



**2015 Year
Annual General Meeting
Open Forum Reports**

Spectrum Committee

(Regulatory, ACMA, ITU, IARU, Repeaters & Beacons, Standards, Interference & EME, Monitoring Service)

Phil VK2ASD (Director), Peter VK3MV, Roger VK2ZRH (Director),
Brian VK3MI, Dale VK1DSH, Peter VK3APO, Andrew VK4QF, Richard VK2AAH, Ron VK3AFW,
Gilbert VK1GH, Rob VK1KRM, Noel VK3NH, Doug VK3UM (SK)

Technical Advisory sub-Committee (Tech support, Band plans etc.)

Chairman John Martin VK3KM

Technical Advisors

VHF/UHF	Walter Howse VK6KZ
Microwaves	Peter Freeman VK3KAI
Repeaters	Peter Mill VK3APO
Band Plans; Beacons	John Martin VK3KM
EME	Doug McArthur VK3UM (SK)
ATV	Peter Cossins VK3BFG
Satellites	Paul Paradigm VK2TXT
Digital DX Modes	Rex Moncur VK7MO
Packet Radio	Barry White VK2AAB
D-Star; APRS	Richard Hoskin VK3JFK

Regional Advisors

VK1	Amanda Hawes VK1WX
VK2	Tim Mills VK2ZTM
VK3	Peter Mill VK3APO
VK4	Bill Sebbens VK4XZ
VK5/8	Paul Bell VK5BX
VK6	Eddie Saunders VK6ZSE
VK7	Rex Moncur VK7MO

Administrative Tasks

National Repeater Co-ordinator	Peter Mill VK3APO
Data Bases; VHF-UHF Records	John Martin VK3KM
TAC Email Admin	Robert Broomhead VK3DN

ITU and Related Activities

The year since the last WIA board meeting has been exceptionally busy. The culmination of the period was the 2015 World Radiocommunications Conference where a number of issues relevant to the amateur service were discussed, the main issue being that of a new secondary allocation to the amateur service around 5300 kHz (WRC-15 agenda item 1.4) and a new primary allocation to the radiolocation service for short range radars in the 77.5 – 78 GHz frequency band (WRC-15 agenda item 1.18) which is an existing primary amateur allocation.

The end result was a new 15 kHz allocation in the 60 m band to the amateur service and minimal impact on amateur usage of the 77.5 – 78 GHz frequency band. These were good outcomes were hard fought at WRC-15.

My role in this was to:

1. Attend the regular Australian WRC preparatory meetings run by the ACMA, acting as coordinator for WRC-15 agenda items 1.4 and 1.18. This group develops the Australian positions on all WRC agenda items which are then approved by the Australian Government for negotiations at WRC which is a treaty level meeting.
2. In July 2015 attend and chair the meeting of ITU-R WG5A-1 'Amateur and Amateur Satellite services' held in Bucharest, Romania. WG5A-1 undertook the necessary sharing and compatibility studies for WRC-15 agenda item 1.4.

The sharing and compatibility report ITU-R M.2335 is available at

<http://www.itu.int/pub/R-REP-M/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=R-REP-M.2335>

WG5A-1 is also responsible for the ongoing work of updating and maintaining all ITU amateur specific reports and recommendations.

3. In August 2015 attend the 5th Asia-Pacific Telecommunity Preparatory meeting (APG15-5) in Seoul, Korea, present the agreed Australian positions on WRC-15 agenda items 1.4 and 1.18 and take part in developing a regional view (where possible) on WRC-15 agenda items. Regional views and positions have become an important part of WRC preparations and negotiations.
4. In November 2015 attend WRC-15 in Geneva, Switzerland. I was Australian coordinator for agenda items 1.4 and 1.18 and I chaired the group that determined the outcome of agenda 1.4 and drafted the necessary regulatory text for the ITU Radio regulations.

The final acts of WRC-15 are available for free and can be downloaded from

<http://www.itu.int/en/publications/Pages/publications.aspx?lang=en&media=electronic&parent=R-ACT-WRC.12-2015> (Note: you have to open an account to download the document)

5. Attend the WRC Industry Debrief hosted by the ACMA in Sydney on March 8 and present the outcomes of WRC-15 agenda items 1.4 and 1.18 and their impact on Australia. These presentations can be found at <http://www.acma.gov.au/Industry/Spectrum/Spectrum-planning/International-planning-ITU-and-other-international-planning-bodies/wrc-15-industry-debrief>

Work for the WRC-19 cycle has already begun with an ITU WG5A-1 meeting scheduled for May in Geneva. A number of issues relating to WRC-19 agenda items will be discussed and work carried over from the last cycle will continue.

I thank the WIA President and Board for supporting this work. I also acknowledge the IARU and their provision of significant funds for travel and living expenses.

Submitted by Dale Hughes VK1DSH, ITU Representative, Chair ITU-R WG5A-1

IARU Liaison

IARU and in our case Region 3, is responsible for representing the amateur service at WRC preparatory meetings of our regional telecommunications organisation, where the administrations of the ITU's Region 3 attempt to agree a common position in respect of the various WRC agenda items.

Peter Young VK3MV was elected to the position of Region 3 Director following the retirement of Geof Atkinson VK3AFA.

Peter young and Phil Wait VK2ASD attended the IARU Region 3 meeting in Bali and presented several discussion papers.

ACMA liaison

The WIA was a very active participant in the Department of Communications Spectrum Review process during 2015. The ACMA itself was undergoing significant change during 2015, and it was necessary to remake the Amateur Radio Licence Conditions Determination (the LCD), largely in its current form with only minor variations, in order ensure the continued operation of the Amateur Service. The WIA prepared for a very substantial submission to the ACMA during 2016.

We are expecting significant change to occur over the next few years as these reviews work through. Progress on issues can be tracked on the hot-issues section of the WIA website.

Standards Committees

RC006/RC004 Standards Development

I am the WIA's representative on Standards Australia committees RC006 and RC004, which develop and maintain AS/NZS radio communications standards. As these are generally industry driven standards, the WIA generally participates in the capacity of a watching brief on spectrum issues which may affect the amateur service. RC006 and RC004 held back to back meetings on 22/23 July in Sydney, 21/22 October in Melbourne and on 17/18 February in Christchurch.

The RC006 (Land mobile and General) committee chaired by myself (For ARCIA):-

- Developed an amendment to the recently published AS/NZS4295 standard to correct editorial errors
- Revised the VHF AM aeronautical standard AS/NZS4583 as an ARCIA sponsored project, to become a direct adoption of ETSI EN 300 676-1:2011
- Started development of AS/NZS 4768 part three for digital land mobile equipment, as the other part of the ARCIA sponsored project, to extend coverage to the latest "mature" international standards to include non-continuous envelope emissions and narrower 6.25kHz channels
- Started a major revision of AS/NZS 4268, a project sponsored by ACMA, to encompass recent changes made to the LIPD class licence and also move the structure of the standard to one that will eventually update automatically by directly referencing requirements in a "re-vamped" LIPD class licence.

The RC004 (Marine) committee, chaired by Peter Pokorny of AMSA:-

- Decision made to drop current AS/NZS 4415.1 (DSC) and AS/NZS 4415.2 (non-DSC) projects and instead focus on adopting under a new AS/NZS series picking up acceptable ETSI and IEC VHF marine (DSC) standards to replace AS/NZS 4415.1. This approach was supported by the ACMA.
- AS/NZS 4415.2 will lapse but remain fit for purpose. (AS/NZS only market)
- Amendments to AS/NZS 4280.1 (EPIRB) and AS/NZS 4280.2 (PLB) are currently being finalised for public comment stage.
- Published AS/NZS 4869.4 (MSLS using AIS) adopts ETSI EN 303 098-1:2014

Unfortunately, RC004 is currently without a chair because Peter Pokorny and his proposed replacement, the previous chair, Jillian Carson-Jackson have left AMSA.

The next meetings will be scheduled to occur in Melbourne once the closing dates for public comments to three RC006 and RC004 standards projects are known.

Also of note: Standards New Zealand is now a business unit within the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) in New Zealand and Department of Communications has undertaken a review of radio communications regulation in Australia. The outcome of the review will be a new Radiocommunications Act which will incorporate changes to both licensing and equipment supply (including standards) to better manage the risks associated with emerging technologies and changing spectrum usage. ACMA has advised the standards

committees (RC-004 and RC-006) that the new arrangements for equipment supply will require a reconsideration of the committees' interaction with the ACMA. This could include a more advisory role for the committees (e.g. recommending to the ACMA, standards for inclusion in the ACMA's regulatory arrangements).

Submitted by Noel Higgins VK3NH, WIA Standards Representative

TE003/TE003-19 Standards Development

TE003 and TE003-19 committees are concerned with electromagnetic compatibility (EMC), including the protection of radio reception, in the range 9 kHz to 400 GHz, from interference caused by operation of electrical or electronic appliances, and the setting of limits and test methods. The committee's liaise with the ACMA and with the following International Organizations in the preparation of Standards to protect the radio spectrum:

- *CIGRE (International Council on Large Electric Systems)*
- *EBU (European Broadcasting Union)*
- *ETSI (European Telecommunications Standards Institute)*
- *IARU (International Amateur Radio Union)*
- *ITU-R (International Telecommunications Union - Radio-communications Sector).*

I recently joined SAA committee TE-003-19. This is a sub-committee of TE-003 Electromagnetic Interference. My role is to support Phil Wait and to represent the interests of the WIA membership. I have some expertise in EMC testing and measurement analysis so I am able to make other contributions to the committee.

This committee has the responsibility of looking at technical aspects of standards from CISPR, IEC and other international standards and making recommendations if required for the Australian SAA response.

I have participated in five of the last six committee meetings (held every two months) and made some suggested improvements to drafts which have been accepted for the Australian input. Perhaps the one with the greatest potential impact concerns frequency allocations for wireless charging of devices ranging from tooth brushes to cars. Our response generally supports the IARU stance which is to limit these devices to specific bands that do not impact on communications or navigation systems.

Submitted by Ron Cook VK3AFW, WIA Standards Representative

National Technical Advisory Sub-committee

Data Bases

Steve Ireland VK2MD has taken up the task of fully updating and maintaining the repeater data base.

