



*Monthly newsletter of
Amateur Radio
Emergency
Communications*

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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: *The various “OTA” (“On the air”) programmes are a great way to learn and practice for portable operations. In this photo, AREC members Sasha ZL1JX and Philip ZL1PSH operate SOTA from Waiheke Island. Using the simple wire link-dipole and Icom IC-705 radio, Sasha was able to make contacts around New Zealand and Australia on 20 and 40m.*



The full AREC Contact List, including District Managers and Group leaders is here:
<https://arec.nz/arec-officers/>

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AREC joins Volunteering New Zealand

In our last issue, I talked about the huge volunteer effort that goes into making AREC what it is, and featured some of the certificate of appreciation that were handed out during Volunteer Week.



I am pleased to say that AREC continues to be a member of Volunteering New Zealand. This will help us build capability to support our members

NZART AGM & AREC Forum

A reminder that the NZART AGM and AREC Forum will be held at the Brentwood Hotel in Kilbirnie on Saturday the 10th of September. Both are free to attend for NZART members. The forum, held after the AGM, is an opportunity to hear from some of the AREC National team and get an update of progress over the last 12 months, as well as projects currently underway. There is also an opportunity to ask questions. I look forward to catching up with those who can make it along.

Activity Reporting

While often seen as an administrative burden, it is very important that we report our activities as this is the information we use to report to NZ SAR and others on our activities. A recent review has shown some significant gaps which we need to move quickly to close please.

There are two reporting streams:

Reporting to Police when responding to SAR Activities

We have a requirement to report the number of AREC members and total person hours of all attendees at a SAR event. This report needs to be made within five working days of the event to the Police Incident Controller or SAR Coordinator (and remember to include the Police job number please.)

AREC Reporting

We also have a web form that should be used for reporting of all AREC activities (which includes callouts, events, training administration etc.) https://tinyurl.im/AREC_ACTIVITY_REPORTS This is a password protected document, your District Manager can provide you these details.

Typically, the Group Leader will complete this reporting however that doesn't have to be the case. If you are doing some AREC related activity, please complete the activity report or send the details to your Group Leader so it can be done for you.

We will be reviewing the reporting system in the future and working with our leaders to try and make this as painless a process as possible.

“SAR skills put to the test”

Reads the headline on a recent article in the Police Ten-One magazine on the annual Gisborne marine SAREX, more here <https://www.police.govt.nz/news/ten-one-magazine/sar-skills-put-test>

Friendly Manager

Most will have received details to sign-on to Friendly Manager, AREC's new membership system. Please take the time to complete the sign-up process. If you haven't received a link, or have any questions, please drop Annalise a line at admin@arec.nz



Until next month, stay safe.

Don, ZL2TYR

Chief Executive Officer, AREC

In AREC's 90th year of service to the community we celebrated Geoff Chapman ZL3PX's almost 60 years of service with an AREC Life Member award and Service medal with Bar.

Geoff started in AREC around 1965, was the Christchurch AREC Section leader for 15 years before stepping back in 1996 to let others take on the leadership role, but still working away in the background for the local Group as well as taking on other roles at higher levels.

Since being Section Leader Geoff has been Canterbury Area Manager, transferring to District Manager under the newer structure, but also Deputy National Director and acting National Director. Geoff has also spent some time as a trustee on the AREC Trust.



Above: Don McDonald ZL3DMC, AREC Canterbury District Manager presenting Geoff Chapman ZL3PX with an AREC Life Member Award.

Through all these years Geoff has been active with all aspects of AREC, and was instrumental in the development of the Christchurch Groups specialist communications vehicles. Together with Gareth ZL3VP, another AREC Life member recipient, spent many hours working on the first communications vehicle putting the J1 Bedford into service in 1970.

After that a second vehicle, a Daihatsu Big Van was developed as a smaller, rapid response, communications vehicle, put into service around 1990.

Later Geoff, and Gareth, worked on the replacement for the J1 Bedford, fitting out a Nisan Civilian Bus as the next generation specialist communications and command vehicle for Christchurch AREC, putting that into service in 2000, with the Bedford moving onto to a new life with Marton AREC.

Geoff has also been key to keeping the vehicles in good condition as well as looking after the electrics for the vehicles, including seeing that the Electrical Warrants were kept up to date, and looking after the

generators.

Through the years Geoff has been involved in many SAR operations, and was recognised by Police as a SAR Advisor, when these roles existed, acknowledging the key role that communications play in any SAR operation and the needed specialist support and advise for that.

In more recent times Geoff remembers some major events such as spending New Years for the turn of the millennium at the Civil Defence “bunker” just in case anything happened for Y2K.

