

The International Morse Preservation Society



VK2FDU
FISTS: 9610
Courtesy At All Times

FISTS Down Under Inc.

ZL6FF
FISTS: 9600
Accuracy Transcends Speed



Members Newsletter – 4th Quarter 2020

Shack photo: VK3QB. FlexRadio with VizKey bug, Schurr paddle and VK2DLF key



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FISTS Down Under Sked Page <http://n8fq.org/sked/index.php?board=fdu>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/349974226381281>

Recommended FISTS calling frequencies (MHz):

1.808	3.528	7.028	10.118	14.058	18.085
21.058	24.908	28.058			

Welcome to the 4th quarter 2020 edition of FISTS Down Under Newsletter. It has been a rather unique year and one very few of us will forget. It began with the devastating bush fires and then dovetailed into the whole new world of Covid-19. I hope that all our members, their families and friends remain safe and healthy.

It has also been a year of increased activity in Amateur Radio. Anecdotal evidence from the AR retailers suggests sales are up by at least 200%, and many old and new amateurs alike have been frustrated by the lack of readily available new and second-hand equipment.

Listening around the bands confirms far more activity... both locally and DX. This is good news for our hobby.

And if Facebook postings (and ordering delays) are anything to go by, the folks who manufacture Morse Code keys, paddles and bugs have been doing a roaring trade.

Thanks Arthur VK2ASB - FISTS Weekly Net

On behalf of the committee and all members, I'd like to extend a very special thank-you to long-time member Arthur VK2ASB. Arthur has been hosting the FISTS Down Under weekly net every Tuesday on 80m for over four years!

Arthur will continue to check into the net and remains active, so please give him a call if you hear him on air.

Thanks Michael VK2CCW for the QRS nets and picking up the weekly net baton

Michael is another stalwart who enjoys helping out fellow Morse Code enthusiasts and aspirants. He is a highly accomplished op and always happy to share his experience with others. And he's quite often found floating around on 40m for a day-time chat – near 7.025MHz.

Don't forget the FISTS net every Tuesday at 0900UTC and QRS Practice Net on Wednesday's, also at 0900UTC. Both nets are on 3528kHz.

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Respecting everyone's interest in Morse Code

Using Morse code means different things to different people. FISTS Down Under has three simple goals:

- * Further the use of CW (Morse Code)
- * Engender friendship among members
- * Encourage newcomers to use CW (Morse Code)

FISTS Down Under is committed to these principles. We will support and promote all aspects of the hobby that fit these criteria. These include:

- Slow (QRS) Morse Code;
- Contesting;
- Chasing awards;
- Chasing DX;
- Ragchewing;
- 599 tu QSOs;
- Use of paddles, keyboards, straight keys, side swipers, bugs; and,
- Constructing equipment

in a friendly, collegiate environment.

Some people limit their activities to contesting, keyboards and the hundreds of hours that go into building a competitive station. Many of these people are extremely skilled CW operators and can copy weak signals and fast code under extremely difficult conditions. Others prefer the more traditional straight key conversational QSO.

Others use Morse code as a way of celebrating the conclusion of a construction project. At least one member is a keen kit builder and probably spends more time on the soldering iron than the Morse key; but Morse Code is still his favourite mode.

Some members only use paddles. Some use a combination of keyboards, paddles, keys and bugs.... but... nothing copies Morse Code like the human brain.

Recently I was enjoying a QSO with a YB1 station on 20m. I was using my paddle and he was using a straight key. It turns out he was a SKCC member and wanted to exchange numbers.... So, I quickly switched over to the Begali and completed the QSO (including exchange of SKCC numbers) with a straight key.

From time to time I hear people lamenting “we’ll lose our skills”.... I’m not so sure of that.... Have a listen around the bands; check out the international FISTS Chapters, SKCC, FOC and CW Ops clubs and have a look at how many straight keys, bugs and paddles are being sold by Begali, Kent, Vibroplex and others. Check out all the Social Media chatter, and have a listen most evenings. Morse Code remains a very popular mode.

