



Headquarters - Info - Line

... a service from ...

The New Zealand Association of
Radio Transmitters Incorporated



17 September 2006

Issue # 123

Greetings Everyone

Welcome to Headquarters-Info-Line a fortnightly bulletin of news from NZART Headquarters E-mailed directly to Branches.

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The NZART Business Manager Debby ZL2TDM Says

Postcode Changes: By now you should all have received a pamphlet detailing the new Post Code changes that are to be implemented at the end of 2007.

Although I have a Post Code Directory, for some reason not all addresses appear. Whether this is because the book says avenue and you have given crescent I'm not sure, any way where possible can you please forward an e-mail or not advising your new codes. Many thanks in advance on this.

Thanks also: For all those people who answered my query regarding the visually impaired examination candidate. I am grateful, as although not everyone is doing the same, the end results are what we hope for - a successful pass.

Elections for Council: We are now heading towards another election time for your National Council. Any of you considering standing should let your Branch members know so that they can send in your nomination by the 31st December 2006.

I know it seems a while away yet, but the days are flying by.

MED & SMART: As yet I am still to attend a training session with Radio Spectrum on the next stage of SMART, which will see me processing all new license applications and any amendments to existing call signs.

If you only have a change of address, I would ask that you first try the on-line system, if you are unsure what to do, please give the Radio Spectrum Customer Service area a call on 0508 776 763, they will be only too happy to help.

For payment of membership fees by bank direct debit: NZART account details are **BNZ 02 0772 0209760 00**, please quote your membership number (where known) in the reference field, otherwise your call sign.

Talk to you all again soon... Debby **ZL2TDM**

Repeaters Beacons and Fixed Links

Without going into the history of how the present state of affairs has come about a brief explanation is required. Prior to 2004 each amateur licence holder paid an individual fee. That fee contained a component which went towards MED services for repeater licences and fixed links. This was a trade-off for what might otherwise have been a slightly reduced annual fee and was seen by NZART Council of the day as fair and reasonable. The problem of "repeaters beacons and fixed links" only arose when free licences to amateurs became a reality. Members may recall that this was heralded at the Nelson AGM/Conference in 2002, when no mention was made of charging for "repeaters beacons and fixed links." All present thought that these, too, would be free. However this proved to be not the case and in due course we learned of the intention to charge a fee of \$250 for each of those items. This was intolerable and a totally unrealistic impost. Our Administration Liaison Officer (ALO) persuaded the MED to reduce this fee to \$50 but no further. This \$50 fee is prescribed by the current radio regulations. A \$5 reduction for payment on-line is available in effect reducing the fee to \$45.

NZART Council is aware that members want "solutions not problems". At the same time members need to know what is happening. Everyone should be aware of the view of NZART Council and members, endorsed at the last two AGM's that our objective is to have all MED costs assessed by way of licence fees shared equitably amongst all amateur licence holders.

It is not acceptable to our membership that fees for the provision of services to amateur radio be incurred solely by our membership.

Bearing in mind the wishes of members NZART Council has considered a number of options as to how to achieve an equitable outcome for the members.

There have been a multitude of possible solutions offered to us as to how a desired outcome might be achieved. Many of these have not passed scrutiny and others, although appearing attractive, have been rejected for one reason or another.

Very serious consideration was given to a mechanism whereby we could invoice non members but this was rejected by the MED and thus could not be enforced.

Recently NZART Council has investigated the possibility of instituting legal proceedings such as a judicial review of the MED invoicing NZART for a service of benefit to all amateurs (members and non-members alike). High level but informal legal advice became available to us, gratis, from a variety of sources, for which I together with the NZART Council are most grateful. The considered opinion of all legal advisors, as accepted by your NZART Council, was that while there was some possibility of achieving a favourable outcome, legal arguments would need to be advanced in a ground-breaking way by highly experienced legal people (probably at Q.C. level). Win or lose, NZART simply cannot afford the costs of such legal proceedings.

Certain political initiatives have been, and continue to be, undertaken by both your Administration Liaison Officer and myself. These continue and I can offer no comment at this stage as to whether or not they will be successful – but I remain optimistic.

Another initiative is to seek the assistance of the Ombudsman. Preliminary discussions are currently underway. If results are encouraging NZART Council will take matters further.

