



WATTS

Pretoria Amateur Radio Club Newsletter

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Email: zs6pta@zs6pta.org.az

WATTS *Monthly Magazine of the Pretoria Amateur Radio Club*

PARC QRP Contest



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To every reader, supporter, and contributor who's tuned in to Watts—thank you. Whether you've shared a story, sparked a laugh, or simply kept the signal strong by reading along, you're part of what makes this frequency worth broadcasting.

We'd love to hear more from you. Got a quirky club tale, a burning question, a bright idea, or a moment worth amplifying? Send it our way at Watts@PARC.co.za. The mic is always open, and your voice keeps the airwaves alive.

Stay curious, stay connected—and keep the dial on Watts. 73

Stay Connected

- WhatsApp Group: Contact any committee member
- Bulletins: 145.725 MHz (Sundays 08h45)
- Relays: 439.025, 438.225, 145.725, 7.066 MHz + Echolink
- Swopshop: 2m & 7.066 MHz live after bulletins
- Rebroadcast: Mondays 19h45 (2m)



Housekeeping



Want to stay in the loop with PARC?

If you'd like to join the PARC WhatsApp group, simply share your contact details with any committee member — we'll make sure you're added and welcomed aboard!

PARC ANNUAL CLUB FEES: PARK JAARLIKSE LEDEGELDE

Bank	First National Bank	Ordinary Members / Gewone Lede : R200 Spouses and Pensioners : R100	Your call sign must appear as statement text!
Branch Code	25 20 45		
Account No	546 000 426 73		

Please remit your subs in time to our Treasurer, or pay per transfer into the PARC account

Betaal asb. u ledegelde betyds aan ons Tesourier, of betaal per oorplasing in die PARC rekening

Please Note : If your Club fees are not paid up to date, birthday details cannot be displayed in Watts

Membership Fees & Financial Year Reminder

To help members stay in sync with club commitments, please note that our financial year runs from **1 July to 30 June**. Membership fees are payable annually during the month of July, marking the start of our new financial cycle.

We encourage all members to renew their subscriptions in July to ensure uninterrupted participation in club activities and communications.

**** If membership fees remain overdue for three months, the membership will automatically be marked as inactive.**

Each member is responsible for updating and maintaining their personal information on the website.

Birthdays | Verjaarsdae, Joys and Sorrows | Lief en Leed

Members' Birthdays — February | Lede Verjaarsdae — Februarie

Date	Name	Callsign
03 February	Willie Greyling	ZR6WGR
04 February	Louis de Wet	ZS6SK
08 February	Jannie Badenhorst	ZR6BBX
09 February	Kenny Martin	ZS6KMM
16 February	Pat Scheider	ZS6XYL
16 February	Pierre Smit	ZS6PS
16 February	de jager Burger	ZS6ZO
21 February	Nickus de Vos	ZS6US
23 February	Hendri Ehlers	ZS6HFE
23 February	Pete Smith - Curren	ZS6PJ
28 February	Basie Du Plessis	ZR2BA

Wishing you loud signals, clear frequencies, and zero interference on your special day. Happy birthday!

Spouses' Birthdays — February | Gade Verjaarsdae — Februarie

Date	Member	Callsign	Spouse
05 February	Neels Heydenrich	ZS4CFH	Nicolene
10 February	Kenny Martin	ZS6KMM	Paddy
16 February	Corlia Smit	ZS6CHS	Pierre
23 February	Pine Pienaar	ZS6OB	Erika
23 February	Martie Venter (Ehlers)	ZS6MV	Hendri Ehlers
24 February	Cobus Kruger	ZS6TLX	Adri
28 February	Jacques Snyman	ZS6QS	Connie
28 February	Zack Pienaar	ZR6ZAK	

May your celebration be filled with laughter, love, and new adventures. Enjoy your special day!

Members' Birthdays — March | Lede Verjaarsdae — Maart

Date	Name	Callsign
01 March	Ben Greyling	ZS6YVC
05 March	Martie Venter (Ehlers)	ZS6MV

Date	Name	Callsign
08 March	Trev Thomsen	Z21GX
14 March	Uys Classen	ZS6UYS
15 March	Dave Bingham	ZS6AAI
22 March	Julian Bouttell	ZS6AOU
22 March	Ivan Jancuska	ZS6CCW
24 March	Marike Roux	ZS6MRX
27 March	Sarel Stapelberg	ZS6EK

Spouses' Birthdays — March | Gade Verjaarsdae — Maart

Date	Member	Callsign	Spouse
08 March	DP Du Toit	ZR6DP	Vasthi
12 March	Vitor Gouveia	ZS6VG	Rita
15 March	Charlie Pretorius	LISTENER	Alice
16 March	Brian Allchin	ZS1ABW	Alta
18 March	Albert Schreuder	ZS6SE	Joydene
20 March	Nico Michael	ZS6BVR	Mary
22 March	Charles Mills	ZS6CJM	Bertha
23 March	Attie Reynecke	ZS6REY	Anne.marie
24 March	Andre Roux	ZS6ARX	Marike
30 March	George William Ellis	ZS6TA	Madelaine
31 March	Pieter Fourie	ZS6CN	Annatjie

Wedding Anniversaries February 2026 | Huweliks Herdenkings Februarie 2026

Date	Member	Callsign	Spouse
03 February	Vincent Harrison	ZS6BTY	Heather
07 February	Ryan Gibson	ZS6GGR	Juanita
13 February	Cobus Kruger	ZS6TLX	Adri
17 February	Trevor Thomsen	Z21GX	Fiona
27 February	Kenneth Martin	ZS6KMM	Paddy
27 February	Wynand Wessels	ZR6WW	Zelda

Wedding Anniversaries March 2026 / Huweliks Herdenkings Maart 2026

Date	Member	Callsign	Spouse
02 March	Corlia en Pierre Smit	ZS6CHS, ZS6PS	Pierre en Corlia
06 March	Willie Johan Classen	ZS6IAM	Pikkie
15 March	Adriaan Johannes Reynecke	ZS6REY	Anne.marie

17 March	Christiaan van den Heever	ZS6CMH	
25 March	Irene en Pieter Myburgh	ZS6IEA, ZS6PAM	Pieter en Irene
26 March	Louis de Wet	ZS6SK	Sharmaine
27 March	Etienne Naude	ZS6EFN	Fiona
30 March	Daniel Petrus Du Toit	ZR6DP	Vasthi
31 March	Sybrand Van der Spuy	ZS6SY	Liezcel

Joys and Sorrows / Lief en Leed

No joys or sorrows to report this month.

Perhaps the silence is a sign of steady skies and peaceful frequencies.



Electronic Component Supply:

Lantis Electronics imports and supply various electronic components in South Africa.

Equipment Repairs:

Lantis Electronics repairs professional audio and studio equipment.

Phone Numbers:

+27 12 348 4858

+27 66 124 7281

Email: Salesbox@lantis.co.za

Web Site: www.lantis.co.za

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Faerie Glen
Pretoria

0043

PARC Sunday Bulletins | PARK Sondag Bulletins

PARC Bulletins are presented on Sunday mornings at approximately 08h45, after the SARL Bulletins in English and Afrikaans, from 08h15. The Bulletin Presenters for the following two months are presented below.

Please do contact the applicable presenter beforehand if you wish to contribute to the Bulletin. PARC Bulletins are broadcast on the 2-meter repeater on 145.725 MHz, and 70 cm on 438.825 and 439.025 MHz. Relays are done on 7.060 MHz by Pierre ZS6PS and Corlia ZS6CHS Smit and on Echolink by Johan Lehman ZS6JPL.

A re-broadcast of the Bulletin is done the following Monday evening at 19h45 by Louis de Wet ZS6SK.

PARK Bulletins word op Sondagoggende aangebied om 08h45, na die SARL Bulletins in Engels en Afrikaans, vanaf 08h15. Die Bulletin aanbieders vir die volgende twee maande word onder aangedui.

Kontak gerus die toepaslike Bulletin leser indien u 'n bydrae tot die Bulletin wil maak. PARK Bulletins word uitgesaai op die 2-meter herhaler op 145.725 MHz, en 70cm op 438.825 en 439.025 MHz. Herleidings word gedoen op 7.060 MHz deur Pierre ZS6PS en Corlia ZS6CHS Smit, en op Echolink deur Johan Lehman ZS6JPL.

'n Heruitsending van die Bulletin geskied die opvolgende Maandag aand om 19h45, en word behartig deur Louis de Wet ZS6SK.

