Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

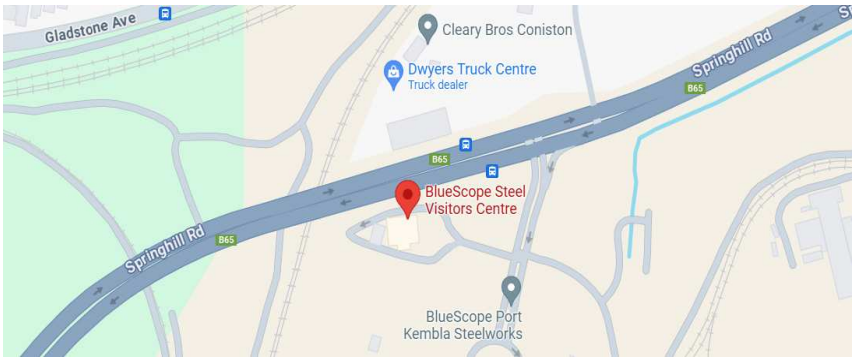
Propagator September 2026

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Upcoming Meeting on the 8th September 2026

The next meeting will be at the Blue Scope Steel visitors centre 7.30pm

Blue Scope Northgate entrance off Springhill Road (See website for detailed map)





VK2RUW (Knights Hill)
34.6231° S, 150.6942° E
QF55IJ



AMATEUR RADIO IN THE ILLAWARRA SINCE 1948



VK2RMP (Maddens Plains)
34°15'30.6"S 150°56'47.4"E
QF55LR

VK2AMW

Our last meeting 11th August 2026



ARS Annual General Meeting Update: A Strong Foundation for an Exciting Year Ahead

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) went off without a hitch! The 2025/2026 committee officially vacated their positions to allow for the new election. In a wonderful show of dedication and continuity for our club, the same faithful team stepped up to serve another round for the 2026/2027 term.

We extend a massive thank you to the outgoing committee. Your hard work, countless hours behind the scenes, and passion for amateur radio kept our club thriving over the past year. Having this experienced team return ensures stability, strong leadership, and a deep understanding of our community's needs.

Your IARS Committee for 2026/2027:

- **President:** Simon – VK2XQX
- **Vice President:** Simon – VK2KU
- **Treasurer:** John – VK2EJL
- **Secretary:** Keith – VK2KQB
- **Committee Member:** Adam – VK2AEV
- **Committee Member:** Roger – VK2VRK
- **Committee Member:** Shane – VK2HCO

The Road Ahead

The future looks incredibly bright for the IARS. With a steady hand at the helm, the committee is already working on a fantastic lineup for the coming year. We are looking forward to:

- **Fresh technical projects** and hands-on workshops to build your skills.
- **Exciting field days** and radio contests to get everyone on the air.
- **Engaging club meetings** featuring guest speakers and social events.

We wish our returning committee a fantastic and rewarding year ahead. Thank you for your continued service, and let’s make 2026/2027 our best year yet!



There was no Snowball winner this month because although Wayne's ticket was drawn he was not present so the money has snowballed for the next meeting.

As usual see Simon VK2KU, the fella with the coloured balls and big smile



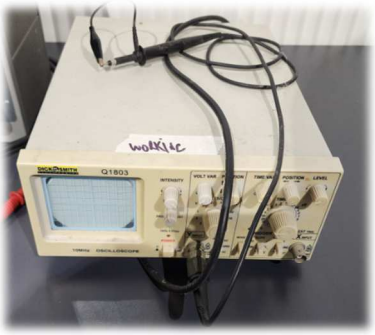
If you want a chance at winning some good cash money, don't forget to play SNOWBALL at the next meeting.

The Disposables Table

This month has been absolutely fantastic for the club's disposable table, with an incredible variety of high-quality gear coming through. We have received some truly outstanding test and measurement equipment recently, including a bench oscilloscope, a reliable SWR meter, and a versatile signal generator, alongside several other highly useful items.











A massive thank you goes out to everyone who generously donated to the table this month. We would also like to extend a special acknowledgement to Chris (VK2CDB). Chris is a regular, highly valued supporter of the club who consistently hooks us up with excellent, top-tier gear on the disposable table.

Make sure to drop by the table at the next meeting to check out these latest arrivals before they are gone!

NEXT Meeting…….

Dust Off Your Gear: Show & Tell Night is Coming!

Got a piece of gear with a great story? A homebrew project you finally finished? Or a weird piece of vintage kit no one can identify?
At our next meeting, we are having a **Show & Tell Night**, and we want you to bring along your favourite radio treasure. Whether it is a beautifully restored valve rig, a handy 3D-printed shack accessory, or even that mystery component you found at a garage sale, bring it in and share it with the club.

Need Testing?
Besides the show and tell, Keith VK2KQB will be bringing along a communications tester for everyone to play with, if you have a radio that needs some testing, bring it along, learn how to operate and use testers to check your equipment.

Come along for a great night of laughs, stories, and clever engineering. See you all there!

The IARS Flying Gang



The Flying Gang is a volunteer team to support IARS members who are unable to install or repair their antenna systems due to age, injury, or other limitations.

Many members are finding it increasingly difficult to stay active on the air—especially when antennas are damaged by storms or when new systems need to be installed.

