THE WORLD BELOW 400 GHz

The Periodical Newsletter of the
WAIKATO VHF GROUP Inc.,
ZL1IS,
Secretary: C/- 14 Acacia Crescent,
Glenview,
Hamilton 3206

NZART BRANCH 81

Web: **www.zl1is.info**

Email: **branch.81**[at sign]**nzart.org.nz**

DECEMBER 2026 ISSUE

WAIKATO VHF GROUP CONTACTS

President	David King	ZL1DGK	027 630 8568
Vice President	Neill Ellis	ZL1TAJ	021 497 611
Secretary	Alan Wallace	ZL1AMW	027 495 4006
Treasurer	Ian Brown	ZL1TAT	0274 818 414
Committee	David McMillan	ZL1TLQ	027 477 0854
Committee	Chris Hattan	ZL2CJ	027 849 9206
Committee	Dennis Seymour	ZL1UET	021 747 664
Webmaster	David McMillan	ZL1TLQ	027 477 0854
Trading Table	Tom Bevan	ZL1THG	0273 093 449
NL Editor	David King	ZL1DGK	027 630 8568

General Meeting December 2026

The next General Meeting of the Waikato VHF Group will be held on

Sunday, 6th December 2026, 1:30pm

at Tauranga Coastguard, 72 Keith Allen Drive,Sulphur Point,Tauranga.

Google Maps coordinates: -37.661988 176.168117 free parking available opposite

Chris ZL2CJ will present on Digital Voice Modes, including a demonstration, refer to pages 7~9 of our September newsletter for background.

The "WaiPlenty" 2m repeater on **146.950MHz** will be monitored prior to this meeting for anyone requiring directions.

Supporting amateur radio on VHF and higher frequencies across the Waikato & Bay of Plenty since 1963

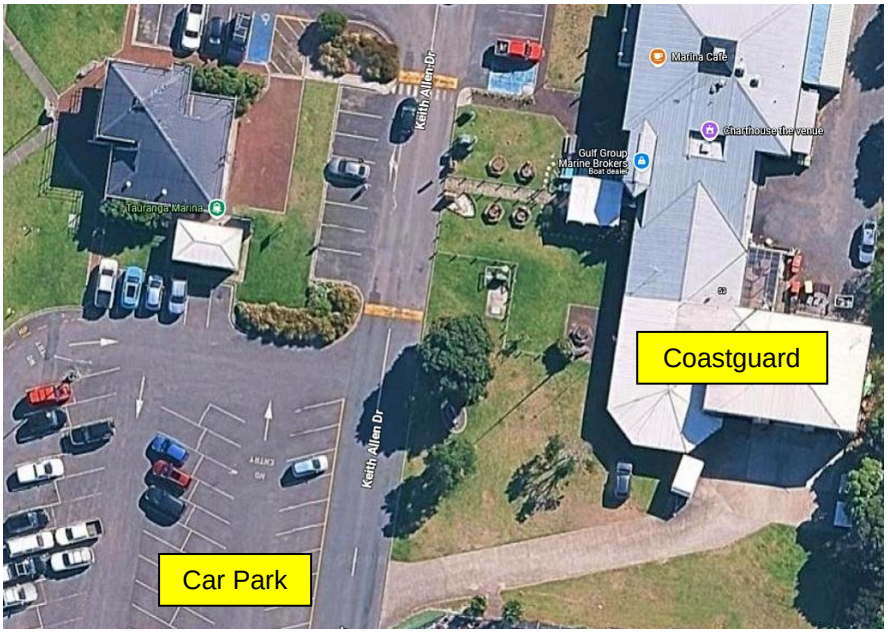
Read our history at https://www.zl1is.info/docs/WVHF_Group_History.pdf

NOTE: Our **December 2026 general meeting** will be held at Tauranga (NOT Te Aroha)

DIRECTIONS:



Driving east along SH2, take the **Sulphur Point** exit into Merrielees Road. 200m along Merrielees Road towards the Port (opposite Matamata Motor Trimmers), turn **left into Cross Rd**. Continue along Cross Rd, which becomes **Keith Allan Drive** where after 800m you'll see the Tauranga Coastguard on your right opposite the car park.



Thanks to Google Maps Street View for images on this page



VHF FIELD DAY 2026:

Our general meeting at Tauranga on December 6th coincides with the second day of VHF Field Day which runs from 5pm to 11pm on Saturday 5th and 7am to 1pm on Sunday December 6th. Rules can be found at https://nzart.org.nz/activities/contests/vhf/

Past Newsletters:

Copies of our newsletters going back to 2005 can be viewed at https://www.zl1is.info/newsletters.html

Under the 'Resources' tab on our web site are links to a range of useful web sites. Members are also welcome to submit items for listing on our web site.

