



QSX-PE

SEPT
2026

NEWSLETTER FOR THE DISCERNING RADIO HAM

PORT ELIZABETH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY



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PORT ELIZABETH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY
ESTABLISHED EXCELLENCE IN AMATEUR RADIO

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Disclaimer

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YOUR COMMITTEE

Meet the team behind your Club!



Thank you to each of our committee members for their time, dedication and support.



CHAIRMAN

Kevern
ZR2BK



VICE CHAIRMAN | RAE

Vaughan
ZS2VR



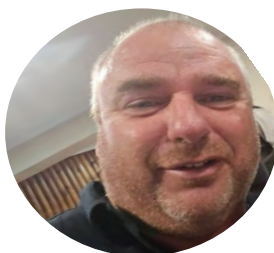
**SECRETARY | REPEATERS
QSX EMAIL | CLUB DATABASE**

Chris
ZS2AAW



TREASURER

Mike
ZS2MIC



**TECHNICAL | REPEATERS
SEARCH & RESCUE
EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION**

Glen
ZS2GV



**COMMITTEE
MEMBER**

Andrew
ZS2AFB



**COMMITTEE
MEMBER**

Patsy
ZS2PTY



**COMMITTEE
MEMBER**

Odette
ZS2OD



**COMMITTEE
MEMBER**

Andre
ZS2ALN

EDITORIAL TEAM



**EDITOR
QSX PE**

Dave
ZS2DH



**COMPILER
QSX PE**

Eugenie
XYL of ZR2BK



CLUB NEWS

Welcome to the latest edition of the QSX. In this edition there are a number of member contributed articles and content. Thank you to those who submitted – even if just a few lines and some photos – it all comes down to the fact that this is a CLUB magazine.

In the club news section, Kev ZR2BK gives us the Chairman's report, you can get the usual update from the minutes of the last meeting to birthdays and anniversaries.

Neil ZR2NT shares his adventure with us and gives us a glimpse into the wild camping he and Merle are enjoying at the moment.

Our member profile this month is Tony, ZR2TX.

A big focus was the TransBaviaans Mountain Bike Race (TBMBR) where the usual route could not be used, rendering the usual comms plan unusable as well. Chris gives us an overview of the comms plan that was used, while other notes from the checkpoints – along with photos will tell you about the fun that was shared. The TBMBR is really a great event, and should you never have gone, you are missing out on something great!

Tony continues with his series on Meshcore – and yes Meshcore was used in the comms plan for TBMBR!

Your dose of DX includes Palau (T88) – one that is still on the editor's to-do list! Next month you can read about the new OTHR system that is going to make T88 a very difficult prefix to get in your log.

The Focus On Contests segment gives you some results along with local and international contests.

In The Rule Book we look at the definitions ICASA is using to tighten the legislative framework, how ICASA is going to help you with your Spam callers, and we celebrate a pirate walking the plank!

In Technically Speaking we look at some simple tips to make sure your home Wi-Fi is optimised. Thanks to Clive ZS2RT for sending this one in.

We round out this edition with the regular back page. Some humour, some activities, and a taste of what is to come next time.

Enjoy!

Editor

Dave
ZS2DH



BULLETINS



Sunday SARL and Monday Evening PEARS Bulletins

PEARS provides a local reading of the SARL bulletin every Sunday morning at 8:15 in Afrikaans read by **Kevern ZR2BK** and at 8:30 in English read by **Rory ZS2BL**, transmitted through the Lady's Slipper Repeater on 145.700MHz.



PEARS Bulletins are transmitted on **Monday evenings** at **20h00** through the Lady Slipper repeater 145.700MHz. Please note from the **07th September** the bulletins will be at **19h00**.



REPEATERS



PE Town VHF 145.650 MHz



PE Town UHF 438.650 MHz



Lady Slipper VHF 145.700 MHz



Lady Slipper UHF 438.700 MHz



Longmore VHF 145.625 MHz

Viewlands UHF 438.675 MHz

Cockscomb UHF 438.600 MHz



Stay connected.
Stay informed.



Thank you for keeping our frequencies active and our community connected.

73!



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Members,

Thank you for reading another edition of **Qsx**, and thanks to the team for their efforts.

This past month, we saw PEARS doing communications for the TransBaviaans event, with an altered route through the Groot Rivier due to the flooding that occurred earlier in the year in the Baviaanskloof. In total 15 club members were involved, and the club thanks them for their service and time.

Also, at the last monthly club meeting, a trivial pursuit was held, presented by Gert, ZS2GS. This was most enjoyed by the attendees. At the next club meeting on the 15th of September, we will have a special guest speaker, Marius Rautenbach. The talk will be about the operational deployment of communication for the funeral of the late Nelson Mandela. Make sure you join us, on the 15th, 19h30 at the German Club. This is not one to be missed.

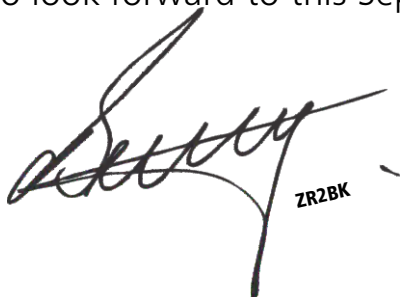
For the SARL Field Day on the 5th and 6th of September, PEARS has booked Krantzkloof, at the foot of Lady Slipper for this contest. Camping costs will be covered by the club, so why not come join us, make some QSO's, learn about antennas, and just have some good old socializing with fellow radio amateurs. The club hopes to operate on 20, 40, 80 and 160 meters.

Then on the 24th of September (National Braai Day), there will be a fox hunt, starting at 09h00 at the Sundridge Scout Hall. This will be followed by a lunch bring and braai. Get those yagi antennas ready, and any other tricks you may have up your sleeve to find the fox! There is also a trophy to be awarded at the AGM of the club.

The PEARS weekly bulletins are now being compiled by Dave Higgs, ZS2DH, and now have some good structure to them. However, Dave is looking for some help! We would like to establish a team for the compiling of the bulletins. Please put your hand up and be part of the club! You would not need to read the bulletins but simply assist in the compiling and formatting of the bulletins. Please also tune into the bulletins, every Monday evening at 20h00 on the Lady Slipper Repeater, and call in afterwards, just so we know you are there!

So there is plenty to look forward to this September, get involved, stay informed and keep safe.

**73,
Kevern**



ZR2BK





The Port Elizabeth Amateur Radio Society presents a

FOX HUNT & *Braai*

24 SEPTEMBER 2025



SUNDRIDGE SCOUT HALL



FOX HUNT
STARTS AT
09h00



FOLLOWED BY A
BRING & BRAAI
LUNCH

Bring the family!





SARL

★ FIELD DAY ★

Radios, friends & the great outdoors!



The SARL Field Day takes place on the weekend of 5th and 6th September 2026.



The venue has been booked for ten spots.



The club will be covering the fees.



The venue is Krantzkloof just below Lady Slipper Mountain.



RADIOS



FRIENDS



ADVENTURE



GOOD TIMES

★ MAKE CONTACTS. SHARE STORIES. ENJOY NATURE. ★



MINUTES

PEARS MONTHLY MEETING

PEARS Monthly Meeting

Held at the German Club on the 18th August 2026 at 19h30

Welcome: Chairman Kevern ZR2BK welcomed all present.

Attendance: ZR2BK, ZS2GS, ZS2ECH, ZS2SG, ZS2PS, ZS2GV, ZS2RT, ZS2OD, ZS2VR, ZS2ALN, ZS2DH, ZS2AFB, ZS2G, ZS2IW, ZS2VS

Apologies: ZS2AAW, ZS2MIC, ZS2DL, ZS2PTY

Acceptance of previous meeting's minutes:

Proposed: ZS2RT | **Seconded:** ZS2PS

Matters arising: None

Finances:

ZR2BK reported all is in good standing.

Events:

TransBaviaans went well. The Chairman thanked all those that offered their time to do communication for the event.

RAE:

Classes have started and there are 9 candidates.

- The Chairman thanked ZS2VR and ZS2SG for their time in offering this service for the club.

Kevern:

- QSX editor is ZS2DH, and Eugenie (XYL of ZR2BK) is the compiler.
- ZS2DH, thanked for the bulletins.

Field Day:

- The SARL field Day takes place on the weekend of the 5th and 6th of September 2026.
- The venue has been booked for ten spots.
- The club will be covering the fees.
- The venue is Krantzklouf just below Lady Slipper Mountain.
- So far attending, Kevern, Andrew Gray, Twanet and Odette.

Social:

- The next social event was announced for the 24th of September (Braai Day) including the Fox Hunt. The venue will be the Sundridge Scout Hall. Fox Hunt will begin at 09h00, followed by a bring and braai lunch. All are welcome to attend.
- The September meeting will have a guest speaker, Marius Rautenbach, on the operational deployment of radio communications for the late Nelson Mandela Funeral.
- The November meeting will be a social with Trivial Pursuit, to make things fun.