If you need assistance, simply reach out to the team using the email addresses listed below. We'll coordinate with you to provide the help you need.

The flying gang team members, please REACH OUT to anyone of the team below.

Simon VK2XQX, Simon VK2KU, Keith VK2KQB, Adam VK2AEV, Phil VK2CPH, Tony VK2TS, Bruce VK2ZPN and last but not least Mal VK2DXM

Or contact us using any one of the emails below.

iars.keithb@gmail.com ; iars.simonr@gmail.com ; simon.ferrie3@det.nsw.edu.au

Other contacts like phone numbers are on the club website at https://www.iars.org.au/?page_id=29

Licensing and upgrades?



The IARS **can help** with obtaining your Foundation, upgrading to Standard or Advanced from *the comfort of your own home,* and its FREE!!! *

We have approved **ACMA** accessors that can offer remote or face to face assessments for the **ACMA**

Please contact Keith VK2KQB at iars.keithb@gmail.com for further information on training and assessments.

Your society supports further learning, please find out more on how we can help you.

The IARS helping Amateur Radio grow in Australia

Since January this year the IARS has assisted 7 new amateur radio enthusiasts to get their licence, almost one a month!

Australian Government | acma Australian Communications and Media Authority

ACMA NEWS and MORE!!

The ACMA published results from its ongoing campaign against illegal and non-compliant online equipment listings.

- **The Numbers**: The latest ACMA audit found only 361 non-compliant listings, a sharp **69% drop** from the previous audit of 1,162.
- **The Gear**: Offending listings included unapproved two-way radios, mobile boosters, and illegal signal jammers that threaten emergency bands.
- **The Message**: Amateurs are reminded to double-check that imported or online gear meets Australian standards before transmitting, as compliance ultimately falls on the operator.

The WIA keeping you informed https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/news/2026/20260610-1/index.php

If you would like to find out more about amateur radio upgrades, here are some handy links to help.

https://www.acma.gov.au/qualifications-operate-amateur-radio
https://www.acma.gov.au/amateur-radio-resources
https://www.acma.gov.au/amateur-radio-accredited-assessors
https://www.acma.gov.au/amateur-radio-licences
https://www.acma.gov.au/technical-details-amateur-radio-licences
https://www.acma.gov.au/amateur-radio-operating-procedures
https://www.acma.gov.au/amateur-radio-call-signs
https://www.acma.gov.au/amateur-class-licence
https://www.acma.gov.au/amateur-radio-related-fees

IARS NETS



1. Saturday Morning, the EAST COAST NET hosted by Steve VK2BGL at 9.30am

You are invited to join Steve every **Saturday at 9.30am** on our **146.850MHz** repeater (linked to 146.675MHz) or **VK2BGL-R** on Echo-link for a very enjoyable morning of general discussions from amateurs who log in from all over the world. This NET is linked to multiple repeater systems including VK2RFS south coast.
Join Steve and everyone for a very enjoyable 2 hours on Saturday morning.

The IARS would also like to thank Doug VK2XLJ and Angelo, VK2NWT who are is always willing to assist whilst Steve is away.

2. NEW NET Yes we have a NET IARS net on 2m , 144.150MHz USB on Monday Evenings from 8pm. Chairman Phil VK2CPH will be your host.

3. **IARS Tuesday evening weekly 80m NET on 3.666MHz will be operating from 8.00 pm May through to September every year, with October to April 8.30pm start. Hosted by an IARS member using VK2AMW.**
Every Tuesday evening, (expect the second Tuesday of the month) for a great get together on 80m. Signal reports, news and general discussions are the agenda. Normally runs for around 60minutes.

4. **IARS Wednesday evening weekly 6m NET, 8pm Maddens plains 6m Repeater on 53.650Mhz with a – 1Mhz offset. 123Hz CTCS tone enabled due to interference**
Hosted by Chris VK2CDB and Simon VK2XQX, (While Geri VK2UTE is unavailable)
General discussions about building antennas for 6m, transceivers and what else comes to mind, this net is normally between 30 and 60minutes.

5. **IARS Thursday evening weekly 10m NET, 8PM on 28.466Mhz +/- for QRM/QRN Hosted by Tony VK2TS**
General discussions about building antennas for 10m, transceivers and what else comes to mind, this net is normally between 30 and 60minutes.

6. **IARS Friday evening weekly 70cm NET , 8PM on 439.675MHz ** with – 7MHz offset (No CTCSS required) Hosted by Rob VK2XIC**
General discussions keeping the repeaters in work, ***"If we don't use it, we may lose it "***

IARS REPEATERS





VK2RUW (Knights Hill) VK2RMP (Maddens Plains)

146.675 MHZ >>>>> *linked* <<<<< 146.850 MHZ

Current Repeater STATUS

- **439.675 with a – 7MHz offset, C4FM Enabled. OK – On Air *****
- **147.275 with a + 600kHz offset NO CTCSS, C4FM enabled OK – On Air *****
- **146.850 with a – 600kHz offset (linked to 146.675) NO CTCSS OK– On Air****
- **146.675 with a – 600kHz offset (at Knights Hill, linked to 146.850) NO CTCSS OK– On Air**
- **53.650Mhz with a – 1Mhz offset (123Hz CTCSS tone enabled due to interference) OK– On Air *****
- **438.725Mhz with a -5mHZ offset DMR only, OK – On Air**
- **1296.850Mhz Experimental Beacon/Simplex repeater, Maddens Plains OK – On Air ***
- **Echo-link VK2MT-R via 146.850MHz also linked to 146.675MHz and VK2BGL-L OK**
- **APRS DIGI-PEATER on 145.175MHz OK– On Air**
- **PACKET 2M on 147.575Mhz Temporarily off air**

The IARS welcomes any feedback on our repeater systems.

