



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).



Contents:

Chief Executive Comment	3
Otago Rally	4
Porirua Grand Traverse	6
Training Update	7
Health, Safety & Wellbeing	8

Cover: Peter Cobb ZL3TC, Don Robertson ZL2TYR, Dick Collins ZL2ARP and Rob Wallace ZL2WAL setting up base antennas for the 2022 Porirua Grand Traverse event.
Photo: Steve Jepson ZL2SJ



AREC Administration – Annalise
admin@arec.nz, 04 939 2189

Newsletter Editor - Soren Low, ZL1SKL
newsletter@arec.nz, 021 813 541

Amateur Radio Emergency Communications

National Officers:

Chief Executive Officer
 Don Robertson, ZL2TYR
ceo@arec.nz, 021 654 085

Regional Manager North
 Andrew Brill, ZL1COP
RMNth@arec.nz, 022 354 6451

Regional Manager Central
 Don Wallace, ZL2TLL
RMCent@arec.nz, 027 444 5123

Regional Manager South
 Lindsey Ross, ZL4KS
RMStth@arec.nz, 021 116 1686

Project Coordinator
 John Murphy, ZL2XJ
projects@arec.nz, 021 0807 5075

National Training Advisor
 Steve Davis, ZL2UCX
training@arec.nz, 027 436 1796

Health & Safety Advisor
 Dave Wilkins, ZL1MR
hsw@arec.nz, 021 185 7903

Treasurer – Evan Sayer
Treasurer@arec.nz, 021 612 164

District Managers:

Northland/Auckland – Richard Gamble
DMAuckland@arec.nz, 021 729 270

Bay of Plenty – Karl Hunt
DMBOP@arec.nz, 021 167 0477

Central – Brian Purdie
DMCentral@arec.nz, 027 321 4470

Eastern – John Newson
DMEastern@arec.nz, 027 230 3642

Wellington – John Murphy
DMWellington@arec.nz, 021 0807 5075

Tasman – Paul Rennie
DMTasman@arec.nz, 027 458 9740

Canterbury – Don MacDonald
DMCanterbury@arec.nz, 027 551 6683

Ray Harkness ZL2RAY

Many will have heard that Ray Harkness ZL2RAY was honoured in this year's NZSAR awards for his 20+ years' service to AREC and LandSAR in the Wellington region.

Ray was recognised with a Certificate of Achievement for his work with deploying, operating, or maintaining search and rescue communication equipment. His work with establishing the trust that funds the WanderSearch in Wellington, along with his involvement in running the programme was also mentioned with the award.

I am very proud of what Ray has achieved and he is a very deserving recipient of this award. On behalf of all of us – well done Ray!

Full details of the awards can be found here [NZSAR-2021-AWARD-BOOKLET-FINAL.pdf](#)



Surveys

Thank you all for participating in the recent surveys. The Training survey results are with the District Managers who are working with AREC Training Advisor Steve Davis ZL2UCX to understand the needs in each area, and how we can deliver programmes to meet your local requirements.

We have only just received the results from the NZSAR AREC volunteer survey. I hope to be able to comment more on this in the next issue.

Dave Wilkins ZL1MR, our HSW Advisor, would like me to pass on his thanks to those who responded to the KPMG Health & Safety survey. This only went to a small number of our members.

New Police SAR Repeaters

The new repeaters are currently being built by Tait Communications at their Christchurch factory and will progressively be shipped out to Police districts for use by Police and LandSAR teams. AREC have been heavily involved in this project, including the extensive testing that was recently completed to allow Police acceptance.

AREC will be providing training to Police and LandSAR groups on the operation of these and AREC Training Advisor Steve Davis ZL2UCX has been busy preparing the training documentation. We will be looking to train local members who can then run sessions with users as required.

AREC Membership System – *Friendly Manager*

We will soon be going live with our membership system, *Friendly Manager*. AREC Project Coordinator John Murphy has been the driving force behind this platform which will give members a place to get all their AREC information, including the ability to update their own details as they change.

AREC members will receive a link to log-in and set up their account over the next month or two once on-boarding starts. Look out for it!

YSAR – Youth Search & Rescue

The national management team recently with Steve Campbell, YSAR General Manager who talked about his organisations core objective to train young people between 14 and 18 to become active community volunteers in the search and rescue and civil defence emergency management sector. This was a great session, and we look forward to talking to Steve about how our organisations can work together.

Until next month, stay safe.

Don, ZL2TYR

Chief Executive Officer, AREC



On the 8th to the 10th of April, Otago Branch 30 AREC members provided operators for the 2022 Otago Rally.

