

# Ten things to do, with a handheld radio

July 2018

K Barnsdale ZL3KB, Alan Chapman ZL3GX

This series of articles are intended to give the newcomer to ham radio an insight into some of the things you can do with a handheld dual band radio.

## 6: Awards and Contests

The competitive spirit will creep into every hobby, and Ham Radio is no exception, many amateur radio operators take part in regular contests and awards throughout the year. In a contest, there will usually be just one winner, but award programs have no winners, just certificates to treasure.

Note, the awards information on the websites can be out of date, and confirmation of requirements should be sought before embarking on the accomplishment.

### Contests

Radio contests are normally designed around worldwide participation on HF bands, so unfortunately a low power handheld would not be very competitive when up against the big stations. FM is still a valid mode in contests, but is rarely used as SSB can be received at greater distances.

### Awards

These are not so competitive as contests, but offer formal recognition of your achievements. Some awards set challenges, such as making contacts with all regions of NZ, or maybe taking part in an annual activity setup by NZART each year; one year it was a "Worked all railway stations" fun activity.

### *Summits On The Air*

If you like tramping, you can try the SOTA program, and operate from as many hilltop summits as possible. There are awards for "activators" who ascend to the summits and "chasers" who either operate from home, a local hilltop or are even activators on other summits.

SOTA is operational in nearly one hundred countries around the world, each with its own Association which defines the recognised SOTA summits within that Association. Each summit earns the activators and chasers a score which is related to the height of the summit. Certificates are available for various

scores, leading to the prestigious "Mountain Goat" and "Shack Sloth" trophies. An Honour Roll for Activators and Chasers is maintained at the SOTA online database.

Activating a summit is usually done with HF SSB radios, but can be achieved with an FM handheld, but a Yagi antenna, and even an amplifier, would be a great advantage.



## **New Zealand Awards**

Some of the awards that would be suitable for an FM hand held are:

### **Christchurch Award**

Christchurch amateurs to work 25 Christchurch stations; For the rest of NZ amateurs-15 stations; A valid Christchurch station is any station that is operating from within the metropolitan area of Christchurch.

Cost: ZL and VK NZ\$5.00. Applications and logs to Christchurch Amateur Radio Club Awards Manager, PO Box 1733, Christchurch Mail Centre, Christchurch 8140.

### **WAZL (Worked All ZL)**

Requires contacts with 45 different branches from around the country.

### **WAD (Worked All Districts)**

Requires one contact from each call district. (ZL1, ZL2, ZL3, ZL4) A ZL1 must be in the ZL1 district etc.

### **ZL3 Award**

Fifty contacts in the ZL3 district.

### **National Parks Award**

Requires contacts with two National Parks.

### **OTC (Old Timers Club award)**

Requires contacts with ten different OTC members, you need to record their OTC number.

### **NZWARO VHF/UHF award (Woman's Amateur Radio Operators)**

Requires contacts with ten different WARO members.



## More information

Award certificates normally cost \$5. Some rules may say less but send \$5 as the cost has gone up since the rules have been printed on the web.

- The awards page of the NZART website is the best to get New Zealand information.  
<http://www.nzart.org.nz/activities/awards/>
- A general page on NZART awards  
[https://www.nzart.org.nz/assets/awards/nzart\\_awards.pdf](https://www.nzart.org.nz/assets/awards/nzart_awards.pdf)
- The contests page here  
<http://www.nzart.org.nz/activities/contests/>  
and NZART contest dates are here:  
<http://www.nzart.org.nz/activities/contests/vhf-uhf-shf-ehf-contest-dates/>
- Summits on the air information  
<http://zl-sota.org/>