

Highway Hotline - February 2026



From the Editor's desk:

Dear Members,



I have been thinking what events in February will be filling our members time. This led me to thinking that this year was a neat and tidy one for those who appreciate the new calendar layout with the week displayed beginning with Monday and ending on Sunday. Maybe as February is always the shortest month in the year, be it a sedate stroll of a standard year or the hectic jump of a leap year. However whatever calendar layout out you prefer, the month is one of love and renewing contacts. Valentine's Day, on February 14, as near as possible to the middle of the month, sets the tone, feeling and colour for the month, red and Love.

Speaking of celebrating Valentine's Day, the 14 February is a Saturday, so ideal for a Club function. Having an event that day would mean that 3 of 4 Saturdays could be filled with Club events. That is a busy Club!

On the calendar for March is the SARL HF Field Day on Saturday 14 March to Sunday 15 March 2026, this is a two day, one-night event and it will hopefully be well attended this year.

Many thanks to those members who submitted articles for Hotline.

As always, looking forward to your response and any articles to be published, which may be sent to hotline@harc.org.za and copy hettie@phdorm.co.za as I might have missed some emails.

73's Hettie ZS5BH

Highway Hotline Newsletter

This newsletter is published monthly and distributed to members by email and is available on the H.A.R.C Website. The editor is Hettie Joubert ZS5BH, Cell +61 478 391 336, Email address is hotline@harc.org.za, and physical address is 56 Adlington Way, The Vines, WA6069.

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessary represent the views of the Committee-Ed (Hettie)

Bits and Bobs

Pictured below is a front and rear view of the embroidered HARC Cap. These are available at a price of R131.00 each. We also have our HARC Golf shirts, if you are interested in buying one, please order yours by contacting our PRO Keith ZS5WFD to place your order.

EFT payment into the Club's Account (Account details on Page 9) quoting Cap or Shirt and your callsign as reference, e.g. "Cap ZS5BH" or "Shirt ZS5BH". Keith will let you know when same is ready for collection.



Club News:

From the Vice Chairman's Desk:

Wishing all our members and families a healthy, peaceful and prosperous 2026.

January has certainly started off with a bang as the club embarks on a new journey. The club meeting was very well attended with expectations high and solid participation in the show and tell. Selwyn ZS5SL brought along his home brew HF vertical antenna and



explained how it was constructed. Dave ZS5CG presented his latest Arduino projects, and showed how they were made, what they could do, as well as their potential applications for other micro-electronics projects.

The new year also started off with the club beginning its journey into a formal NPC. The core committee proposed and nominated the required 3 directors of the new entity. Alan ZS5AJA, Keith ZS5WFD and Brian ZS5BR accepted the nominations. Richard ZS5RVR received all IDs, addresses and email addresses to prepare the applicable application forms for CIPC and SARS. The club preferred name being 'Highway Amateur Radio Club, NPC'. More details to follow as and when registration is approved.

The Kloof repeater repairs and upgrades were approved in principle by poll on the members WhatsApp group. The upgrade costs will be presented to members for approval once the equipment list is available. Dave ZS5CG has kindly agreed to start preparations this week.

The 'official' members' communications of the new entity will be through only 2 WhatsApp groups. One for members only, Highway Amateur Radio Club, the other, 'Swopshop' will be for swopshop and other general chat topics. All the other WhatsApp groups will remain as specialist groups, however, will not be used for HARC club communications.

The committee notes with concern the lack of participation in Hamnet. Hamnet is an important part of amateur radio. We encourage as many HAMS as possible, club members or non-members, to join to ensure KZN stands ready in case of disasters and participation in major sporting events. Hamnet operators need to be members of SARL, but not necessarily to clubs. Keith ZS5WFD, Hamnet deputy national director and provincial director makes himself available to lead and support, please feel free to come forward and chat with him for more details.