Band Plans

During the past year, major changes have been made to the 2 metre and 70 cm band plans. On 2 metres, 500 kHz of the band has been reallocated from simplex use to repeaters. Of this, 400 kHz will be used to provide a second set of input channels for the 147 MHz block of repeaters. This will help overcome some interference issues, but as it does not provide a new set of repeater pairs (output channels as well as inputs) it is a lavish use of the limited spectrum available. It has also created some unresolved issues. There is now a shortage of simplex channels, and there are issues with established simplex frequencies (such as the ARDF homing beacons channel) which will continue to be used despite also being nominated as new repeater input channels. These clashes will need to be resolved, but it is not clear how this can be done.

On the 70 cm band, a new repeater input segment has been created, allowing new repeaters to be allocated without the LIPD interference that has caused problems for some years. However the new plan has handed over virtually all of the previously unallocated spectrum to repeaters. There is now no reserve spectrum available for the future development of weak signal work and new narrow band techniques. This despite the pressures on our spectrum and the need for improved spectrum efficiency in the future. I am concerned that these major band plan changes were made in some haste and without detailed consultation with the TAC or with amateurs in general.

Committee Membership

The committee members are listed in the Committee header. It is with much regret that I record the passing of Doug McArthur VK3UM, the TAC EME advisor, and that position is now vacant.

Submitted by John Martin VK3KM, Chair Technical Advisory Sub-committee

Repeater and Beacon Advisory Service

Due to resourcing decisions at the ACMA, the timeframes for having repeater and beacon licences issues have now blown out considerably. Only a very small number of applications are being processed by the ACMA, and we are not able to give any accurate prediction.

We have discussed the situation with the ACMA and we hope the current situation will improving in the near future, but currently they are processing applications forwarded in the second half of last year. The delay is due to the work required for the interference

potential analysis. At this time our advice to anyone who desires a speedy outcome is to use a private frequency assigner rather than rely on the ACMA.

We were very fortunate to have Andrew Chapman come on board during 2015. Thanks Andrew VK4QF for your valuable assistance in this quite challenging area.

Submitted by Peter Mill VK3APO, Repeater and Beacon Coordinator

WIA Monitoring System Report

The WIA Monitoring System is one of many radio societies reporting arrangements of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU). The IARU Monitoring System provide reports of intruders into the “Primary” status Amateur Service high frequency bands to the relevant Regulatory Agencies in member countries. At the last IARU Region 3 Conference, I stepped down as the regional monitoring system coordinator after my election as a Region 3 Director. The new coordinator is Dr Titon Dutono, YB3PET. I will continue in my role as the WIA Monitoring System Coordinator.

Like many other areas of the WIA, the monitoring system relies upon volunteers for without their significant contribution each month the WIA could not provide its reports to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) the Australian spectrum regulator. I am particularly grateful to John Kirk, VK4TJ for his monthly reports. I would like to thank the many ad-hoc reports that are sent in by individuals via the WIA website electronic lodgement system.

In the year 2015, WIA observers detected 5289 intruders, which contrasted with 5643 reports in 2014. The WIA continues to provide monthly monitoring reports to the ACMA of these intrusions. Due to the iterant nature of some intruders, the ACMA has difficulty in determining which ITU member administration is responsible, which draws out the process for their removal. In many cases there has been some success but only to see the same intruder return some time later. There are, however, some Administrations that ignore requests for removal of interfering services from our Primary status bands.

As reported last year with reasonable propagation conditions on the higher HF bands, there has been a multitude of Over-The-Horizon-Radar (OTHR) systems. There is still a large proliferation of Chinese, Turkish, Iranian and British OTHR systems along with CODAR systems (oceanographic radars) particularly on the 20 to 10 meter bands. There is also increasing numbers of digital emissions where the use of Software Defined Receivers (SDR) has been useful in identifying non-amateur digital systems that are frequency hopping.

The monthly monitoring reports are placed on the “Members Section” of the WIA website. For the WIA monitoring system to continue to work volunteers are required - Can you help? Information can be found on the WIA website on how to become an observer and what’s involved, or you can contact me via vk3mv@wia.org.au .

Submitted by Peter Young VK3MV, WIA Monitoring System Coordinator

Administrative Committee

Bruce Deefholts (Executive Administrator), David VK3RU (Secretary), Phil VK2ASD (President), Fred VK3DAC (Vice President), Treasurer (Murray Leadbetter)

The Administrative Committee is concerned with the day-to-day running of the WIA, the efficient operation of the WIA Office, and the WIA's financial management.

Total number of amateurs

The total number of amateurs in Australia is the ACMA total of Amateur Licences less Repeaters, Beacons and cancelled / expired licences.

Licence Grade	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Foundation	2,204	2,248	2,304	2089	2096
Standard	2,033	2,005	2,012	1827	1901
Advanced	10,306	10,123	9,874	10119	10147
Total	14,543	14,376	14,190	14,035	14,144

WIA Membership Statistics and New Licences

The total number of WIA members in 2015 is taken from a MEMNET report and is slightly lower than expected. The new and upgraded licences are taken from the IT report.

The Wireless Institute of Australia						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Amateurs in Australia	14,642	14,543	14,376	14,190	14,040	14,144
WIA Membership	4,578	4,575	4,562	4,538	4,465	4,253
% WIA Members	31%	31%	32%	32%	32%	31%
New & Upgrade Licences Issued						
Foundation	480	411	360	414	382	390
Standard	137	121	100	118	104	115
Advance	85	96	86	93	104	250
Total	702	628	546	625	590	755
% of Amateur Community	4.8%	4.3%	3.8%	4.4%	4.2%	5.3%

WIA Administration

In the latter half of 2015, and following an increasing number of complaints, it became clear that a full review of the WIA administration was required. A review was commissioned and came to the conclusion that the WIA office was not meeting the expectations of the Board or the members, and that a restructure of the WIA operation was required. A restructure was subsequently carried out and as part of that restructure the Office Manager position was replaced with a higher level Executive Administrator position. The Office Manager accepted redundancy.

Following the restructure, WIA Director Fred Swainston VK3DAC acted as temporary Executive Administrator, initially for a 6 week period and later extended until early in 2016. During that time Fred reorganised and documented many of the WIA office functions and procedures, introduced new initiatives, and generally streamlined the office and improved customer service. Fred continues to oversee the WIA office in a voluntary capacity.

Bruce Deefholts joined the WIA as Executive Administrator late in 2015. Dianne Ashton retired in July 2015 and was replaced by Petra, initially as a temporary agency appointment but more recently as a permanent employee of the WIA.

The WIA is very fortunate to have both Bruce and Petra working full-time at the WIA Office and member feedback is very encouraging.

The WIA has been systematically moving core business functions, some of which were previously being performed by volunteers outside the WIA office, into the office where they are performed by salaried staff. Conversely, some non-core activities, which were previously performed by salaried staff, are planned to be moved out of the office. Moving critical activities into the office which are necessary for the WIA to function, such as membership administration, day to day financial activities, and club insurance, should make the administration of the WIA more resilient to an ageing membership and volunteers.

Too much of the office time is taken up with telephone and Email enquiries, especially solving MEMNET issues, and we need to find a way to reduce staff-time on these items.

The WIA also continues to provide services on a cost-recovery basis on behalf of the Commonwealth, such as education and assessment administration, callsign and certificate of proficiency administration.

Over the last year the executive manager and IT services team undertook a review of the Memnet member management system, and identified a number of shortcomings which were causing members to experience difficulties logging in and renewing their membership. Those issues have now largely been fixed, and we appreciate member's patience and understanding as we continue to solve a few remaining issues. The IT Committee report goes into this issue in detail. ***Submitted by Phil Wait VK2ASD***

WIA Bookshop

By midyear 2015 the bookshop had over 30 back orders. The bookshop had been running on a backorder process and as a result we had received many complaints from members and others relating to the time taken for book orders to be filled.

Books were being ordered from the ARRL and RSGB and as a result the back orders were subject to Australian \$ variations resulting some books being sold at less than cost price. This situation was remedied in the second half of 2015 where Marc Hillman and Robert Broomhead worked with WIA office staff to develop a process for eliminating the back order system. If a book is not in stock it cannot be ordered. This resulted in books being sold at cost price plus so that the WIA makes a meagre profit on each book sold.

Essentially the stock control for all WIA books was relocated from the last step in the process to the front end where the stock is controlled by the WIA website ordering system. The new system provides for postage at the minimum cost available. As people are aware postage costs have increased significantly and we are looking at ways to reduce this cost for members and others.

The range of books available from the bookshop has been increased. The WIA is currently seeking to further expand the range. The decrease in the Australian \$ has meant that some of our books have increased substantially due to the overseas purchase requirements. A great working relationship has been developed with Peter from Pages of Cobram where the WIA bookshop is able to receive some books at bulk purchase prices from overseas. Our two bestselling books are the Foundation Manual and the WIA Call Book which are produced in-house.

Currently the book shop is running at a profit and is returning these profits to further increase the book shop service and support WIA members.

The Foundation Manual has been completely sold out early in 2016 and a third edition with minor corrections and updates is with the printer as this report is being written. The Foundation Manual will be available during April 2016.

The Publications Committee have been asked to examine the possibility of reducing the weight of the Call Book to less than 500g. This would result in a cost saving of \$5 on postage which would be passed to members and others.

Submitted by Fred Swainston VK3DAC

Affiliated Clubs Committee

Ted VK2ARA, Phil VK2ASD (Director), Bruce Deefholts (Executive Administrator)

Affiliated Clubs

It has been a relatively quiet year for Affiliated clubs. A small number of special interest clubs have formed and there has been no loss of our Community based clubs.

For the past 10 years my major effort for clubs has been the Liability insurance joint policies. For the 2016 renewal year, and future years, I have handed it over to the National office. Minor tasks during the year are easy, and it is a pleasure to help clubs, but the workload of the has become too great, especially when the 10% of unhelpful clubs use up 90% of my time. It was too stressful, my personal target of 100% satisfaction was not achievable, and my health was suffering. I had no choice but to hand it back to the WIA office and although I have every confidence in Bruce, our new Manager, I am still there to assist if needed.

At the start of the 2016 renewal there was an inadvertent error in the use of outdated letterhead in the postal mail-out. It would not have happened if email was used as I recommended, but that has been and gone. It is most disconcerting to hear of how many clubs sent returns and payments to a WIA address that has not been used for at least five years, but thankfully Australia Post have returned, as far as I know, all of the misdirected mail. However, I do find it hard to believe that clubs would not have picked-up the outdated address.