Recent Happenings: Last month (August 2006) the first of the repeater invoices arrived followed in September by two more. The bulk of the invoices are expected in November.

We had expected a single invoice for all repeaters, as stated by MED, but the SMART software application has been turned on and is sending out a few individual invoices as a precursor to the bulk invoicing yet to come.

With most licences now in the name of NZART, we received the first invoice when it was issued. Following considerable discussion by NZART Council, the General Secretary was asked to contact the Branch and Repeater Trustees concerned to give them the opportunity to pay the fee should they so wish. This they did and, by arrangement with all concerned, the fee has been paid by NZART on the basis that it will be reimbursed to by the Branch.

The process involved was extremely time consuming. It took many working hours plus several telephone calls and emails to achieve a positive outcome. As a one-off the General-Secretary was able to help facilitate this and for the next two invoices a similar process can be followed. However, our single part time manager will be unable to process the work generated by a bulk invoice for several hundred licences.

So what do we do?

Council has debated the matter and considered many options. We know that all members want any assessed fees to be born equitably by all and not by our members alone. NZART Council fully support this view.

We have these choices or some combination of them:

Option 1: NZART pays all beacon, repeater and fixed link licence fees for this licensing period only (2006-7).

Option 2: NZART declines to pay any beacon, repeater and fixed link licence fees, without exception.

Option 3: NZART pays for certain beacon, repeater and fixed link licence fees for 2006-2007 and maybe beyond.

What are the pros and cons of each of these options?

Option 1: Is an interim measure to buy time. It enables retention of the existing infrastructure without incurring the substantial costs and difficulties associated with trying to contact branch secretaries and trustees. It avoids placing the burden of licence fees on some branches such as VHF groups who have already used substantial funds of their own for the benefit of all. It means we can retain all Channel 39 (ATV or Amateur Television) licences nationwide and all component parts of the National System. Further it means that we will not lose hill top repeater sites because a particular branch can't, won't, or fails to act when a renewal is required. In essence we buy time to continue efforts to obtain free licences for repeaters, beacons and fixed links as Canadian and British amateurs will shortly have.

If this option were chosen there would be a substantial unbudgeted cost falling in the current financial year. Will the amateur fraternity see this as an acceptable course of action to preserve our infrastructure while all avenues of persuasion are explored, or until the membership can review the situation at the next AGM in 2007?

If this option was adopted, there could be some cost recovery by setting up a fund (a fighting fund, if you will) to accept voluntary donations. Members might like to return their \$15 subscription rebate to such a fund, for example.

Option 2: This is an option that was voted on at two AGM's and is the view of the membership. It means that branches/repeater trustees will need to make their own arrangements to pay assessed fees. NZART would do its best to advise those affected of the details of the accounts received, but clearly this may need to be done in a global rather than an individual way. With licences in the name of NZART the system for collecting payments will need to be established.

It is almost inevitable that if this option is taken then several licences will not be renewed. This may be due to inertia or other reason such as the branch deciding to relinquish a repeater licence.

Associated with this option is the suggestion that all licences should revert back to the branch/beneficial owner. This is not as easy to achieve as the undoing process requires input from the branches. One difficulty with retention by NZART is that if a licence is allowed to lapse NZART must take immediate steps to ensure the repeater is disabled. Failure to do so could expose us to liability and compliance costs if it is not disabled, such as fines. It is unlikely that NZART Council has the ability to disable any significant number of repeaters.

Option 3: This is a compromise option. It recognises that NZART should not be paying for licences even as an interim measure – but at the same time recognises that at least in the interim certain items of infra structure ought to be paid for by NZART, e.g. our international beacon. The cost of this is negligible (as the beacon is now only one licence, not the many it had been) and it is unlikely that anyone would object to NZART paying to preserve this.

Another candidate for preservation is our Channel 39 ATV access. NZART Council has good reason to believe that if we lost these licences then access to Channel 39 would be lost forever. Commercial interests in the UHF TV Band are already putting pressure on MED to have the amateur allocation reviewed, and possibly removed.

Then there is the National System. Is this something that needs to be preserved? NZART Council will need to make decisions very soon.

None of us want to lose any of our current repeaters, beacons or fixed links.

None of us want the situation of our members having to pay for repeaters, beacons or fixed links available for the use of non members to continue indefinitely, as this is simply not a fair situation.