ZS2G:

- Andrew indicated that Morse Code practice will continue on 80 meters, every Monday evening on 3680 kHz. Practice will only be 15 minutes long.
- Andrew also indicated that this coming Saturday, he will be building a vertical 20 meters antenna at the usual park space. Will start at 3pm until 5pm.

Speaker: ZS2GS

Gert, presented a very well organized trivial pursuit. Some members brought their XYL's with to join in on the fun.

Closure:

Meeting ended at 20h15

Next meeting 15th September 2026



Trivia NIGHT FUN

Great Questions. Good Company. Lots of Laughs!



After the monthly meeting, a trivia pursuit was presented by Gert, ZS2GS.



A number of XYL's joined in on the fun. Questions ranged from ham radio, music and general knowledge.



The club will endeavour to have more of these evenings and stretch the brains a bit more!



Congratulations to
Paul ZS2PS,
who came out on top
with the highest score.



*Good Times. Great Minds.
That's **PEARS!***

MESHCORE

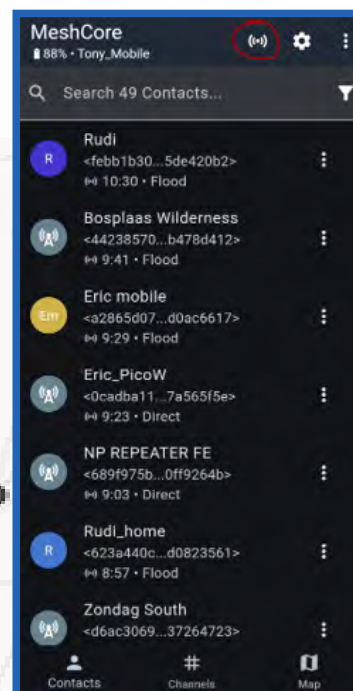
— GENERAL USAGE



If you followed the steps last month you should now have a functioning Meshcore Companion device paired with your cellphone via BLE.

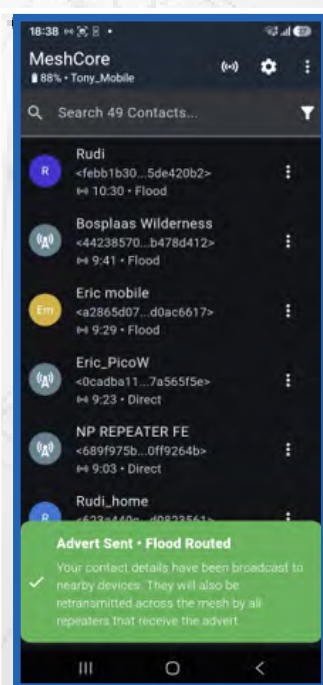
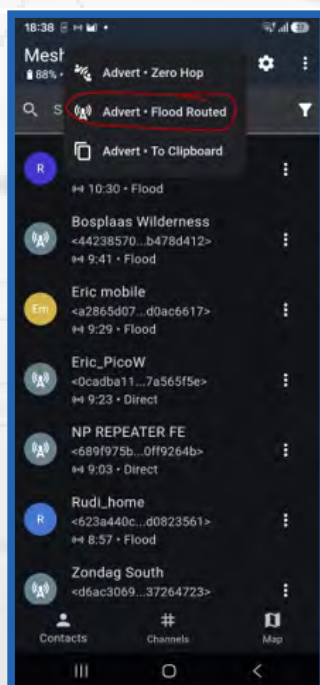
STAY VISIBLE ON THE MESH

Over time your contact list should become populated with repeaters and users which are part of the mesh. Repeaters currently default to sending out an advert every 12 hours, so just be patient if you don't see anything at first. Users need to manually send adverts, it is good practice to do this occasionally so you become visible to new users.



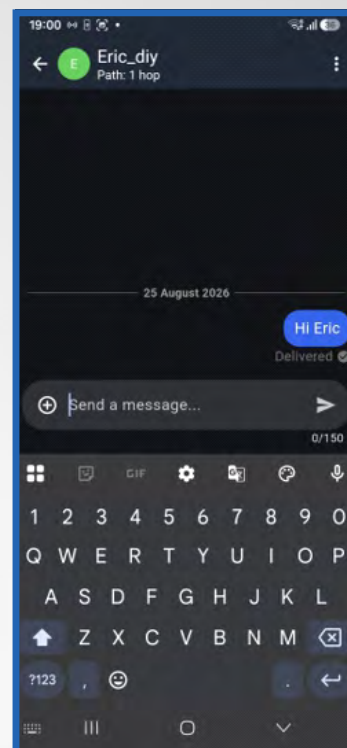
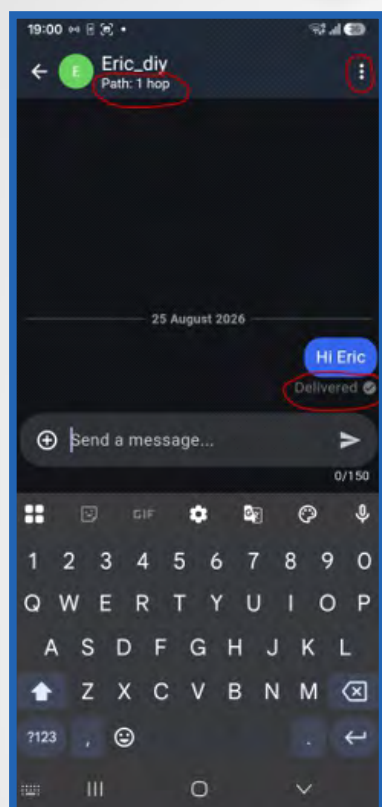
SEND AN ADVERT

You select the icon as above, then choose Flood, this will send an advert over the whole mesh. Zero hop is useful if you are in range of a user you want to contact and the clipboard option will allow you to send the advert via other means, Whatsapp etc, to someone who is currently off the mesh.



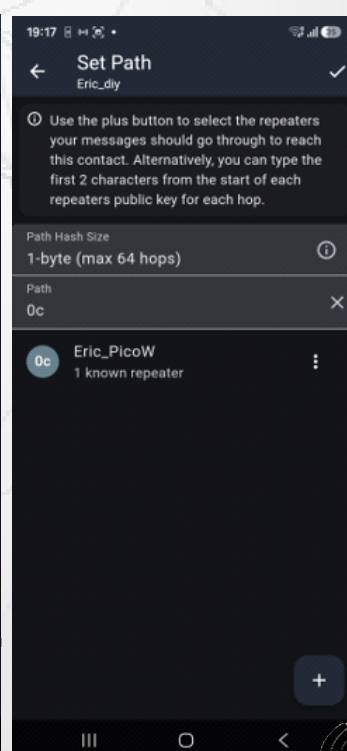
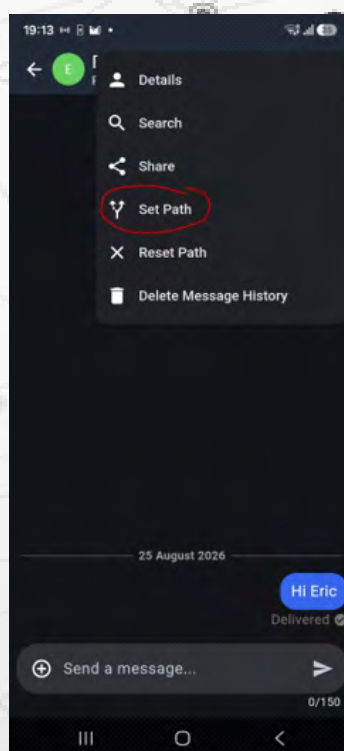
MESSAGING ACROSS THE MESH

Selecting a contact from the list allows you to send a message much the same as using Whatsapp, but it is totally off-grid, using our own simple LoRa mesh network. You can see that the message was delivered, how many hops it took, and the 3 dot hamburger brings up further information. The set path is particularly interesting as it allows you to decide which repeaters to use for this contact.

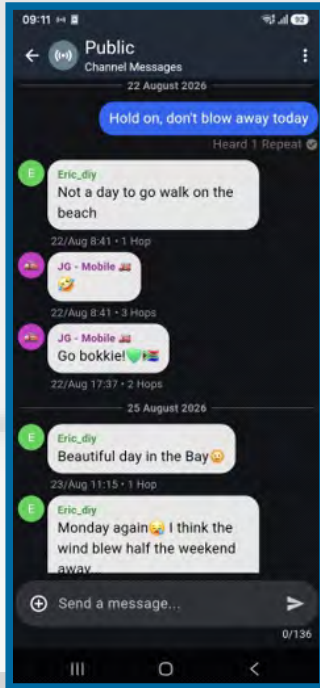
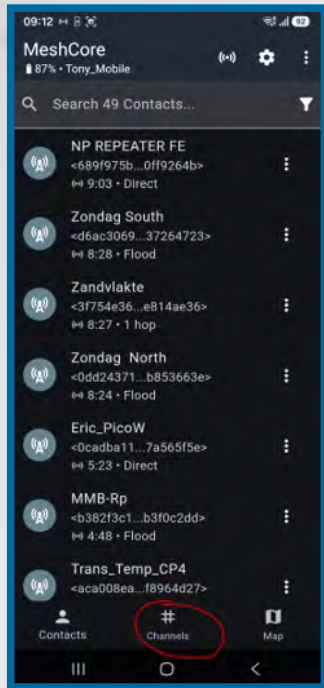


Here we see that this message took 1 hop, as Eric and I are close to each other, via the Eric_PicoW repeater. Usually the mesh will decide the path and provided you do not change location, or a repeater goes offline, this will remain in use going forward. Some times the path might not be the most efficient so you are then able to delete the existing one and set your own. This requires you to understand the topography and layout of the mesh and is not something you would usually need to do, but nice to have the option.