Our September 2026 newsletter: https://www.zl1is.info/news/2026-09_the_world_below.pdf

Subscriptions:

Our financial year aligns with the calender year, so **subscriptions fall due on 1st January each year**. Each subscription payment is acknowledged with a receipt emailed to the member – check your inbox, or if not sure, ask our Treasurer. Receipt of this newsletter demonstrates your sub is up to date. Can you encourage someone else to join? The value returned far exceedes the subs we collect.

Subscription rates for 2027 remain unchanged as follows:

Member or Associate	$35.00
Family or Club Member [1]	$40.00
Student Member [2]	$20.00

1. Family members = two or more members residing permanently at the same address, please provide all names & callsigns.
2. Student member = currently enrolled at NZ secondary school or tertiary educational institution.

Subscriptions can be paid by Direct Credit to our Westpac account 03 1555 0091289 00
Please enter your name/callsign in the transaction description so we can identify who payment is from.

Contact details etc should be updated using our subscription form available on our web site at
https://www.zl1is.info/docs/MEMBERSHIP_FORM-A5_V26-1.pdf

Licence Fees have increased for Amateur Radio Service:

Radio Spectrum Management (RSM) increased radio licence fees on 1st July 2026, and for amateur radio repeater, links and beacons that increase was 32% to $66.00 per licence per annum.

The **cost of sponsoring each Waikato VHF Group radio licence is now $66.00 per annum**.

Our Meetings & Minutes:

The Waikato VHF Group Inc holds **four general meetings each year**, with our Committee meeting on-line approximately one month prior. Our quarterly newsletter which includes notification of our upcoming general meeting, to which all members and visitors are invited, is published after our Committee meets (and determines that meeting date which is also dependent on venue availability). **Minutes** of the previous meeting (Annual or General) are now published at the end of that newsletter for members to read prior to attending the meeting rather than enduring them being read out at the meeting.

Month	Meeting Type	Meeting scheduled	Minutes published in our newsletter
March	AGM	2nd half March	March N/L following year
June	Normal general	2nd half June	September N/L
September	Normal general	2nd half September	December N/L
December	Normal general	1st half December	June N/L following year

A guest speaker and/or presentation is arranged for most meetings. If you have a suggestion for a presentation or speaker, let one of our committee members know so we can arrange/schedule it.

Significantly increased cost of hiring the Events Centre at Te Aroha led our committee to seek alternative venues, so we'll be **alternating future meetings between Tauranga and Hamilton**.

Monday night YL Net on National System

There is a YL net every Monday night at 7.30pm on the National System. Join them to make contacts around NZ and to chat about anything.

This is a great way to form friendships with other females who share the amateur radio hobby. We also meet up every year at the NZART conference so you can put faces to names.

National System - GUIDELINES

The National System is a network of linked high-performance voice repeaters. Their primary function is to extend voice communication range of mobile and home stations in the UHF band, providing coverage across most of New Zealand.

In its present form, the National System provides a single voice channel, and, when a station accesses the System, and then the signal is relayed by all other repeaters in the network.

The National System may also be used for AREC and CD purposes in times of need.

The system Trustees have also authorised the use of the National System to relay the monthly NZART broadcast, and for Jamboree on the Air. Specific events may also be approved from time-to-time, for example the past satellite link-ups to Australia.

Operating

1. Give AREC stations priority.
2. Give stations using portable power priority.
3. When calling all stations, there is no need to call CQ, simply announce your Call-sign and that you are listening on the National System.
4. Announce Call-signs at the start and end of a contact, and at least once every 10 minutes.
5. Each over should be limited to 2 minutes maximum duration.
6. Before replying to an over, allow the repeater "tail" to finish, then wait a further 3 seconds before transmitting. NOTE that intermediate ULS stations like Kaimai '485 don't have a tail.
7. If another station announces their Call-sign during the 3 seconds wait period between each over, the station about to reply should announce "Go Ahead" and let them transmit immediately.
8. If you wish to break into a contact which is already underway, wait until the 3 second break between the overs, and then announce your Call-sign. Do not announce "Break".
9. Contacts should be limited to 10 minutes maximum duration.
10. Announce when contacts are completed, so other users can establish a contact without risk of doubling.