PARC Bulletin Presenters: January 2026 – February 2026

Date	Presenter	Date	Presenter
1 February 2026	Alméro Du Pisani ZS6LDPK	1 March 2026	Louis de Wet ZS6SK
8 February 2026	Louis de Wet ZS6SK	8 March 2026	Louis de Wet ZS6SK
15 February 2026	Alméro Du Pisani ZS6LDP	15 March 2026	Louis de Wet ZS6SK
22 February 2026	Louis de Wet ZS6SK	22 March 2026	Louis de Wet ZS6SK



Contests and Events | Kompetisies en Gebeure

February 2026

- 1 February — Antique Wireless Association CW Activity Day (1300Z-1500Z)
- 8 February — HamSat-SA ZS QO-100 QSO Party (1300Z-1500Z)
- 10 February — Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest (0100Z-0159Z)
- 18 February — SARL Wednesday 80 m Club Contest (1700Z - 1800Z)
- 21 February — to 22 February ARRL International DX Contest, CW (0000Z, Feb 21 to 2400Z, Feb 22)
- 22 February — World Wide Argentina DX Contest (0000Z-2359Z)
- 24 February — Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest (0100Z-0159Z)
- 27 February to 1 March — CQ 160-Meter Contest, SSB (2200Z, Feb 27 to 2200Z, Mar 1)

March 2026

- 1 March — SARL HAMNET 40 m Simulated Emergency Contest (1200Z -1400Z)
- 3 March — Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest (0100Z - 0159Z)
- 7 March — SARL YL QSO Party (1400Z - 1500Z)
- 7 March — ARRL Inter. DX Contest, SSB (0000Z, Mar 7 to 2400Z, Mar 8)
- 10 March — Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest (0100Z-0159Z)
- 14 March — SARL National Field Day - start 0800Z
- 15 March — SARL National Field Day - end 1000Z
- 16 March — SARL March Equinox 6m DX Challenge - start 0001Z
- 17 March — Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest (0100Z-0159Z)
- 21 March — SARL Saturday 20 m Club Contest (1100Z - 1200Z)
- 24 March — Worldwide Sideband Activity Contest (0100Z-0159Z)
- 28 March — Africa All Mode International DX Contest - start 1200Z
- 29 March — Africa All Mode International DX Contest - end 1200Z

The Pretoria Amateur Radio Club does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of contest details listed above. For verification and more information, please visit the SARL website, www.sarl.org.za, as well as the WA7BNM international contest calendar at the following website: <http://hornucopia.co>

Tip: Always verify contest details on SARL and WA7BNM calendars.

PARC Flea Market | PARK Snuffelmark



NEXT FLEA MARKET

4 April

16 Catherine Rd, Shere

BOOK YOUR TABLE:
Alméro du Pisani | 083 938 8955 | almerodps@gmail.com

JOIN US

16 Catherine Road, Shere, Pretoria East

Next Flea Market Date: 4 April / Volgende Snuffelmark Datum: 4 April

CONTACT PERSON: Alméro Du Pisani (T) 083-938-8955 (E) almerodps@gmail.com

** Please take note: the price of a table at the fleamarket is now **R30** per table.

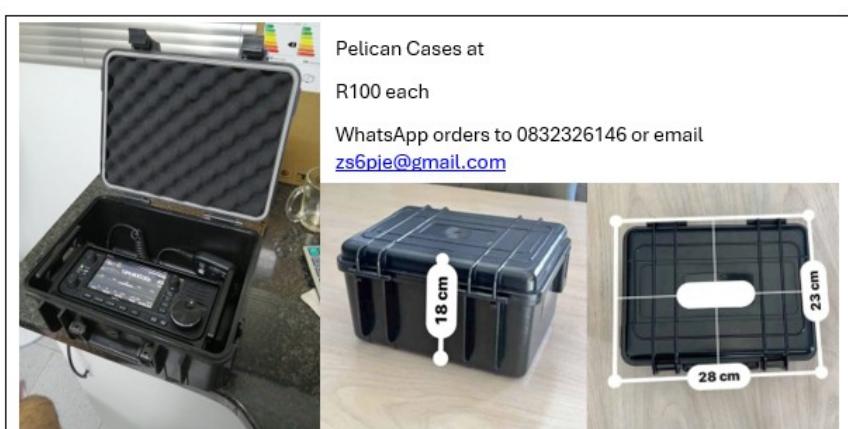
** Neem asseblief kennis: die prys van 'n tafel by die vlooimark is nou **R30** per tafel.

Upcoming Dates — 2026

- 4 Apr — PARC
- 6 Jun — PARC
- 1 Aug — PARC
- 5 Dec — PARC

Other Clubs — 2026

- 7 Feb — East Rand Radio Club
- 7 Mar — West Rand Radio Club



PARC QRP Contest by Martie - ZS6MV

The **PARC Contest Team** – Pierre Holtzhausen (ZS6PJH), Hendri Ehlers (ZS6HFE), and myself (ZS6MV) – together with guests and aspiring hams, gathered at a picture-perfect venue for the **QRP contest**.

Shout-out to Louis ZS6SK and his guests for their support.

From the moment we arrived, the tone was set: a welcoming smile, a designated antenna waiting for me, and the promise of a day filled with signals, sandwiches, and shared stories.

My antenna was quickly raised, tuned to perfection, and tested to ensure we were within contest specifications. Photos taken, proof secured – the station was ready to sing.



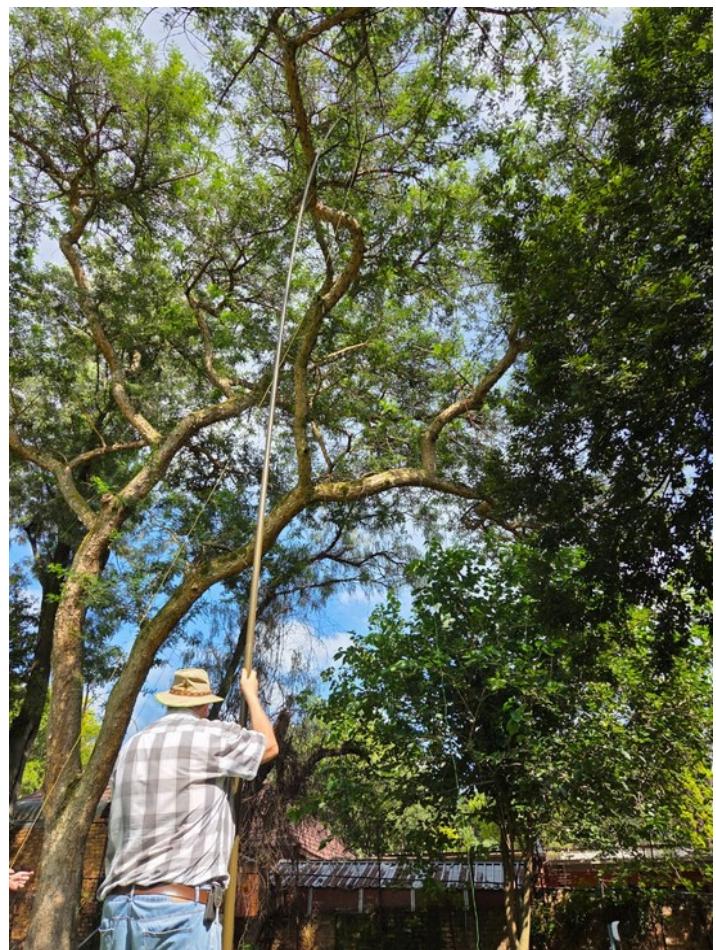
Just as my rig came alive, Pierre arrived. In true ham style, everyone pitched in to help him set up. With plenty of time before the contest, we paused for the most important pre-contest ritual: toasted sandwiches. Fuelled and focused, we returned to cables, poles, and radios, each station coming together like a well-orchestrated symphony.



Sliding into **contest mode**, I had the joy of showing aspiring hams what the thrill of contesting is all about: chasing signals, logging contacts, and laughing through the inevitable challenges. A few gremlins popped up – but that's part of the fun.



Meanwhile, at the other station, antenna issues sparked an “all hands on deck” moment. I only learned about the commotion later, but it was a perfect example of how teamwork and improvisation define amateur radio.



When the last CQ faded, we gathered around a large table for lunch. The on-site restaurant buzzed like a busy frequency: questions, ideas, advice, and observations bounced around like signals off the ionosphere. It was a magical condiment, enriching every conversation and leaving everyone inspired.