As mentioned the above message delivery is fine as long as you do not change location, if you or the recipient moves the existing set path might no longer be valid. You will then see the app attempt to send the message a number of times. Once the default number of retries it exhausted it will revert to flood routing and attempt to establish a new path. This might take a few attempts so persevere, once the path is re-established messages flow smoothly.



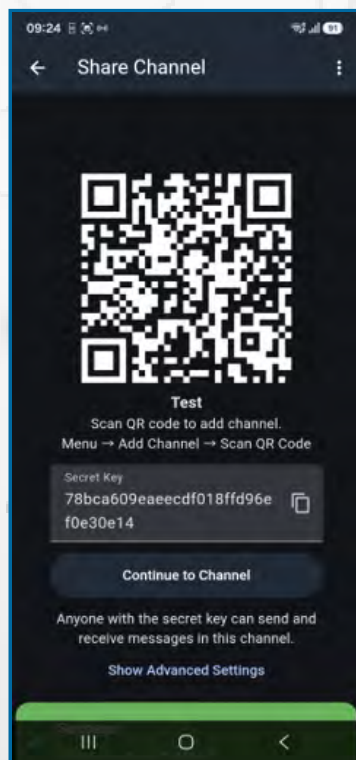
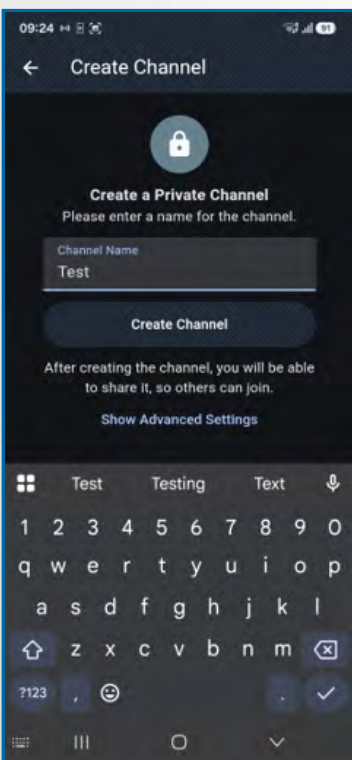
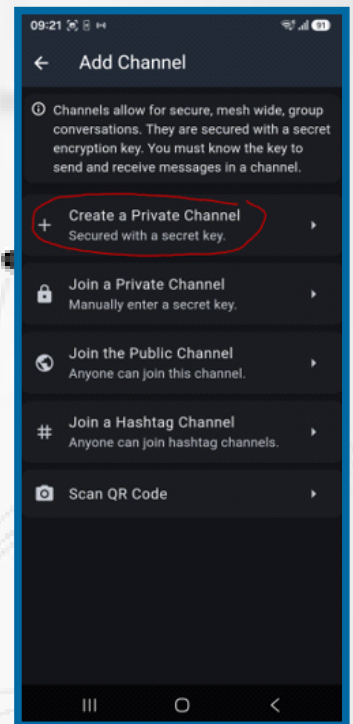
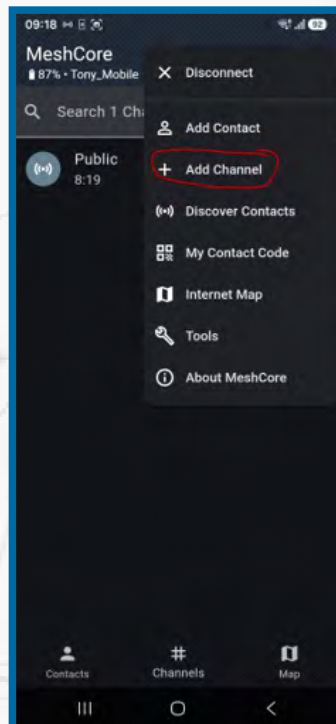
STAY CONNECTED WITH CHANNELS



Another option for sending messages is via a Channel, The app has a Public Channel set by default, any message sent here is received by everyone on the mesh.

This is great for general chatting but if you want something more private you can set up any number of Private Channels, you then share the private key with anyone you would like to have access. This is then your own chat group, again similar to Whatsapp.

Again you click the 3 dot hamburger and select Add Channel, there are a number of other options which you can try which are all self explanatory.



You then proceed to name the channel and share the code with your chosen contacts.

You now have a private channel for group discussions.

I hope this assists you in your journey of discovery on Meshcore, there is already an extensive mesh out there and it is continually growing. Contact me if you are interested as I have some hardware available to get you started.

Next month we will look at setting up a repeater and additional advanced features available to you.

73 Tony
ZR2TX



MEMBER PROFILE

ZR2TX



PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Where and when were you born and where did you grow up?

I was born in Cape Town, January 1960. Grew up in East London and did my High Schooling at Queens College in Queenstown. Moved to Port Elizabeth in 1997.

What is one childhood memory that makes you smile?

Catching my first BIG fish

What do you do for a living?

I obtained a B.Com degree and worked in Finance my whole working career, was MD of a French owned textile company for the last 10 years prior to the company closing and me going on early retirement. Now I work at Sumatran Coffee, our family owned coffee roastery.

What is something about your early life that people might find surprising?

I ran marathons and ultra-marathon for a number of years in my twenties.

What is something you're surprisingly good at?

Being GRUMPY

What do you think the future has in store for the hobby?

Ham radio is increasingly coming under pressure from other hobbies and distractions. Cell phones and internet have taken away some of the fascination of making contact with someone on the other side of the world. That said, it still remains at the forefront of technological development. With the advent of DSP radios are becoming more powerful, smaller and sometimes cheaper.

The legacy manufacturers will continue to come under pressure from equipment "Made in China", this will continue to improve and will offer the Amateur better features at affordable prices.

Digital modes are already having a major impact but in my opinion take away the personal feeling, somehow a computer talking to another computer and logging the QSO just does not do it for me.

Hams are resourceful people so I am sure we will find ways to keep the hobby relevant in the modern world.

INTERESTS BEYOND RADIO



What hobbies do you enjoy outside of amateur radio?

Hiking / Camping / Time in the bush, as well as sailing my RC yacht.



What books, music or films do you enjoy?

Don't read as much as I should or watch movies but I do listen to 60's and 70's rock and blues.



What is your favourite way to relax?

Time with family and friends in the bush.

YOUR PEARS CONNECTION

How did you first get involved with the PEARS?

Joined PEARS in my quest to get my licence, first meeting I attended was in a church hall off Cape Road, remember thinking, "What a bunch of old farts" now I am one of the old farts. ;-)

What do you enjoy most about being part of the PEARS?

Having people from all walks of life coming together with a common passion.

What would you like to see more of in the PEARS or the QSX magazine?

Articles and submissions with a local flavour, things happening in our club and area.

AMATEUR RADIO JOURNEY

When and how did you first get involved in amateur radio?

While I was at Rhodes University in the late 70's I had a friend with an FRG-7, this first peaked my interest in amateur radio. I investigated obtaining my licence but found it all rather daunting, a short while later CB radio arrived in SA and so my journey into radio began. After varsity life took over and radio fell by the wayside, but the interest never faded.

What was your first callsign and your first radio?

ZR2TX if my first and only callsign, people have asked why I did not change it to ZS once the restrictions fell away but I do not see the need.

Who or what inspired you to get licensed?

About 25 years ago I saw an article which mentioned the dropping of the CW requirement for an Amateur Licence, this awakened my interest so I made contact with PEARS. I was put in touch with Paul, ZS2PG who guided me through the syllabus and as they say "The rest is history".

What parts of the hobby do you enjoy most (HF, VHF, contesting, etc.)?

My main interest has always been Emergency / Public Service communications.

What is your proudest or most memorable radio moment?

Receiving the PEARS HRO Ham of the Year award a number of years ago.

What is the most unusual or distant contact you've ever made?

Running QRP in the bush with an alarm battery, wire in a tree, to the USA west coast.

What equipment are you currently running in your shack?

I have a Yaesu FT8800 VHF/UHF, Xiegu G90 HF, and TYT HT

What project(s) are you currently working on (radio or otherwise)?

Playing around with LoRa, specifically Meshcore and building an HF Go Box for my G90.



2026 TRANS BAVIAANS MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE COMMS

Good comms, Safe riders, Every Kilometer

By Chris **ZS2AAW**

The Port Elizabeth Amateur Radio Society provided good quality radio communications services over the weekend of the 8-9 August 2026.