The flavour of the time seems to be Reform, and fixing problems in the way that the WIA operates. I am not in touch, being no longer a Board member, of the financial management and overall operation so I will make no comment, but I do offer these Dot Point comments in regard to affiliated clubs. These are my views alone, and may sound like they are coming from a grumpy old man, but they come from painful experience.

If you do read these notes, PLEASE take a copy to your club Committee.

1. Between the WIA and Affiliated clubs, there is no **“THEY”** and there is only **“We”**. Unless we make equal effort, there is no hope of success!
2. **Communication!** This is the greatest of all of our assets, and all our problems. The lack of it is the real issue. As a bunch of communicators we are all too lousy at it. We do not communicate, we send to, or talk at, but never listen and respond to what we receive. How can the WIA officially communicate with a club if they don't have a valid contact, or they only have a Facebook group, or if an incoming Email needs to be approved by someone first before distribution to the intended person. In the last few years of checking Affiliated Clubs pages on the WIA website it has been very disappointing to see how many are left blank, or haven't been updated for years. How can the WIA communicate with your club if there is no valid contact number or email address?

3. **Patience and Follow Up:** When you send your urgent message to the WIA you may believe that your issue is the most important on the agenda. The reality is that the WIA office receives over 60 emails a day, many from the 150 Affiliated Clubs, so your email is only one of many that must be dealt with. If it has been a while since you sent your email to the WIA please CHECK. Emails are not perfect, and some do go astray or get lost between the cracks. Also, please check the address first as there is no point in sending your request/complaint to ARV or ARNSW.
4. Please understand that we are all doing the best we can, but when we say we will get back to you “as soon as we can”, it does not mean NOW! Visualise yourself being dropped into the WIA office to help answering the phone and processing mail. When the phone rings, would you have the knowledge and skill to deal with every call and answer every issue competently on the spot? **Of course not, but too often that is what is expected! A little patience and goodwill on everyone’s part goes a long way.**

I know that most people read the start and end of material so here we go. THANK YOU to those clubs who went out of their way to make my job as simple as possible. Thank you to those who expressed appreciation of my efforts and thank you to the Staff and Volunteers who helped make it happen. Without them it would not have worked.

I intend continuing in support of clubs and I look forward to keeping in contact. Best wishes for 2016 and the future.

Submitted by Ted Thrift VK2ARA, Clubs Coordinator

Communications, Marketing, Publications and AGM Committee

Robert VK3DN (Director), Phil VK2ASD (director), Jim VK3PC,
Graham VK4BB (Broadcast), Roger VK2ZRH (Director)

Publications sub-Committee (AR Magazine, Callbook etc):

Peter VK3PF (Editor AR), Peter VK3PH (Editor *Callbook*)
Kaye VK3FKDW (Secretary), Peter VK3AZL, Evan VK3ANI, Ewan VK3OW, Bill VK3BR

Communications Marketing and Publications

The Committee has responded to the relevant sections of the membership survey of 2014, particularly in promoting the WIA.

The WIA website in 2015 had an 80% increase in news releases compared to the previous year. The aim was to communicate better with an emphasis on quality and not mere numbers.

There were 174 releases, and 96 in 2014. All months in 2015 had more promotion of the WIA. The VK1WIA broadcast had a weekly WIA presence, and this material appeared in Amateur Radio magazine. (There were also some news emails and the WIA Board issued nine newsletters.)

A series of mini-articles on aspects and content of the WIA website were broadcast by VK1WIA and published in Amateur Radio magazine.

The year was busy with WIA Advocacy, the introduction of the ACMA SPECTRA system, the Band Plan Review, the ANZAC 100 program and promotion of the IARU 90th birthday. The Committee was pleased to play its part in helping the WIA communicate its varied activities.

The content of the WIA website was reviewed and updated progressively, reflecting requests and suggestions from a few members. It now includes a Frequently Asked Questions section (to be reviewed in 2016 following the review), which coupled with the Search facility, has made it more useful, and slightly lessened the load on the office staff.

It is a resource for the WIA Board and all Committees. In the year ahead the WIA continues to inform and educate its members on what it does for them.

Submitted by Jim Linton VK3PC, Communications and Publicity

Publications Committee

Annual Report for 2015

The work of Publications Committee continues in a largely routine manner. The Committee meets quarterly in March, June, September and December, with most discussion centring around the production of the 11 issues each year of *Amateur Radio* magazine, with some time required (typically at the June and September meetings) around the production of the *Callbook*.

Kaye Wright VK3FKDW has settled into the Secretary role after taking a couple of months to become familiar with the various tasks and associated processes. One such task is the maintenance of the Article Register, which we use to track most articles submitted for consideration. Once received, an article is recorded on the Register and given an identifier. Technical articles are then forwarded to the Technical Editor Peter VK3AZL for distribution to one of the technical editors. Once processed and approved, the technical article will return to the Secretary and then forwarded to the Editor to await inclusion in the magazine. Non-technical articles and columns are registered, checked and then forwarded to the Editor. During 2015, 253 articles and columns were recorded on the Register. Some of these have not yet been published. Some articles are not recorded on the Register, including the Editorial, the President's Comment and WIA News. Some other short items simply go direct to press.

Peter Hartfield VK3PH continues to do a sterling job as *Callbook* Editor.

The December meeting was the last for Evan Jarman VK3ANI. Evan joined the Publications Committee in September 1978. During the following 38 years he undertook several roles and was one of the key members of the technical editor team. For many years he prepared the ionospheric predictions up until the committee decided to discontinue that feature, another victim of increased access to current information via the internet. He also filled in a Secretary for the period between the departure of Ernie Walls VK3FM in September 2014 and Kaye VK3FKDW joining the team.

Finally, I thank the members of Publications Committee and all the regular contributors to *Amateur Radio* for all their work. We can only produce a useful magazine if people continue to contribute material for publication. I firmly believe that we produce a very good product, especially considering the size of the amateur population that we serve.

As always, we look forward to contributions for the magazine and for the *Callbook*.

Information on how to contribute can be found on the *Amateur Radio* magazine portion of the WIA website. ***Submitted by Peter Freeman VK3PF, Editor and Chair***

WIA National News Broadcast

Hi to all on arguably the world's largest DX-Pedition, the WIA AGM and Forum being held on Norfolk Island.

With regards this year's WIA National News Service to me the most pleasing aspect has been the constant input of WIA news being written for us by VK3PC Jim Linton then being read by several of our Directors, thanks Phil and Roger.

WIA Director Robert Broomhead VK3DN along with Bryan Pliatsios VK3GR continue as back up for when I decide to take a holiday, and also with VK4FUQ Felix and Jason VK2LAW read each and every week, thank you!

This year the news has also been transmitted in VK5 using the FreeDV 1600 mode by VK5DGR.

It is interesting looking at the numbers and where the highest call backs come from, also the variation from same time same frequencies but say VK6 to VK4. Keeping an eye on propagation in the west, VK6GX Phil has continued experimentation by broadcasting the WIA National news at 6, 7 or 8 depending on the season and consistently reaches 20 listeners a broadcast, and this on 160 meters.

Again I would like to encourage even more material from YOUR local area. Don't worry if an item may be used on your areas local broadcast as well, or first, because often it will be of interest VK wide.

In closing we thank YOU for taking the time to read and listen to VK1WIA National News.

Submitted by Walk Softly -- GraHam VK4BB, WIA National news

Education Committee

Fred VK3DAC (Director), Owen VK2AEJ, Ron VK2DQ, Bruce Deefholts (Exec. Administrator)

ASSESSMENT REPORT 2015-2016

October 2016 is the 11th anniversary of the introduction of the current LCD. In 2015 the ACMA and the WIA commenced discussions on the remake of the LCD, and the changes continue to be discussed with several WIA submissions being tabled. These discussions will continue in September 2016. The new LCD is intended to allow for future technological developments to be included into Amateur Radio without the need for amendments to the LCD. The introduction of a new LCD will require an amended syllabus to be introduced which will have an impact on our training and assessment resource material. As yet we do not have timelines for this to occur although it is a priority for the WIA and ACMA. Minor changes have been made to the syllabus documents to include EMR questions into the Standard and Advanced Regulations Syllabus.

The Assessment Information System continues to work well. The on-line component is providing the information required by assessors and over the past 12 months there have been no issues with the Assessment Information System. We have had four minor complaints that have been resolved.

Currently there are 212 assessors using the system. There has been an increase of 9% in Assessor numbers over the past 12 months. Other than natural attrition through resignations, and one SK, assessors inactive or non-contactable have been removed from the system.

Some assessors have not completed assessments for more than a year and the currency of competency issue will be continually addressed. The audits conducted of assessors indicate that, generally, these assessors are located in remote areas or areas where there are few assessments requested.

The breakdown of assessors is as follows:

ACT 5: NSW 69: Victoria 59: Queensland 40: SA 18: WA 12: Tasmania 3: and NT 6.

There are currently 49 Learning Facilitators providing assistance to the assessors and 56 assessor/learning facilitator trainees. The breakdown of Learning Facilitators is as follows:

ACT 4: NSW 11: Victoria 11: Queensland 14: SA 2: WA 2: Tasmania 3: and NT 2

Currently there are 22 Nominated Assessors covering all States and Territories. 3 additional Nominated Assessors, one in WA, one in SA and one in Qld will be added during 2016.

ACT 1: NSW 5: Victoria 6: Queensland 5: SA 3: WA 1: Tasmania 1.