Please send all your feedback to iars.keithb@gmail.com and it will be passed on to our repeater team.

If the repeaters are silent, why not just give out a call, who knows who may be on the other end of the tower.

Latest Repeater Report:

* Note, this will be changing to 1.293 800 GHz Simplex soon, however, plans are in place for it to become a Full Duplex repeater system. The equipment has been sourced and should be ready before the end of the year if all goes to plan.

** **146.850MHz repeater (which is 146.250MHz RX)** at Maddens Plains is operating off a temporary antenna until the main dipole is repaired/replaced. We are in talks with an authorised tower maintenance team to carry out the works.

*** All signals into Wollongong will be affected until this is rectified. (This will most likely be carried out at the same time as item ** previous



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING to SWAP, BUY, SELL, an OLD PART

Parts you may need for repairs or some radio gear you no longer need that could go to a new home…….?
Email iars.keithb@gmail.com

Electronic component and service suppliers

JLCPCB **https://jlcpcb.com**

element14 AN AVNET COMPANY https://au.element14.com

RS https://au.rs-online.com/web/

MOUSER ELECTRONICS https://au.mouser.com

DigiKey https://www.digikey.com.au

Minikits https://www.minikits.com.au

core ELECTRONICS https://core-electronics.com.au

Elite Communications & Electronics https://www.elitecommunications.com.au

Little Bird Electronics https://littlebirdelectronics.com.au

ATR Amateur Transreceiver Radio Supplies **https://amateurradiosupplies.com.au**

BNCom Australia. https://bncom.com.au

VK RADIO **YAESU Sales and repairs** https://www.vkradio.com.au

DXing https://dxing.com.au

TELCO ANTENNAS https://www.telcoantennas.com.au

ALTRONICS **https://www.altronics.com.au**

jaycar **https://www.jaycar.com.au**

TWR Technology ICOM agent **carlo.twr@gmail.com**

Radio Communications Equipment Supply, Service including radio and antenna installations, support local Wollongong business

If you know of a good supplier of electronic stuff or services 😊, please share it with us so we can all benefit.

Send information to iars.keithb@gmail.com and we will publish it in the next propagator

Share it with us, this could be suggestions, technical ideas, circuit diagrams, IARS community projects, pictures of your latest shack project, in fact

ANYTHING of interest

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>><<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<



FM Fading and Multipath Interference

The Invisible Havoc on Repeater Networks

In the world of amateur radio, Frequency Modulation (FM) is prized for its high-fidelity audio and relative immunity to amplitude-based noise compared to Amplitude Modulation (AM).
However, FM is not immune to signal degradation, particularly in the VHF and UHF bands commonly used for repeater operations. When FM signals degrade due to multipath interference, the result is not just a quiet, fuzzy signal; it is often a chaotic, garbled mess, commonly referred to as "picket fencing" or, in severe cases, the "underwater" or "bubbly" audio effect.

Understanding why this happens requires looking at the invisible landscape of radio wave propagation.

The Nature of the Signal: Line of Sight and Reflections

VHF (144-148 MHz) and UHF (440-450 MHz) signals are primarily "line-of-sight." They travel in straight lines, similar to light. However, radio waves do not just travel directly from the transmitter to the receiver; they also reflect off buildings, hills, cars, water towers, and even airplanes. (We have had a few of those)

Multipath Interference Defined

Multipath interference occurs when a radio signal takes multiple paths to reach the receiver. The receiver gets the direct, intended signal along with one or more reflected, delayed, and weakened versions of the same signal.

- The Problem of Phase Difference: Because the reflected signals travel a longer distance, they arrive at the receiver slightly later than the direct signal. This difference in arrival time means the signals are no longer in phase—the wave peaks and troughs do not align.
- Constructive vs. Destructive Interference: When the signals arrive in phase, they strengthen the signal (constructive interference). However, when they arrive out of phase, they cancel each other out (destructive interference).

The "Picket Fencing" Phenomenon

When you are moving—for example, driving a car while talking on a 2-meter repeater, you are constantly driving through areas of constructive and destructive interference. The signal rapidly shifts between strong and weak, often hundreds of times per second.

- Why It's Called Picket Fencing: Imagine driving past a wooden picket fence. The spaces allow you to see through, and the wooden slats block your view. Multipath interference works similarly; the signal rapidly turns on and off.
- The Audio Effect: On a radio, this causes a rapid, pulsing buzz or "flutter" in the audio, reminiscent of a wooden stick being dragged along a picket fence.