Then came the goodbyes – or at least the first round. True ham style, we gathered next to Pierre’s trusty Suzuki, and the conversation flowed again. Three or four “final finals” later, we finally headed home, smiling ear to ear, radios still humming in our minds.

Hendri (ZS6HFE) captured the spirit perfectly:

“It was great fun. From fishing for signal with a fishing pole, swapping antennas, connecting antennas... absolutely amazing day. We had a couple of gremlins in the wiring which proved to be exceptional training for the aspiring hams who joined us.”



PARC Launch RAE Preparation Training

The Pretoria Amateur Radio Club (PARC) is thrilled to announce that we are officially hosting **RAE (Radio Amateur Examination) preparation training** at our very own **registered exam centre**. This marks an exciting milestone for our community: we are fully equipped with **HF trainers, a qualified invigilator, and all the resources needed** to help aspiring radio amateurs succeed.

At PARC, we believe there is always room for learning, growth, and new voices on the airwaves. Whether you're just starting your journey into amateur radio or looking to sharpen your skills, our training sessions are designed to be **inclusive, professional, and supportive**.

We're ready to get started—and we'd love for you to be part of it. If you're interested in joining our RAE preparation training, simply send us an email at RAE@PARC.ORG.ZA

Or you can visit our PARC web page <https://www.parc.org.za/index.php?page=rae>

Let's make 2026 the year you earn your amateur radio license and join the vibrant world of radio communication. The airwaves are waiting—are you ready to answer the call?



The Amateur's Code | Die Amateur se Kode

As the airwaves grow lively with contest signals and the thrill of competition, it's worth pausing to reflect on the values that bind us together as radio amateurs. The Amateur's Code, first penned by Paul M. Segal in 1928, remains a timeless compass for our conduct—on and off the bands.

It reminds us that beyond the chase for multipliers and the excitement of pileups, amateur radio is a service, a fellowship, and a craft. We are called to be **considerate**, ensuring our signals do not cause needless interference; **loyal**, supporting our clubs, fellow operators, and the spirit of cooperation; **progressive**, embracing new techniques and learning with curiosity; **friendly**, welcoming newcomers and fostering goodwill; **balanced**, keeping radio in harmony with life's other duties; and **patriotic**, using our skills in service of community and country when needed.

In contests, where adrenaline and ambition run high, the Code is our anchor. It reminds us that every QSO is more than a point—it is a handshake across distance, a moment of shared passion, and a reflection of the dignity of our hobby. Let us carry these principles into the contest season, so that our logs are not only full of contacts, but also full of respect, camaraderie, and pride in being radio amateurs.

Remember: the **SARL Contest Manual** is your best reference for contest rules and good operating practice. Keep it close—it keeps us all on the same frequency.

The 2026 South African Radio League Contest Manual:

<https://mysarl.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2026-SARL-Contest-Manual-Version-1.1-2025-12-15.pdf>

The Amateur's Code	Die Amateur se Kode
CONSIDERATE...	BEDAGSAAM...
Never knowingly operates in such a way as to lessen the pleasure of others.	Die amateur is 'n ware heer. Hy sal nooit bewustelik of moedswillig die radiogolwe op so 'n wyse vir sy eie genot aanwend om daardeur die genot vir ander te bederf nie.
LOYAL...	LOJAAL...
offers loyalty, encouragement and support to other amateurs, local clubs and the South African Radio League, through which Amateur Radio in South Africa is represented nationally and internationally.	Die Amateur is lojaal teenoor die Suid-Afrikaanse Radioliga en bied sy ondersteuning aan. Hy lê hom neer by die onderneming wat die SARL aan die owerheid beloof het.
PROGRESSIVE...	PROGRESSIEF...
with knowledge abreast of science, a well-built and efficient station and operation above reproach.	Die Amateur is progressief en sy stasie is in tred met die wetenskap. Sy bedieningspraktyk is netjies en ordelik.
FRIENDLY...	VRIENDELIK...
slow and patient operating when requested; friendly advice and counsel to the beginner; kindly assistance, cooperation and consideration for the interests of others. These are the hallmarks of the amateur spirit.	Die Amateur is vriendelik en verdraagsaam wanneer aan hom 'n versoek gerig word. Hy verstrek geredelik raad aan alle amateurs en verleen hulp en samewerking in die gees van amateur radio.
BALANCED...	EWEWIGTIG...
radio is an avocation, never interfering with duties owed to family, job, school or community.	Die Amateur is ewewigtig en laat nie toe dat sy stokperdjie met sy gesinslewe, werk of gemeenskap inmeng nie.
PATRIOTIC...	PATRIOTIES...
station and skill always ready for service to country and community.	Die Amateur is patrioties, sy kennis en stasie is altyd vir sy land en gemeenskap beskikbaar.

A Refresher on the Band Plans

It is important to remind ourselves of the framework that keeps our signals orderly and our community strong—the **band plans**. These allocations are not just technical charts; they are agreements that help us share the spectrum responsibly, avoid interference, and make space for every mode and operator.

With contests and everyday activity filling the bands, a quick refresher ensures we operate with clarity, courtesy, and confidence. The band plan is our roadmap: it keeps the excitement of radio alive while safeguarding the harmony of the airwaves.

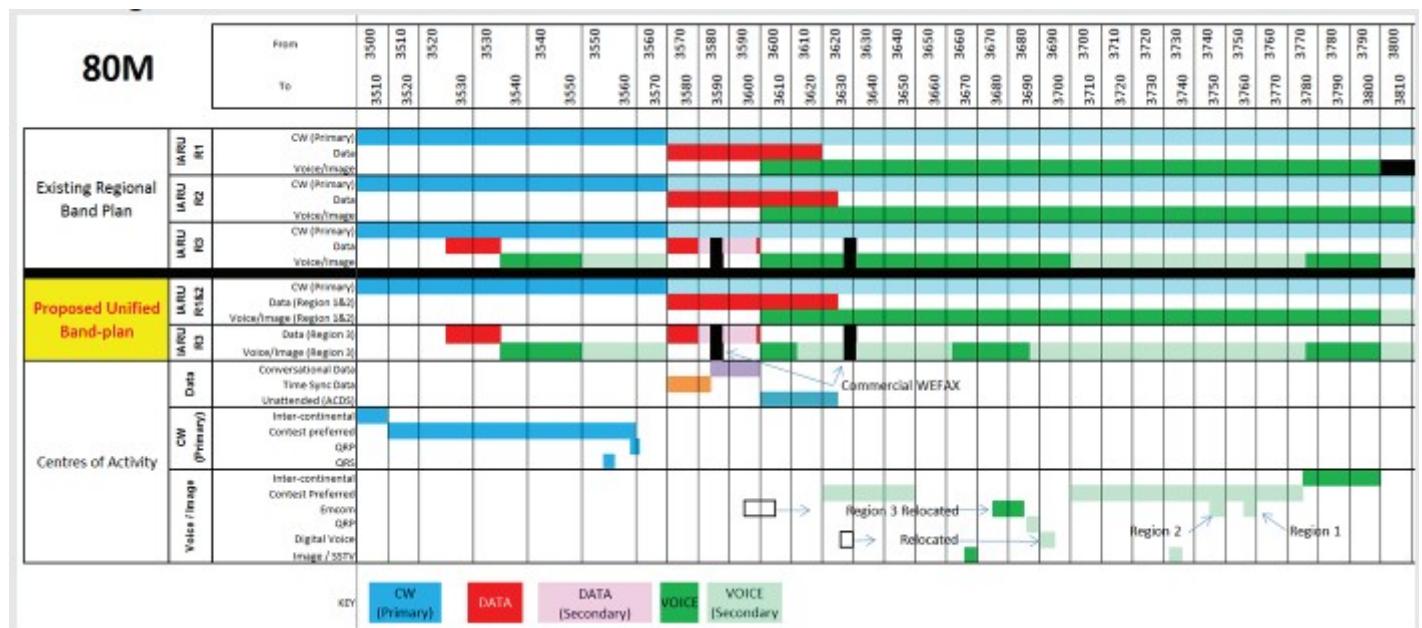
The Band Plans can be found at <https://mysarl.org.za/bandplans/>

In this article we're highlighting the most popular band plans—those segments of the spectrum where most of our daily activity and contesting takes place. Of course, these are not the *only* allocations; the full set of band plans covers every mode and frequency segment, and is published by the SARL and IARU for reference.