None of us want access to repeater to be controlled by access codes so that they can be accessed by NZART members or branch members only. So what's the answer?

The time has come for your input.

If we select option one this preserves our infrastructure for the time being, enables us to continue to fight for what we believe is justice, at the cost of temporarily reversing our position as set out in recent AGM resolutions?

If we select option two we are asking those who have worked long and hard to ensure Channel 39 access to accept its likely permanent loss. Will NZART members at large accept any loss of the repeaters and links in the National System? Will those individuals who have given freely of their time and energies in providing infrastructure be motivated to revive and renew dismantled stations, resulting from non-payment of licences? Will those faced with a re-engineering fee of \$300 plus a licence fee of \$50 be interested to re-instate any lost licence? Will there be physical resources available which will enable this to happen in a timely way?

If we select option three will we be faced with endless arguments as to what should or should not be preserved? Or can we identify the need to preserve our International beacons, our Channel 39 access and our National System infrastructure as a minimum?

Members want answers not problems. Whatever answer we give you will not be acceptable to all. There is no magic wand to wave to conjure up \$16,000 (or so) to preserve our infrastructure for another year.

It would not be fair of me to suggest a solution to you as being the option preferred by NZART Council.

I can however give you my own view, which is that I do not wish to see any of our infrastructure lost in the short term – certainly not before we have had every opportunity to take all appropriate measures properly available to us and pursued each of them to their logical conclusion. We do not have the advantage of time. If licences are not paid by due date they are automatically cancelled by the SMART system. All rights in relation to the same would be lost and would have to be reapplied for as if they were applications for new licences, with all the processing formality that is associated with a new application. In the case of Channel 39 it is my belief, on advice, that if not paid for these licences would most likely be permanently lost.

It is my personal opinion at this time (and not necessarily the opinion of any other member of NZART Council) that Option 3 is the preferred course (though Option 1 is in my view a viable alternative).

So where to from here? Send an email with your name, call sign and membership number to repeatersurvey@nzart.org.nz with the subject line showing your order of preference. For example "Option 2, Option 1, Option 3" or if only one or two of the options is acceptable to you specifying accordingly e.g. "Option 1". If for any reason you are unable to email, a fax or letter to NZART Headquarters to the same effect will be acceptable.

If you have any additional comments please send these to Council or myself separately. The purpose of this survey is simply to ascertain overall support for suggested options. There may be other options that occur to you - by all means suggest these to us we would appreciate all constructive input at this time.

Also included with this statement is a document entitled "The Licensing Of Amateur Repeaters, Beacons, And Links – An Update" by Doug Ingham ZL2TAR, Secretary of FMTAG. This explains the workings of the SMART system that has been instituted by MED.

73 Bruce Douglas ZL2WP

The Licensing Of Amateur Repeaters, Beacons And Links – An Update

Summary

The MED has introduced a number of step-wise changes in the licensing of all radio services, including Amateur repeaters, beacons and links. Many of our members appear to be unaware of these changes, despite much publicity by the MED (several direct mail-outs to all licensees) and FMTAG and Council (Break-In, HQ InfoLine, Official Broadcasts and Branch visits).

Failure to understand these licensing changes can have costly consequences, particularly if the Annual Licence Fees are not paid by the due date.

The total cost of re-certifying a cancelled licence is in the region of seven to eleven times the Annual Licence Fee. Fines for operating while un-licensed typically start at five to twenty-five times the Annual Licence Fee.

The automated collection of Annual Licence Fees commenced in July 2005, for all services except Amateur repeaters, beacons and links. From that date the Amateur repeater, beacon and links licences showed an Annual Licence Fee of \$50, but fee collection was “turned off”. The MED “turned on” the collection of the Amateur Licence Fee in July 2006, after 12 month’s grace.

324 licences are currently in the name of NZART Incorporated. Failure to pay the Annual Licence Fee has serious practical and monetary consequences.

Failure To Pay The Annual Fee For An Existing Licence

SMART operates automatically, without human intervention, issuing emails at every step of each process.

In the case of failure to pay the Annual Licence Fee for an existing licence, SMART automatically cancels the licence and erases all its engineering records, without human intervention.

This means that once cancelled, a licence cannot be re-instated. A new licence has to be applied for, and pass through the Engineering Certification process, as if it were a new licence application. The hidden dangers of this process will be discussed in the next section.