Conventions

1. Do not transmit on National System repeater output frequencies. Monitor reverse frequency, and if the signal is satisfactory, then QSY [change frequency] from the National System to a simplex frequency.
2. Ignore annoying transmissions. Do not respond to, or comment on, any transmission not identified by a Call-sign.
3. The National System may be used only for voice communication.
4. The National System may not be used for cross-band contacts. The Trustees reserve the absolute right to disconnect any portion of the National System so used.
5. No additions/extensions may be made to the National System without the prior approval of the system Trustees. Those Trustees reserve the absolute right to disconnect any portion of the National System so used. The Trustees require that any proposal to connect must propose equipment which complies with The National System Specification.

The National System can be heard by a wide audience, both amateurs and potential new amateurs. Extra consideration and courtesy will reflect a good image of amateur radio.

The above is a formal document from the National System Trustees.
Published in the interests of all Amateurs by Wellington VHF Group, NZART Branch 74.

Early VHF Groups in New Zealand

The **Auckland VHF Group** was established in 1956, and became a branch of NZART in 1967. Its magazine “Spectrum” was first published in 1968, and the group opened its own clubrooms in 1972.

The **Waikato VHF Group** was formed in 1963 catering for enthusiasts south of the Bombay range.

The **Wellington VHF Group** started in 1970.

Following the 1963 introduction of the Non Morse Technican grade of licence for operation on frequencies above 144MHz, there was a significant increase of activity especially on 2-metres. Over 5,800 “T calls” were licenced over the next ten years. With limited supply of radio equipment specifically manufactured for amateur bands, operators used ex commercial radios converted for use on amateur bands, or constructed equipment from scratch themselves.

VHF Field Days began in 1971 involving teams operating VHF, UHF and microwave equipment from higher altitude locations.

Milestones of NZART history are published at https://nzart.org.nz/info/milestones-the-history-of-nzart/

‘For Sale’ items on Waikato VHF Group Web site:

When our new web site was created in 2025, we included a page for items offered for sale, see https://www.zl1is.info/sale.html Links to this are under the home page header ‘SALE’ tab.

Items presently for sale include:

50 Ohm coaxial relay, DC to 12.4GHz frequency range, 250 Watt power handling capability, 12V DC coil, single pole double throw with series N socket connectors.

Delivery to be arranged at purchaser’s cost,
or may be collected at our December meeting in Tauranga.



Surge Arrestor, Polyphaser IS-60V-30A floating ground model. Essential protection between solar array or remote power supply and your precious radio equipment. New in original packaging, includes data sheet.

Delivery to be arranged at purchaser’s cost,
or may be collected at our December meeting in Tauranga.



DC to DC Converter, Digitec AA0236 (new in original packaging)

Input Voltage:	6~28V DC
Output Voltage:	3 / 6 / 9 / 12 / 15V DC
Output Current:	1.5A maximum
Dimensions:	60mm (L) x 45mm (W) x 20mm (D)
Weight:	110g

Delivery to be arranged at purchaser’s cost,
or may be collected at our December meeting in Tauranga.



These are the minutes of our last General Meeting ….

WAIKATO VHF GROUP Inc.
NZART Branch 81

Minutes of General Meeting

Held at the Te Aroha Events Centre, 44 Stanley Ave., Te Aroha
On Sunday 27 September 2026 at 1:30pm.

Present:- David ZL1DGK (Chair), Neill ZL1TAJ (Vice President), Ian ZL1TAT (Treasurer), Alan ZL1AMW (Secretary) Chris ZL2CJ, Rod ZL1TFX, Ian ZL1AOX, Margaret Ashley, John ZL1PO, Dave ZL1DRG, Roy ZL1BPB, Wally ZL1WE, Maxine ZL1FW

ZL1DGK welcomed all to the meeting, and announced this would be our last meeting in the Te Aroha Events Centre as the charges for the facility have increased significantly and the committee has agreed to change to meeting in clubrooms of other Branches.

We have received invitations from local groups, and our current plan is to rotate between holding meetings in the Hamilton and Tauranga areas.

While meeting in the Te Aroha facility has worked well for us, this new concept will give opportunity for a greater awareness of our Group's role among local Amateur's.

Apologies: ZL1KRH, ZL1UET, ZL1THG, ZL1TLQ, ZL2TUZ

Minutes of Last Meeting:- Minutes from our previous (05 July 2026) general meeting as circulated with the September issue of our newsletter were accepted.

Matters Arising:- no matters were raised.

Finances:- Ian ZL1TAT reported that our major expense is repeater costs, especially license fees which totalled $858 this year.

Correspondence: Auckland VHF Group Newsletter "

General Business:

There was discussion on encouraging our members who are also members of other branches to share information on our VHF Group's role of running and managing costs for the wider Waikato / BOP repeater network.

There being no General Business, our Chair passed to Alan ZL1AMW for presentation on Home Automation using Open Source Software.

The meeting concluded with afternoon tea together, thanks to David ZL1DGK