



AREC **info**

Monthly newsletter of
Amateur Radio Emergency
Communications

OCTOBER 2020

NATIONAL DIRECTOR

Hello everyone and welcome to the October AREC Newsletter. Things are really beginning to move at pace now and I'd like to take the opportunity to bring you up to speed on a few of these things:

SAR Sector

A highlight this month was attending a SAR Sector Board Chairperson & CEO meeting where we discussed a number of areas around interagency collaboration, including opportunities to share in joint initiatives such as training.

I was also interviewed by a journalist engaged by NZSAR for an article on AREC which will run in their quarterly *Link* magazine. This is a great opportunity to showcase the great work done by our members and help lift our profile in the sector. You can find past issues here <https://nzsar.govt.nz/about-us-2/newsletters/>

Police SAR

Every month I meet with Police National SAR Coordinator – this is a very useful forum and supports the regular meetings that our District Managers hold with their local Police representatives. Local relationships are very important and we are working to strengthen these.

On the subject of Police SAR – some of you may be aware of the Police Portable SAR Repeater upgrade project. AREC provided input to the specification and I am involved in the evaluation.

LandSAR

LandSAR held their National Annual General Meeting in Wellington during the last month and I was invited to attend. We have an excellent relationship with LandSAR and you will recall the memorandum of understanding that was signed between LandSAR CEO Carl McOnie and myself at our recent AGM.

Like ourselves, LandSAR have received a funding boost through NZSAR and are also working to build their capability to support their team of volunteers.

Finance and Governance

These functions are generally furthest from the minds of most members but our organisation simply won't exist without them. This month we have done further work on the AREC Trust deed revision, finalised the AREC General Funding Plan (and received approval from NZSAR) and worked with the AREC Treasurer and Administrator to confirm the chart of accounts.

AREC Meetings

Every month, we hold a Group Leaders net, that I host, on 80m and DMR. Group Leaders are encouraged to participate and the net is open to anyone to listen. Details of where and when can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Porirua Grand Traverse

To top it all off, I even had the opportunity to get out into the field to work with other AREC members to provide communications to the Porirua Grand Traverse multi-sport event.

Have a great month Team!

Don, ZL2TYR





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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2020 AT 10 AM UTC+13 – 2 PM UTC+13

Emergency Services Expo 2020

John Murphy ZL2XJ, AREC Wellington District Manager explains ...

This year's Wellington Emergency Services Expo featured a wide variety of organisations from across the emergency services and search and rescue sectors. As well as FENZ, Airport Fire, Police and Ambulance – other participants included NZ Defence Force, Urban Search and Rescue, Emergency Response Team (NZRT8), Wellington Volunteer Coastguard, SPCA, LandSAR and AREC. Both Police and FENZ had virtual reality demonstrations operating.

Our AREC display was set up alongside Wellington LandSAR – the day was very well attended and there were many questions answered about what we are, what we do, and our value to the community.

The event included plenty of demonstrations to keep everyone entertained – including the crowd-pleasing car extrication!

Photos: John Murphy ZL2XJ



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 Bay of Plenty District Manager, Karl Hunt ZL3RUM

This month we feature AREC Bay of Plenty District Manager Karl Hunt ZL3RUM. National Director Don Robertson introduces Karl by saying "Karl represents new blood to AREC management. He is a relative newcomer to Amateur Radio, has quickly found a niche in AREC and provides that much-needed balance to those of us who have a long history in the hobby and our organisation."



Karl Hunt ZL3RUM was licensed only a few short years ago in 2016. He, alongside a few others from the Whakatane area, had a general interest in radio and thought getting involved in Amateur Radio was an interesting thing to do. "There was a small group of us who thought getting licensed would be fun, we went through the process, sat the exam and have since been joined by a few more of our mates".