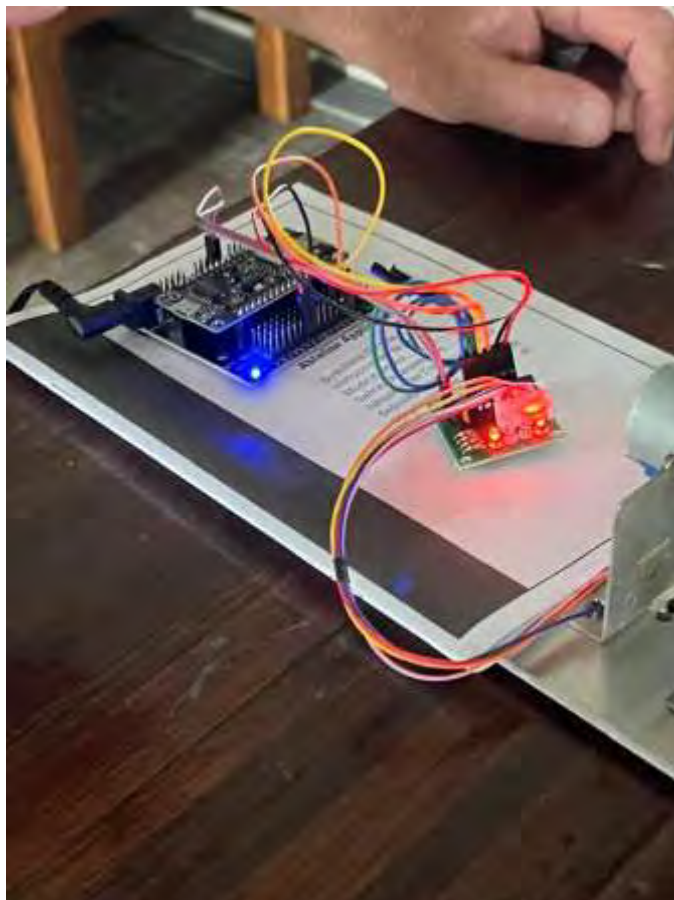
Finances are in good shape. All of the funds from the Standard Bank and Nedbank accounts are now in Capitec Bank. Once the HARC NPC is registered Richard ZS5RVR will prepare the first management accounts, and an income statement. The Capitec bank account will then be amended with signatories to reflect the new entity.