24hr



230km

WHERE TEAM SPIRIT GETS A WHOLE NEW MEANING

PLANNING



Due to flood damage in the Baviaanskloof, the route was changed at the 11th hour, to follow the Grootrivier just North of, and parallel to the Baviaanskloof.



This meant the regular comms networks we rely on year after year for the Baviaanskloof route, were out of the window! We had new challenges to overcome!



Checkpoint locations were received quite late, and RadioMobile software planning got underway in earnest. Due to river flow, the Grootrivier crossing could not be traversed by vehicle, and it was deemed essential for communications to be provided there.



Additionally, the climb up to the Elandsrivier road is in very poor condition and evacuation teams would be stationed halfway up to assist competitors who might withdraw. These evac teams would not have a ham radio operator and would rely on commercial VHF repeater communications to the river crossing below, and checkpoint 4 at the top.



The Cockscomb UHF repeater is ideally situated to provide coverage for this route. RadioMobile however predicted very low UHF signals at the bottom of the valley at the Grootrivier crossing. Levels at all other manned checkpoints and the control centre in Jeffreys Bay were predicted to be good.



Cockscomb is a solar powered UHF repeater, and concerns were raised on its durability for night-long comms. Alternate plans were required such as simplex between checkpoints to relay messages if required. Checkpoint 4 at the top of the climb near the Patensie Vodacom tower would possibly provide a good relay point.

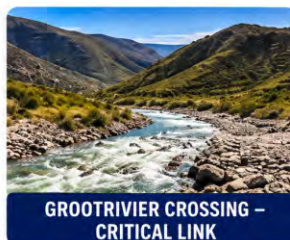


MISSION: CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS

- ✓ Support every rider
- ✓ Coordinate evacuations
- ✓ Keep control informed
- ✓ Get everyone home safely



COCKSCOMB UHF REPEATER
(SOLAR POWERED)



GROOTRIVIER CROSSING -
CRITICAL LINK



THANK YOU
TO ALL HAMS
WHO MADE IT
POSSIBLE!

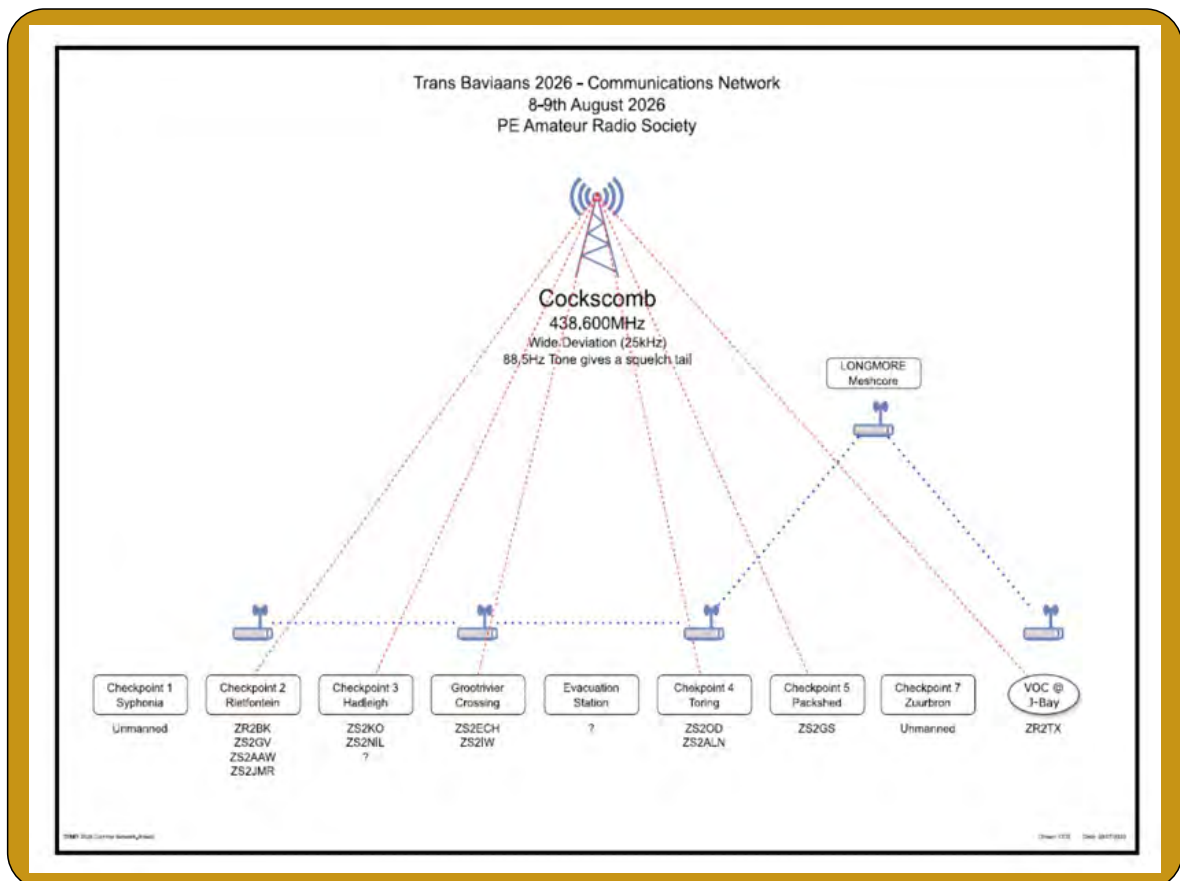
PEARS - Volunteers on the Air, Safety on the Ground





COMMS NETWORK & RACE COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Following on from our route planning and radio coverage overview, here is a report on the comms network and how it performed over the weekend.



MESHCORE



WHERE TEAM SPIRIT GETS A WHOLE NEW MEANING



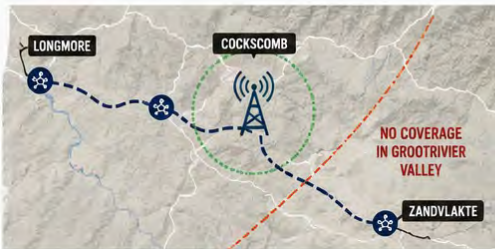
MeshCore nodes were also planned to be deployed at some checkpoints and at Control, to evaluate their effectiveness for such event comms. Unfortunately, the only MeshCore repeaters are located at Longmore and in the Baviaanskloof itself at Zandvlakte, and neither of these provide any coverage in the Grootrivier valley.



Cockscomb is earmarked to have its APRS UHF Digipeater replaced with a MeshCore repeater as soon as site access can be arranged, and this would have changed things considerably in terms of MeshCore coverage.



Checkpoint 4 did not provide much coverage towards the more distant checkpoints, or the Grootrivier crossing. Judging by UHF voice coverage experienced from Cockscomb, it will be a huge asset in terms of MeshCore when activated.



QUALITY COMMS PROVIDED



WHERE TEAM SPIRIT GETS A WHOLE NEW MEANING



The weekend was a great success. UHF communications were excellent, with full quieting signals received from all checkpoints manned (2, 3, crossing, 4, 5, and VOC at Jeffreys Bay). In many instances simple UHF handheld radios could be used, although at times this can be scratchy and a base station (mobile rig) with antenna on a pole is the best choice by far.



It is essential that the control station has excellent signals, as it is difficult to copy noisy or scratchy signals from the control center all the time, and having to ask for repeats does not make for efficient communications. Our Stalwart Control operator, Tony ZR2TX, is well experienced in what he needs to get out onto the comms network well, and always makes sure he has a good quality signal, which in turn makes communication easy.



The Cockscomb repeater performed well with no battery power issues and for this we have the landlord to thank for maintaining the common DC solar system over the years. Thanks, ZS2JR! And of course, thanks to ZS2GV and ZS2DH for installing the repeater and suffering personal discomfort at the time, but that's another story!



www.jacquesmarais.co.za / Pentax

2026 TRANS BAVIAANS MOUNTAIN BIKE RACE

REPORT BACK

Contributions by ZS2AAW, ZS2GV, ZS2ALN



24hr



230km

WHERE TEAM SPIRIT GETS A WHOLE NEW MEANING



As mentioned, the route and the comms plan were radically altered for the 2026 event and much of what was deployed from a PEARS perspective, worked out of the box. The event itself seemed to have a few unexpected challenges - ranging from GPS track files taking leaders off the route, to water replenishing issues!



WATER CHALLENGE

The rainwater tank was half a km away, and so ZR2BK and I (ZS2AAW) rode back and forth with empty bottles refilling in relays, for hours. Not ideal! It was hot and so the queues for water were snaking all around the venue at some stages.



NORTHERN SIDE SMOOTHER THAN EXPECTED



Communication on the northern side of the mountain was far easier than expected, reports ZS2GV. Checkpoint 2 had comms by means of handheld radios through the Cockscombs UHF repeater. Eric at Groot Rivier crossing put up a pole with an antenna.