"What I really enjoy about the hobby" says Karl, "is its many facets. It is a technical hobby at the core – but locally we have a great group who want to learn, share and grow together. And more than that, it has a great social element and AREC provides the opportunity to give back to the community"

Karl is a member of Eastern Bay of Plenty Branch 51. Soon after being licensed, he and some of the Branch AREC members started exploring the SARTrack programme and got the opportunity to put it into action at a SAREX

not long after. "Our local LandSAR group had heard of SARTrack but it wasn't something they knew too much about. We were able show how it could be useful and have worked with them to make it a valuable tool."

After becoming the Bay of Plenty District Manager mid-2019, Karl has started to get involved in AREC National. "I didn't really know what to expect" he says "it has certainly been a steep learning curve. But our job is to make AREC an organisation that people want to join and one that other groups want to work with". Karl goes on to say "I have huge respect for those that have grown AREC to where it is today, but it is really important that we continue to evolve and listen to what our people are telling us, especially those that bring a new or different perspective."

Karl is passionate about building capability in his district. "LandSAR as an example depends on us being able to stand up communications where they are needed. In our patch, there are plenty of areas that don't have good voice or data communications and we set up satellite internet in remote locations to provide links back into civilisation. LandSAR need to concentrate on their core task - offering search and rescue support for the lost, missing and injured – my job is to make sure we have a team who can support them through using our skills to give them one less thing to worry about."

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

CLARENCE BRIDGE SEARCH

By Paul Rennie ZL2RE, AREC Tasman District Manager

At around 1700 on Tuesday the 22nd of September, I received a call to go to the Blenheim Police station SAR Shed to issue radios for a search at Clarence Bridge, a one-hour drive to the south. We were called out to assist in a search for a missing female who did not turn up for work on the Monday morning.

After four-hours at the SAR Shed, we were stood down for the night. Ron ZL2BDD was tasked to report in at 0600 Wednesday as the rescue helicopter aerial coastline and targeted Police dog searching turned up nothing.

A portable repeater was set-up on a high point overlooking the search area and the Police "booze bus" soon arrived to become our forward base. Garth ZL3HK set-up SARTrack and Ron and Garth continued to work from the bus.



On Thursday, the search was continued with the area being expanded to cover more ground to hopefully pick up more clues. Friday was a stand down day so Ron returned back to his home in Blenheim. The search kicked off again on the Saturday with Garth and I driving to the forward base, at Clarence Bridge, for another long day. My first task was to check on the repeater and install an external battery at the site.

Saturday was another long one by the time we returned back to Blenheim and sorted out tasking, changing batteries on handhelds ready for Sunday as teams from further away had been called in to assist. Ron and Garth ran the forward base.

The Search was suspended on the Sunday night. Blenheim LandSAR were supported by teams from Kaikoura, Christchurch, Hurunui, Hanmer and Motueka. AREC Blenheim contributed 80 hours to the search. A very long and involved search, with the total effort across all groups totalling 755 hours.



Ron Harris ZL2BDD (in yellow hi-viz) supporting the Clarence search. Photo: Helen Harris ZL2HH.

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

LandSAR AGM

By Don Robertson ZL2TYR

AREC National Director Don Robertson attended the 2020 LandSAR Annual General Meeting held at Wellington.

Feedback from Don was that the meeting covered a wide range of topics and there was good engagement from those who attended in person or virtually.

A highlight was the LandSAR awards that recognises the significant contribution of members.



AREC Health, Safety & Welfare

By Dave Wilkins, ZL1MR



Hi from your HSW Advisor.

As you go about your day-to-day activities just remind yourself to think about your own safety and the safety of those around you or those who may come along after you. Just "Stop-Think-Plan-Communicate-Act." Keep safe out there.

I learned from this: 'I arrived at night at my designated point on the rally stage and decided to get ready so I could be on the air first thing in the morning. I got out my aluminium mast and set it up in the dark with the antennas attached and coax running to my vehicle parked on the side of the backcountry road. Next day I got up in the day light to find the aluminium pole was between two of the conductors of the local powerline! Needless to say, I carefully lowered the antenna and set up well away from the powerline. It was a close shave!'

Reporting: If you have any feedback from the frontline that may help others please 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.

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