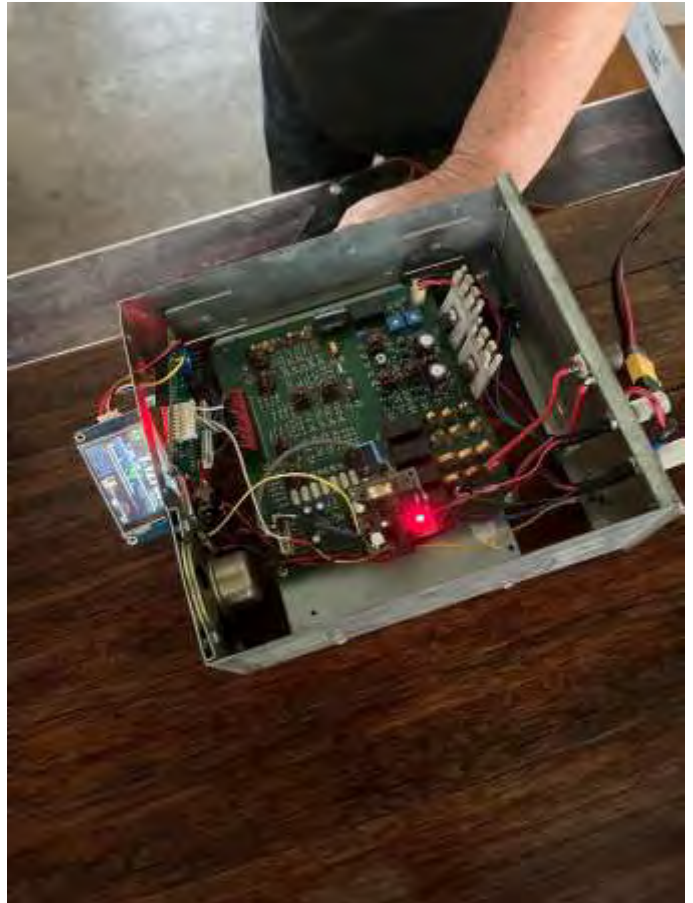
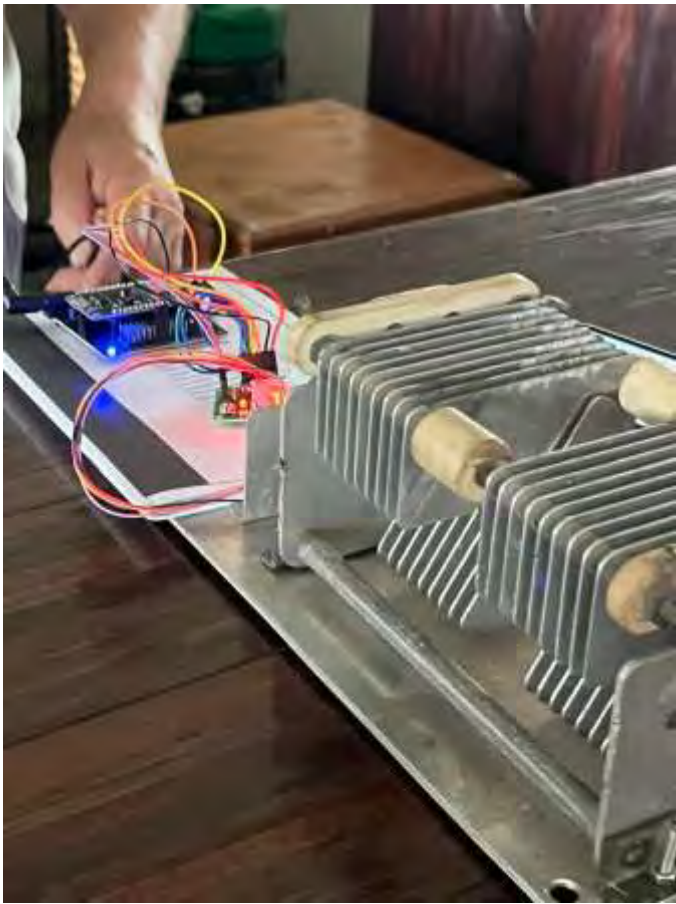
Best wishes

Alan ZS5AJA, Vice-Chairman











Before the frequency meter will work properly, it must be calibrated. This may be as simple as connecting a known frequency source and adjusting the trimmer capacitor so the correct value is displayed. If you are unable to adjust the displayed frequency, then a "coarse calibration" is required.

This involves starting with the power off. Pin 10 is connected to ground and the power is then turned on (and held on). The PIC will measure and display the input frequency, followed by the letters CAL. If you can't adjust the indicated frequency to the correct value (by adjusting the 33 pF trimmer), then coarse adjustments can be made by briefly connecting pin 12 or pin 13 to ground. It may take several tries, because the program only checks these pins once each measurement (0.4 second). Once you are happy with the adjustment, remove the ground from pin 10 (while power is still applied). This will cause the PIC to store the calibration in non volatile internal memory.

Normally pin 10 is floating at turn on, but may be grounded later to "program" the Intermediate frequency offsets. The next few paragraphs, copied (with amendments) from the September 2002 article describe how this is done.

To program the intermediate frequencies, connect the BFO to the the counter then set up the PIC as follows:

Ground pins 12 and/or 13 of the PIC to select one of three IF offsets. Pin 12 when pulled low, indicates the BFO is on its lower frequency. Pin 13 when pulled low, indicates the BFO is on its higher frequency. Alternatively, you can pull both pins 12 and 13 low to use the third offset. If both pins 12 and 13 are left floating, the PIC will not actually store anything!