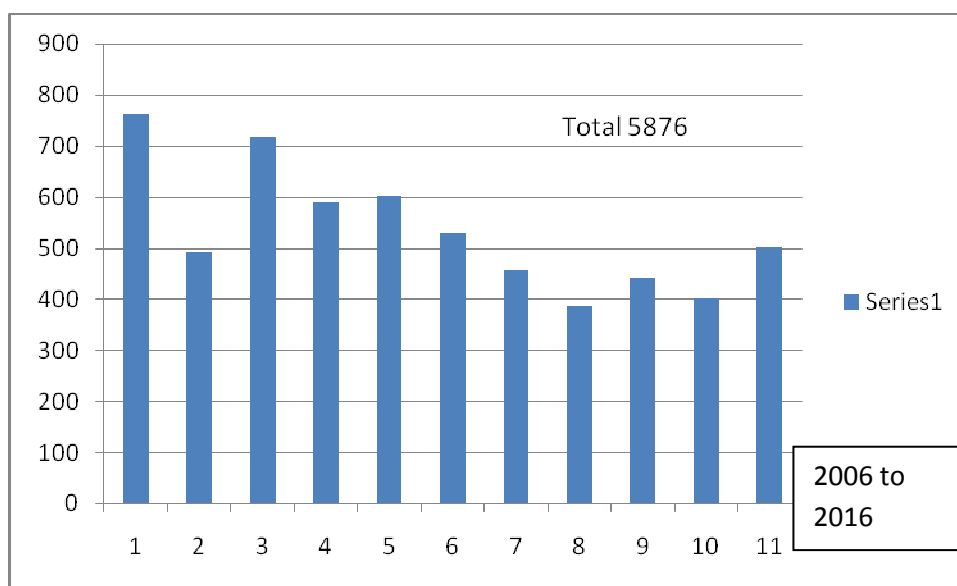
The 22 Nominated Assessors have conducted 246 audits over the past 12 months and as a result of these audits there were 44 non-conformances. The non-conformances were minor, where the assessor or learning facilitator had not conducted an assessment in the past 12 months. These are flagged as non-conformances relating to currency of competency, and are often assessors or learning facilitators who are in remote areas.

1 special and 11 remote assessments have been carried out by the Nominated Assessors.

There have been 13 Form 11 exam queries generated over the past 12 months. These have all had a response. Currently there are no incorrect answers in the question banks; however, some older exam papers will still have incorrect answers. Nine, of the 13 Form 11's were generated as a result of old exam papers still in circulation. 2 form 11's required a change to adjust an ambiguous distracter in a question.

There have been 13 requests for recognition of prior learning for theory examinations. In every case these requests require the applicant to complete a Regulations examination. The standard of applicants has been extremely high with the majority coming from an electrical/electronics radio background. Of the 13 applicants, 11 received recognition for advanced theory and practical, 2 received recognition for standard theory.

We have seen a general decline in the number of persons seeking to sit for the Foundation Licence with a slight increase in 2015/6.



Candidates completing Foundation licence from 2005 to 2016

In the 2015/6 calendar year 120 Foundation licensees qualified to Standard compared with 75 in the 2014 calendar year, and 29 Foundation licensees qualified directly to Advanced compared with 41 the year before. We continue to see a general upward trend in licence level upgrades with a major upswing from Foundation to Standard during the last 12 months.

The WIA Training Organisation wishes to thank all Nominated Assessors, Assessors, Learning Facilitators, Learning Organisers and AR trainers for their co-operation and assistance in encouraging new entrants into Amateur Radio.

Submitted by Fred Swainston VK3DAC, WIA Training Organisation

Radio Activities Committee

Paul VK5PAS (Director)

Contests sub-Committee:

Alan VK4SN, Denis VK4AE/3ZUX, John VK3KM, Tony VK3TZ,
Kevin VK4UH, Colin VK5DK, James Fleming

Awards sub-Committee:

Bob VK3SX, Marc VK3OHM, Laurie VK7ZE, Alan VK2CA,
Alek VK6APK, David VK3EW, Paul VK5PAS

ARDF sub-Committee: Jack VK3WWW

ARISS sub-Committee: Tony VK5ZAI

QSL Card sub-Committee:

Fred VK3DAC, Alex VK2ZM, John VK1CJ, Max VK3WT,
June VK4SJ, Stephan VK5RZ, Alek VK6APK, John VK7RT

ANZAC Report for Open Forum

During 2015, the Centenary of ANZAC troops landing at Gallipoli, the WIA initiated the use of the VK100ANZAC and VI#ANZAC callsigns for use by individuals and groups to commemorate this historical event.

The WIA events commenced on ANZAC day 2015 and concluded on the 20th December 2015. The 20th December was the date the last ANZAC troops were evacuated from Gallipoli.

Several events were took place before ANZAC day and for these the WIA assisted callsigns. The two major events before ANZAC day were, the first Australian shot of World War I fired from Fort Nepean when on the 5 August 1914, the German ship SS Pfalz attempted to escape from Port Phillip Bay, and Borella's Ride where in 1915, Albert Borella journeyed through 1,000 kilometres of Northern Territory's outback from the Tennant Creek area to Darwin, and then onto Townsville by ship, to enlist in World War I, as well as the First Troop ship leaving WA for the middle east.

On ANZAC Day several WIA Board members were on Mt Ainslie at dawn and commenced ANZAC operations. From that day all States and Territories were activated with either

VK100ANZAC or VI#ANZAC except for VI9ANZAC that is being activated over the AGM weekend from Norfolk Island.

For the duration of the event 51 activations were conducted by individuals, groups and clubs with an estimated 250 radio amateurs being involved.

There were over 30,000 contacts made.

There were many highlights over the operating period. One was the station set up in Belgium to commemorate the Battle at Polygon Wood. This was the Brothers in Arms Project. We also thank our New Zealand neighbours for their activations cooperation and assisting with the event.

VI4AE2 was activated in Qld, outside of the WIA umbrella, but supported by the WIA. This activation was for the submarine AE2 to commemorate the sailors of the RAN on submarine HMAS AE2 who successfully breached the defences of the Dardanelles.

For this event the WIA chose to use E-QSL which Trent Sampson VK4TS managed. The WIA expresses thanks to Trent for his assistance. In addition several thousand QSL cards have been processed that have come via the Inwards QSL Bureau.

21 awards for the ANZAC events were lodged with the WIA and those who have lodged awards have received acknowledgement. Organisers of events, individuals, groups and clubs have also received certificates of participation.

The WIA expresses many thanks to Jim Linton VK3PC who assisted this event by providing publicity, website information and coordination for participants and others.

Submitted by Fred Swainston VK3DAC, WIA ANZAC Coordinator

VHF-UHF Field Days

The VHF-UHF Field Days provide VHF-UHF operators with the opportunity to "head for the hills" and see how far and how many stations they can work. These events are supported by www.wia.org.au/members/contests/vhfuhf/.

As most contestants would be aware, in early 2014, the WIA Board decided to trial alternative sets of scoring rules for the Winter and Spring 2014 events, and Summer 2015, then to review the participation and consider the rules for future contests. The 'traditional' VHF-UHF Field Day grid square-based scoring system was retained (called Division 1) and a distance-based scoring system introduced (called Division 2). The general idea behind this was to "let the 'market' decide". Contestants could enter logs in either or both Divisions. In addition, the Board wished to see development in the VHF-UHF Field Day rules. Well, it seems that the 'market' decided to pretty much have an each-way bet between Division 1 and Division 2! To further complicate matters, some contestants switched between Division 1 and Division 2 for successive events, as well as entering logs for both, on occasion.

Colin VK5DK was appointed as Division 2 Contest Manager in 2014. Mike VK3AVV (developer of the VKCL contest logging software) joined the 'team' as contest log-checker, using his log-checking application specially developed for the purpose. During 2015, Michael VK3ALZ came aboard as Division 1 Contest Manager.

It was planned to develop an 'options paper' and publish it during 2015, encouraging contestants and others interested, to provide input so that a single set of scoring rules could be developed. It was not to be, as the work necessary to respond to the government's Spectrum Review processes took priority over developing the foreshadowed options paper.

Some developments in contest categories and sub-categories were introduced during 2015. The Portable 24 hour and 6 hour sections have been retained for single and multi-operator stations, along with the 24 hour Home station section. The developments introduced are outlined here.

DEVELOPMENTS

A **Single-band only Sub-section** was introduced, immediately adopted by a small number of operators – and not just for 6m or 2m, as some commentators expected, and which some contestants entered, but *also* for microwave bands – David VK2JDS and Matt VK2DAG took advantage of the single-band category, entering logs for 24 GHz for the Spring event.

The **Four-bands Sub-section** – for the 50-144-432-1296 MHz bands was revised to encourage entries specifically for these bands, rather than extracting scores from multi-band submissions as in previous years. The multi-operator "super stations" tended to dominate this category in the past. With this change, stations – whether single or multi-operator – can choose their strategy and plan accordingly. At a minimum, stations entering this section can operate on any two of the bands, or three of them, or the whole four. It can be seen in the published results that these three possible combinations are taken up across most events, now.

A **Digital Sub-section** was introduced, which was taken up with alacrity by Waldis VK1WJ, but unfortunately he became SK and this innovation has languished since.

In addition, the **Rework Period** was reduced from three hours to two. Remarkably, this did not occasion any controversy. The intention is to "keep things moving" during a contest.

During 2015, receipt of logs moved to **electronic submissions only**. The world did not end. Queen Elizabeth is still on the British throne. A **Field Day Log Uploader** facility was provided on the WIA website by webmaster, Robert Broomhead VK3DN. Even so, a few errant contestants emailed their logs to me or to others, but these stray logs still managed to be included. It is planned to improve the functionality of this Log Uploader to enable operators to confirm that their log submission has been received. In addition, development of a page showing which stations have submitted logs and on which date/time (but not the log itself), is being considered. This might encourage more operators to submit logs, and to get them in before the deadline!

The **date for the Spring Event** was previously established as the last weekend in November (23-24 November for 2014), intended to take advantage of the improved propagation conditions – both tropo refraction and sporadic E. Unfortunately, the following Summer event lobs six weeks later, with Christmas-New year in between. This left insufficient time to process logs and compile a report in a "timely" manner. To alleviate this difficulty, the 2015 Spring event was moved to the middle weekend of November (14-15th). While some operators were disappointed by the change in date (see Colin VK5DK's report later), participation increased substantially (see the table in the next

section). Improved propagation events are highly variable from year to year and geographically across Australia, for both tropo and Es. The one constant seems to be that “every ‘season’ is different”.

Presentation of **results** in long-form, tabulated format requires a great deal of work. Time-consuming, tedious work. This occasioned delays between finalising log submissions and publication of results. The fore-shortened period between the November Spring event and the January Summer event, with Christmas in between, further complicates production of results, as identified above. Attempts at ‘automating’ at least part of it were unsuccessful to start with, but Mike VK3AVV has adapted his log-checking recently software to produce PDFs of ASCII text tables that, so far, seem to be acceptable. Time will tell.

