

# Remembrance Day Contest - Introduction - 2014

## lead-in countdown beeps

### THIS TRANSMISSION STARTS

so that the *last* word (“Open”) is at 02:59:59UTC

(Competition starts: Sat 16th August 2014, 0300 UTC / 1300AEST)

#### **Peter Ellis VK1PE**

Welcome in 2014 to the Remembrance Day Contest, Australia’s biggest and most significant annual amateur radio competition. I am Peter Ellis VK1PE.

Each year we pause to consider the roles that amateurs played in World War II, and we honour the passing of the brave servicemen who did not return home when the hostilities ceased. However, the whole idea of the contest is to have fun. Indeed for the next 24 hours we’re pretty sure the bands will be at their busiest for the whole year, so please be involved.

The rules for this weekend’s contest were published in the WIA magazine Amateur Radio, and are available on the website at <http://www.wia.org.au>. There is no obligation to participate, but even with 30 minutes on air, your involvement will make a difference, **particularly by submitting a log**. It really doesn’t matter if this is your first RD, or your 50<sup>th</sup>, history says that you will enjoy the experience. This contest for us Amateurs, just it has been every year since the late 1940s.

We conduct the RD Contest for 24 hours on the weekend closest to the day called VP Day – Victory in the Pacific Day. This day formally marked the end of World War II.

So, each year in the RD we spend a little while in quiet contemplation prior to its 0300 Zulu start, while we remember those people who didn't make it back but whose efforts helped to save our nation, then after 0300 Zulu we celebrate in a joyous way by competing together for up to 24 hours in a state versus state race to win the most on air contacts.

This year, we will hear from the President of the WIA, Phil Plait VK2ASD, and have a reading of the names of Amateur Radio operators known to have been killed during World War 2.

recorded msg ~2min , President WIA, Phil Wait VK2ASD

reading of the names of the fallen Amateurs

**VK1PE:** Now, to our official speaker.

Last year, Captain Jeff Goedecke, Director General Navy Communication and Information Warfare, delivered the opening speech for the contest. He began life in the navy at the lowest rank, and has become the professional head of his specialisation.

A person with a similar road to the top of his profession is our speaker for 2014:

## **WOFF-AF Mark Pentreath, CSM**

**WARRANT OFFICER OF THE AIR FORCE**

Warrant Officer Mark Pentreath joined the Australian Regular Army in April 1981 and graduated from training with 7th Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare) in June 1982 as an Operator Signalman. After postings to 7th Signal Regiment (EW), Joint Telecommunications Unit Melbourne and the Joint Telecommunications School as an instructor, he transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force as a Signals Operator (Linguist) [SIGSOP(L)] in March 1992.

Warrant Officer Pentreath had postings to the Defence Signals Directorate, Joint Telecommunications School, 462SQN and AFHQ as the SIGSOP Senior Mustering Advisor.

Between 1999 - 2002, Warrant Officer Pentreath was posted to the Australian Defence Force Academy as a Divisional Senior NCO and Squadron Sergeant Major - Air Force Squadron. During this tour he was awarded an Australia Day Medallion in recognition of his contribution to the development of Officer Cadets at the Academy.

Warrant Officer Pentreath has seen operational service in both Iraq and Afghanistan in 2004 and 2007 respectively. In recognition of his performance in the Cryptologic Services Group Baghdad, WOFF Pentreath was awarded a Chief of Defence Force commendation by General Cosgrove in September 2004.

Warrant Officer Pentreath transferred to the Executive Warrant Officer mustering in April 2008 as the Group Warrant Officer for the Aerospace Operational Support Group (AOSG). He graduated from the Australian Command and Staff College in 2010 having done Foundation and Air Force studies. He was awarded a Conspicuous Service Medal for meritorious service to AOSG on Australia Day 2011. After serving at the Air Force Training Group, Warrant Officer Pentreath was appointed as the seventh Warrant Officer of the Air Force on 04 November 2011.

### **Informal question and answer.**

**VK1PE:** Would I be correct to say that almost all of your professional life as a “communicator” was spent listening to a radio receiver?

WOFF-AF Pentreath: You are correct. As an Operator Signaller in the Army and Signals Operator in the Air Force my primary role was to listen to various methods of communications transmitted by radio transmitters. From the good old Morse code to voice and other electronic communications media. I remain incredibly proud of the work my brethren from across the ADF continue to perform in this important but largely unrecognised role.