Band plans are more than charts:

- **They are voluntary agreements** that help amateurs share the spectrum harmoniously.
- **They protect diversity of modes**—from CW and SSB to digital and experimental signals.
- **They evolve with technology**—new modes and practices are accommodated as our hobby grows.
- **They foster international cooperation**—since many allocations are harmonized across regions, making DX smoother.
- **They safeguard emergency use**—ensuring clear channels when amateur radio is called to serve.

By refreshing ourselves on the most popular segments, we strengthen our awareness of where activity is concentrated, while remembering that the full band plan is always available for deeper study. Think of this as a quick map for everyday operating, with the SARL Contest Manual and IARU documents as the complete atlas.



80 m Band – Structure and Options

80m Band	Frequency Segment (kHz)	Primary Mode	Secondary Mode	Max Bandwidth (Hz)	Centres of Activity	Sub-Band (kHz)		
	3500-3570	CW		200	Intercontinental	3500-3510		
					Contest Preferred	3510-3560		
		CW	Data (R3)	2700	Region 3 Only - Secondary Data	3525-3535		
			Speech (R3)	2700	Region 3 Only - Secondary Speech	3535-3570		
	3570-3600	CW		200	CW - QRS	3555		
					CQ - QRP	3560		
		Data		200	WSPR Weak Signal Beacons (Dial 3568.6 kHz)	3570.0-3570.2		
					Time Synced Modes (eg WSJT Family Modes)	3570-3584		
				2700	Conversational Data (eg PSK/RTTY/Olivia)	3584-3600		
REGION 2/3 Only	3600-3625	Data	Speech (R3)	2700	Automatic Controlled Data Stations (ACDS)	3600-3625		
	3625-3700	Speech / Image		2700	SSTV Region 3	3670		
	3700-3775	Speech / Image			Emergency Comms Region 3	3680		
					Digital Voice	3690		
	3775-3800	Speech / Image		2700	SSTV	3735		
					Emergency Comms Region 2	3750		
					Emergency Comms Region 1	3760		
	3800-3875	Speech / Image		2700	Inter-Continental DX Window			
	3875-3900	Speech / Image			REGION 2/3 ONLY			
			6000	SSTV	3845			
	3900-4000			Speech / Image	AM (6kHz BW allowed)	3885		
				2700	Emergency Comms Region 2	3985		

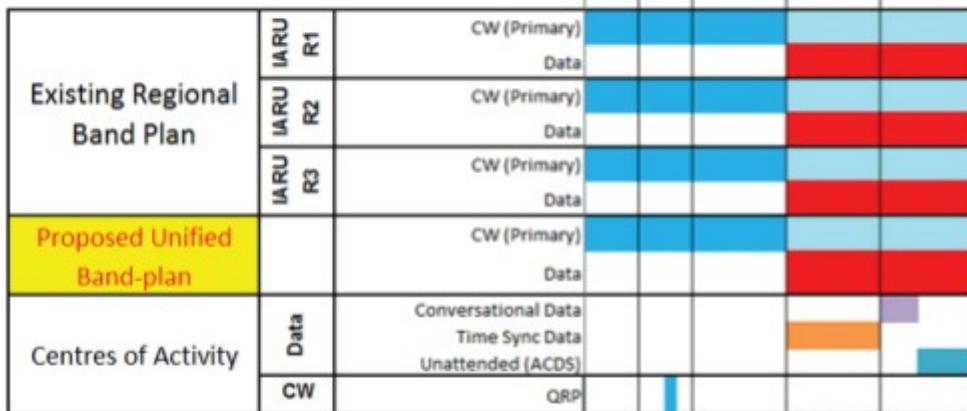
40m Band	Frequency Segment (kHz)	Primary Mode	Secondary Mode	Max Bandwidth (Hz)	Centres of Activity	Sub-Band (kHz)				
	7000-7030	CW		200	CQ - QRP	7030				
	7030-7040	CW	Data (R3)		Region 3 Only - Data (due to restrictions above 7045kHz)	7030-7040				
	7030-7040	CW	Data (R3)	2700	Japan Only - Time Synced Modes (eg WSJT Family Modes)	7037-7040				
	7040-7060	Data			WSPR Weak Signal Beacons (Dial 7038.6 kHz)	7040.0-7040.2				
					Conversational Data (eg PSK/RTTY/Olivia)	7040-7060				
					Automatic Controlled Data Stations (ACDS)	7050-7060				
	7060-7065	Data	Speech	2700	Automatic Controlled Data Stations (ACDS)	7060-7065				
					Digital Voice	7065				
	7065-7070	Data		200	Time Synced Modes (eg WSJT Family Modes)	7065-7070				
	Time Synced Modes (eg WSJT Family Modes)				7065-7080					
	7080-7175	Speech / Image		2700	SSB Contest Preferred	7080-7100				
					SSB - QRP	7090				
					Emergency Comms	7110				
					SSB Contest Preferred	7130-7175				
					SSTV	7165				
	7175-7200	Speech / Image		2700	SSB Contest Preferred - Priority for Intercontinental	7175-7200				
	7200-7300	Speech / Image			Emergency Comms Region 2	7240				
					Emergency Comms Region 2	7275				
					SSB - QRP	7285				
					AM - 6kHz allowed	7290				
	Voice / Image	EmCom Contest Preferred QRP Image / SSTV			Region 2 Deleted					
					Deleted					
<p>KEY</p> <p>CW (Primary) DATA DATA (Secondary) VOICE VOICE (Secondary)</p>										

Above: 40 m Band – Structure and Options. Below: 40 m Band - Proposal

(Continued on page 14)

30M

From								
To								
	10110	10100						
	10120	10110						
	10130							
	10140							
	10150							



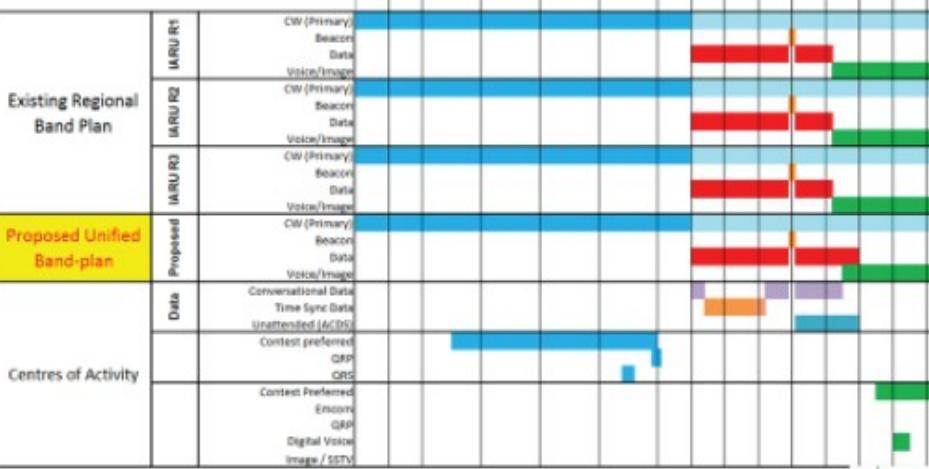
30 m Band – Structure and Options

KEY CW (Primary) DATA (Secondary) VOICE (Secondary)

30m Band	Frequency Segment (kHz)	Primary Mode	Secondary Mode	Max Bandwidth (Hz)	Centres of Activity		Sub-Band (kHz)	
	10100-10130	CW		200	CW - QRP		10116	
10125-10130	CW	Speech		2700	SSB Use restricted to VK & AF where permitted		10125-10130	
10130-10150	Data			2700	Time Synced Modes (eg WSJT Family Modes)		10130-10140	
					WSPR Weak Signal Beacons (Dial 10138.6 kHz)		10140.0-10140.2	
					Conversational Data (eg PSK/RTTY/Olivia)		10140-10144	
					Automatic Controlled Data Stations (ACDS)		10144-10150	