How Multipath Causes Havoc on FM Repeaters

FM receivers manage signal strength variations much better than AM. They use a circuit called a **limiter**, which clips off variations in amplitude (signal strength) to focus entirely on the frequency-modulated information. However, when the signal drops too low, falling into the radio's **noise floor** and below the limiter's threshold, the limiter cannot do its job.

- **Choppy Audio and Static Crashes:** This occurs when the direct signal and reflected signals arrive at your antenna with similar strength but out of phase. The resulting phase cancellation overwhelms the receiver's limiter. The radio tries to interpret the rapidly shifting phase as audio information. This creates distinct, weak-signal dropouts, static pulses, and a harsh chopping sound, often resembling a woodpecker or someone rapidly clicking a PTT button.
- **Repeater "Tail" Flickering:** Sometimes the interference isn't severe enough to completely ruin voice audio, but it causes a mobile operator's signal to rapidly drop below the repeater's receiver threshold. At sites like **Knights Hill** or **Maddens Plains**, this makes the repeater's courtesy tone or carrier "tail" flicker and stutter, sounding as if someone is repeatedly keying their microphone.

Factors Affecting Severity

- **Frequency:** UHF (70cm / 440 MHz) signals are more susceptible to severe multipath than VHF (2m / 146 MHz). The shorter wavelength of UHF (approx. 70 cm) means it takes a much smaller physical movement or reflection to cause a complete phase cancellation.
- **Environment:** Urban centres with steel-reinforced buildings and dense suburban areas present significantly more reflection points than open, rural terrain.
- **Speed:** The faster a mobile station moves through these signal nulls, the higher the frequency of the "picket fence" chopping sound.

Mitigation: How to Improve Your Signal

- **Change Position:** Moving just a meter or two can shift your antenna out of a destructive cancellation node (dead spot).
- **Use Directional Antennas:** For base or stationary portable operations, a directional Yagi antenna rejects multipath reflections from the sides and rear, focusing strictly on the direct path.
- **Increase Power (With Caution):** Raising the transmitter power can help override the noise floor, but it does not fix the underlying phase interference, it may only delay the point where the signal completely breaks up.
- **Maintain Vertical Polarization:** Ensure your antenna is perfectly vertical. A tilted antenna picks up cross-polarized reflections, which intensifies multipath distortion.

Conclusion

While FM is highly effective, multipath fading reminds us that radio waves are complex. The next time you hear that familiar **choppy, picket-fencing** audio on a repeater, you'll know it is not just a simple "weak signal." It is a chaotic mix of reflections and phase cancellations creating momentary, invisible havoc in the air around you.

Next time if you are on a portable , just side step a meter or two, or change antenna polarization. If you have a **fixed** station with problem reception from another **fixed** station like a repeater, move your antenna just a bit or use a directional antenna like a Yagi if possible, it may solve months of frustration.

The Balun

A quick basic overview of our unsung heroes

When building or installing antennas, we often encounter the need for a **balun**—short for **BAL**anced to **UN**balanced. Their primary job is to transition from an unbalanced transmission line (like coaxial cable) to a balanced antenna (like a dipole). However, choosing the wrong type can lead to poor performance, high SWR, and stray RF in the shack. Here is a back-to-basics guide comparing **Current Baluns** and **Voltage Baluns** to help you choose the right tool for the job.

The Fundamental Difference

- **Current Balun (Choke Balun / Guanella):** Forces equal and opposite currents into the two halves of the antenna, regardless of whether the antenna is perfectly balanced or not. It uses high impedance to block common-mode currents from flowing back down the outside of your coax shield. (most commonly used)
- **Voltage Balun (Ruthroff):** Forces equal voltages at the two output terminals relative to ground. If the antenna legs are perfectly identical and clear of surroundings, the currents will be equal. If they are not, it can actively force common-mode current down your feedline.

Key Comparisons at a Glance

- **RF in the Shack:** Current baluns are highly effective at stopping stray RF from traveling down your coax and into your radio. Voltage baluns do not stop common-mode currents and can sometimes make RF feedback worse.
- **Efficiency & Heat:** Current baluns handle unbalanced loads gracefully by wasting very little power. Voltage baluns convert unequal currents into heat inside the ferrite core, risking saturation or damage under high power.
- **Load Tolerance:** Current baluns operate exceptionally well over a wide frequency range and handle varying, non-resonant antenna impedances with ease. Voltage baluns require a highly balanced, predictable load to perform cleanly.

Where to Use Which?

Choose a Current Balun for:

- **Center-fed Dipoles & Inverted Vs:** Keeps the radiation pattern clean and prevents the coax from radiating.
- **Yagi & Beam Antennas:** Ensures the driven element is perfectly balanced for a sharp directional pattern.
- **End-Fed Half-Wave (EFHW) Antennas:** Usually deployed as a 49:1 or 9:1 unun, which functions similarly to a current balun to isolate the feedline.
- **Any multi-band wire antenna** fed with a tuner, where impedance varies wildly.

Choose a Voltage Balun for:

- **Off-Center Fed Dipoles (OCFD):** Historically popular in 4:1 ratios to transform impedance, *though modern designs often prefer a dual-core current balun setup here.*
- **Perfectly Symmetrical Loops:** True delta loops or full-wave squares where the environment is completely clear of metallic obstructions.
- **Strictly Voltage-Matched Impedance Transmutations:** Specific laboratory test benches or highly controlled, single-band commercial arrays.