After the Christchurch Earthquakes Geoff, and others, valiantly got the AREC communications vehicles out from garage in Eastern Christchurch, which was badly affected by quake and liquification, to get them into the city, across damaged bridges and roads, to assist Civil Defence and LandSAR with communications in the days and weeks ahead as a part of the Earthquake response around the city.

Auckland Area Meeting

Andy Brill ZL1COP

This month it was North Shore’s turn to host the quarterly AREC Auckland District meeting. Following general business, the meeting welcomed guests from New Zealand Police, Senior Sargent Gary Larsen (below, left), Officer in Charge at the Marine Rescue Centre at Mechanics Bay, and Michelle Millan (below, right), District Search and Rescue Deputy Coordinator (DSARAC for short).



One of Michelle’s duties as DSARAC is to maintain liaison with all the volunteer agencies involved in Search and Rescue, which includes AREC.

An important part of her job is to implement the “4 Rs” of emergency planning; Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery.

Reduction is to reduce the likelihood of an emergency happening. One of the ways is to do an ongoing analysis of past SAR operations on

common factors in the lead up to the incidents, for example identifying particular tracks where people regularly get lost due to poor signage, and arranging for signs to be improved.

Readiness involves making sure that the Police SAR squad is fully equipped and ready to respond. Michelle looks after the logistics of equipping and maintaining the SAR squads at constant readiness.

In the area of **Response**, Michelle is involved in the production and maintenance of pre-Plans which provide the SAR teams with all the information they may require to run a search in any specific location – Track information, access routes, key contact information, hazards, resources available etc.

Recovery is what happens after the incident itself. This involves debriefing the people involved in the search, and documentation of lessons learned and recording of any issues or problems encountered. This information is then collated and fed back into the reduction and readiness stages to help prevent future incidents and make future searches easier.

Following Michelle’s presentation the floor was open for discussion. AREC members provided some thoughts on how we can contribute to the SAR process in the future. Many thanks to Gary and Michelle for joining us and providing a valuable insight into the DSARAC role.

Photos: Henry Falkner



SAREX Season is upon us

'Spring has sprung and the grass is ris' as the old saying goes, lambs are leaping around as they pop out into some rather bad weather of late. With the longer days comes the opportunity for the various SAREX that have been postponed due to Covid to start to take place. From an AREC perspective Groups need to be contacting their local Police/LandSAR coordinators to ensure AREC teams are involved in every possible SAREX. It is only by exercising with the other SAR partners that AREC members will remain connected in to the wider SAR scene and be able to make a contribution.

From an HSW perspective SAREX give the opportunity to travel to other areas around New Zealand and see how effectively we are all putting into effect our core safety, health and well-being strategies.

As I write this column I'm about to head out to a SAREX in Taupo where Jodi (LandSAR HSW Advisor) and I will be carrying out a set of HSW Observations to see where the strengths exist in the area of HSW planning and to also identify areas where improvements can be made.

As there are no active AREC SAR members in the Taupo - Turangi area it will be interesting to see how the local LandSAR and Police manage their communication needs. All I currently know is that they are planning to use two fixed repeaters on ESB57 and ESB59 so I presume they must rely on their high point coverage to avoid having to deploy any portable repeaters.

Our focus at the SAREX though won't be on communications but on the more mundane matters of how does IMT plan to keep everyone safe, how effectively do the various teams take on their HSW responsibilities, and how IMT and the field teams coordinate their efforts to ensure best outcomes.

When you get involved with your local SAREX don't forget to ensure the AREC Team Leader asks the Police Incident Controller who has been nominated as the Safety Advisor for the SAREX. This will allow the AREC Team Leader to communicate effectively about issues that may primarily involve AREC but need to be communicated so that everyone is working to the same HSW plan.

Also, the role of Team Leader is to brief the AREC team. You cannot do this effectively unless you know the hazardscape that will confront the field teams. You will be monitoring locations and may be able to proactively alert IMT to any developing safety issues that may be arising before they actually occur e.g., likelihood of a team disappearing from radio coverage.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

As you may recall in the last Newsletter I was hoping that we would have a contract in place by now for the provision of a Wellbeing assistance program. We have a firm quote and it is now just requiring the AREC CEO to sign the contract. Unfortunately, Don has been tied up with some significant issues over the past few weeks hence the delay.

The contractual arrangements should be finalised by the time of the NZART Conference and AREC Annual Meeting. After that we should be able to send out a special Newsletter Bulletin with the details of how to use the service, contact details, etc.

As always remain sensible, stay safe, and look out for those around you as well as looking after yourself. Remember please report any issues, near-misses, good ideas, suggestions, or other matters to HSW@arec.nz and I will make sure they get addressed.

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.