20M

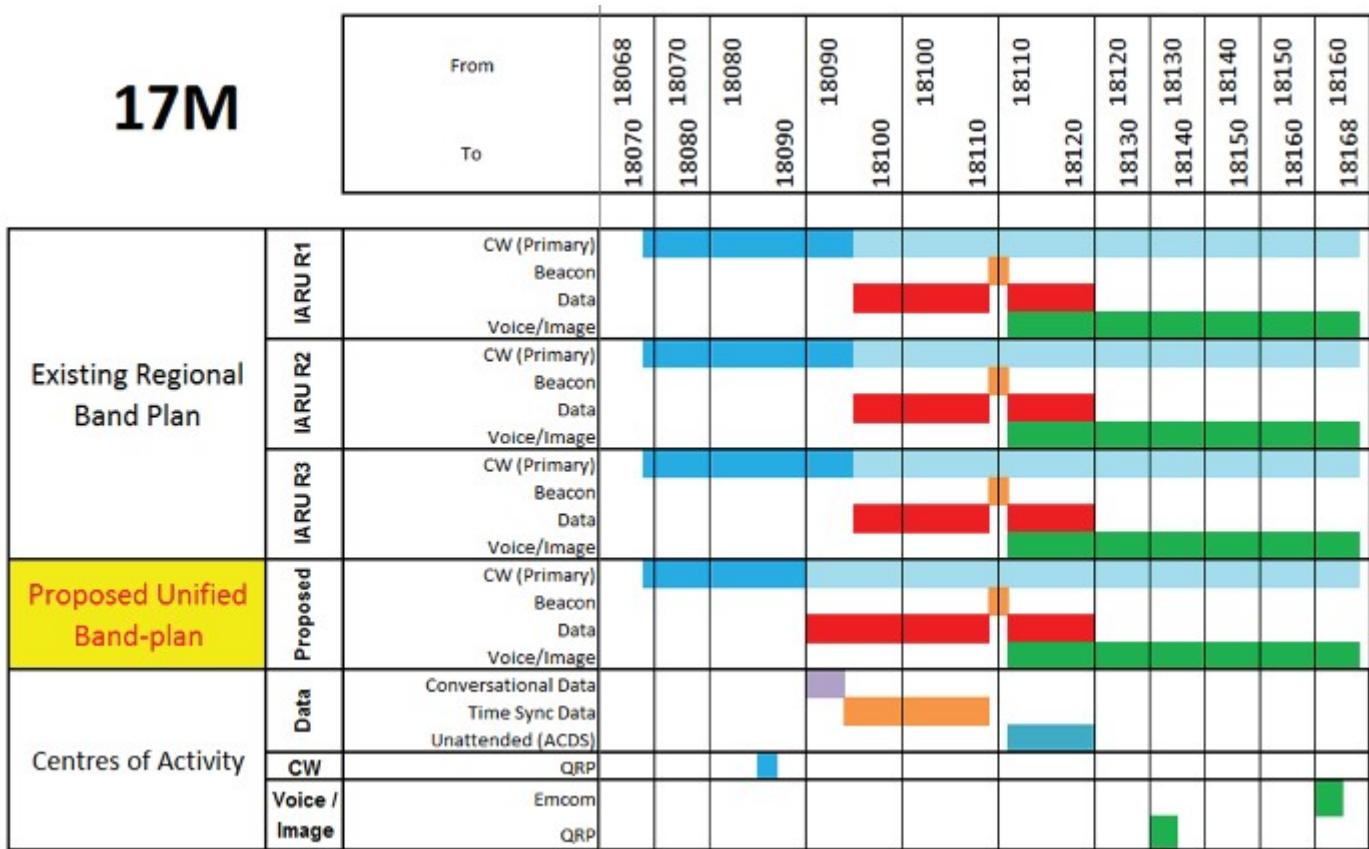
From								
To								
14010	14000							
14020	14010							
14020								
14030								
14040								
14050								
14060								
14070	14060							
14080	14070							
14090	14080							
14100	14090							
14110	14100							
14120	14110							
14130	14120							
14140	14130							



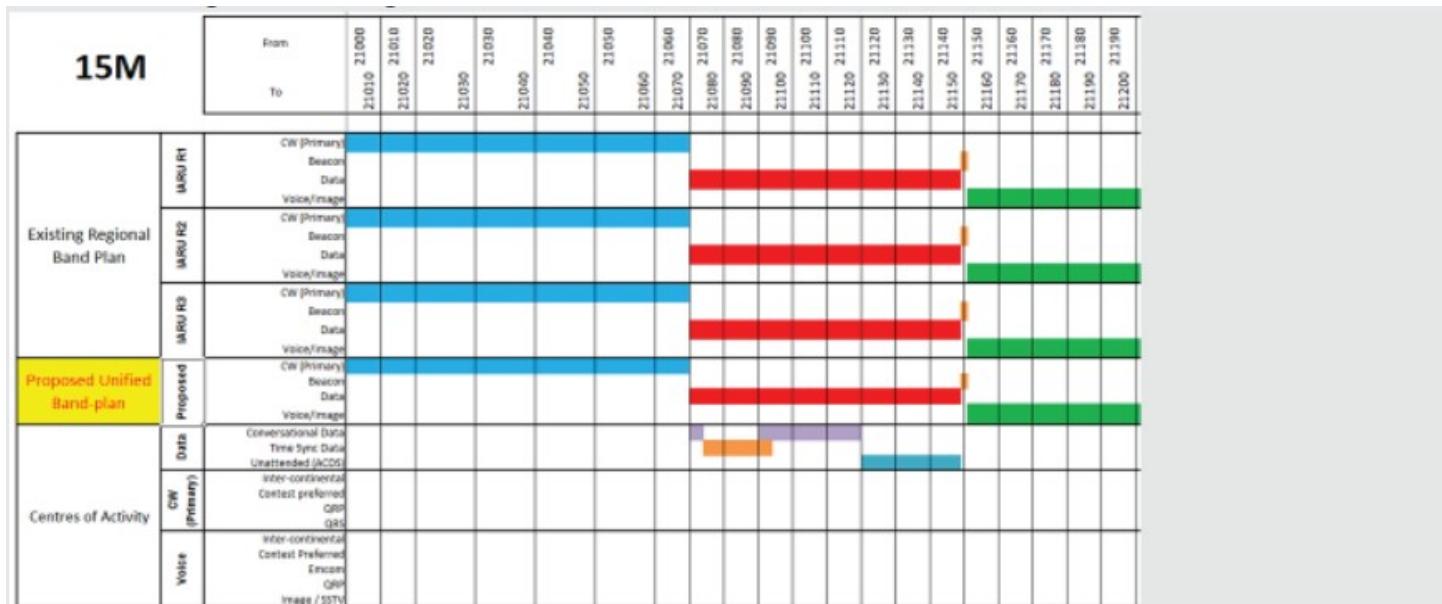
20 m Band – Structure and Options

KEY CW (Primary) DATA (Secondary) VOICE (Secondary)