Although the team was prepared with HF and VarAc (a digital mode) for backup, both systems worked as expected, proving HF can be valuable as a fallback position.



Checkpoint 3 also had good comms.



*Great effort. Great teamwork.
Thanks to all involved!*



WELL DONE TEAM!

Given the extent of the changes, PEARS can be proud of the deployment that worked without issue in the face of a struggling event. Well done to Tony, Chris, and the others for knowing what needed to be done and then getting it done.



CHECKPOINT 4 - A TOUGH CLIMB



Andreas, ZS2ALN reports that he and Odi (ZS2OD) arrived at check point 4 around 11:30 on Saturday morning, with the leading team only came past after 14:00.



Even with a great signal into the repeater from a handheld, the mast went up anyway, so all bases were covered.



The climb to CP4 has earned a reputation and all riders complained about the climb saying it was tough and many had to resort to walking. The average rider took about 4 hours for the uphill to Cp4.



COLD NIGHT

Andreas also reports that around 01:00 on Sunday morning the thermometer in the bakkie showed **8°C**.



DOWNHILL & HOME

Andreas and Odi decided to follow the Sweep & extraction vehicles down the mountain at 02:30 and were home by 05:30.







WHERE TEAM SPIRIT GETS A WHOLE NEW MEANING



Langs Baviaans GROOTRIVIER "CHECK POINT"

Eric ZS2ECH and Isolda ZS2IW Hosten



Camping in the Doringbome



We left mid-morning on Friday passing through Uitenhage and headed west on the gravel Cockscomb road. The road was not too bad and managed a QSO with Chris ZS2AAW and Kevern ZR2BK on the Cockscomb repeater on the way. Before we headed down into the poort, I installed a Meshcore repeater on a ridge overlooking the river crossing. The pass down to the river was not too bad, just a few scary bits were rock falls blocked half the road – always at the spots where there is a steep drop on the other side! Once we got to the river we immediately went to go look at the little bridge build for the cyclist to cross- impressive what one can build with pallets!. The river was still flowing strongly and one couldn't see how deep it was.

We decided to wild camp on the beach just before where the road was washed away. We installed a VHF/UHF collinear about 5 meters up using a half washed out doringboom to support the pole with ample support of thousands of muggies. Good comms was obtained with CP3, CP4 and ZS2BO mobile. So no need to setup the 12 element UHF yagi! We also had a visit from the team at CP3 that came to inspect our radio licenses.



At dusk a bakkie appeared on the other side with two guys hoping to take a shortcut to Steytlerville. The driver walked through the river and the water came up to the middle of his back. He wisely decided to turn around!



The night was peaceful (with no muggies luckily) with beautiful stars and a never-ending choir of frogs.

RACE DAY



On race day about 7 am the lifesaving team arrived and a short while later the medics. Wikus arrive later in the morning to drop off a few things (including a bicycle rack) and transferred to a vehicle on the other side. The first cyclist came and disappeared soon after.



We setup ourselves under our awning and enjoyed the entertainment of seeing the cyclist trying to cycle over a sandy patch. Quite a few had some impressive tumbles! They kept coming for the rest of the day and none managed to fall off the bridge into the water.



Comms was good throughout the day but Meshcore didn't work. Managed to send a few messages to CP3 but delivery confirmation didn't always work. Only got one weak flood from CP4. Obviously next time the repeater must go on a higher point.



We also were running VaraC as a backup on 40m the whole day, got a message from Glen ZS2GV and received beacons from all over the country (very little noise down there, I wonder why).



The bicycle rack was ordered back and forth over the river a few times and the temptation was strong to throw it in the river. Eventually it was sent back to CP3 after the last cyclist passed. No competitors dropped out at our spot but a few were brought in from CP3 and transferred to evacuation vehicles on the other side.



After the last cyclist passed around dusk, everyone packed up and disappeared soon after that. There were rumors of rain and strong wind so we packed up as much as we could and went to go sleep in the house.

SUNDAY MORNING



We continued our packing with intermittent spells of rain and as soon as we could we made our way out of the kloof picking up the Meshcore repeater on the way.



By the time we got to the Cockscomb road the harder rain had started and driving on the dirt road was becoming very interesting.



We decided to take a side road to the main road and had some coffee and pies and the Kleinpoort Padstal.



The rest of the way home was uneventful.



Bridge over the Grootrivier



Isolda ZS2IW inspecting the bridge.





WHERE IN THE WORLD?

*A 4x4 Adventure
through the Richtersveld*

📷 Pics & text by Neil, ZR2NT

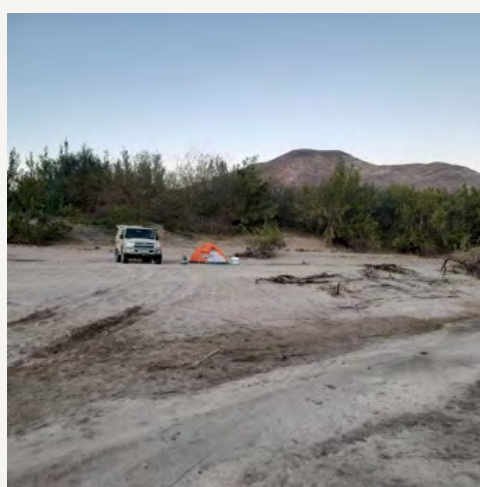
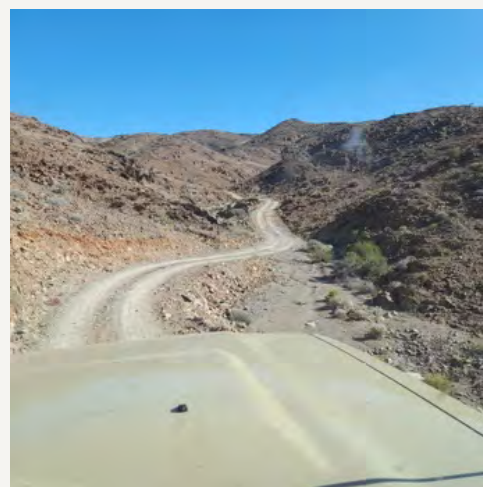


Neil, ZR2NT send us the following photos and explains that he and Merle have just completed the Namakwa 4x4 echo trail.

These pics were taken while they were staying at **Sendelings drift** in the **Richtersveld**.

“ Neil says :
“A nice chance to wash
and recuperate after
some wild camping!” ”

From here they head back to camping for 5 days in the Richtersveld and then on to Springbok.



We wish them safe travels!
Enjoy the pics!

*The Journey
continues...*



NAMAKWA
4x4 ECHO TRAIL



RICHTERSVELD



SPRINGBOK



♥ THE BEST MEMORIES ARE MADE OFF THE BEATEN TRACK ♥





SEPTEMBER 2026

— STAY ACTIVE, STAY CONNECTED! —



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Secretary's Day  Johannes (Joe) Geldenhuys ZS2JO Renette van Deventer <i>XYL of Andre van Deventer ZS2BK</i>	3	4	5 SARL National Field Day
6 SARL National Field Day	7	8	9  Andre Bouwer ZS2AFB Merle Thomas <i>XYL of Neil Thomas ZS2NT</i>	10  Andre van Deventer ZS2BK Joel Greaves ZR2JG	11 Rosh Hashanah  Jane Fife <i>XYL of Olive Fife ZS2RT</i>	12 Rosh Hashanah European SOTA Day Africa FT4 DX Contest  Jo (ZS2W) Alkers <i>XYL of Al Alkers ZS2H</i> Dixieeta Gajjar <i>XYL of Tejraj Gajjar ZS2TQ</i>
13 Rosh Hashanah	14	15  Shanelle Mitchell <i>XYL of Corda Mitchell ZS2NM</i>	16  Paul Straub ZS2KT	17	18 IARU Region 1 General Conference  Nellie Brits <i>XYL of Anton Brits ZS2ST</i>	19 Region 1 GC ZS SOTA activity weekend
20 YOM Kippur Region 1 GX ZS SOTA activity weekend  Ellie Goosens <i>XYL of Rob Goosens ZS2RQ</i> Retha <i>XYL of Andrew ZS2AFB</i>	21	22 Region 1 GC	23 Spring Equinox Region 1 GC Provincial Schools Close International day of Sign languages	24 National Braai Day Region 1 GC  Dylan MacDonald ZS2D (ZS2MAC)	25 Region 1 GC October RAE registration closes  Sarita Brand <i>XYL of Albert Brand ZS2BA</i>	26 World Maritime Day CQ WW RTTY Contest  Caryn Pearson <i>XYL of Graham Pearson ZS2KCP</i>
27 World Tourism Day CQ WW RTTY Contest  Chantel Koekemoer ZS2CKK	28  Glen Cummings Zs2gv	29	30 International Translation Day			





HAM BIRTHDAYS = SEPTEMBER =

Celebrating our members – on the air and in life!



02
SEPT

**Johannes (Joe)
Geldenhuis**

ZS2JO

American tennis star **Jimmy Connors** will be turning 73 and **Keanu Reeves** will be turning 61 on your birthday!.