The Golden Rule

If you are unsure which one to buy or build for a standard backyard amateur station, **always default to a 1:1 Current Balun**.

It acts as a safety barrier for your station's electronics, cleans up your receive noise floor, and ensures your antenna, not your coax, is doing the radiating.

https://myantennas.com/wp/tech-info/about-baluns/?srsltid=AfmBOop1oGEwIt4AjaUKXHBJGsBh062sSVauuEGd5Pp6U_8uzitRajBZ

https://www.sarcnet.org/feed-lines-and-baluns.html

Handy On Line Calculators



Send us your favourite handy calculator link so we can post it here!

Skin Depth Calculator https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/skin-depth

Ladder line calculator www.smrcc.org.uk/tools/OpenWire.htm

Cavity Filter designer https://www.changpuak.ch/electronics/Coaxial_Tank_VHF_Filter_Designer.php

Cavity resonance calculator https://learnemc.com/ext/calculators/cavity_resonance/index.html

COAX LOSS Calculator https://kv5r.com/ham-radio/coax-loss-calculator/

Impedance ….. https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/rlc-impedance

Wavelength …. https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/wavelength

PI attenuator values …… https://www.omnicalculator.com/other/pi-attenuator

Xc …… https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/capacitive-reactance

XL …… https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/inductive-reactance

Cut Off ….. https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/cutoff-frequency

VSWR …… https://www.omnicalculator.com/physics/vswr-voltage-standing-wave-ratio

LM317 Regulator resistor selector ….. https://www.omnicalculator.com/other/lm317

Resistor Colour code calculator….. https://www.digikey.com.au/en/resources/conversion-calculators/conversion-calculator-resistor-color-code

Resistor Heat rise ……. https://calculator.academy/resistor-heat-calculator/

Volt Drop Calculator AC and DC …….. https://www.rapidtables.com/calc/wire/voltage-drop-calculator.html

Helix antenna calculator ……. https://sgcderek.github.io/tools/helix-calc.html

Parabolic dish calculator ……. https://www.everythingrf.com/rf-calculators/parabolic-reflector-antenna-gain

We are looking for more handy on-line calculators, if you have one that isn't listed above, please share with us so that more amateur radio enthusiasts can benefit ☺

OR

If you have any links to handy hints or information, please send it to us!





Radio & Electronics School
Established 1997

WIRELESS INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

How many of these can you still answer correctly?

Question 1. What is the resonant frequency of an LC circuit with an inductance of 100 µH and a capacitance of 100 pF?

(a) 1.06 MHz
(b) 1.59 MHz
(c) 15.9 MHz
(d) 6.28 MHz

Question 2. A transmitter produces 100 Watts of forward power and 4 Watts of reflected power on a transmission line. What is the Voltage Standing Wave Ratio (VSWR)?

(a) 1.5:1
(b) 1.2:1
(c) 1.8:1
(d) 2.0:1

Question 3. Which class of amplifier has a conduction angle of less than 180 degrees, making it highly efficient but generating significant harmonic distortion?

(a) Class A
(b) Class B
(c) Class AB
(d) Class C

Question 4. In a superheterodyne receiver, what is the primary advantage of converting a received RF signal to a lower Intermediate Frequency (IF)?

(a) It shifts the signal directly to the speaker without needing a detector.
(b) It provides high gain and excellent selectivity at a fixed frequency.
(c) It completely eliminates the need for an RF amplifier.
(d) It allows the receiver to transmit simultaneously.

Question 5. What is the approximate physical length of a half-wave dipole antenna in free space for a frequency of 28.5 MHz?

(a) 10.53 meters
(b) 2.63 meters
(c) 5.26 meters
(d) 15.79 meters

Question 6. What is the main defining characteristic of a direct-conversion (homodyne) receiver?

(a) It mixes the received RF signal directly with the local oscillator to produce baseband audio.
(b) It uses multiple IF stages to achieve high selectivity.
(c) It converts the signal directly to digital data before mixing.
(d) It relies on the image frequency to reject unwanted sidebands.