To store the measured BFO in the selected internal EEPROM, just ground pin 10 of the PIC for at least 0.5 second, then release it.

For normal operation, the RF input of the counter is connected to the receiver VFO and the PIC uses the stored IF offsets to calculate the actual frequency. If neither BFO selection pin (12 and/or 13) is pulled low, the PIC uses the average BFO frequency. If no IF offset is required, just measure and store 0Hz for both offsets. Alternatively, you can pull both pins 12 and 13 low to use the third offset (which must also be programmed to 0Hz.)

Pin 11 when held low, indicates that the selected IF is to be added to the measured VFO frequency to give the indicated frequency. If pin 11 is floating, then a subtraction is done (VFO-IF or IF-VFO, whichever is appropriate).

Some LCD displays are configured as "8 character by 2 line" but with all the characters displayed on the one line. To cater for these displays, the PIC tests pin 18 occasionally. If it finds this pin grounded, it it inserts a "move to line 2" command after the eighth character. If your display only shows eight characters, then try grounding pin 18 of the PIC.

The last word:

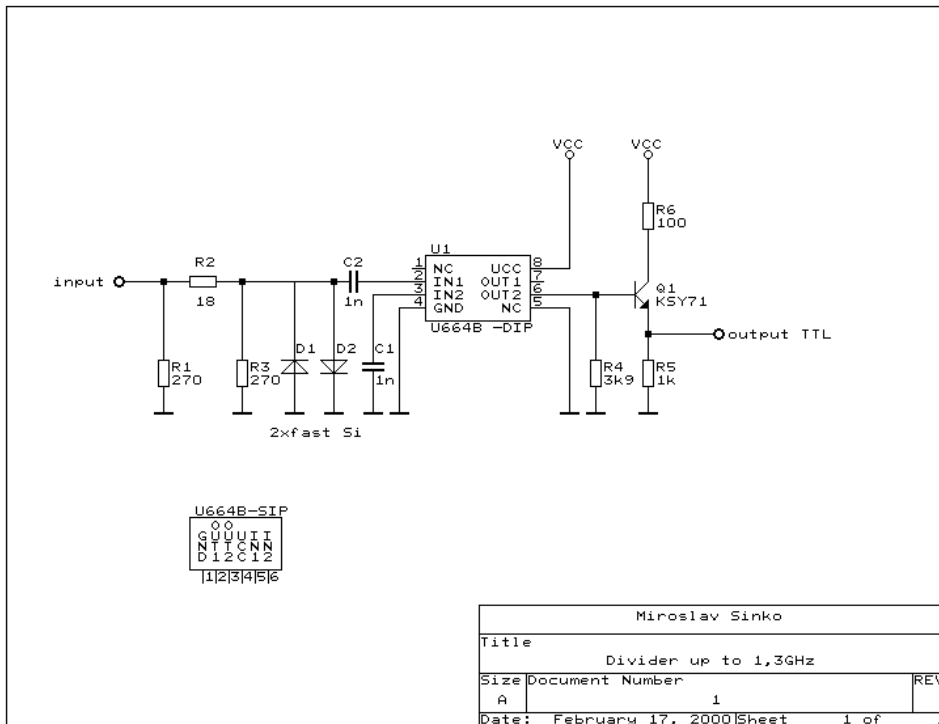
This frequency meter has much simpler hardware than the 2002 version and because of "improvements" in the software (32 bit counter instead of 24) has a higher frequency limit. The 2002 frequency meter was hard limited to 41.94303 MHz. This one exceeds 50 MHz, limited only by the PIC's counter/timer. The prototype was still counting reliably at 60+ MHz.

Adding a Prescaler

[Frequency meter with Prescaler](#)

Here is a modification to allow a "divide by 64" prescaler to be used with the "new" frequency meter.