17M



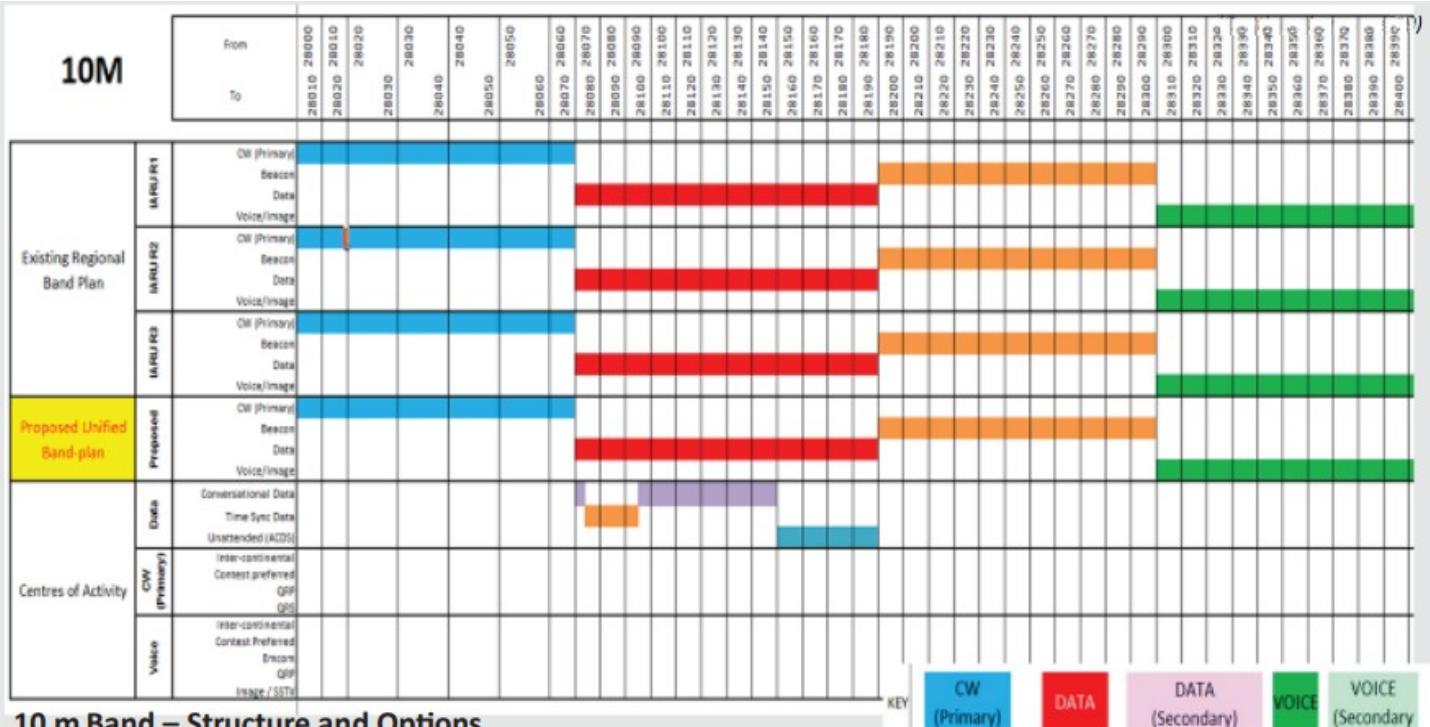
15M



15 m Band – Structure and Options

KEY	CW (Primary)	DATA	DATA (Secondary)	VOICE	VOICE (Secondary)
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10M



C/O NELSPORT & 801 MALMESBURY STR, WINGATE PARK, PRETORIA [S25.49.36 & E28.16.07]



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Shack Talk by Vernon - ZS6AIG (Part 3)



Many years ago, I contacted OM Ed on CW, but over time we lost touch. Recently, one morning while tuning in to the early birds on 40m, I heard the call sign ZS6UT. I soon realized it belonged to a dedicated CW operator based in Garsfontein and a member of PARC. The very next day, I reached out to OM Ed, and he graciously agreed to sit down for an interview with **Shack Talk**.



Ed ZS6UT

Our conversion started with how did you first get involved with amateur radio, and what sparked your interest?

During the 1960s, while I was in high school, I became fascinated with building a crystal set. Using a cat's whisker on a quartz crystal, I managed to create a working receiver. I even set up a long bamboo pole as a mast, and I was amazed at how many broadcast stations came through on a pair of high-impedance headphones.

After joining the Post Office as a clerk, I was assigned to the Postal Telegraph Office in Durban, where we trained in CW (Morse code) and Telex machine operation. In 1964, I was called up for compulsory military service and joined the Artillery Regiment in Potchefstroom for nine months. I was stationed at the Command

Post behind the 25-pounder guns, receiving coordinates from the Observation Post via VHF radio. This marked the beginning of my experience with operating real radios.

What was the ham radio community like when you started compared to today?

After a break of 25 years from radios, I decided to join the Durban Amateur Radio Club to do the RAE. In 1990, I received the call sign ZS5NT I remember how Don Seargeant, ZS5WT (Now SK) helped me with CW practice over 2m which I picked up quickly. At that time, operators were required to complete 200 QSOs on CW before moving on to SSB. I began with a hand pump key, operated with my left hand, and later switched to a single-lever paddle, which I still use today with my right hand.

My first transceiver was a Yaesu FT-707, paired with a 4BTB vertical antenna that I installed on the roof of the block of flats where I lived. Soon, the DX bug bit, and I found immense joy in making friends around the globe. Along the way, I also became something of a stamp collector through the many QSL cards exchanged. There was a lot of support from Elmers in the ZS5D Club to help you like Louis ZS5LP. Today with the Internet and various Groups on U Tube there is also lots of information available. I have been with PARC member since 1992 and have had great support when needed.

Back in the day, how much of your equipment did you repair or build yourself?

On the technical side, I greatly enjoyed building antennas. With the help of Hein ZS6Q, I constructed a 6-element log Yagi covering 30 to 10 meters, which performed exceptionally well. Over time, I added inverted Vees for 160, 80, 40, and 30 meters, as well as a 4-element quad for 6 meters during the excellent six-meter conditions of 2001.

Other projects included a home-brew ZS6BKW, end-fed long wire antennas for 40 and 80 meters using a 49:1 balun, a horizontal sky loop for 40 to 10 meters, a Controlled Current Distribution (CCD) antenna, a magnetic loop with a Jennings vacuum capacitor, an extended Zepp dipole, and a 160-meter horizontal loop.

During the six and a half years we lived on a farm at Worlds View near Cullinan, I had ample space to experiment. One highlight was erecting a 300-meter long wire antenna aimed toward the Caribbean and USA, which worked remarkably well. I also built a J-pole for 2 meters and 70 cm, rounding out a diverse collection of antennas.

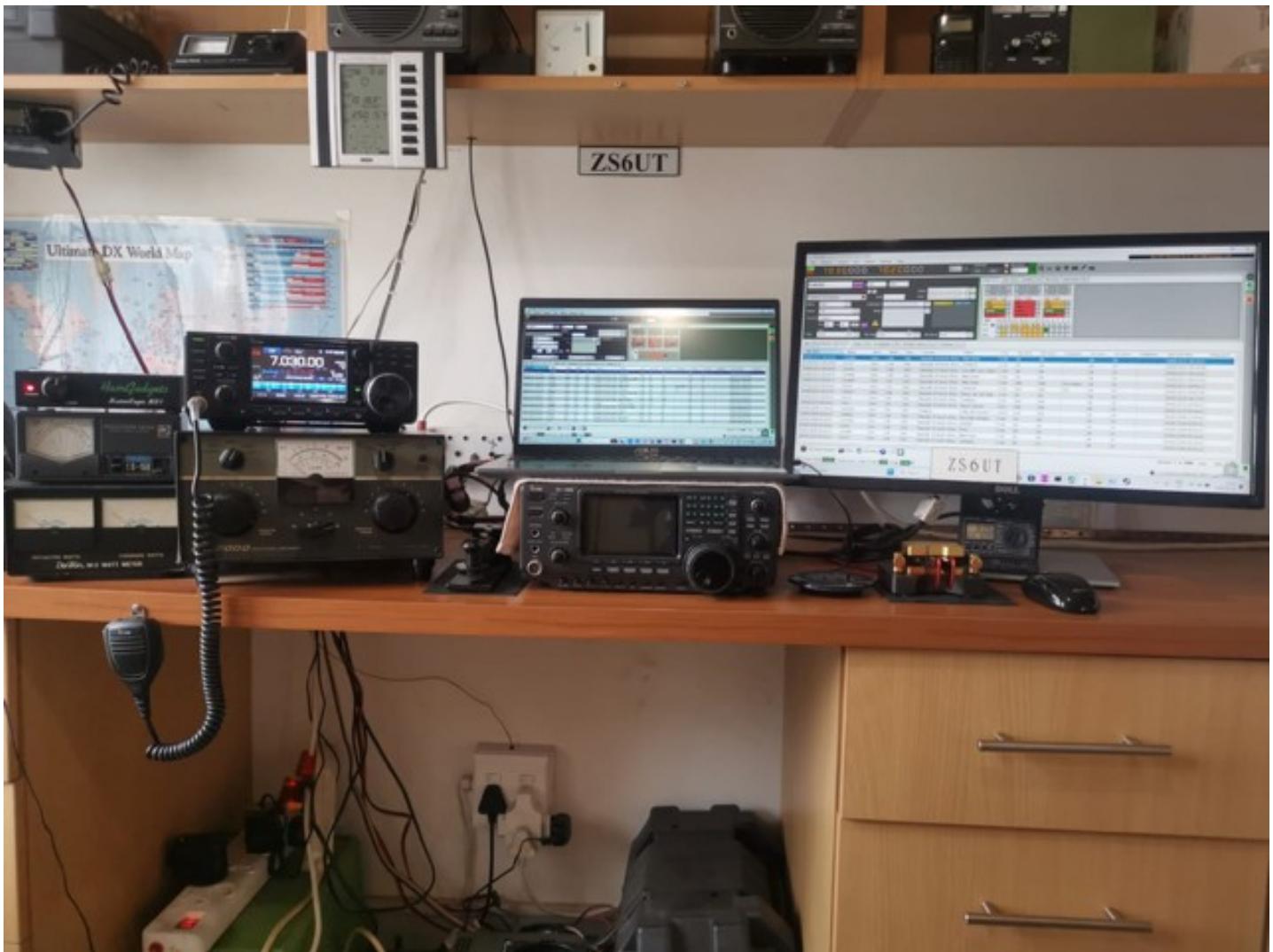
My first construction project was a QRP CW transmitter, suggested by Roger, ZS5L from Lima Electronics. I later built a CW key-er using the Curtiss chip. One of my more ambitious undertakings was acquiring a Thomson CSF HF linear amplifier with a 4CX1500B ceramic tube—it took considerable effort to get it running properly. Unfortunately, it was eventually damaged in a lightning strike.