SMART sends an email to the Licensee, advising of the cancellation, and of the severe consequences of operating the station without a licence.

SMART also sends an email to the nearest MED Field Office (previously known as the Radio Inspector’s office). This describes the new licence granted (for inspection) or the old licence cancelled (for inspection to confirm that the station is no longer operating and has been dismantled). MED compliance action (warning or infringement notice and fine) follows if a cancelled licence station is found to be still operating.

With 324 licences currently in the name of NZART, it will be seen that the failure to pay the Annual Licence Fee has serious consequences. The largest group of these licences falls due for payment in two month’s time.

Hidden Dangers Of Licence Cancellation

MED document PIB38 requires that each new or modified licence has to be certified to be compatible with every existing licence within a radius of 2 km, or more in certain circumstances. In other words, every new licence granted since our particular repeater licence was granted, has had to be made compatible with our old licence.

This is sometimes referred to as “first in time rights”. Often the certification process reveals technical problems, requiring the new licence to be on a frequency other than that preferred by the applicant, and sometimes in a different frequency band.

On cancellation of an old licence, for example for non-payment of the Annual Licence Fee, the “first in time rights” are lost. The new, replacement, licence becomes the “last in time”, and has to be made compatible with all existing licences. Similarly, a frequency or band change may be required.

The Special Case of TV Channel 39 (614 MHz To 622 MHz)

NZART holds 30 licences on Channel 39, distributed around New Zealand. These licences effectively prevent the use of Channel 39 for non-Amateur use, and force prospective broadcast applicants, for Channel 38 and Channel 40, to engineer their applications for compatibility with our existing Channel 39 licences.

The recently proposed MED procedures for licensing additional Channel 39 Amateur stations, or for modifying existing Channel 39 Amateur stations, are more complex than previously.

It is likely that the cancellation of a Channel 39 licence, for non-payment of fees, would make it more difficult, or impossible to re-certify, prevent the re-licensing of that station. This is a serious hidden danger.

MED Spectrum Management And Registration Technology (SMART)

SMART is a fully automated licensing system. Each intermediate step of the SMART process must be satisfactorily completed before the SMART software permits commencement of the next step.

In the case of new or modified licences, one such intermediate step is the payment of fees. The process stops if the fees are not paid, and the application is erased from SMART after a period.

In the case of the Amateur Service, the minimum cost is \$50, being the Annual Licence Fee, plus a zero dollar Engineering Certification Fee, provided that a charitable MED-Approved Person, willing to waive the fee, and having the required software and 3 to 5 hours to spare, needed to certify each licence application, can be found.

The Amateur Licence Fee requested for a new application can differ from \$50, depending on the timing difference between the Application Date and the Annual Billing Date of the licence applicant.

In the case of the Amateur Service, when Engineering Certification by the MED is chosen, the typical fee is \$350, consisting of the \$300 MED Internal Engineering Certification Fee plus the \$50 Annual Licence Fee. Similarly, the Annual Fee can differ from \$50, owing to timing differences.

Another option is External Engineering by one of the Approved Radio Engineers or Approved Radio Certifiers, listed on the MED's web site. The Approved persons typically charge \$300 to \$500 for Engineering Certification of an application, depending on its complexity. Similarly, the \$50 Annual Licence Fee, and any timing-difference supplement, is additional.

Failure to pay either fee freezes applications at the payment request step.

The present NZART policy, of not paying the Annual Licence Fee, has stopped all new or modified licence applications. Existing applications, frozen by non-payment, are being automatically erased by SMART, as time progresses, while this policy continues.

Doug Ingham, ZL2TAR, Secretary FMTAG

Deceased Amateurs

Several members have noted that the names of some deceased Amateurs are still shown in the MED's licence database.

NZART has offered to facilitate the removal of deceased Amateurs from the MED's licence database.

Please advise NZART Headquarters of the details of the deceased Amateurs, before the 29th of September 2006. The email address is: nzart.hq@clear.net.nz.

All of the Silent Key notices published in Break-In, and notified to NZART Headquarters, have already been processed.

Final date 29th September 2006

The MED is moving to a new system in early October, so this offer must expire on the 29th of September 2006.