A notable innovation to come out of the VHF-UHF Field Day tribe in 2015 was the **Contest Radar website** (www.contestradar.com). Developed by Andrew VK3MIX and Lou VK3ALB, the website enables operators to enter their planned portable (or Home station) location (using 4, 6 or 8-character locator), along with other salient station details. The website then displays these details on a map – along with the fleet of other stations who’ve entered their details. Anyone can see at a glance who’s where and what bands they’re running, etc. Take-up of the facility has been quite strong. Notably, the website is integrated with the VKCL logging software.

PARTICIPATION

The number of stations “handing out numbers” during VHF-UHF Field Day events is highly variable. It was ever thus. However, the percentage of operators submitting logs generally grew over 2015, as the table below shows.

Field Day	Logs submitted	Participants	Ratio
Spring 2014	54	159	34%
Summer 2015	61	201	30.4%
Winter 2015	38	98	38.8%
Spring 2015	78	151	51.7%

The purpose of the developments introduced was to reduce barriers to entering the VHF-UHF Field Days, which seems to have been achieved, and the table supports this conclusion. Many callsigns not previously seen among submitted logs appeared during 2015. In addition, the number of Foundation operators participating, and those submitting logs, has increased over the 2015 events, albeit from a low base. Further, a couple of VK6 operators submitted logs, the first time in over three years, and a lone VK7; participation from Tasmania has not been evident for who knows how long. *One swallow does not make a summer, neither does one fine day*, opined Greek philosopher and scientist, Aristotle in 350 BCE. So, a trend cannot be claimed here, unfortunately.

Submitted by Roger Harrison VK2ZRH, Interim Manager

AN OPERATOR'S VIEW

This is a brief summary of my thoughts & operations during the three VHF/UHF Field Days over the past twelve months.

The WIA was to make a decision whether to proceed with Division 1 or Division 2 rules for the VHF/UHF Field Day. The distance-based scoring rules for Division 2 do help the remote/country stations to be more competitive, and Mike VK3AVV, who provides the VKCL Contest program, also favours Division 2 into the future.

The Winter Field Day is not very popular in the Southern States owing to usually wet and windy conditions and very poor propagation. It does seem to be better in the Northern States for portable operations although there were still quite a few "Home Stations" with logs from VK3 & VK5.

The Spring Field Day this year was brought forward by two weeks, which did not suit quite a few operators going Portable. In previous years the Spring Field Day was held on the last weekend in November, which also has typically provided better propagation conditions. My view is that the last weekend in November should be reinstated to encourage greater participation.

The most popular Field Day would be the Summer Field Day, where propagation is typically improved, which helps the more remote portable stations achieve a greater number of contacts to city-based 'home & portable' stations. This year, VHF-UHF & Microwave operation was quite good over the Field Day weekend, and some excellent contacts were made from the Mt Gambier area, mainly into the Eastern States were possible.

Submitted by Colin Hutchesson VK5DK, Division 2 Contest Manager

PARKS ACTIVITY REPORT

The past 12 months has seen an explosion in the parks programs here in Australia. The World Wide Flora and Fauna (WWFF) program, the VK5 National and Conservation Parks Award, and the Keith Roget Memorial National Parks Awards (KRMNPA) continue to be very popular pastimes.

It is extremely pleasing to see a number of Foundation operators taking part in the programs as both park activators and park hunters. Another very pleasing aspect is that a number of comments have been made by amateurs that their interest in the hobby has been rejuvenated due to the parks programs.

Since the inception of the WWFF program in Australia in March 2013, over 1,300 award certificates have now been issued. The VK5 National & Conservation parks Award commenced in April 2013, and around 350 award certificates have been issued. During the last 12 months around 10 KRMNPA certificates have been issued. This includes 2 KRMNPA Grand Slam plaques for activating and hunting all 45 Victorian National Parks. And a further 3 Merit Award plaques.

During November 2015 the KRMNPA Activation Weekend took place which saw around 25 activators, operate portable from 27 National Parks across Victoria.

Also during November 2015 an inaugural special activation weekend took place for the Australian (VKFF) chapter of WWFF. Over 50 amateurs activated around 90 different parks all across Australia.

In April 2016, the VK5 Parks Award celebrated its 3rd birthday in fine style with a special anniversary activation weekend. Nearly 30 amateurs took part, and around 75 different parks were activated all across South Australia.

Events planned for the remainder of 2016 include the KRMNPA Activation Weekend in November, and the 2nd VKFF Activation weekend also to be held in November. Work continues on an electronic database for the VK5 Parks Award.

Submitted by Paul VK5PAS, VKFF co-ordinator and VK5 Parks Award Manager, and Tony VK3VTH, VK3 Awards Manager.

Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF)

In my previous Annual Report I mentioned the upcoming Region 3 Championships in Japan, a bid to host the 2018 World ARDF Championships in Australia and a “come and try ARDF” campaign.

Well, our team in representing WIA in Japan did very well and a full report was written up in the December 2015 edition of AR, but just briefly. I am very pleased that our team were awarded a total of 12 medals including 3 Gold medals. For a team of only 5 competitors we did quite well with each of the 5 team members receiving at least one medal.

Whilst in Japan in my capacity as a member of the Region 3 ARDF Committee I attended quite a few meetings regarding ARDF in our region. Some of the more important items discussed were 1: Improving the participation rate for the sport. 2: Increasing the number of Region 3 Societies involved in International events. 3: 2017 Region 3 Championships Hosting Society. 4: 2018 World Championships Hosting Society.

Currently in Region 3 we only have a small number of countries that are able to host an International Competition. If we can convince some more Societies to join us it will take a lot of pressure off the existing members who find they need to host the Championships about every 6-8 years. There was some talk of combining Region 2 and Region 3 together (just for ARDF) this is currently a work in progress and more information will be available soon. While in Japan at one of the meetings a vote was taken to decide between KARL (South Korea) and WIA to host the 2018 World ARDF Championships. Result of the vote was 4 to 3 in favour of KARL. We still need a host for the 2017 Championships but at this stage on behalf of the WIA I have said no. Having been on 2 organising committees for such an event we really need a lot more time to plan many things.

Come and Try ARDF has been interesting. So far only been tried locally with some success but publicity on my part was probably the downside. One of the drawbacks trying to promote interstate activity is the provision of equipment. Covering the cost of both

transmitters and receivers can turn off a lot of clubs and groups considering giving ARDF a go. I think the best way would be to build up a portable kit that can be shipped around the country with maybe help from an experienced competitor at each location to make life a bit easier for the local group or club that wished to try ARDF.

Later in 2016 the 18th World ARDF Championships will be held in Albena, Bulgaria. WIA will have a team of 2 attending this event. You can probably well imagine that to compete internationally on a regular basis is not cheap. 2014 Kazakhstan, 2015 Japan, 2016 Bulgaria, 2017? If the 2018 event was to be held in Australia I am sure the numbers from Region 1 would be cut quite considerably when the cost of travel and travel times are realised. Thanks to Ralph VK3LL and Damian VK3KQ we are now in the possession of some Australian designed and built GPS locked start clocks. These clocks even have the local Orienteering community interested. We do have a good relationship with the Orienteering Community and the technical side of our hobby is well represented at most local orienteering events.

For me 2015-2016 has so far been quite busy ARDF wise. Having said that, I am happy to continue, for another year, as WIA ARDF Coordinator.

Submitted by Jack Bramham VK3WWW, WIA ARDF Coordinator

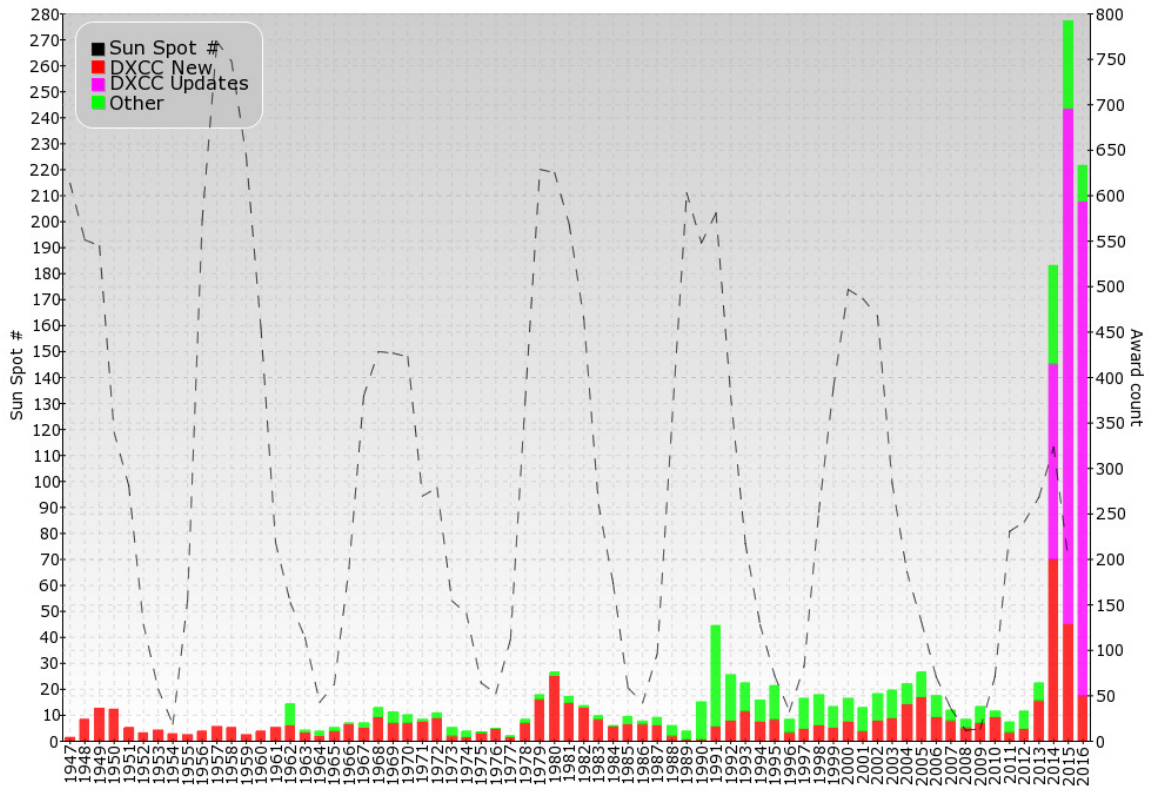
WIA Awards Committee report

2015 has been another strong year for the online awards system. The most activity is people updating their DXCC Standing (purple) by increments of one. It is clear that people are quite competitive about their position in the standings.