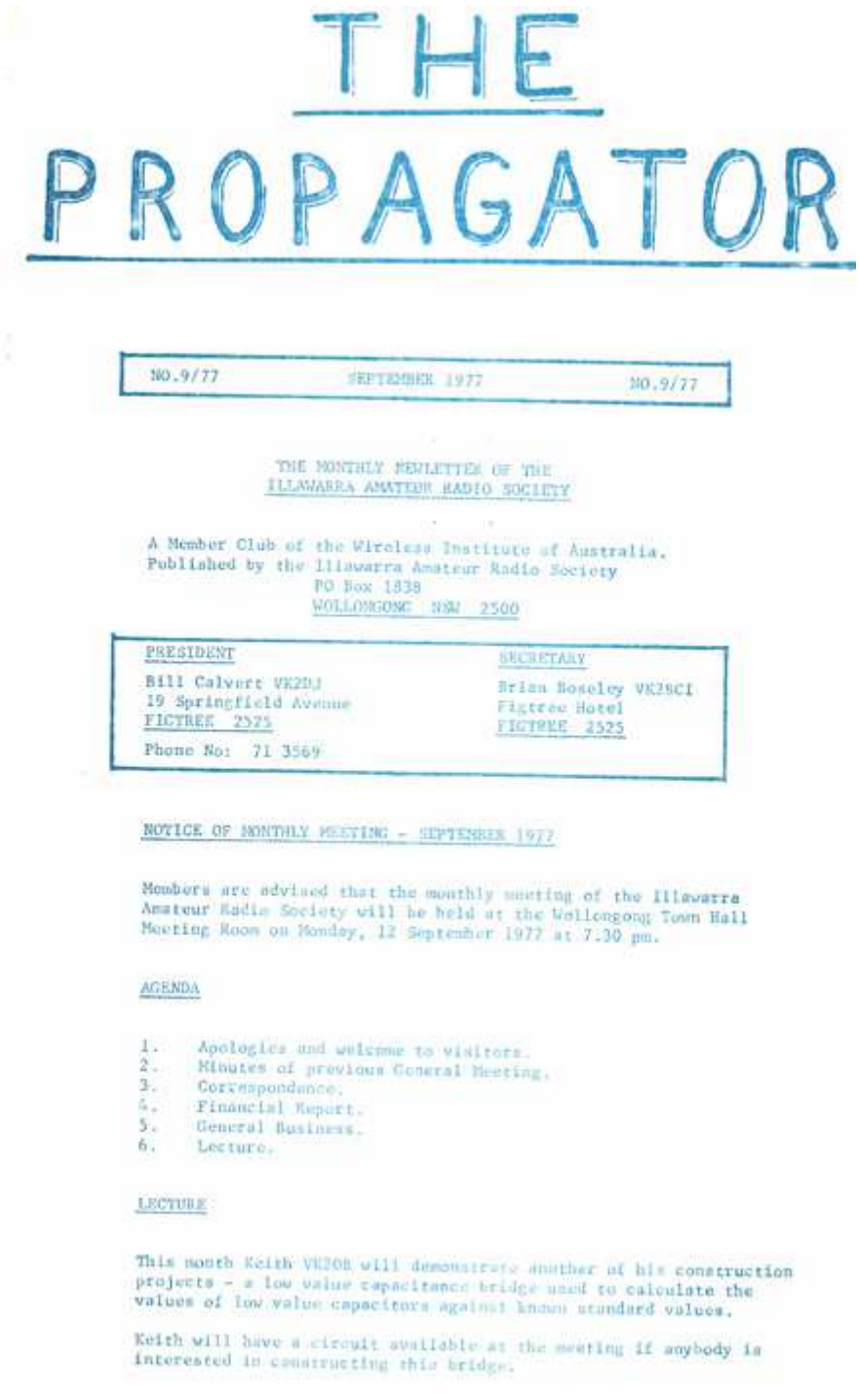
Answers next propagator ☺

Answers to the last propagator questions … Q1 = c; Q2 = a; Q3 = d; Q4 = a; Q5 = b ; Q6 = a

How well did you do, will you still pass the Amateur Radio test?

BLAST FROM THE Past

OLD PROPAGATOR MEMORIES



THE PROPAGATOR

NO.9/77 SEPTEMBER 1977 NO.9/77

THE MONTHLY NEWLETTER OF THE
ILLAWARRA AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY

A Member Club of the Wireless Institute of Australia.
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NOTICE OF MONTHLY MEETING - SEPTEMBER 1977

Members are advised that the monthly meeting of the Illawarra Amateur Radio Society will be held at the Wollongong Town Hall Meeting Room on Monday, 12 September 1977 at 7.30 pm.

AGENDA

1. Apologies and welcome to visitors.
2. Minutes of previous General Meeting.
3. Correspondence.
4. Financial Report.
5. General Business.
6. Lecture.

LECTURE

This month Keith VK2QB will demonstrate another of his construction projects - a low value capacitance bridge used to calculate the values of low value capacitors against known standard values.

Keith will have a circuit available at the meeting if anybody is interested in constructing this bridge.

Will share more oldies next month.

To read more information about this old propagator and others, use this link

https://www.iars.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/1977-09-September.pdf

News & Upcoming contests

VHF UHF Field Days

Contest Manager

Roger Harrison VK2ZRH. **Dateline:** 18 February 2026.

Finalised results for the 2025 Spring VHF-UHF Field Day event and the 2026 Summer VHF-UHF event are published on the VK Contest Log Checker website. Click on the image captioned "VHF UHF Field Day." **www.vklogchecker.com**

At right: Andrew VK2XI having a crack operating portable at St Helena near Byron Bay, in the Northern Rivers region of NSW (thanks to Graeme VK2QJ for the information).



Logs for all events are now processed through the VK Contest Log Checker and must be submitted through the website, at: **www.vklogchecker.com**

You can choose to use either of two logging programs – VKCL (VKCL 4.15), the one you've known for so long – or N1MM Logger+, adopted by some contestants for the 2025 Summer and Winter events. N1MM Logger+ is widely used across many other contests.

For contesters using the VKCL logger, the VHF log file output needs to be converted to Cabrillo 3.0 format before submitting to the VK Contest Log Checker. You can download a converter from: www.vk4sn.com/Contests/Contesting.