### **IN-PERSON INTRODUCTION**

PE: WOFF-AF Mark Pentreath, CSM, on behalf of the Wireless Institute of Australia, and the Amateur Radio operators of the nation, thank you, as we remember both the amateur and professional communicators in the nation's armed services and the supporting elements in the community. I invite you to deliver the opening address.

### **WOFF-AF MARK PENREATH:**

The Remembrance Day Contest honours the Australian radio operators who served their country with distinction during World War II, but who failed to return home afterwards.

Of course, Australian forces played a key role in the Pacific War from 1942 until early 1944, making up the majority of Allied strength throughout much of the fighting in the South West Pacific. Appropriately, this contest is held on the weekend nearest 15 August, Victory in the Pacific Day. This year the Contest falls on the 16th and 17<sup>th</sup> of August. But, let's not forget some other dates in August:

21 August 1945 – the Japanese surrender on the island of Ambon.

25 August 1942 – the Battle of Milne Bay (Philippines) in which 75 and 76 SQNs were heavily involved.

And, last year, Captain Jeff Goedecke RAN talked about the Navy's part in Defence communication. You won't be surprised that I'm looking at military communications from an aviation perspective.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of July, the feature article on Wikipedia was “Australian contribution to the Battle of Normandy” with a significant proportion of our Aussies involved in the D-Day assault. The campaign that followed saw RAAF aircrew – flying in RAAF squadrons – based out of England and later Normandy, France play an important and perilous role in the War. Each bomber and long distance liaison aircraft had a radio operator as an integral member of the crew. The importance of this role was reinforced across the Pacific theatre, with long flights being undertaken regularly across large masses of open water and often inhospitable and largely unpopulated islands. The radio operators talked to operators at HF radio stations attached to airfields throughout the theatre of war.

Then there were the radio intercept stations, such as those in Darwin at the time of the bombing of 19 February 1942. Of course for me the role these members played holds a particular interest and evokes a tremendous sense of pride. The specialist radio operators

from Darwin later formed the nucleus of No. 1 Wireless Unit RAAF, an Australian signals intelligence unit established on 25 April 1945 at Pimlico in Townsville. These operators were adept at International Morse but also the Japanese Wabun (or 'kana') code and kept an ear on Japanese flight operations – passing on their intercepts to the Allied code breakers.

The Air Force of today continues to recognise the importance of well-trained professional Airmen and Airwomen to provide the various communication requirements for a technologically advanced Air Force. Our Number 1 Combat Communications Squadron has a long and distinguished record of providing tactical communications and information systems in support of a variety of operations and exercises. 1CCS has grown significantly over the years, from humble beginnings with 12 people in 1965 to the present day where some 300 men and women provide tactical and temporary CIS support to operations, exercises and other activities in support of Air Force, the Australian Defence Force and the community.

Likewise the Air Force continues to provide an important signals intelligence capability that ensures we meet the needs of our Service, the Government and the nation. We've come a long way from me scratching down Morse on an old message pad in the early 80's!

Bringing our thoughts to the present, we think of rotations of ADF men and women to Afghanistan, and should also not forget those deployed to Somalia, South Sudan, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Israel and Lebanon, and the South-West Pacific. The Navy is patrolling the northern coasts of Australia, operating in our northern region conducting border protection operations, and has a ship deployed in the Middle East. Our RAAF aircraft and their well-trained personnel are patrolling the oceans and skies and providing strategic and regional airlift, including recent and ongoing support for two civilian air tragedies: off the coast of Western Australia (MH370), and in Ukraine (MH17).

Since the last remembrance day contest, one Australian serviceman has been killed whilst serving in Afghanistan, and I wish to acknowledge:

- ▮ **Todd John Chidgey**, 29, a lance corporal from the 2nd Commando Regiment attached to Australian Defence Force Headquarters Kabul, who died from a non-combat-related gunshot wound on 1 July 2014.

We could hope this is the last such death on operations.

As the contest begins, let's also not forget that 18 August is Vietnam Veterans Day. Let's remember that there are men and women for whom this day brings a special sense of comradeship as they recall their former service.

The numbers of WW2 service personnel are thinning as the years march on, but we honour them today as our country has done for 70 years. What a legacy they have left!

Radio Amateurs of Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea, on this weekend nearest the anniversary of VP Day, it is my great pleasure to formally **declare** the **Remembrance Day Contest** for 2014 -- **Open**.

lead-out long "AR" .\_.\_. ("end of message")



“CT” \_.\_.\_ (“commence transmission”)  
CONTEST COMMENCES

NOTE: WOFF-AF PENREATH said the AR & CT codes by voice. He joked about this because it reminded him of his time using Morse code.

**\*\*END\*\***

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