Currently (Apr 2016), there are 227 users and 1328739 QSO in the system. 57 users are DX. Inactive users (no activity for > 12 months and no QSO) have been pruned from the system.

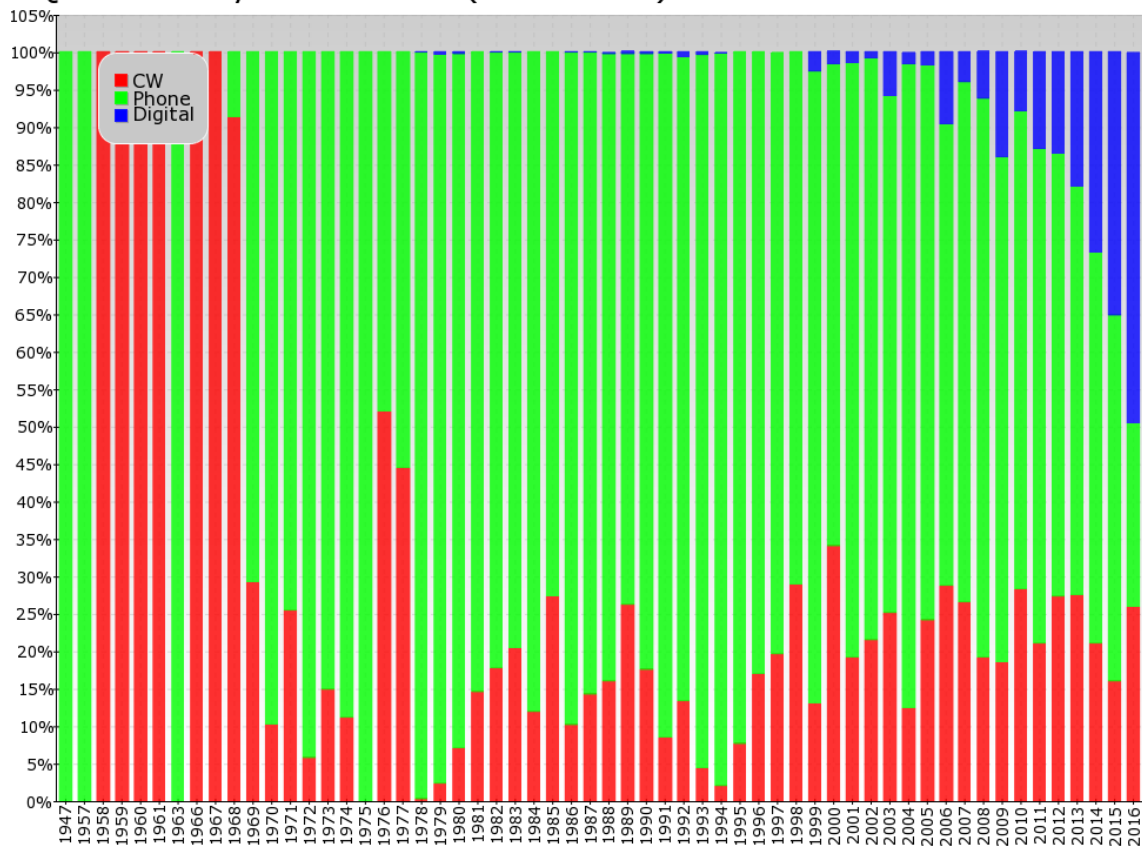
Competition in the All Grades DX Leader board has been fierce, but the results won't be known until just before the AGM. Interest in the Foundation grade leader board seems low, with no qualifying entries at this stage.

Award count by Year



Of interest is the changing profile of mode used. CW is holding its own, but Digital is growing at the expense of Phone. Digital is now the dominant mode for DX'ers.

QSO count by Year & Mode (Normalised)



There have been no personnel changes in the awards committee in 2015, and the award process is running very smoothly with little effort required of the committee.

Submitted by Bob VK3SX (Awards Manager) and Marc VK3OHM (Awards Technical Engineer) for the WIA Awards Committee

Historic QSL's

The Historic QSL Bureau continues to be maintained and our Historic QSL collection continues to grow. The collection the WIA has, due to the legacy of Ken Matchett SK VK3TL, is the second largest in the world and houses some of the rarest QSL cards.

We continue to maintain our contact with Wolf Harranth OE1WHC in Vienna who maintains the world's largest QSL collection including domestic and commercial and other historic radio memorabilia.

Over 2015 we have had 5 very generous donations from family of SK's and others, who have been added to the collection. One of these donations came via Ken Taylor VK3TKQ from the Yarra Valley Amateur Radio Group who had a box of pre WWII and during WWII domestic radio station QSL cards. These cards are of interest and an article is being prepared for AR relating to this quite unusual collection. A second collection arrived with a number of photographs. This has been curated and an article will be produced for AR.

During 2015 the QSL collection was used on several occasions for research purposes, where we were able to provide assistance for family of former radio amateurs who were seeking to identify the Amateur's activities during WWII.

The Historic QSL Bureau has been reorganised to allow for more efficient searches for historic information. The Bureau has also been curating collections based on the former owner of the collection instead of integrating cards into the broader collection where often the identity of the former owner is difficult to find. This change has come about based on advice from Wolf Harranth.

Submitted by Fred Swainston VK3DAC, Historic QSL Manager

Inwards QSL's

By the end of 2015 the Inwards QSL had received, sorted and despatched to the State and Territory QSL Managers over 20,000 QSL cards. The Inwards QSL Bureau Manager expresses thanks to Mick Adams a WIA volunteer for his assistance in sorting over the year.

There have been a number of changes to the State and Territory QSL Bureau managers and for those managers who have retired we thank and record our appreciation. For the new managers who have come on board we look forward to working with you in the coming years.

The cost of sending out QSL cards to the State and Territory Bureaux has increased due to Australia Post increased cost and to keep this to a minimum the outwards QSL bureau has been sending cards in 3kg and 5kg satchels except for VK1 where 500g satchels are used. This has offset the cost of posting packages and also decreased the turn-around time from receipt of the QSL cards to dispatch to the State and Territory bureaux managers.

The system over 2015 has been completely reviewed and streamlined. This has meant that the requirements for VK9, VK0 and special event call signs must nominate a QSL manager. This will assist with processing these QSL cards as they must be dealt with individually.

I will be retiring as the temporary Inwards QSL Bureau Manager at the AGM in May 2016. The WIA is seeking a new Inwards QSL Bureau Manager and would like to hear from anyone who would be interested in this extremely interesting role. Applications should be made in writing to the Administrative Executive at the WIA Office.

I will continue to manage the VK9, VK0 and special event incoming QSL activities.

Submitted by Fred Swainston VK3DAC, Inwards QSL Manager

Outwards QSL's

As is the case each year, the Westlakes club provided the WIA's outwards QSL service during 2015.

The outwards QSL service continues to provide a valuable service to members as seen by the following statistics for the year 2014:

QSL CARDS POSTED TO OTHER BUREAUS	26,000
QSL CARDS RECEIVED FROM WIA INWARDS BUREAU	12,890
QSL CARDS POSTED TO VK2 MEMBERS	9,450
QSL CARDS HANDED AT WYONG FIELD DAY	12,016
TOTAL	60,356

As in previous years, there is a continuing problem with non-ITU standard card sizes which cannot be sent through the normal channels.

Submitted by Alex VK2ZM, Outwards QSL Manager

Historical and Archive Committee

Drew VK3XU (Librarian), Linda VK7QP (General library and Archiving), Martin VK7GN, Ian VK3IFM (Call Book scanning and computer advisor), Will VK6UU (AR Scanning), David VK3ADW (advice on IARU and WIA activities) and Jennifer VK3WQ/VK5ANW (Data input and shelving), Peter VK3RV, WIA Historian, (Leader, Co-ordinator), Roger Harrison VK2ZRH

The Historical and Archive Committee operates as a collection of individuals who generally look after a particular area of Archive activity.

While most of our “meetings” are via the internet, it was very positive to have a “round table meeting” of most of the Committee, while Linda was in Melbourne during mid 2015. Although only limited progress has been made in some of the archival activities discussed then, the existence of a WIA Archive is getting better known to WIA members and has been of assistance to many, as well as an increasing number of members of the general public.

ANZAC - 100 & STORIES OF AUSTRALIAN AMATEURS AT WAR

This has continued to be a major activity within the H&AC this year and I don't believe that we could have achieved such good results with the magazine articles for the ANZAC 100 project without the Archive - as crude as it currently is! Our spreadsheet records, Will's scanned ARs and the scanned Call Books, enabled us to locate suitable material for most of the article writers!

In addition, the Board has recently decided to publish a compendium of the ANZAC 100 stories printed in AR, together with some new material which has come to hand as the result of the various articles published in AR and the WIA news service.

AR SCANNING PROJECT

Scanning back issues of AR continues. Will VK6UU advises that in the past 12 months he has scanned and enhanced ARs from 1979 to 1987. At this rate, all ARs to 2000 should be completed in just over a year's time.

Will also advises that he has been receiving help from Terry VK5TM. Terry has also produced a text searchable data base of articles published in AR magazine between the years, 1970 - 1986, and is continuing to add more. This is only for articles, not the text within the articles. Despite the limited text searchability, it is a great step forward to tracking down topics, articles, call signs etc.

OUR HISTORY ON WIA WEBSITE

Earlier last year, a number of historical pages about the development of amateur radio in Australia and the WIA were added to the website. This has proved to have been quite worthwhile with a number of people, both local and international, contacting the Archive to seek further detailed information. More material is planned to be added as time permits.

Perhaps one of the more interesting enquiries during the year was from an American film script writer who was seeking information about amateur radio in Australia at about the

time of WWII and discovered the WIA website and its History section. We were able to help her out and also pointed her towards the ARRL for local information. (The script for a possible film is based on a factual situation during WWII. The work is still in progress and according to a couple of subsequent email exchanges, the lady concerned has become quite interested in amateur radio and what it can offer!)

Another more recent enquiry came from a well known English technical writer who was seeking some historical information about the early formation of the WIA. This is still work in progress.

IN THE PIPELINE:

We continue to receive donations and wish to acknowledge all who have forwarded material to the Archive.