More Information for September Spring start https://www.wia.org.au/members/contests/vhfuhf/



WIA NEWS

HAVE YOU SEEN THE LATEST WIA WEBSITE NEWS SECTION ?

The WIA team have really gone out of their way to upgrade the website in many places and keep it refreshed with the latest of all goings on, no need for the IARS do the work anymore 😊

For all your local and international news , the WIA has all the information at this link……

https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/news/2026/index.php?month=8



23cm Fun day on the 23rd of EVERY MONTH !!



If you are interested in 23cm or higher communications, the local IARS members are getting together with the MSCARC members on the 23rd of every month to have a fun day around the Illawarra area.

The SHF team are even looking at 13cm fun day on the 13th of every month, for more information please contact the SHF organiser Rob Heyer VK2XIC at **vk2xic@gmail.com**

Amateur radio news from around the world!

Use these handy links if you would like to see what is going on around the amateur radio world.

Radio Society of Great Britain https://rsgb.org/main

American Radio league https://www.arrl.org

Amateur Radio Germany https://www.darc.de/der-club/referate/ausland/english-version/

South African Radio League www.sarl.org.za

Italian Amateur Radio https://www.ari.it

Amateur radio France https://www.radioamateurs-france.fr

Amateur radio Russia https://srr.ru/sbory24_6/

Amateur Radio Japan https://www.jarl.org/English/

DX ATLAS DOWNLOAD https://dxatlas.com/Download.asp

https://daily.hamweekly.com

Communications Satellites

Status information and latest updates >>> https://www.amsat.org/two-way-satellites/

https://amsat-uk.org/satellites/frequencies-of-active-satellites/

Why Should We Support the WIA?

There is a simple reason IARS members should support the Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA): **Australian amateur radio needs a strong, capable and unified national voice, and the WIA is doing the work required to provide it.**

The WIA is one of the world's oldest amateur radio organisations, but its value today is not simply its history. Its importance is in what it is doing now, representing Australian amateurs to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), addressing complex regulatory issues, protecting our access to spectrum and working to improve the operating environment for every Australian amateur.

Our community has experienced periods of division, including representation being spread across more than one organisation. Whatever the history behind that situation, fragmentation ultimately makes our collective voice weaker. When dealing with a regulator responsible for Australia's increasingly valuable and heavily contested radio spectrum, **we are stronger when we speak with one clear, technically credible voice.**

That is why the work currently being undertaken by the WIA deserves our support.

The Heavy Lifting Behind the Scenes

A great deal of the WIA's most important work is not highly visible to the average amateur. It involves detailed technical submissions, regulatory discussions and months of behind-the-scenes work.

Much of this is being driven by the WIA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), whose work is directly relevant to the future of our hobby. This is Australia's amateur radio "A-Team".

Defending Our Spectrum

The WIA has prepared and submitted detailed responses to the ACMA Five-Year Spectrum Outlook (FYSO).

This matters because spectrum is the foundation of amateur radio. Our allocations cannot simply be taken for granted. The WIA is actively ensuring that amateur radio's requirements and interests are represented when Australia's future spectrum needs are being considered.

Someone needs to be in that room, doing that work. The WIA is doing it.

Modernising the Band Plan

The TAC has undertaken a major review of the Australian Amateur Service Band Plan, supported by an open consultation process.

That is important work. Amateur radio is no longer simply about the modes and operating practices of decades past. Digital modes, experimentation and new technologies continue to evolve, and our regulatory framework needs to evolve with them.

The WIA is investing the technical effort needed to make that happen.

Working Towards Higher Power

The WIA has also been actively engaging with the ACMA on the development of an EMR competence framework.

One of the potential outcomes of this work is a pathway towards increased power limits for appropriately qualified amateurs, including consideration of up to **1,500 watts for Advanced licensees**.

This is exactly the sort of issue where effective national representation matters. Achieving meaningful regulatory change requires technical knowledge, persistence and a willingness to work constructively with the regulator.

The WIA is doing that work.

Repeater and Beacon Modernisation

The WIA's technical teams are also working on proposals to modernise the regulatory framework surrounding repeaters and beacons.

For amateur clubs and operators, reducing unnecessary administrative complexity can make a real difference. Again, this is not glamorous work — but it is the kind of detailed regulatory work that needs to be done if we want our hobby to remain practical and accessible.

Why IARS Should Support the WIA

The question should not simply be whether the WIA is perfect……. **No organisation is.**

The better question is: *Who is prepared to put in the work required to represent Australian amateur radio at a national regulatory level?*

Right now, the WIA is demonstrating that it is prepared to do exactly that.

The WIA has the **history**, the **national profile**, the **technical expertise** and the **established role** needed to engage effectively with the ACMA. More importantly, its volunteers are putting in the substantial effort required to turn that position into practical outcomes for amateurs.

That deserves recognition — and it deserves our support.

Supporting the WIA does not mean that IARS, its members or individual amateurs must agree with every decision the WIA makes. It means recognising that **a strong national amateur radio organisation benefits all of us**.