Pin 18 of the PIC is now used to select between direct readout (without prescaler) and "multiply by 64" (with prescaler).

To select direct readout, connect pin 18 to ground.

To select "multiply by 64", connect pin 18 to 5 volt.

The measuring period is 1 second (not auto-ranging ;-).

Serial 9600 baud output is available at pin 17. You will need to add a TTL to RS232 level converter. A MAX232 chip works fine.

Hex code for Chip available, free, request if you are building this project

Credit : Phil Rice VK3BHR

Swap Shop

Weather was perfect but unfortunately quite a few of our regulars were not available to attend. Our "Braaimaster" Bernard ZS5BWY was away in Kruger and his Deputy Sean ZS5TI was also not available so we did not have a braai this time.

Good to have seen Justin Furner ZS5KT and Duncan Withers ZS5RTL. Other visitors included husband and wife Steve and Linda Pietersen ZS5HP and ZS5LD.

We are still working on an alternative venue in case of inclement weather since the Power Centre is up for sale and the Take Away has closed down.





Selwyn ZS5SL perusing offerings from The Emporium



Les ZS5LW Garth ZS5GMW and Aubrey ZS5ACW



Les ZS5LW and Eugene from CB radio



Dave ZS5CG with Duncan ZS5RTL and Rob ZR5RHS with his back to the camera



Hamnet

Upper Highway Trail Marathon



Saturday 6th December, Hamnet-KZN deployed 7 members who once again partnered with S.T.A.R.T Rescue (Specialised Tactical Accident Rescue Team) and Redline Response Ambulance to assist with communications for this popular annual event.

A Joint Operations Centre (JOC) was established at the beautiful Start and Finish venue of Camp Orchards in Hillcrest which was manned by Provincial Director Keith Lowes ZS5WFD for Hamnet and Brad Cool for the S.T.A.R.T Rescue team members. Hamnet made use of the Highway Amateur Radio Club's 145-7625 repeater situated in Kloof and 145-550 Simplex which gave us excellent coverage of the whole route. The route took runners through 7 Nature Conservancies, 6 river eco-systems, 3 scenic waterfalls and some of the most beautiful trails in the area.

142 runners started the 42Km race at 05H30 with 6 Water Points, whilst 437 runners started the 21Km event at 06H00 with 3 Water Points on route. The last runner crossed the finish line at 15H15.

Trail conditions were wet and slippery with cloudy/overcast and light rain persisting for the duration of the event.

I am pleased to report that no serious medical emergencies were experienced apart from the usual cuts/grazes and sprained ankles. If you didn't bleed, you weren't trying hard enough!!!! An ambulance was dispatched at 09H20 to Watsonia Place to assist a patient who was not part of the Trail Event.

Recently acquired SARL HAMNET EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS tear drop banners drew the publics attention to our activities at strategic points along the route.

This was our final sporting event for the year. I wish to extend my sincere thanks to my Hamnet KZN team for their dedication and loyal support during the year. You may take a well-earned break with your families but please remain vigilant and be available should a call for Hamnet's assistance be received during the festive period.

Upper Highway Trail Marathon Saturday 06 Dec 2026				
HAMNET-KZN Tactical Deployments Issue 3				
Position	Call Sign	Name	Start	Finish
Camp Orchards JOC	Z 95WFD	Keith	05H30	15H00
Bridle Road / Watsonia Place	Z 95VSM	Rod	08H30	14H00
Springside Road	Z 55WAY	Wayne	06H00	08H00
Acutts Drive	Z 95AJA	Alan	06H00	15H00
Abelia Road / Impangele Road	Z 55BR	Brian	08H30	11H00
Sherwood Drive / Bridle Road	Z 95WAY	Wayne	09H00	14H00
Kloof Falls Road / Impangele Place	Z 55SM	Shaun	07H30	10H30

Frequencies Primary 145.7625 Repeater Secondary 145.550 Simplex			
Please arrive at position 30 mins prior to your "Start" time.			