These days, I find soldering more difficult, as I no longer have a steady hand, but the memories of those projects remain a highlight of my radio journey.

Do you still have any of your equipment from yester year?

The only equipment from those days which I still use in the Shack is the FP707 PSU to keep the Deep Cell Battery charged.

The other transceiver I had was a Kenwood TS450S with its DSP Unit. Genuinely nice set up which I regretted selling. Then an Icom 746 which is still here, followed by Icom 7000, Icom 703, and now a Icom 7300 being the current Rig.



The present-day Shack

What are some of the memorable things that come to mind?

It is so nice to contact a DX station again and discover you have had a QSO 20 years ago on 160m CW. I also have a DXCC from 160 to 10meters mostly CW. 323 Entities)

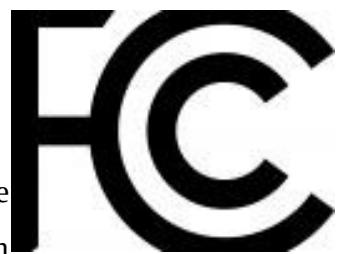
If there is one journey I would like to relive is a 160m CW contact I had with two Hawaii stations, working the grey termination Line. It was already light here but not dark yet in Hawaii and I worked them; I still have the QSL card somewhere must find it.

What advice would you give to new hams starting out today?

Join an Elmer support group in a Radio Club, ask questions and have a go on CW which is still popular and gets through when SSB struggles. I think some digital modes like FT8 do not really work for me. You see mostly FT8 on the Cluster which is a pity but can be useful for propagation studies.

Well that wraps up our conversation with OM Ed. His stories remind us how amateur radio is more than just technology — it's about community, learning, and the joy of making connections across the airwaves. A big thank you to Ed for sharing his memories and insights.

Stay tuned for the next edition of Shack Talk, where we'll continue exploring the rigs, people, and stories that make ham radio such a special part of our lives. Until then, keep those signals strong and those friendships stronger — 73!"



New 60-Meter Frequencies Available as of February 13

01/15/2026

The new 60-meter frequencies approved by the FCC in December will become available to amateurs as of February 13, 2026, along with new power restrictions on those frequencies. It's a bit confusing, as different rules apply to different segments of the band. The changes result from the FCC's action to approve a worldwide 60-meter amateur allocation made by the World Radiocommunications Conference in 2015 (WRC-15). See <https://tinyurl.com/mt8p8jpa>.

As of February 13, FCC-licensed amateur operators holding General Class or higher licenses may operate on a secondary basis anywhere between 5351.5 and 5366.5 kHz, subject to a maximum bandwidth of 2.8 kHz and maximum transmit power of 9.15 watts ERP (effective radiated power). For the purpose of computing ERP, the transmitter PEP (peak envelope power) is multiplied by the antenna gain relative to a half-wave dipole antenna. A half-wave dipole is presumed to have a gain of 1 (0 dBd). Amateurs using other antennas must maintain in their station records either the antenna manufacturer's data on the antenna gain or calculations of the antenna gain.

Here's the confusing part: The existing 60-meter channels centered on 5332, 5348, 5373, and 5405 kHz remain as secondary amateur allocations with maximum power of 100 watts ERP. However, the old channel at 5358.5 kHz is eliminated as it is now part of the new 5351.5-5366.5 kHz subband and subject to the lower power limit.

For all 60-meter transmissions, emission bandwidth is limited to 2.8 kHz or less and amateurs must not cause harmful interference to, and must accept interference from, stations authorized by the United States (NTIA and FCC) and other nations in the fixed service; and all other nations in the mobile service (except aeronautical mobile). Data or RTTY emissions in particular must be limited in transmission length so as not to cause harmful interference. Digital mode operators must be familiar with offsets in order to stay within the authorized frequencies.

**NEW 60-METER
FREQUENCIES
AVAILABLE AS OF
FEBRUARY 13**

Get to know your fellow Hams – Irene Myburgh ZS6IEA

Radio Roots & Identity

1 What first sparked your interest in amateur radio?

My interest in amateur radio was sparked by my excitement to help with communication at the rallies.

2 What's your call sign, and is there a story behind it?

ZS6IEA not really any story behind it, it is my initials.

3 Who was your biggest mentor or influence in your ham journey?

My husband. We have a little game where we try to guess the name of the voice on the radio before they say their names.



HONOR 400 Lite

Operating Style & Passions

4 Do you prefer rag chewing, contesting, experimenting, or another form of comms?

I like being involved with the communications at rallies.

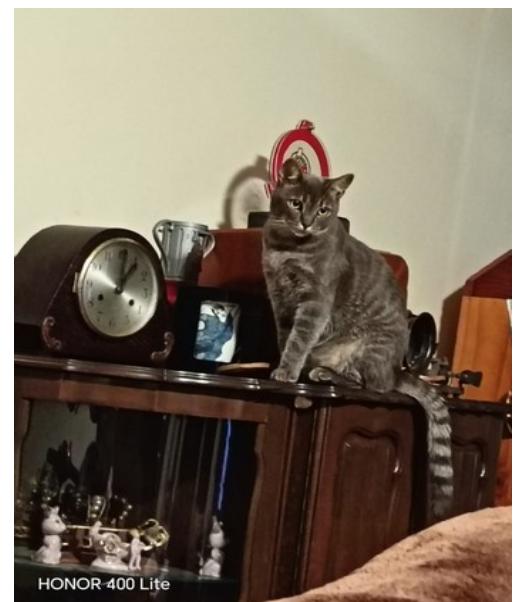
Personality & Humour

5 If your shack had a mascot, what would it be?

My shack mascot will definitely be a cat because our cats are always in the shack when we are on the radios or PC's.

6 What nickname would your fellow hams give you?

I would not know, you should ask them. Hi hi.



HONOR 400 Lite

Beyond the Shack

7 What other hobbies or interests do you enjoy?

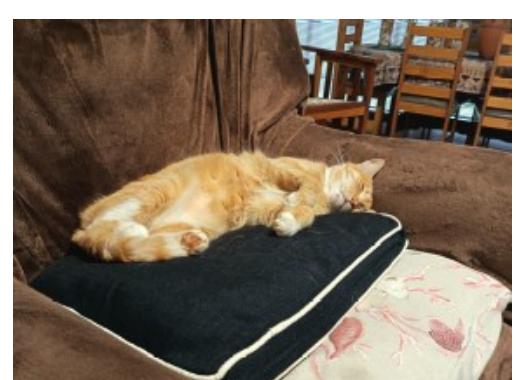
I really enjoy Rallies/Marshals and practical pistol shooting.

8 How has amateur radio shaped your friendships or travels?

I have made wonderful friends with an shared interest in radio and radio related events.

9 What's one thing people might be surprised to learn about you?

I do not know I think and hope I am an open book.



Wisdom & Legacy

10 What advice would you give to a newcomer?

Start by joining a club near you and become involved.

11 What do you hope to see in the future of amateur radio?

I hope to see younger people in the hobby.

12 If you could send one message to the world via ham radio, what would it be?

People always ask me what HAM radio gives to me; why must I join, my answer is for the fun and also for emergencies when there is no phone or other communication.

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Long Term HF Propagation February 2026 By Vincent, ZS6BTY

Local Propagation (up to 500 km): The F or F2 critical frequency ($f_{\text{o}}\text{F2}$) is the MUF for short range, near vertical incidence sky-wave (NVIS) propagation.

Long Distance Propagation: The MUF for a first hop of 4000 km in the cardinal directions are labeled North, East, South and West. They indicate the direction that propagation may be expected.