- Every amateur benefits when our spectrum is defended.
- Every amateur benefits when our regulations are improved.
- Every amateur benefits when our licensing framework can evolve.
- Every amateur benefits when the regulator hears a technically credible and consistent national amateur voice.

And every amateur benefits when the people doing that work know that the wider amateur community stands behind them.

A Stronger Future for Amateur Radio

The WIA has an opportunity to strengthen its role as the national representative organisation for Australian amateur radio — but it cannot do that without the support of the amateur community.

- If we want a stronger voice with the ACMA, we should support the organisation doing the work.
- If we want our spectrum protected, we should support the organisation advocating for it.
- If we want modern, practical regulation, we should support the organisation investing the technical effort to achieve it.

And if we want Australian amateur radio to have a strong future, **we should support the WIA.**

This is not about dwelling on the divisions of the past.

It is about recognising what is happening now — and getting behind the work being done for the future of our hobby.

IARS should support the WIA because a stronger WIA means a stronger voice for Australian amateur radio.



Mid South Coast
Amateur Radio Club Inc.

www.mscarc.org.au



&

IARS Illawarra Amateur Radio Society

Amateur Radio to Wollongong since 1948

Invite you to a
Joint picnic/day out

WHEN : 26th September 2026

TIME : From 09H30 till whenever

WHERE : Fitzroy Falls Reservoir Area

WHAT TO BRING : Lunch, refreshments, portable gear and fox hunting gear.

The club will be offering soft drinks for a gold coin donation

There are gas BBQ's, Hot Water and toilet facilities

For more information please contact

David VK2LDW
mscarcinc@gmail.com

Keith VK2KQB
lars.keithb@gmail.com



Upcoming IARS meeting presentations …….

Please note the changes to the meeting schedule.

We have moved back to having an official committee meeting every month and a general meeting every second month.

Doors open at 6:30pm, giving you time to settle in, Committee meetings start at 6.30pm but presentations and general meetings kick off after 7:30pm. The Snowball draw happens every month, except January when there are no gatherings or if the raffle master is not available 😊

Members are very welcome to arrive from 6:30pm to enjoy a cuppa and catch up with friends in the foyer before things get underway.

We need to wrap up and be out by approximately 9:30pm, so please lend a hand on your way out by popping empty cups in the correct bin and straightening your chair or putting it back if you have moved it.

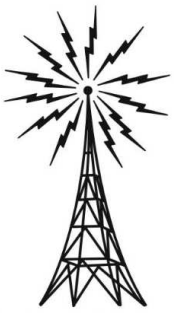
A big thank you to everyone for skipping the coffee machine. Because of your help, we are back in the good books with the centre management and everything is running smoothly again. Cheers for helping us keep the peace

- **September 2026** : Committee meeting only. Doors open 6.30pm
  7.30 pm Show And Tell, bring along your project to share with us
- **October 2026** : Committee and General meeting, doors open 6.30pm.
  After General meeting IARS Trivia with Prizes 😊
- **November 2026** : Committee meeting at 6.30pm. No General meeting.
  IARS Annual Auction with Simon VK2XQX. Doors open at 6.30pm for sellers for looking to sell their gear. Equipment must be booked in before the auction starts at 7.30pm. Please NO latecomers.
- **December** : Committee starts at 6.30pm then general meeting at 7.30pm. Doors open 6.30pm 
  IARS year end Christmas function with a Show and Tell

Fun Corner

Please send in your funnies to iars.keithb@gmail.com

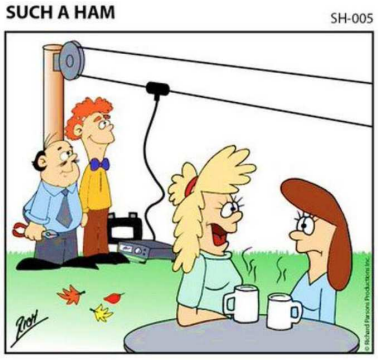
Thanks to all that sent in funnies.



Ham 1: *"Hey, I hear Old Megawatt is retiring from ham radio."*

Ham 2: *"Yeah, I heard him say that before."*

Ham 1: *"I know, but this time the ACMA said it!"*



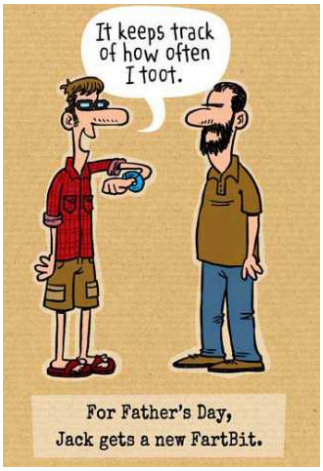
Stan & Cliff have been working all day on installing my clothesline, Mary.





"I don't care if division doesn't send QSL cards, Kolderup . . . GET ON THAT RADIO!"





Please submit any technical items, amateur radio news, any projects you would like to share, in fact any AR related goings on are welcomed.

Feedback is also very important for us as it helps maintain a good read, if you would like to see more of something, or would like to see a subject added. Please let us know iars.keithb@gmail.com

That's all for now, hopefully catch you all at the

Blue Scope visitors centre on the 8th September from 7.30pm,

73
Keith VK2KQB
IARS Secretary

IARS, Amateur Radio in the Illawarra since 1948