UHTM Deployments



UHTM 2025



UHTM START Trailer



UHTM ZS5WFD with PV49



UHTM 1 of 3 Waterfalls on the route



UHTM Alan ZS5AJA



UHTM Redline Medical Response Unit



UHTM Shaun ZS5SM



UHTM Brian ZS5BR

Welcome to VarAC Wednesday!

The weekly digital ham radio net using VarAC. Explore training resources, last week's stats and map, and learn more about operating VarAC with confidence. Check out our [News](#) for important announcements.

<https://www.varac-hamradio.com/>
<https://www.varac-hamradio.com/varac-wednesday>
<https://www.varacwednesday.net/>



In summary it's a digital communication tool using HF, FM and SAT on multi bands for Emmcomm in situations where other comms are down. Started in 2025, users can 'check-in' weekly and/or participate in activities that result in participation awards

Whacky Wednesday
Photo's sent by Odette ZS5OM



Gavin Halse ZS5GAV, Sheila friend of Bernard Yeadon ZS5BWY, Mike ZS5KM, Derik ZS5DM, Mike Boatwright ZS5M,



Dave Trezona ZS5DT and Lee D'Eathe ZS5KC

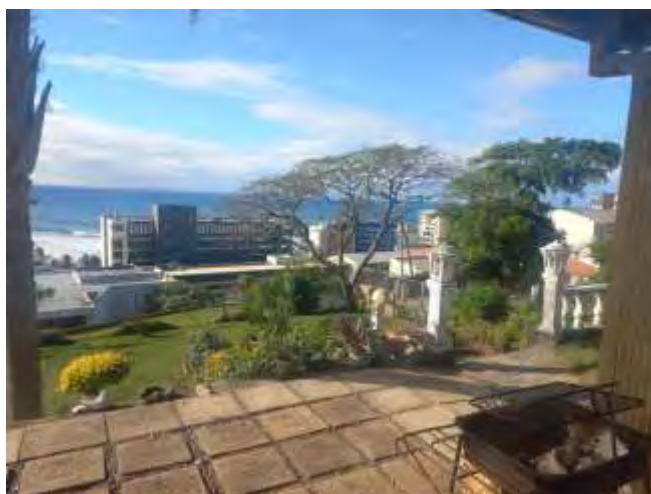


Odette ZS5OM

Cottage In Margate

Special accommodation! Radio amateurs only R200 a night p/p Margate, sleeps 8 people 5 mins walk to main beach, self-catering, has backup power and backup water.

Please contact Dave Duff ZS5CG on 064 160 7246 to book.



Bulletin Presenters



February 2026

01-Feb-26	ZS5BWY	Bernard Yeadon	0837259710
08-Feb-26	ZS5CG	Dave Duff	0641607246
15-Feb-26	ZS5LT	Pravin Kumar	0824963198
22-Feb-26	ZS5ROB	Rob Marshall	0829310970
The readers will be contacted if there are any changes.			

March 2026

01-Mar-26	ZS5SL	Selwyn Losinsky	0828042782
05-Mar-26	ZS5WFD	Keith Lowes	0826856666
15-Mar-26	ZS5BR	Brian Roodt	0828236780
22-Mar-26	ZS5BWY	Bernard Yeadon	0837259710
29-Mar-26	ZS5LT	Pravin Kumar	29-Mar-26

We need more members to assist with the Sunday bulletin reading, the more there are, the less often one has to be available to read!