The Otago Rally has run annually since 1976 and has been part of the NZ Rally Championship since 1993. This event is the first round of the 2022 New Zealand Rally Championship.

The event was run from the 4th floor of the Southern Cross Hotel in one of their conference areas which has been used as “Rally Base” for over a decade.



Above: “Rally Base” in the Southern Cross Hotel. From closest to the camera are Brendan Sheehy ZL4BDS, Stephen Gosling ZL4SLG and Daniel Erichson ZL4DE.

Friday afternoon is setup day where many local amateurs turn up to receive their tasks. As we are on the 4th floor and most volunteers have been involved with this event many times, like a well-oiled machine, everyone gets to work collecting all the equipment and splitting it into two groups.

The first group move equipment, coax, antenna adapters, guy ropes etc that need to be transported to the roof via the elevators.

The second group get on with the radios, power supplies, backup battery, antenna adapters that are set up in rally base. Four VHF radios, two UHF radios plus the use of a remote HF rig which became essential for both days as a couple of the stages used HF to communicate back to Rally base.

Permission was sought and received from Downer to use their six-site linked analogue network, which covers most of the Otago region, for all the official vehicles and Rally Control who were supplied with their own dedicated radios removing the need for us to pass messages to and from the officials out in the field.

Saturday's stages were located approximately 100km north of Dunedin in the Palmerston/Macraes area. 16 Operators positioned on the start, midpoint and finish of eight Special Stages. Four fixed repeaters and one crossband was used to cover these stages.

The plan was to use the New Zealand Emergency Management Repeater ESB130 located southeast of Oamaru at a height of 1400m, which would have covered all the stages easily. But during the investigation and testing phase we found issues with the reliability of this repeater so a backup plan was put into place.

As often happens during these events things don't go to plan, and it was suspected the batteries at the repeater site failed and took the repeater offline for most of the day.

The advantages with using an organisation like ours (AREC) is most of our operators have very capable vehicle setups and this became essential as when ESB130 failed, one of the operators parked on a high spot where he could communicate via simplex with the operators on the affected stages and with Rally Base on one of the repeaters we were monitoring.

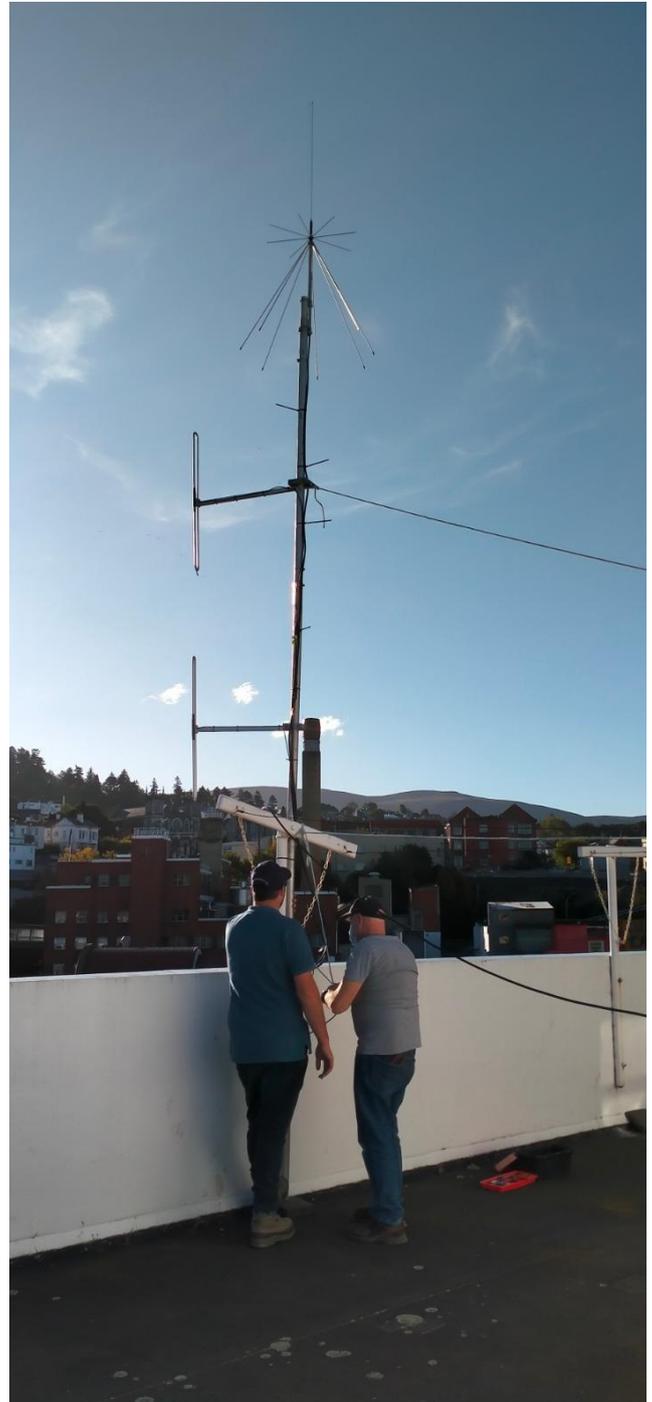
Sunday's stages were around 60km's south of Dunedin in the Waihola/Berwick area. 18 operators, eight Stages, four fixed repeaters, one portable STSP repeater, one crossband were required.

