a long-time Ham and is no stranger to AREC. For now, Geoff has agreed to stay on in the Deputy role to help Don get settles and to help make for a seamless transition.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Geoff and Gareth for their sterling service and Don for stepping into his new role. Canterbury has a very active AREC community and it is great to recognise the important contributions of Geoff and Gareth and they hand the reins over to Don.

Mt. Victoria 900MHz DMR

Wellington VHF group have recently installed a 33cm AREC DMR repeater on 927.850MHz at Mount Victoria. This is part of the AREC DMR-MARC network and is connected to the existing 70cm and 33cm machines.

Photos: Steve Jepson ZL2SJ / ZL2KG



Above: End view of the Mt. Victoria building with the tower in the background.

Left: The Wellington VHF Group's 33cm DMR repeater.

Below: Photos showing the 33cm repeater's antenna on the main building



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

Covid is once again amongst us with a more easily transmittable version of the virus. The news media has been full of the topic so I won't repeat the obvious. However catching COVID-19 Delta is clearly a wellness issues so we must address the hazard and what risks are peculiar to AREC operations.

Don AREC CEO is releasing an updated advice sheet for AREC members concerning the necessary precautions we must take. Please note the key precautions around not compromising yourself or your bubble people by stepping outside the guidelines. If you are older 65+ and/or have any significant health issues do not take part in AREC Activities unless you can do so from inside your bubble.

One of the advantages of modern computer aided technology is that you can operate a communication function from the comfort of your home, so long as you can access the repeaters and have the same software as everyone else on the SAROP.

During a previous lockdown one AREC member ran comms from their home and logged all the messages into SARTrack so it was immediately available to the rest of the IMT in their own bubble(s). We just need to be creative when dealing with our hazards and solutions.

Bart, the creator of SARTrack has made the program more available for those AREC members who want to experiment with the system from home whilst locked down. If you aren't already on the SARTrack NZ email list the instructions can be made available to you by someone in your Group who is.

So see this enforced break as an opportunity to get all those jobs around the shack sorted out. Start cleaning out the storage areas, you'll be surprised with what you find!

Keep safe. And as always if there is anything to report just send an email to HSW@arec.nz.



Remember the AREC Safety Dance:

Stop – Think – Plan – Communicate - Act.

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

David Wilkins ZL1MR
AREC Health & Safety Advisor

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.