09
SEPT

Andrew Bouwer

ZS2AFB

Celebrates with **Colonel Saunders of KFC** fame.

10
SEPT

Andre van Deventer
Joel Greaves

ZS2BK
ZR2JG

Celebrate along with **Arnold Palmer**, the famous golfer, and **Colin Firth** the actor.

16
SEPT

Paul Straub

ZS2KT

Paul, you celebrate along with **David Copperfield** - the man who made the Statue of Liberty disappear! David will be turning 69!

24
SEPT

Dylan MacDonald

ZS2D
(ZS2MAC)

Dylan keeps some famous party mates! Both **F. Scott Fitzgerald**, author of "The Great Gatsby" and **Howard Florey** the Australian pathologist and pharmacologist who purified penicillin.

27
SEPT

Chantel Koekemoer

ZS2CKK

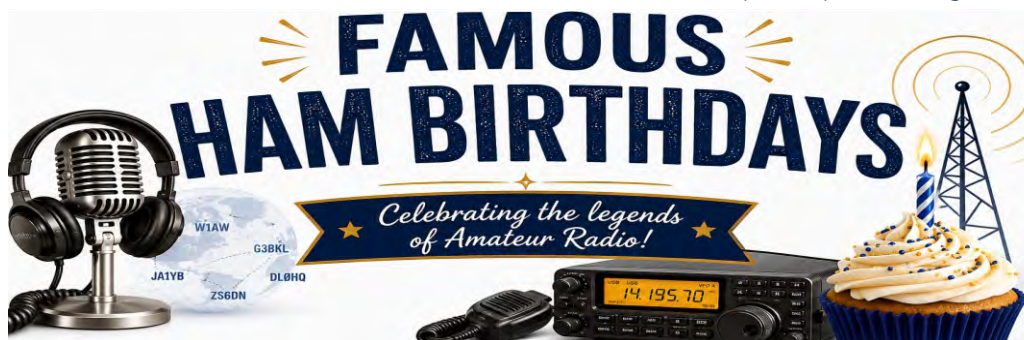
Chantel, you share a birthday with **Meat Loaf**. No really - the singer, not the meal!

28
SEPT

Glen Cummings

ZS2GV

GV - you celebrate with **Confucius** the Chinese philosopher. Enough said. .



22 SEPT
1970

Neil Rapp (WB9VPG) is one of the most famous figures in amateur radio, known internationally for becoming the youngest licensed ham at age 5, later achieving Technician at 6, General at 7, Advanced at 9, and Amateur Extra. His early achievements were covered by major media outlets and every major ham radio magazine in the U.S. He is also a chemistry professor and long time contributor to youth outreach.

11 SEPT
2024

Another celebrity birthday is a young lady born just 2 years ago. This came to my at September 2024 edition of the QSX where it was announced that Anja had joined t Mike ZS2MIC and Dane. Happy birthday girl!





SPOUSE BIRTHDAYS

= SEPTEMBER =

Celebrating the special people behind the Hams!



DATE

SPOUSE

FAMOUS CONNECTION

02
SEPT

Renett van Deventer

X4L of Andre ZS2BK

Renett you share a birthday with Joe ZS2JO, **Jimmy Connors**, and **Keanu Reeves**.

09
SEPT

Merle Thomas

X4L of Neil ZR2NT

You celebrate with **Andrew Bouwer, ZS2AFB** and **colonel Saunders**..

11
SEPT

Jane Fife

X4L of Clive ZS2RT

The poet and writer **DH Lawrence** shares a birthday with you.

12
SEPT

Jo Alkers

X4L of Al ZS2U

Dixeeta Gajjar

X4L of Tejas ZS2TQ

Irene Joliot-Curie, daughter of Marie Curie who not only followed in her mother's career path but also picked up a Nobel prize as well!

15
SEPT

Shanelle Mitchell

X4L of Carlin ZS2NM

Shanelle, you celebrate with **Marco Polo**, the Italian explorer who was born in 1254.

18
SEPT

Nellie Brits

X4L of Anton ZS2ST

Nellie you celebrate with **Lance Armstrong** the Tour de France winner who was banned for illegal drug use.

20
SEPT

Ellie Goosens

X4L of Rudi ZR2RQ

Retha

X4L of Andrew ZS2AFB

You will be celebrating with **Sophia Louren** who was born in Rome in 1934. She will be turning 91!

25
SEPT

Sarita Brand

X4L of Albert ZS2BA

Remember the actor **Michael Douglas**? He will be 81 on your birthday!

26
SEPT

Caryn Pearson

X4L of Graham ZS2GKP

Caryn, you share your day with **Olivia Newton-John** of Grease fame.





02
SEPT

*Alan &
Joan Bowles ZS2BO*

Celebrate their wedding anniversary with **George Harrison of The Beatles** fame, proving that All you need is love!

11
SEPT

*Neville &
Sandra Bowden ZS2N*

Country legend **Merle Haggard** was wed on the 11 September 1993. And getting married was something he knew about - this was his fifth wife!

14
SEPT

*Paul &
Daphne Galpin ZS2PG*

Sigmund Freud was married in 14 September 1886 in Hamburg, Germany.

16
SEPT

*Tapiwa &
Babalwa Gunda ZS2TAP*

You share your wedding anniversary with **Henry Fonda, Susan Sarandon, Natalie Cole, Willie Nelson, and Stephen Hawking.**

25
SEPT

*Trevor &
Tracey Hartwig ZS2TJ*

Kevin Costner and **Elon Musk** also selected 25 September to tie the knot.

27
SEPT

*Graham ZS2GKP &
Caryn Pearson
Petrus Jakobus &
Catherine Janse
van Rensburg ZR6PLW*

Angela Lansbury also chose 27 September for her wedding day way back in 1945. She got divorced in 1946, so I guess you get the prize?

30
SEPT

*Kevin &
Monique O'Donoghue ZS2KO*

Jazz trumpeter **Miles Davis, Meryl Streep,** and tennis great **Pete Sampras** share your special day.



YOUR DOSE OF DX



*If DX were easy,
we'd call it local.*



DX WATCH

STATIONS ON THE AIR



Grenada

GRENADA - J3 (J38LD & J38DX)

From 1-12 September 2026, operators MM8IJU (as J38LD) and GM5RDX (as J38DX) will be active from Grenada, IOTA NA 024. They will operate 80-6m using SSB, FT8, and FT4. QSL is available via M0OXO. (LoTW; OPDX; announced 2026 04 18)



PALAU - T88PB

From 4-7 September 2026, JA0JHQ will operate as T88PB from Koror Island, IOTA OC 009, grid PJ77fi. Activity will be on HF, CW, and the station will be QRV for the All Asia DX SSB contest. QSL is via JA0JHQ direct. (LoTW; OPDX; announced 2026 06 28)



KOSOVO - Z68PX

From 4-11 September 2026, IZ2DPX will operate as Z68PX from Grastice. Bands covered will be 60-6m, using SSB, FT8, and FT4 with verticals and dipoles. QSL is via Club Log OQRS or IZ2DPX (bureau/direct). (LoTW; DXW.Net; announced 2026 07 09)



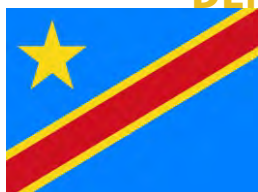
VIETNAM - 3W9C

From 4-12 September 2026, SP5APW will operate as 3W9C from Hon Son Island, IOTA AS 128. The operation focuses on 6m, with additional activity on 20, 15, and 10m. QSL is via Club Log OQRS. (LoTW; DXW.Net; announced 2026 07 28)



BERMUDA - Vp91 / N7NU/VP9

From 23-29 September 2026, operators N7NU, WJ7R, and K7AR will operate from VP9GE's QTH in Bermuda. They will be active as VP9I for CQWW DX RTTY, and also QRV as N7NU/VP9 during the same period. Activity will be on HF, using SSB, CW, and digital modes. QSL is via N7NU. (LoTW; TDDX; announced 2026 07 16)



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO - 9T0MD

Beginning 30 September 2026 and running through 11 October 2026, the MDXC Team will operate as 9T0MD from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Bands covered include 160-6m, using SSB, CW, FT8, and RTTY. QSL is via IK2VUC (bureau/direct). (LoTW; OPDX; announced 2026 03 17)



FOCUS ON CONTESTS



"Because shouting your callsign at strangers is a sport."

We start this segment with some contest results.



CONTEST RESULTS

The SARL Newbie contest results showed that of the 19 logs entered, Zs2 was not very well represented. That said, we can tip our hats to:



- ZS2ALN** Andre Nortje - 6th place with 267 points
- ZS2HR** Sher van Staden - 11th place with 128 points
- ZS2EC** Theunis Potgieter - 14th place with 78 points



Top of the pile was **ZR1CZ** Chloe Zaayman with 480 points.



LOCAL CONTEST UPDATE – LOG SUBMISSIONS

On the local side, there have been changes made to the SARL upload page where log submissions take place. You will now get a copy of your log sent back to you with the file renamed as per the contest naming convention. This email confirms that your log has been submitted.