Please let me know if you are available so I can add you to the list. You can either reply to this e-mail or WhatsApp me on +61478391336, Hettie ZS5BH

Birthday Book

February 2026

05-Feb	ZS5OM	Odette Schapers
08-Feb	ZR5JAS	Jasodha (Roshnie)
9-Feb	ZS5AJH	Andrew Henderson
9-Feb	ZS5PAH	Paul Harris
9-Feb	ZS5ZT	Zane Thackeray
17-Feb	ZS5SAD	Bryon Machado
19-Feb	ZS5PL	Peter Leonard
24-Feb	ZS5KIM	Kimmy Wright



March 2026

01-Mar	ZS5UGR	Ugo Surian
02-Mar	ZS5PG	Matthew Lyle
03-Mar	ZU5AI	Andrew Ingle
05-Mar	ZS5Z	Brad Phillips
15-Mar	ZS5AW	Andre Rheder
24-Mar	ZS5JW	Justin Wright
27-Mar	ZS5XT	Bruce Dunn
29-Mar	ZS5TWJ	Troy Beveridge

The Chairman, Committee and the members of HARC join together in wishing you all a very HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Calendar Events

February 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 HARC Bulletin Antique Wireless Association CW Activity Day	2	3	4	5 Log due Tomorrow - Antique Wireless Association CW Activity Day	6	7
8 HARC Bulletin HamSat-SA ZS QO-100 QSO Party	9	10	11	12 Log due Tomorrow - HamSat-SA ZS QO-100 QSO Party	13	14
15 HARC Bulletin;	16	17	18 SARL Wednesday 80 m Club Contest	19	20	21 HARC Club Meeting Armed Forces Day
22 HARC Bulletin Log due Tomorrow - SARL Wednesday 80 m Club Contest	23	24	25	26	27	28 HARC Swap Shop

Highway Amateur Radio Club Information

Banking Details

Please note: All payments by Bank Deposit or EFT. A copy of proof of payment must be sent to The Treasurer at treasurer@harc.org.za

HARC Banking Details: Capitec Bank: Account Number 2447917925. **Please quote your callsign as reference.**



Meetings

The Club holds their monthly meeting on the 3rd Saturday of the month (at 10h00 for 10h30), at the New Germany Sports Club, 2 Harvey Road, New Germany 3620. A Swap Shop is held on last Saturday of month at the New Germany Nature Reserve, access from Gilbert Drive off Mountain Ridge Road, starting at 10h30.

Visitors are welcome to attend all our functions.

The Committee holds its meetings on the second Thursday of every month starting at 19h00.

Bulletins

The Club's weekly bulletin is broadcast every Sunday morning at 07h45 on the Highway repeater(145.7625Mhz). HARC Sunday Bulletin the 40m link is activated at call in on the frequency of 7.130mhz the link is interactive [call in on 40m before 2m], the 439.025 link is also available.

The KZN Hamnet bulletin can be heard every Sunday of the month at 07h00 on the Highway repeater (145.7625Mhz), with a link onto 439.025mhz 88.5 tone [simplex].

The S.A.R.L weekly bulletin (in English) is relayed on the Durban repeater (145.650Mhz) at 08h30 on a Sunday morning.

Amateur Radio Nets

The Early Bird Net, a net of long-standing starts at 06h15 on a frequency 7.125 Mhz. and continues until 07h15.

Interest Group nets are conducted in the evenings. They are:-

Mondays	19h30	AR and WIA News line, by Dave/ZS5CG on 145.7625Mhz with a link onto 439.025mhz 88.5 tone [simplex]
Tuesdays	19h30	DMR-ZA Net currently hosted by Brian/ZS5BR
Wednesday	19h30	Hamnet Indaba hosted by Keith/ZS5WFD on 145.7625Mhz with a link onto 439.025mhz 88.5 tone [simplex]
Thursdays	19h30	4 Metre Net – You can find us on 70.200 Mhz FM with a link onto the 145.7625 repeater, and onto the 439.025mhz link with a tone of 88.5
Saturdays	18h00	World DMR Net Call in, on Talk Group 91
Sundays 06h00		See <u>Amateur Radio Nets</u> above.
Sundays 07h45		HARC Sunday Bulletin + see <u>Bulletins</u> above.