Apart from some noise in the morning on the Downer network created by the charging system which disappeared once the sun got on the solar panels, everything went to plan.

The STSP repeater was deployed on a hill in the Berwick forest called "The Dell" which is at approximately 607m in height. We have used this location for many years as it's accessible and has the best coverage into the Waipori Gorge and village where one of the stages were held. It also covers the Berwick Forest stages. This repeater is then crossbanded back into Rally base from Highcliff.

Rally base usually consists of either 2-3 operators. Often manned by different people each day giving others a chance to get out into the field. With the utilisation of "RallySafe" Stage operators don't have to send the times as we did in the past, so it gives them more time to take in the usually great weather and watch the racing.

This year's 2022 Rally of Otago was made possible by the following Amateurs: ZL4ASC, ZL4XDJ, ZL4QC, ZL4KX, ZL4BDS, ZL4KT, ZL4DE, ZL4DK, ZL4JC, ZL4ERT, ZL4LC, ZL4CB, ZL4LDS, ZL4KS, ZL4JH, ZL4SA, ZL4RMF, ZL4RC, ZL4RP, ZL4VM, ZL4MB and myself ZL4SLG Group Leader Br30



***Above Right:** Adam Campbell ZL4ASC and Martin Balch ZL4JH temporarily installing antennas on the roof of the Southern Cross Hotel.*



Steve Jepson has shared some photos from this year's Porirua Grand Traverse which is a key event in Wellington AREC's calendar.

AREC provide safety communications across the course using DMR (70cm ZK Colonial Knob repeater, EE122 AREC DMR ZK also on Colonial Knob, 70cm DMR simplex and a temporary ES band analogue repeater.



AREC Newsletter – Call for articles!

We are always on the lookout for material for the AREC Newsletter. Short articles on AREC activities or items which may be of interest to members are always welcome, preferably accompanied by a few photos.

Please send submissions to newsletter@arec.nz

AREC Photo Archive!

We also need photos of AREC members that we can use on our social media pages and in training materials. If you have any photos you are able to share, please send these to admin@arec.nz

AREC Training Update

Steve Davis ZL2UCX

An update of upcoming training courses:

TPP/NZSAR Multi-Agency

2-3 Jul	CIMS4	Hawkes Bay
29-31 Jul	Manage the Initial Response	Rotorua
9-10 Jul	CIMS4	Levin
6-7 Aug	CIMS4	Wellington
12-14 Aug	Manage the Initial Response	Christchurch
27-28 Aug	CIMS4	Tauranga

The TPP courses are aimed at members that are working as a Comms Unit leader or above, so preference will be given to Deputy Group Leaders and above, or those specifically nominated.

LandSAR

18-19 Jun	Searching Suburban Environments (useful for WanderSearch responders)	Cromwell
19 Jun	RCOM/GPS & SRM Refresher	Taihape
2 Jul	First Aid Refresher	Nelson
3-4 Jul	Searching Suburban Environments (useful for WanderSearch responders)	Nelson
9 Jul	First Aid Refresher	Ellesmere
9-10 Jul	Outdoor First Aid	Cromwell
30 Jul	RCOM	Christchurch
6-7 Aug	Outdoor First Aid	South canty
13-14 Aug	Searching Suburban Environments (useful for WanderSearch responders)	Invercargill
13 Aug	IMT Refresher	Palmerston North

Due to funding systems AREC places may be limited on some of the LandSAR courses.

Note that you cannot take a course a second time, and you need to have done the original course to be eligible for a Refresher course. We have a limited budget for travel etc, so preference will be given to those that are local to the courses, but there is provision for some support for travel, and accommodation if needed. For all applications for these courses, please apply via your Group Leader or District Manager, and they will pass on applications to training@arec.nz

Note that normally course enrolments close 3 weeks before course date, but sometimes we can get additions a little after the close-off.

NZART 2M / 70cm Band Plan Review

Members will be aware that NZART is currently [reviewing the 2metre and 70 cm band plans](#).

I have been asked to coordinate the AREC input into this review.