Upload your log



We receive your log



Renamed log
sent back to you



Email confirms
your submission

*Easy.
Confirmed.
Ready to
compete!*



CONTEST CALENDAR

September 2026



LOCAL SCENE

Several local contests take place in September. Keep an eye on the SARL website for full details and rules.



IMPORTANT UPDATE: SARL LOG SUBMISSION

The SARL upload page has been updated. When you submit your log, you will now receive a copy of your log via email with the file renamed according to the contest naming convention.

This email confirms that your log has been submitted.



INTERNATIONAL CONTESTS *in September 2026*



ALL ASIAN DX CONTEST — SSB

🕒 **Runs:** 7–8 September 2026

🕒 **Time:** 00:00 UTC (22:00 UTC alt) on 7 Sept to 00:00 UTC (22:00 UTC alt) on 8 Sept

📶 **Bands:** 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m

🎤 **Mode:** SSB

🌐 **Region:** Asia



WAE DX CONTEST — SSB

🕒 **Held:** 12–13 September 2026

🕒 **Time:** 02:00 UTC (00:00 UTC alt) on 12 Sept to 01:59 UTC (23:59 UTC alt) on 13 Sept

📶 **Bands:** 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m

🎤 **Mode:** SSB



CQ WORLDWIDE DX CONTEST — RTTY

🕒 **Occurs:** 26–28 September 2026

🕒 **Time:** 02:00 UTC (00:00 UTC alt) on 26 Sept to 01:59 UTC (23:59 UTC alt) on 28 Sept

📶 **Bands:** All HF bands

🎤 **Mode:** RTTY

🌐 **Region:** Worldwide



Note: This list is not complete – it includes the big ones from a PEARS perspective.



GET ON THE AIR, HAVE FUN AND WORK THOSE STATIONS!



73 & Good DX!





SARL CONTESTS

September 2026

Get on the air. Test your skills. Have fun!



A quick reminder that the SARL Blue Book Contest Manual is a free download from the [mySARL.org.za](https://www.mysarl.org.za) website – for members and non-members of the SARL.

Go to <https://www.mysarl.org.za/> to get the contest manual, calendar, and all the goodies you need to take part in the local contests.



SARL NATIONAL FIELD DAY (SECOND SESSION)

The second annual session of the SARL Field Day, open to South African amateurs and international participants.



DATES

5–6
SEPTEMBER
2026



DETAILS

National Field Day
– Second Session



AFRICA FT4 DX CONTEST (SECOND LEG)

Occurs 12 September 2026, from 15:00–18:00 UTC. Bands: 80m, 40m, 20m, mode FT4, open to African and international stations.



DATE

12
SEPTEMBER
2026



DETAILS

15:00 – 18:00 UTC
Bands: 80m, 40m,
20m | Mode: FT4



SARL EQUINOX 6M AFRICAN DX ENTITY CHALLENGE (SECOND SESSION)

Runs 16 September – 15 October 2026, starting mid-September. Focuses on 6m DX, Africa-centric but open internationally.



DATES

16 SEPTEMBER –
15 OCTOBER
2026



DETAILS

6m DX Challenge
Africa-centric,
open internationally



ZS SOTA ACTIVITY WEEKEND

Finally, while SOTA is not a contest, it is worth a mention here. The ZS SOTA Activity Weekend takes place on the weekend of 19–20 September. If you not going up a mountain you can sit in your shack and chase! SOTA is for everyone.

More information: [mysarl.org.za/sota-summits-on-the-air/](https://www.mysarl.org.za/sota-summits-on-the-air/)



DATES

19–20
SEPTEMBER
2026



DETAILS

Not a contest,
but always worth
a mention!
SOTA is for
everyone.





REGULATIONS AND REGULATORY INFORMATION



New Definitions in the ICASA Draft: Why They Matter to Amateurs

by Dave ZS2DH

In last month's edition we took a brief look at the new ICASA 2026 draft amendments and where we stand currently. This month we look at the new definitions the amendments introduce. While they may seem administrative, they have real implications for amateur radio operations:



EARTH STATION

A formal definition aligning with ITU terminology. This matters for amateurs involved in satellite tracking, AMSAT operations, or microwave uplinks/downlinks.



EARTH STATION IN MOTION (ESIM)

Satellite terminals mounted on aircraft, ships, and land vehicles. ESIMs increasingly operate in bands adjacent to amateur microwave allocations, and ICASA's definition signals future coordination requirements.



NETWORK CONTROL AND MONITORING CENTRE (NCMC)

A mandatory monitoring facility for ESIM networks. This is a major shift toward active interference management and real-time spectrum policing.



ASTRONOMY DEVICE

Equipment protected under the Astronomy Geographic Advantage Act. This definition ties amateur operations more tightly to astronomy-quiet zones.

These definitions show ICASA aligning with global regulatory trends: more satellite traffic, more monitoring, and more protection for scientific installations. Amateur operators should expect stricter coordination in shared or adjacent bands.

ICASA IN THE NEWS



Are you getting blasted by spam callers like they're an unwanted QRM on your favourite band?



A recent report on mybroadband.co.za says that on Tuesday, 4 August 2026, ICASA briefed the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Communications and Digital Technologies about its plan to tackle the issue.



ICASA explained that it's deploying some sophisticated signal-hunting gear to track down illegal SIM boxes—the telecom equivalent of a pirate station hiding behind a callsign it doesn't own.



These SIM boxes, sometimes called SIM banks, are bits of hardware loaded with multiple SIM cards.

ILLEGAL SIM BOX (SIM BANK)



Read the full article here:

[South Africa has a powerful new tool to track down illegal spam callers](#)

SARL HAMNET & ICASA SLAY A PIRATE!

By Gert ZS2GS

Yes ICASA, with the assistance of SARL HAMNET Gauteng, identified and closed an illegal operation in Germiston. The long and short of it is that SARL HAMNET Gauteng were involved in tracking the illegal operators and, with the backing of ICASA, these pirates were brought to book. SARL HAMNET Gauteng alleges the pirates were using commercial radio equipment on the amateur radio spectrum between 430MHz and 440MHz. The identity of the company and entity has not been disclosed as the matter is reportedly part of an ongoing legal process. Basically, the pirates are on the line for two contraventions of the law: Operating without a licence and owning/operating a Baofeng UV-5R.



KNOW THE LAW!

Most radio hams understand the first of these - and we proudly defend our right to our bands!



It is the second offence that should sound the alarm.

The UV-5R is an awesome little radio but it has not been type approved by ICASA. In fact, ICASA issued a statement stating specifically that the UV-5R has not been type cast and is subject to type approval.

This means that even if you HAVE a licence, you are not allowed to use the Baofeng UV-5R.



DEFEND OUR BRANDS!

Given the proliferation of pirate stations - everything from security companies to neighbourhood watches - we need to defend our bands!

Let's take a leaf from SARL HAMNET Gauteng and report abuse.



Read the full story as it appeared in the press:

[ICASA investigates illegal radio transmissions in Germiston | Germiston City News](#)



**NO LICENCE?
IT'S ILLEGAL.**

Operating without a licence is a criminal offence.



**UNAPPROVED
EQUIPMENT?
STILL ILLEGAL.**

Use only type approved radio equipment.



**RESPECT
THE SPECTRUM.**

Good operators make good neighbours.



**REPORT ABUSE.
DEFEND OUR
SPECTRUM.**

Report illegal activity to ICASA and help protect our bands.





TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

Technical articles, build projects,
and other clever stuff

EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR WI-FI AT HOME FOR FREE

By Myles Illidge



This article is based on an article that was posted on mybroadband.co.za and written by Myles Illidge and submitted to the QSX editor by Clive ZS2RT.

The good news is that it does not cost an arm and a leg to optimise your home Wi-Fi setup. These tips are cheap, easy to implement, and will make a real difference to the quality and speed of your Wi-Fi at home. That does not mean that a professional with deep pockets could not tweak it a little bit more, it simply means you can make sure you are getting the best performance for the setup you have. If you are ever frustrated by the speed of your Wi-Fi, or the internet connection, just remember dial-up and appreciate how far we have come.



Fixing the internet is not what we are looking at here. We are looking at the Wi-Fi inside your house. "This side" of your router. What happens on the outside, stays on the outside. 😊



Not wanting to blame the tools like a bad workman, cheap "free-to-use" routers that ISPs provide often lack the latest Wi-Fi technology, and that, combined with obstructed /interfered signals, could impede overall speeds. However, this doesn't mean that households must buy expensive networking equipment to boost their connection's performance.



Wireless connectivity uses radio frequency spectrum to transmit data, and like the VHF we use in the 2m band, the transmission strength can be reduced when walls obstruct the line of sight between the router and a connected device, or we get QRM/QRN.



The strength of these radio waves deteriorates when passing through obstructions, including walls and large pieces of furniture.



Therefore, simply moving your Wi-Fi router to a location that is more "visible" to the devices that connect to it can result in significant improvements. Just think "line of sight".