Last year we thought that all Call Books had been scanned. Not so! Recently it was discovered that we had missed some from the 1950s and 60s. Copies of these have now been located and we hope to scan them soon.

Call sign information is frequently sought by families and writers and this became very important (and worthwhile) during the preparation of the “ANZAC Articles”.

The Librarian, (Drew Diamond) and Committee have been considering access to the Institute’s library books, a recommendation was made to the Board and it is hoped to be able to make an announcement about this soon.

Thank you to all committee members for their work and interest in this WIA activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The Board to consider how AR and Call Book scans should be stored and made available to members and other users.**

(The Committee considers that ARs should be freely available to members from within the WIA website. Currently CDs of the Call Book contain the previous year’s ARs and are thus largely in the public domain.)

- **The Committee recommends that Call Books should be available on the WIA website.**

Submitted by Peter Wolfenden VK3RV, WIA Historian, for the WIA History and Archive Committee

IT Services

**Rob Broomhead VK3DN, Marc Hillman VK3OHM, Tim Broomhead VK3KTB
Jim Linton VK3PC and Roger Harrison VK2ZRH (website content)**

WEBSITE AND IT SERVICES

Welcome to the WIA 2016 open forum and the annual Website and IT services report.

During the last 12 months we saw the ACMA update their frequency and callsign management database. The changes were very significant and a considerable amount of work and testing was carried out by the WIA to accommodate the new changed data formats with the data feed provided by the ACMA. The WIA utilises a daily feed of ACMA data to provide the online available callsign database, for Memnet, and to allow members only features and functionality provided on the WIA website (such as the Awards system). Throughout the year there were a number of outages of the available callsign database, a result of issues with the data feed from the ACMA's new database. Unfortunately the WIA had no option but to take the available callsign service offline whilst the teething problems with the new ACMA database were resolved.

Over the last year the executive manager and IT services team undertook a review of the Memnet member management system and identified a number of key areas with shortcomings or faults which were causing our members to experience difficulties logging in and renewing their membership. One problem identified occurred when a member had overlooked making a membership payment by the due date. This required an email or telephone call to WIA office staff who would manually log into the Memnet backend and update the system in order for the person to be able to log back in and pay their membership.

Other Memnet problems identified and resolved included a shortcoming with the members email address stored in Memnet. Any email address update also needed to be manually updated a second time in a second system in order to allow members to use the lost password feature via Memnet user interface. This problem alone caused significant frustration for both members and office staff with members lost passwords. Memnet, as a member management system has been designed with features that cover a wide range of market sectors and clients rather than being specifically for amateur radio and WIA membership. We appreciate our members patience and understanding as we have spent time and invested money to solve a number of problematic issues.

Over the last year we commenced a website review. Web pages and code were carefully reviewed and checked for completeness, accuracy and a number of improvements and updates have been made. A note of appreciation to Jim, Roger and Marc for the significant number of hours they invested in this valuable but not necessarily highly visible task.

The WIA online bookshop backend code has also undergone a full rewrite thanks to Marc and the bookshop now tracks stock on hand and more accurately calculates postage.

Calculations are based on the most cost effective method of postage to the particular destination based on product weight and dimensions offering significant savings particularly with multi item purchases.

As usual this report contains a large number of website statistics which we report on each year, plus updates on new website features added. Four areas with significant interest and usage are the online available callsign lookup facility, the AR Digital edition facility, the weekly WIA news broadcast in MP3 and text formats and the callsign@wia.org.au email facility. This year we have also included a 10 year summary of the Australian Amateur licencing numbers with some analysis.

Some stats for the period April 1st 2015 through to April 1st 2016.

- During the last 12 months the WIA website has received just over 15.3 million hits this number is up from 12.5 million hits last year. A mistake some people could easily make is to think that 15.3 website hits translates to 15.3 people visiting our website, however a website hit simply represents one access of a web page. As an example the available callsign lookup page receives lots of consecutive hits with people searching for available callsigns. On average the WIA website sees around 1,800 visitors per day many are regular visitors. Some members may have the WIA website selected as their browser home page so the website is visited each time they launch their web browser.
- Over the last 12 month period we have served out just under a terabyte (957 gigs) of web data to members. This figure is made up of web page traffic from our website, weekly downloads of the WIA news broadcast, plus downloads of the new AR digital edition for members. The figure is web traffic only and does not include the data required to support the callsign@wia.org.au email service.
- In the last twelve months there have been around 40,000 downloads of the MP3 version of the weekly WIA news broadcast and around 90,000 downloads of the text edition. This is the first year where we have seen the number of downloads of the text edition exceed the number of downloads of the MP3 file. These numbers represent both members downloading the news directly from the WIA website news page and those who have chosen to subscribe to the news as a podcast. At time of writing the news broadcast with the highest number of downloads in the last 12 months was Sun, 3 May 2015 with 1043 downloads of the MP3 file and 3047 downloads of the text edition.
- 743 people have used the websites “contact the WIA email form” in the 2015 period a slight decline compared to 756 people who used the form in the previous 12 months. The breakdown of people using the WIA email contact form were:
 - 599 people sent an email to the National WIA Office
 - 57 people sent an email to the WIA President
 - 87 people sent an email to the WIA Webmaster
- There were 639 bookshop purchases from the online bookshop in 2015. The most popular items were Foundation Manual (324) and Callbook (117)

- In the last 12 months there have been 67,054 lookups of callsigns on the online available callsign database page this figure compares to the 65,925 lookups in the previous 12 month period an increase of around 2%
- Currently 2,288 members have taken advantage of the WIA email address forwarding service providing them with their WIA email address in the format callsign@wia.org.au forwarding email to an email account of their choice. This is an increase of 52 new callsign@wia.org.au email addresses within the last 12 months. Members with WIA email addresses also receive periodical WIA's news bulletins and news alerts sent to their WIA email address.

The website also provides a public enquiry form completed by anyone seeking further information on how to get into the hobby of Amateur Radio. In the last 12 months 171 people have completed that form, 3 more than this time last year. The WIA office staff follow up each enquiry, mailing out information packs on amateur radio. Included in the packs are a personalised letter, some promotional literature including a Calling CQ brochure and a sample back issue of AR magazine. The public enquiry form also asks people to identify the age bracket they fall into- the results are of particular interest. Listed below are the age breakdown for inquiries both the current 12 month period and the previous 12 month period:

- 7% were in the age bracket 10 – 19 (in the previous 12 months was 6%)
- 11% were in the age bracket 20 – 29 (in the previous 12 months was 15%)
- 20% were in the age bracket 30 – 39 (in the previous 12 months was 20%)
- 22% were in the age bracket 40 – 49 (in the previous 12 months was 26%)
- 25% were in the age bracket 50 – 59 (in the previous 12 months was 21%)
- 9% were in the age bracket 60 -69 (in the previous 12 months was 10%)
- 7% were in the age bracket e 70 + (in the previous 12 months was 2%)

In June 2014 we launched a new Members Only feature on the website, Digital AR download. This has proved very popular with WIA members last year having made 6496 downloads of the digital version of the magazine up from 6,049 downloads the previous year. The breakdown of downloads per month over the previous year is as follows:

May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
712	793	645	603	792	324	346	723	N/A	699	236	623

Lastly, each year we have been providing the WIA President a breakdown of Amateur licences used in the presidents report, these statistics were taken each year from the ACMA licence and callsign database used to produce the calbook (around August). This year we have including a 10 year summary of the licence information including some analysis of trends that show the number of amateurs who have upgraded or decided to leave the hobby (licence was not renewed and expired). In the majority of cases we do not know the reason for non renewal as the data analysis was conducted using data taken at the end of each year. Acknowledgement to Marc Hillman for his work on the analysis.

Licence Category by Year

The table below describes the number of licences, by grade, by year. The analysis ignores the fact that some people could have multiple callsigns, and possibly at multiple grades. So, it counts the number of callsigns, not amateurs.

Data is shown for Amateurs in Table 1 and Repeaters/Beacons in Table 3.

Year	Category	Count
2005	Advanced	11901
	Foundation	8
	Standard	1858
2006	Advanced	11621
	Foundation	937
	Standard	1894
2007	Advanced	11539
	Foundation	1441
	Standard	1928
2008	Advanced	11313
	Foundation	1728
	Standard	1984
2009	Advanced	11154
	Foundation	1989
	Standard	2047
2010	Advanced	11038
	Foundation	2149
	Standard	2070
2011	Advanced	10911
	Foundation	2251
	Standard	2101
2012	Advanced	10763
	Foundation	2278
	Standard	2064
2013	Advanced	10504
	Foundation	2341
	Standard	2069
2014	Advanced	10321
	Foundation	2375
	Standard	2029
2015	Advanced	10184
	Foundation	2458
	Standard	2079

Table 1 – Category count by year

YEAR	TOTALS
2005	13767
2006	14452
2007	14908
2008	15025
2009	15190
2010	15257
2011	15263
2012	15105
2013	14914
2014	14725
2015	14721

Table 2 – Totals by year

Year	Category	Total
2005	Amateur Beacon	28
	Amateur Repeater	345
2006	Amateur Beacon	28
	Amateur Repeater	349
2007	Amateur Beacon	28
	Amateur Repeater	367
2008	Amateur Beacon	29
	Amateur Repeater	390
2009	Amateur Beacon	33
	Amateur Repeater	403
2010	Amateur Beacon	33
	Amateur Repeater	418
2011	Amateur Beacon	32
	Amateur Repeater	423
2012	Amateur Beacon	33
	Amateur Repeater	438
2013	Amateur Beacon	35
	Amateur Repeater	435
2014	Amateur Beacon	33
	Amateur Repeater	451
2015	Amateur Beacon	36
	Amateur Repeater	442

Table 3 – Beacons & Repeaters by year

Joiners, Leavers & Up-graders

An analysis has been performed to determine the number of Joiners, Leavers & upgraders. For the first year, everyone is a 'joiner', i.e. it establishes the baseline.

The numbers in this table may be slightly less than those in the previous section as multiple callsigns are ignored, and Amateur Beacons and Repeaters have been excluded.

Joiners are those ACMA clients who did not exist in the previous year.

Leavers are those who disappeared from the RADCOM data for that year.