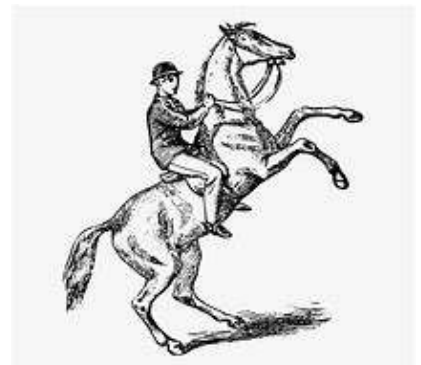
Snippets: Talk groups of interest: DMR, Echolink & Zello

1. Talk Group 3150174 World Wide Ragchew Net, also on Zello Ch: GBZN-Repeater, on Sundays at 16h00 UTC
2. Talk Group 6558 Western Cape Hamnet Net, or on echolink node ZS1DCC-R, on the 2nd & 3rd + Wednesdays of the month at 19h30.

Club Committee: harc@harc.org.za; committee@harc.org.za

Chairman	Dave Duff, ZS5CG
Vice Chairman	Alan Aitken, ZS5AJA
Secretary	Caroline Smith secretary@harc.org.za
Treasurer	Richard Venter ZS5RVR treasurer@harc.org.za
Members	

Financial Certifier	Chris Williams ZS5W
---------------------	---------------------



Portfolios: The following are to be contacted with regards to all the following portfolios

Portfolios:

Repeater Custodians
Repeater Licenses
Website & Email Infrastructure
Contests
Technical
RAE
PRO (Image)
Bulletins
HF assessors for RAE
QSL Manager
Meetings Organiser
Club Constitution
Hotline Editor
Assisting DSTAR/DMR
Club History
Club Database
SARL Liaison
Bank Signatories
RAE Examination Invigilator
Events

Name:

Dave Duff, ZS5CG, Sub Committee Repeaters
Secretary / Treasurer
Brad Phillips ZS5Z webmaster@harc.org.za
Keith ZS5WFD
Dave Duff, ZS5CG, Rob ZS5ROB
Committee

Hettie ZS5BH
Keith ZS5WFD, Dave ZS5CG, Pravin ZS5LT
Keith ZS5WFD
Secretary
Committee
Hettie ZS5BH hotline@harc.org.za +61 478 391 336
Brian Roodt ZS5BR
Committee
Secretary / Treasurer
Secretary
Keith ZS5WFD, Bruce ZS5XT
Rob ZS5ROB



HARC Repeater Information

VHF Beacon: 144.420MHz, 20W, 6-Element Quad, Pointing to JHB Div6, QTH of ZS5KT: KG50ME - Not Operational

APRS: 144.800 MHz, ZS0PMB-7 is the Durban-Bluff based Digipeater - Not Operational

DMR Repeater: Kloof UHF Repeater – 438.200 MHz (Rptr Tx) - 7.6 MHz Split
Also chat on DMR 432.500 & 432.525 Simplex - Operational

VHF Repeater: Kloof Hillcrest: 145.7625rx 145.1625tx Tone 88.5 - Operational

UHF Simplex Link Durban Central: 439.025 MHz Tone 88.5 - Operational

Links to Kloof Hillcrest 145.7625 Repeater for the Greater Durban Area

Botha's Hill 4M Link 70.200 MHz Simplex No Tone Links to 145.7625 Repeater - Operational

Durban Repeater: Based at Bluff 145.650 MHz RX 145.050TX Tone 88.5 - Operational

Full Duplex HF to VHF Link Operational for our Sunday Bulletins at 07H40 and Emergency Communications usually on 7.145 MHz
This link is operational through the Kloof Hillcrest Repeater - Operational

Internet Web Site Addresses

South African Radio League: <https://mysarl.org.za/>

Highway Amateur Radio Club: <http://www.harc.org.za> The Webmaster is Brad Phillips (ZS5Z)

HARC Online Swop Shop: <https://harc.org.za/swopshop/>

E-Mail Address of the Club. harc@harc.org.za

HARC Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/298581387576/>