In the same way that you place a repeater in the centre of the field of service, placing routers in a central location in the home, such as on top of a bookcase or a counter, where they are visible from as many angles as possible seems obvious. I'll bet your router is tucked away somewhere at the far end of the house - am I right?



We mentioned QRM and it would seem obvious to us Radio Hams but keep the router away from high-powered appliances such as microwave ovens, televisions, and weak-current boxes, as they can cause signal interference.



For the record, we must point out that wireless speeds in terms of Wi-Fi in the home is still a lot slower than good old Ethernet cable. Don't believe me? Give it a try. So, for your high-speed items, connect them buy cable if you can.



Channel switching and 2.4GHz versus 5GHz bands

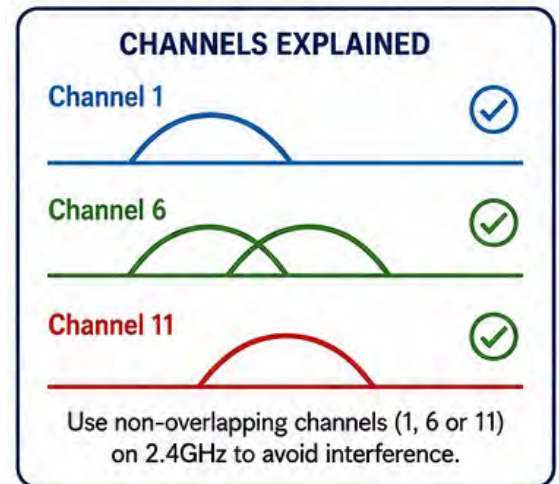


If you are up to changing settings on your router, then you can also test switching the channel on which your router operates.

This may improve signal strength and can be critical when nearby Wi-Fi routers or devices interfere with transmissions. This is about the same as switching to a clear channel or an open frequency. If your neighbour is on the same channel, you can suffer interference.

Most routers will configure themselves to operate on the optimal channel with the least interference. However, this can change as more devices connect to a Wi-Fi network.

How you go about making these changes on your router is either easy because you know what to do, or easy if you start by reading the manual. If you don't know what you are doing, ask someone first before you mess it all up and wish you had just stayed with the slow but working setup you had!



Another important consideration that can impact home Wi-Fi speeds is the band selection. Most home Wi-Fi routers provided by ISPs support dual-band technology.

This means they can transmit signals over two frequency bands: 2.4GHz and 5GHz, each with its own pros and cons.

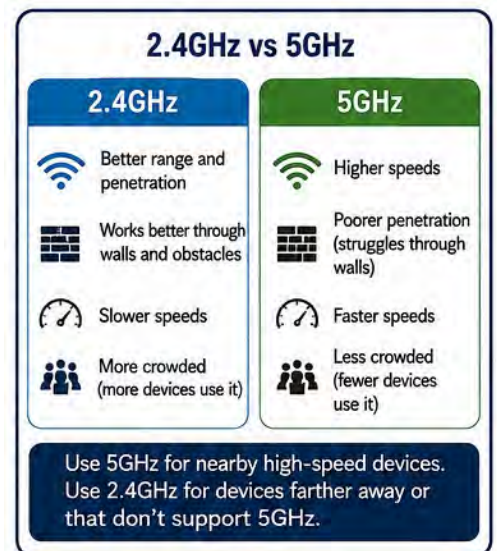
The 2.4GHz band offers better penetration, is more reliable, but is slower. The 5GHz band, on the other hand, is faster but less reliable - especially as distance and obstructions increase.

A router that can transmit over both bands offers homes some flexibility. Devices that support 5GHz connections and are closer to the router will benefit from higher speeds.

This is ideal to connect devices like TVs, laptops, and fixed devices like home cameras, most of which support 5GHz connectivity. At the same time, devices that are further away or those that don't support 5GHz connectivity can connect to the router's 2.4GHz network.

You can also benefit by keeping your router's firmware up-to-date and by using signal boosters to cover dead spots.

Finally, setting a tough-to-crack password can prevent opportunistic neighbours from connecting to your network. Not only is this a security risk, but it will negatively impact on your Wi-Fi speed. It is simple really - the more the traffic the slower the progress. Think of a Lambourgini cruising down Cape Road in the middle of rush hour!



The full article is available here:

[Easy ways to improve your Wi-Fi at home for free - MyBroadband.](#)

Thank you Clive ZS2RT,
for sending this one in!





SOME HAM JOKES



@LeeMSnow



Let me get this straight:
You have thousands of
dollars of ham gear,
but you still can't
hear me calling you
from the kitchen?

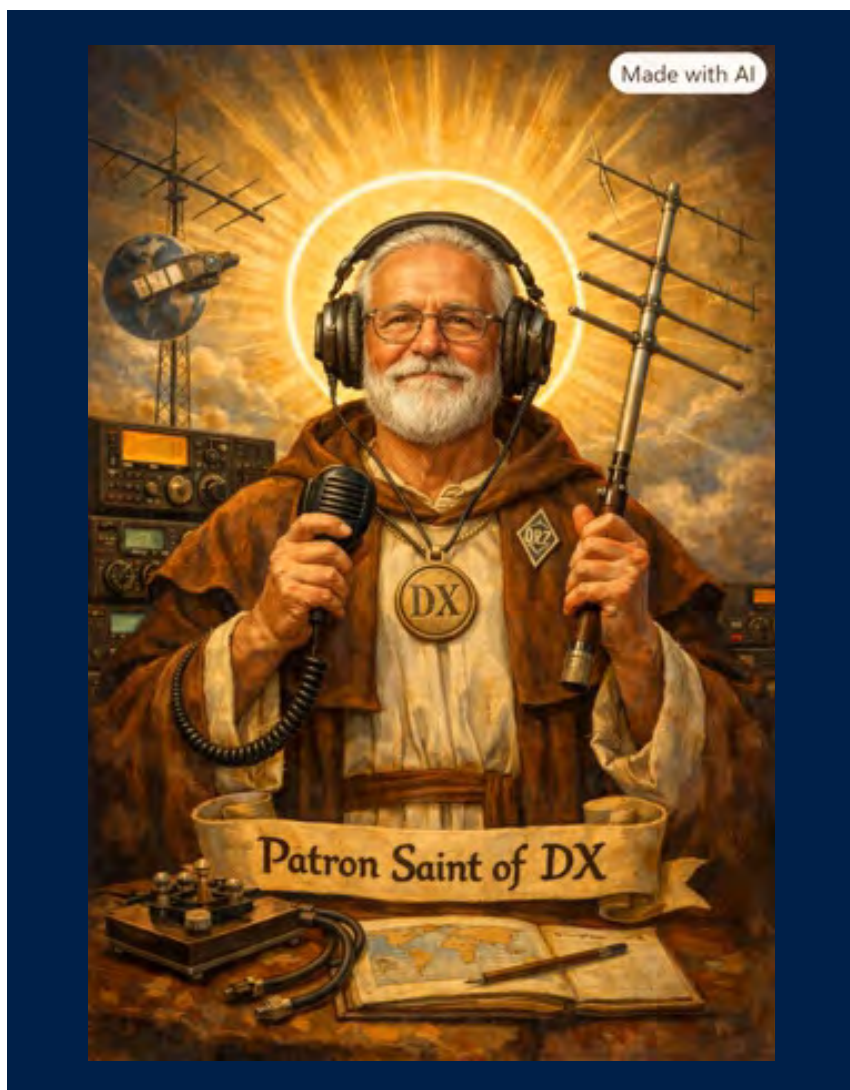


Ham Radio Operator Humor

HAM RADIO TRUTHS



- ★ "If patience is a virtue, DXers are basically saints with antennas."
- ★ "Propagation was so bad today, even my noise floor sounded lonely."
- ★ "If RF burns calories, my shack is basically a gym."
- ★ "I don't have too many radios - I have too little shack."
- ★ "My power supply hums in the key of 'budget constraints'."
- ★ "Yes, I did need that new radio. No, I can't explain why."





A TASTE OF WHAT IS TO COME.



In next month's edition you can expect more club news, contests, DX, and technical articles including all about making your own AllStar unit for your QTH.

OVER - THE - HORIZON RADAR (OTHR)



One of the interesting articles will give insight into the new Over-The-Horizon-Radar (OTHR) system being built on Palau by the US. This system will transmit broadband to detect missiles over the horizon.

JOTA / JOTI OCTOBER



Also in October is the annual JOTA/JOTI with the Scouts. Imagine Scouts all over town working on radios and being exposed to this great hobby.



MORE
CLUB NEWS



CONTESTS



DX NEWS



TECHNICAL
ARTICLES

*Stay
tuned!*



THANK YOU

Thank you for joining us for another edition of QSX. We hope this month's articles have informed, inspired, and encouraged you to spend a little more time on the air and connect with fellow amateurs near and far.

Wishing you clear skies, good propagation, and plenty of memorable contacts throughout the month ahead.

Until October...
73 and happy DXing!