Upgraders are those whose grade changed that year. 3 types of upgrade are possible:

- Foundation to Standard (F->S)
- Foundation to Advanced (F->A)
- Standard to Advanced (S->A)

There are instances where a licence lapsed, and the amateur rejoined later. These rejoins are counted as a Leave, followed by a Join.

Also shown are the number of Foundation (F never) and Standard (S never) licence holders that have never upgraded.

Year	Join/Foundation	Join/Standard	Join/Advanced	Join/Total	Leave/Foundation	Leave/Standard	Leave/Advanced	Leave/Total	Upgrade/F->S	Upgrade/F->A	Upgrade/S->A	Amateurs Total	Foundation Total	Standard Total	Advanced Total
2005	8	1832	11461	13301	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13301	8	1832	11461
2006	916	168	320	1404	0	117	586	703	1	1	41	14002	922	1843	11237
2007	622	92	296	1010	56	99	421	576	70	16	49	14436	1402	1857	11177
2008	579	134	268	981	180	128	603	911	100	46	65	14506	1655	1898	10953
2009	557	121	290	968	178	111	615	904	106	43	71	14570	1885	1943	10742
2010	474	100	245	819	229	114	430	773	88	35	69	14616	2007	1948	10661
2011	416	95	237	748	226	93	453	772	82	42	75	14592	2073	1957	10562
2012	353	68	210	631	248	113	456	817	63	51	79	14406	2064	1896	10446
2013	386	88	204	678	254	114	514	882	78	35	70	14202	2083	1878	10241
2014	390	60	214	664	268	113	450	831	74	42	72	14035	2089	1827	10119
2015	399	115	250	764	239	115	468	822	94	53	71	14144	2096	1901	10147
Totals	5100	2873	13995	21968	1878	1117	4996	7991	756	364	662				
F never	1663														
S never	896														

Table 4 - Joiners & Leavers

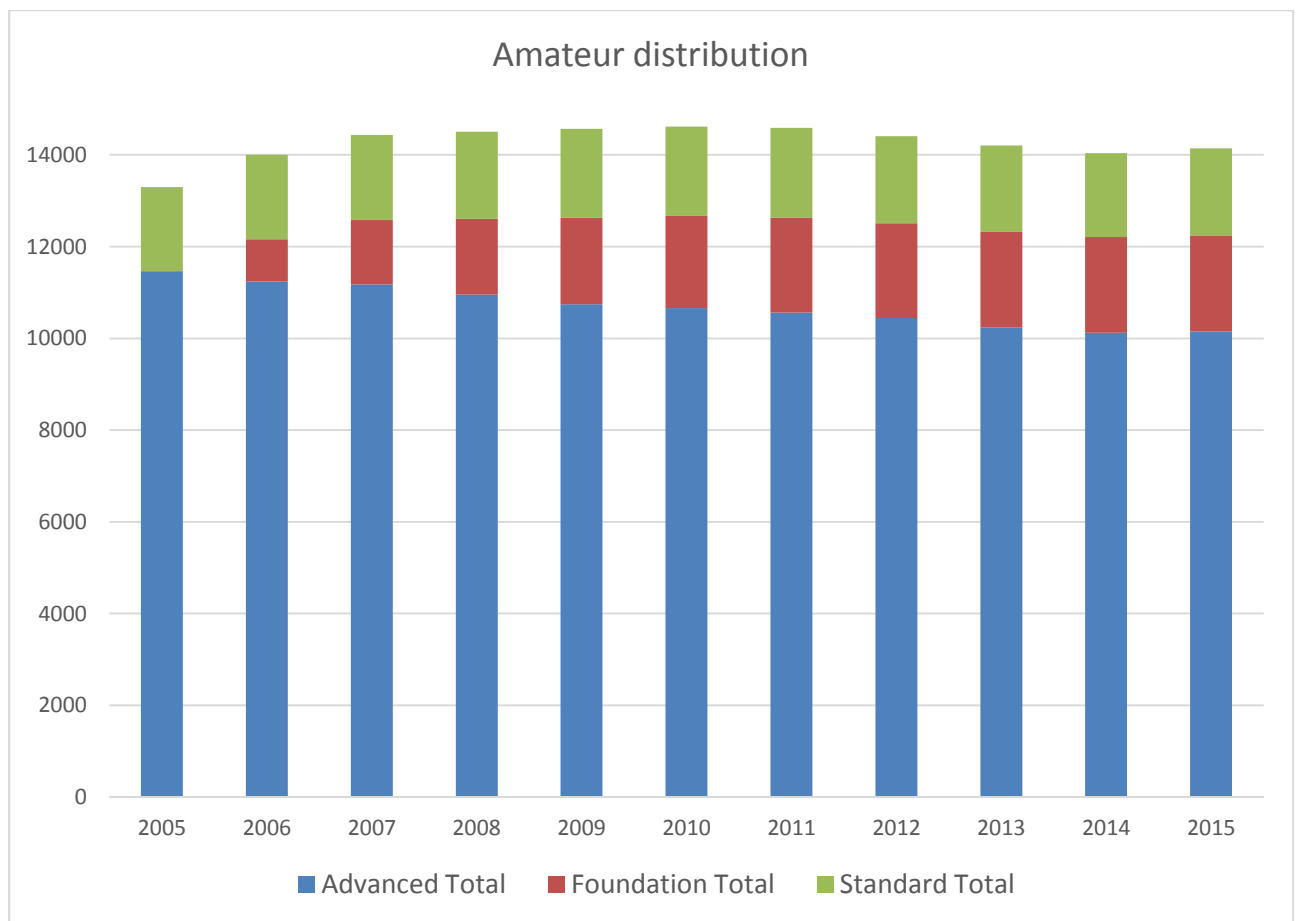


Figure 1 - Distribution of amateurs

Observations

This analysis provides some data that allows some trends within the amateur population to be observed (and there are some interesting trends). Not unexpectedly, this data raises more questions than it answers. It provides insight into WHAT is happening. Because correlation does not equal causation, it is difficult, if not impossible to determine WHY. We can really only speculate.

Thanks again for taking time to read this report, as always your feedback and suggestions for improvements and enhancements are most welcome.

Submitted by Rob Broomhead VK3DN, Marc Hillman VK3OHM, Tim Broomhead VK3KTB, Jim Linton VK3PC and Roger Harrison VK2ZRH (website content)



Wireless Institute of Australia

Open Forum
Norfolk Island, May, 2016

Community Service

Ewan VK4ERM, Fred VK2DAC, Phil VK2ASD

The Community Service Committee was largely inactive during 2015; however the WIA acknowledges the continuing contribution made by WICEN to emergency and community service activities.

There has been extensive discussion at the Board in relation to the Community service related activities. This discussion has led to the first steps in planning meaningful community service activities where radio amateurs can contribute to the community through their skills and knowledge.

The discussions have been in relation to the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics (STEAM) program announced by the Prime Minister. This program provides an opportunity for the WIA to lead involvement via other organisations such as Skills One and Rotary. It is expected that several projects and a formal structure for such projects will be developed during 2016. This will provide a new direction for this committee.

PR4AR is a great opportunity to encourage new entrants into the world of amateur radio and also an opportunity to showcase amateur radio to the public. Going public can be a daunting activity, to accommodate this event, the PR committee have provided excellent promotional material. It is anticipated that PR4AR to recommence in 2017.



Response to the Technical Advisory Sub-Committee Report

Following publication of the Open Forum Reports on the WIA website, the WIA was contacted by Grant Willis VK5GR. Grant requested the opportunity to respond as he was instrumental in the design of the new 2m and 70cm Bandplans. Grant's response is below:

I read with some concern the report of the FTAC chairman for this year. I feel strongly that his report has misrepresented the situation and events of 2015. I feel that the report is presenting a false view of proceedings, considering in particular the statement "I am concerned that these major band plan changes were made in some haste and without detailed consultation with the TAC or with amateurs in general."

I would like to see the record corrected to reflect the following:

History

- 2012 – The WIA without any serious attempt at consultation drops new repeater inputs over the top of the 145.0125-145.400MHz band with -1.6MHz offsets – this with a few holes left for APRS, WICEN and ARDF consumed virtually all of the 400kHz of this band segment for no gain other than addressing the RL8 Land Mobile trunking spectrum plan issues when collocating with amateur repeaters

Sequence of Events for the latest round of band plan updates

- Around June 2014 I raised the issue with the TAC chairman, the TAC committee members (that I could find email addresses for on the WIA website) and ultimately submitted a discussion paper to Amateur Radio magazine in July 2014 which reviewed the state of the band plans, their design, the demand for spectrum from the various interests within the amateur service. This was a three part series that spanned 3 months in AR. Surely that would constitute "consultation" with the entire membership? (I received quite a few emailed responses to that article from across Australia, almost all of them in support of what I was proposing).
- Conversation with the TAC chairman continued through July and September on email and several times by phone, ramping up further in January 2015.
- At the same time the discussions were also conducted on the vklogger forum and the various Australian amateur radio Facebook groups in an attempt to gain a wider range of feedback from as many quarters as possible.
- In the whole time that the TAC chairman discussion was being undertaken, attempts to garner further feedback from the TAC committee members were also attempted. Only two ever replied, apart from the VK5 TAC representative (who I knew well).



- Discussions continued into April, and eventually following discussions with the WIA president a meeting was agreed to in Canberra at the AGM which the repeater coordinator attended but not the FTAC chairman.
- The meeting was ultimately a success in that finally the WIA repeater coordinator entered the discussion, and an agreement was reached on the majority of the ideas being proposed such that a final position could be proposed to the membership for consideration.
- Following the AGM a further period of consultation was undertaken with the final proposal being presented to members via the WIA Website.
- More consultation was had and issues with the plan were indicated by various interest groups. The 2m plan was the most controversial however it did improve the lot for simplex operation between 145.000-145.400 by relocating the issue to the 145.425-145.775 – so actually no more spectrum consumed than previously – just moved to a different slot. Most concerns were alleviated through the limited new repeater output segment (using refarmed AX.25 packet channels) and the use of -1.6MHz offsets being restricted to only occur at sites where the LM8 TMR issues actually existed, with a preference to try and avoid the use of 147.3 as far as possible due to it clashing with the 145.7 ARDF homing channel.
- Finally the plan was ratified by the board in about September 2015 – a process that took OVER 12 months!

I therefore wish to move that the NTAC report not be accepted as a true and accurate representation of events.

Regards,
Grant Willis
VK5GR