Worldwide Propagation Maps: <http://www.parc.org.za/index.php?page=propagation>

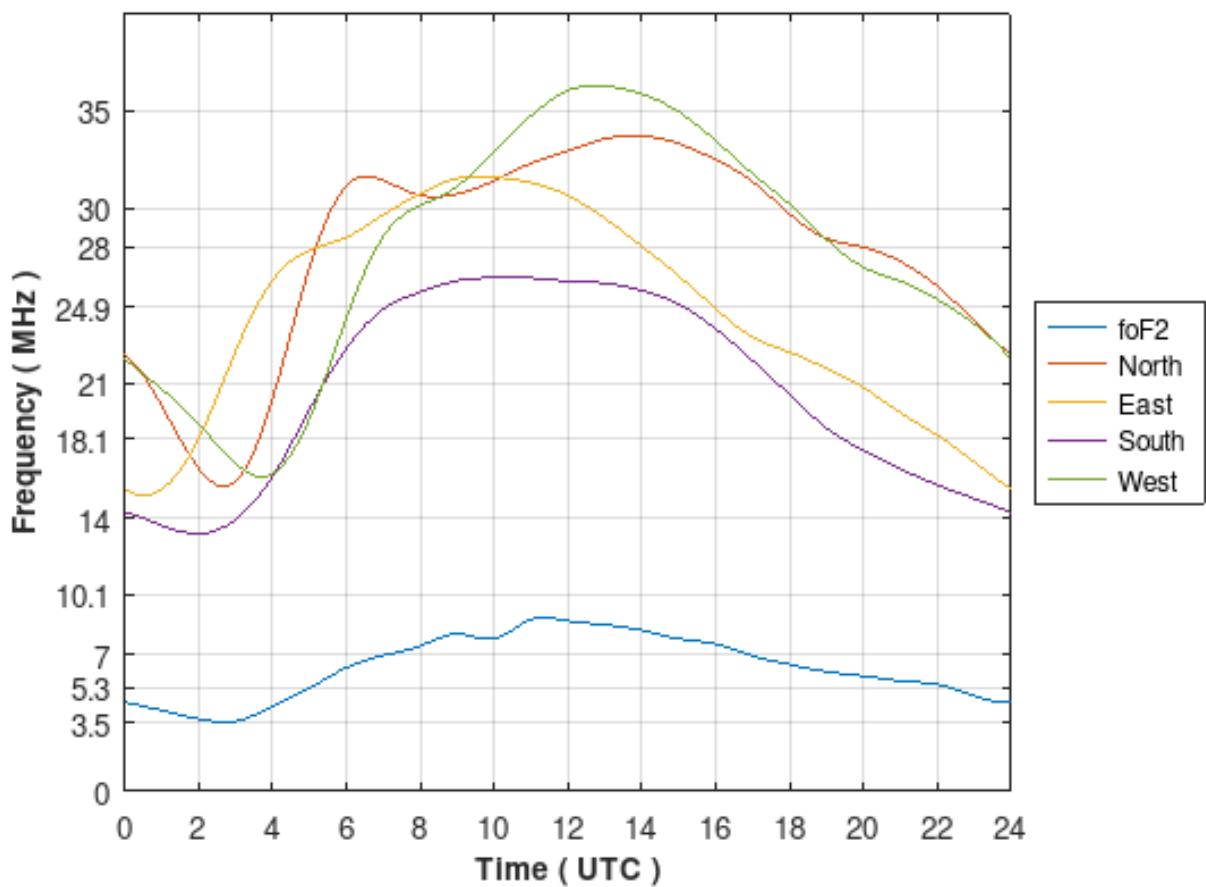
“Prediction is difficult, especially when dealing with the future”. . . Danish Proverb

73 Vincent, ZS6BTY

[1] FTZMUF2: A simple method of estimating the ionospheric parameters of $f_{\text{o}}\text{F2}$ and $M(3000)$ with the aid of a home computer - Thomas Damboldt and Peter Süßmann, Deutsche Bundespost, December 1988.

[2] Silso 12-month forecasts of the monthly sunspot number (<http://sidc.oma.be/silso/FORECASTS/predIML.txt>)

Pretoria Critical Frequency and 4000 km MUF - February 2026, (SSN = 102.6)



Motor Rallies 2026 | Motor Tydrenne 2026



CALENDAR

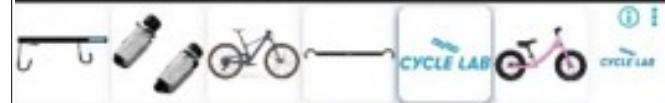


ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
2	18	23
FEBRUARY	APRIL	MAY
ROUND 4	ROUND 5	ROUND 6
27	1	5
JUNE	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
ROUND 7	ROUND 8	AWARDS
10	14	28
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	NOVEMBER

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PROVISIONAL 2026 RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR

TBA	GAUTENG	MARCH 2026
SWARTLAND RALLY	MALMESBURY	APRIL 2026
TZANEEN RALLY	TZANEEN	MAY 2026
ALGOA RALLY	GQEBERHA	JULY 2026
TGRSA RALLY	ERMELO	AUGUST 2026
FOURIESBURG RALLY	FOURIESBURG	SEPTEMBER 2026
TRACN4 RALLY	DULLSTROOM	OCTOBER 2026
		
BEST OF 2025		
<p style="margin: 0;">From the blithering heat and dust to freezing temperatures and mud, rally photographers place themselves exactly where the action unfolds. Often long before the first car arrives and long after the last one has passed, not to mention hours of editing after the event.</p>		
		



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MSA NATIONAL RALLY-RAID CHAMPIONSHIP CIRCULAR 1 OF 2026

Affected parties are hereby advised of the following amendment to the 2026 MSA National Rally-Raid Championship Calendar, effective immediately, as approved by the MSA SA Rally-Raid Championship Promoter:

DATE	NAME OF VENUE	PROVINCE	ROUND	STATUS
6 – 7 Feb 2026	Stella	North West	1	POSTPONED
8 – 10 May 2026	Outeniqua	Western Cape	2-1	
19 – 20 June 2026	Parys	Free State	2-2	
24 – 25 July 2026	Bronkhorstspruit	Gauteng	4-3	
28 – 29 August 2026	Reserve	Reserve	5-4	
9 – 10 October 2026	Vryheid	KwaZulu-Natal	6-5	
13 – 14 November 2026	Thabazimbi	Limpopo	7-6	

A revised 2026 SA Rally-Raid Championship calendar will be communicated to all stakeholders once finalised.

MSA apologises for any inconvenience caused by this change, but it is due to circumstances beyond MSA's control.

For any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Charmaine Fortune - charmaine@sarallyraid.co.za

CARMEN HILL
SPORTING SERVICES MANAGER

26 January 2025

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Mrs. T. Human, Mrs. S. Lubusenger-Jenek, Ms. E. Mihara, D. Koenchander, Ms. M. Spur
Interim Appointed Directors: X. Letlaka, N. Tshwane

** The Stella race has been postponed due to foot-and-mouth disease.

For More Rally information please contact the following Radio Marshalls:

Graham Reid ZS6GJR at: 083-701-0511 or greid@wol.co.za

Irene Myburgh ZS6IEA at: 082-462-6001/ 084-544-0618 or irene.myburgh@outlook.com

PARC Committee Members | PARK Komiteelede

Name & Callsign	Portfolio/s	Email Adress	Mobile No
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Irene Myburgh ZS6IEA	Vice Chairlady Secretary Social	irene.myburgh@outlook.com	082-462-6001 084-544-0618
Hendri Ehlers ZS6HFE	Website & Social Media ICASA Liaison Repeaters	zs6hfe@gmail.com	083-460-5586
Louis de Wet ZS6SK	Club Historian Awards SARL Liaison	louis.zs6sk@gmail.com	072-140-9893
Martie Venter ZS6MV	Watts Newsletter RAE Training Club Membership	zs6mv73@gmail.com	072-273-1370

Co-opted Committee Members | Gekoöpte Komiteelede

Name & Callsign	Portfolio/s	Email Adress	Mobile No
Alméro Du Pisani ZS6LDP (Hon.)	Flea-markets Swap Shop	almerodps@gmail.com	083-938-8955
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Pierre Holtzhausen ZS6PJH	Contests	zs6pjh@gmail.com	082-575-5799

To every reader, supporter, and contributor who's tuned in to Watts—thank you. Whether you've shared a story, sparked a laugh, or simply kept the signal strong by reading along, you're part of what makes this frequency worth broadcasting.

We'd love to hear more from you. Got a quirky club tale, a burning question, a bright idea, or a moment worth amplifying? Send it our way at Watts@PARC.co.za. The mic is always open, and your voice keeps the airwaves alive.

Stay curious, stay connected—and keep the dial on Watts. 73