Many thanks, Doug, ZL2TAR, Secretary FMTAG

Contest News with John Powell ZL1BHQ, NZART Contest Manager FORTHCOMING NZART CONTESTS

OCEANIA CONTESTS - PHONE AND CW

SSB Contest - 7 & 8 October 2006 - 1000Z Sat. 7th until 1000Z Sun. 8th - All Bands
CW Contest - 14 & 15 October 2006 - 1000Z Sat. until 1000Z Sun. 15th - All Bands

Contest Rules and other operating information is available and downloadable at www.oceaniadxcontest.com/rules.pdf.

Only four weeks to the 'Phone and five weeks to the CW Contests - time to check the antennae and rigs. Increased ZL participation will be most welcome, not only by the Contest organizers, but also the Overseas participants. A good source of new and exotic DX for those that are keen in working towards DXCC - a number of well known Contesters are active in preparation for the CQWW Contests that follow soon after the Oceania.

Recent years has seen a decline in ZL/VK participation to the extent that greater numbers of Overseas hams are participating in our own HF DX Contest. The Contest

organizers welcome increased involvement from both ZL and VK operators, **so how about giving it a go.**

2006 STRAIGHT KEY NIGHT

When - 4 November 2006 – 2000 NZDT – 2300 NZDT

Where - 80m (3.5Mhz)

Mode - CW only

Contest Rules and other operating information – please refer 2004/5 NZART

Callbook – Page 5-8, or NZART Website

www.nzart.org.nz/nzart/Update/Contests/rules.html

Please note – send logs by email, or mail to Ken McCormack, ZL1AIH, 181 Ararimu Valley Road, Waimauku. AUCKLAND.

MANAWATU BRANCH ACTIVITY CONTEST - 16-22 SEPTEMBER 2006

For Contest/Activity information, downloadable logsheets, rules etc. refer to the Branch website :- www.zl2ko.org.nz. Other details are available from Allan, ZL2SKY - zl2sky@zl2ko.org.nz.

2007 JOCK WHITE MEMORIAL FIELD DAY CONTEST

An early notification – the 2007 Field Day Contest will take place on 24 & 25 February 2007, Refer 2006/2007NZART Callbook for Contest rules and other operating information.

Now is the time for Branches to commence their planning for the 2007 event.
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OTHER FORTHCOMING CONTESTS

CQ Worldwide DX Contest, RTTY	0000Z, Sep 23 to 2400Z, Sep 24
Scandinavian Activity Contest, SSB	1200Z, Sep 23 to 1200Z, Sep 24
UBA ON Contest, CW	0600Z-1000Z, Sep 24
RSGB 21/28 MHz Contest	0700Z-1900Z, Oct 1
TARA PSK Rumble Contest	0000Z-2400Z, Oct 6
Oceania DX Contest, Phone	0800Z, Oct 7 to 0800Z, Oct 8
International HELL-Contest	1400Z-1600Z, Oct 7 (80m) and 0900Z-1100Z, Oct 8 (40m)
PRO CW Contest	1600Z-1800Z, Oct 7 and 0600Z-0800Z, Oct 8
UBA ON Contest,	SSB 0600Z-1000Z, Oct 8
Makrothen RTTY Contest	0000Z-0759Z, Oct 14 and 1600Z-2359Z, Oct 14 and 0800Z-1559Z, Oct 15
Oceania DX Contest, CW	0800Z, Oct 14 to 0800Z, Oct 15
CQ Worldwide DX Contest, SSB	0000Z, Oct 28 to 2400Z, Oct 29

73, John Powell ZL1BHQ, NZART Contest Manager

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<http://www.nzart.org.nz/nzart> Look for **Info-Line Subscribe**. Supply your name, callsign and e-mail address and that's all you need to do. You will receive an e-mail confirmation of your auto-subscription and you can un-subscribe at any time.

HQ Info-Line and Official Broadcast dates for remainder of 2006

HQIL Dates Sunday: 17 Sep, 8 Oct, 22 Oct, 5 Nov, 19 Nov and 20 Dec.

Official Broadcast Dates Sunday: 24 Sep, 29 Oct, 26 Nov and 17 Dec.

Dates To Remember

- * **NZART Official Broadcast Sunday 24 September 2006**
- * **Next HQ-Info-Line E-mailed on Sunday 8 October 2006**

Regards
Jamie Pye ZL2NN
Editor