District managers and Group leaders please consider and discuss with your members what matters relevant to AREC operations should be included in the review.

Some initial suggestions:

- Specific calling and emergency channels for both bands.
- Defined VHF and UHF FM simplex channels for AREC use in emergencies to ensure national consistency.
- Standardised naming convention for AREC channels suitable for use with alphanumeric displays.
- Specific channel allocations for VHF/UHF data modes for future AREC/Emergency use.

It is intended that the review be completed before the NZART AGM in September, so please feedback ideas and suggestions to me ASAP.

Andy Brill, AREC Regional Manager North

022 354 6451 / rmnth@arec.nz

Hi everyone.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

In all the articles so far, I've focussed on the Health & Safety aspects of what we do. Essentially the way we physically interact with our environment and those things and activities around us. I suppose it means that we are remaining uninjured and physically functional.

Today I want to talk about Wellbeing

Wellbeing is really the output once we have done everything correctly in our lives. We feel 'well' if we are housed, fed, fulfilled by what we are doing, and ultimately that we have a happy outlook on life in general. In other words, it is a feeling or an emotional response to the world and what is going on around us and within our own heads.

Of course someone has to have created a definition of 'Wellbeing' so here is the Merriam-Webster version: *the state of being happy, healthy, or prosperous.*

Psychology Today has a similar explanation: *Wellbeing is the experience of health, [happiness](#), and prosperity. It includes having good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose, and [ability to manage stress](#). More generally, well-being is just feeling well.* Then they offer a quiz to check your own state of wellbeing.

I'm not sure about the prosperous comment though. One day I said to the retired Chief Engineer from the Gisborne meat works who had been given a Gold Watch at the end of 25 years and was always complaining about something '*Look Dobbie, money won't buy you happiness*', his immediate reply was '*well I'd much rather die unhappy and rich than unhappy and poor!*'

So wellbeing is something we have to continually strive to achieve. Do I have the right outlook on life? Am I seeing the glass half empty or half full?

We must also be prepared though to make good choices about our wellbeing. Am I trying to do too much? Should I be spending more time on one area of my life than another? If I think I am not feeling well in myself should I seek some advice or help?

In AREC we are not exposed to too many situations caused by AREC activities that should adversely affect our wellbeing. However we never know when something is going to sneak up on us and all the things we have been holding back suddenly get triggered.

To ensure AREC has some backup support I am investigating engaging with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that can put you in touch with a counselling service if something happens on an AREC deployment that badly affects your wellbeing.

A trigger can be as simple as hearing a radio call that triggers off a bad set of memories for you that you cannot get out of your mind. Another more obvious issue would be if you were a rally safety radio and a rally car crashes in front of you. You weren't expecting that to happen and you see the car roll through the crowd of spectators with mass casualties occurring. You call it in and do what you can but at the end of it all feel inadequate, not sure if you've done the right thing, and it starts to get to you.

Ideally the AREC Team Leader and event organiser should ensure there is a major debrief of everyone involved in the event. What if this doesn't happen? How do you deal with your emotions in that circumstance? Is it normal to feel OK after seeing something like that happen? Who do you talk to, to help you come to terms with what you saw and are now starting to dream about?

Ideally these sorts of issues should be addressed at the time but we usually don't know what our triggers for an adverse outcome may be. We do our best to cope but the old '*harden up and take a concrete pill*' doesn't always work. We also have some strange peer pressures at times that make us think that sharing a problem is not the done thing.

We can do something about it at a personal level and AREC also needs to take some steps to ensure any adverse outcomes from participating in AREC activities are promptly addressed. To that end if an adverse event happens at any AREC activity the AREC Team Leader or you must make a brief report via email to HSW@arec.nz outlining who in AREC was involved and their mobile phone numbers so the HSW Advisor and/or AREC management can carry out a welfare check. If we don't know the issue even arose how can we make any referral for ongoing support.

In the interim, if you suffer a problem whilst on a SAR Activity and you are already a member of LandSAR you can access their confidential EAP service (Instep). The contact details are at the bottom of every weekly bulletin email sent out by the LandSAR CEO.

As I mentioned AREC is investigating setting up our own referral process for EAP support to ensure we cover all members on all AREC activities.

Finally, If something has happened or is happening and you notice a friend starting to react poorly then have a word with them and encourage them to see their GP or other health professional. If the triggering issue could be related to AREC activities get in touch with HSW@arec.nz so AREC can help if possible and practicable.

As always, stay safe, think about your wellbeing and look after each other.

Any issues, incidents or accidents please report them to HSW@arec.nz.

If you want any clarification about the contents of this article or anything else related to Health, Safety and Wellbeing just drop a line.

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.