We need to embrace and encourage anyone interested in Morse Code. And if they wish, develop their skills to use a straight key, paddle or bug. We cannot and should not shun newcomers because they don’t comply with an individual narrow view of what Morse Code is... or isn’t.

Exclusion, elitism, and intolerance are the quickest ways to drive people away from our hobby and see our collective skills and numbers decline.

FISTS Down Under is committed to an inclusive and friendly environment.

Finally, on behalf of the committee, we hope all members and friends have a safe, healthy and enjoyable festive season and good wishes for 2021.

73, Chris VK3QB #9085

President, FDU

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Future editions of FISTS Newsletter

The FISTS Newsletter will continue as a quarterly publication. What would you like to see in your newsletter? Please send the secretary an email with your questions or ideas.

And, as always, we welcome stories about your radio station, Morse Code paraphernalia and operating experiences. Anything radio related really....

secretary@fdu.org.au

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Secondary access to 60m not supported by ACMA

Unfortunately, our national efforts to gain secondary access to the 60m band have been unsuccessful.

On 7th December 2020, ACMA released their Decision.

“Submissions supporting Option 4, which opposed amateur use of the band, were received from the Department of Defence and 2 others. Defence’s public submission did not support an allocation, on the basis that:

... this frequency band is already experiencing spectrum congestion, which adversely affects critical Defence capabilities. Therefore, Defence cannot accept further increase of spectrum congestion by the introduction of Amateur services.

The Department of Defence also provided non-public information to the ACMA to further support their position.”

.....

“In considering spectrum use, the ACMA considers the objects of the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*. This includes maximising the overall public benefit derived from the use of the radio spectrum and, of particular importance in this matter given Defence usage, making adequate provision for use by agencies involved in the defence or national security of Australia.

In balancing the existing uses of the 5351.5–5366.5 kHz band against the impacts of introducing use by the amateur service, the ACMA has decided not to support amateur use in the band. “

In summary, Defense interests trump secondary access by the Amateur Radio sector. You can read the full details here:

<https://www.acma.gov.au/consultations/2020-05/possible-use-53515-53665-khz-band-amateur-service-consultation-132020>

Thanks to the Radio Amateur Society of Australia for this news item.

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FISTS Down Under Facebook

If you’re on Social Media but haven’t yet joined our Facebook page, click this link and join up.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/349974226381281>

It’s a great way to exchange info with fellow members and see what others are up to... we maintain a collegiate environment here as well, so please read the rules in the “About” section.

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Reverse Beacon Network

REVERSE BEACON NETWORK

[welcome](#) [main](#) [dx spots](#) [nodes](#) [FT8](#) [downloads](#) [about](#) [contact us](#)

Members will recall the committee established a Grants programme earlier in the year to encourage clubs to expand the Reverse Beacon Network in VK. There was only one dedicated Reverse Beacon in VK, VK4CT located in Queensland.

We're pleased to report that two successful applications have now been deployed and are up and running. The Northern Corridor Amateur Radio Group were first cab off the rank with VK6ANC. And just in the last few weeks, the Radio Amateur Society of Australia have launched VK3RASA.

FISTS Down Under is proud to have been able to contribute \$500 towards each of these projects and committee feels it reflects our commitment to supporting the code whilst leveraging the latest technology.

Many different interest groups will benefit from these Reverse Beacons.

These two new Reverse Beacons represent a significant expansion in the VK RBN footprint, with three beacons now online – one in southern VK6, one in VK4 and one in southern VK3 – providing fairly good coverage across our continent.

The Grants Programme still has funding for at least one more application, and we'd like to see another Beacon either in VK5, VK7 or VK2... so, please encourage your local club to get involved.

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia's e-magazine QTC (Nov/Dec edition) will have a detailed article about their solution and the RBN technology in general... so, stand by for their next edition.

www.qtcmag.com

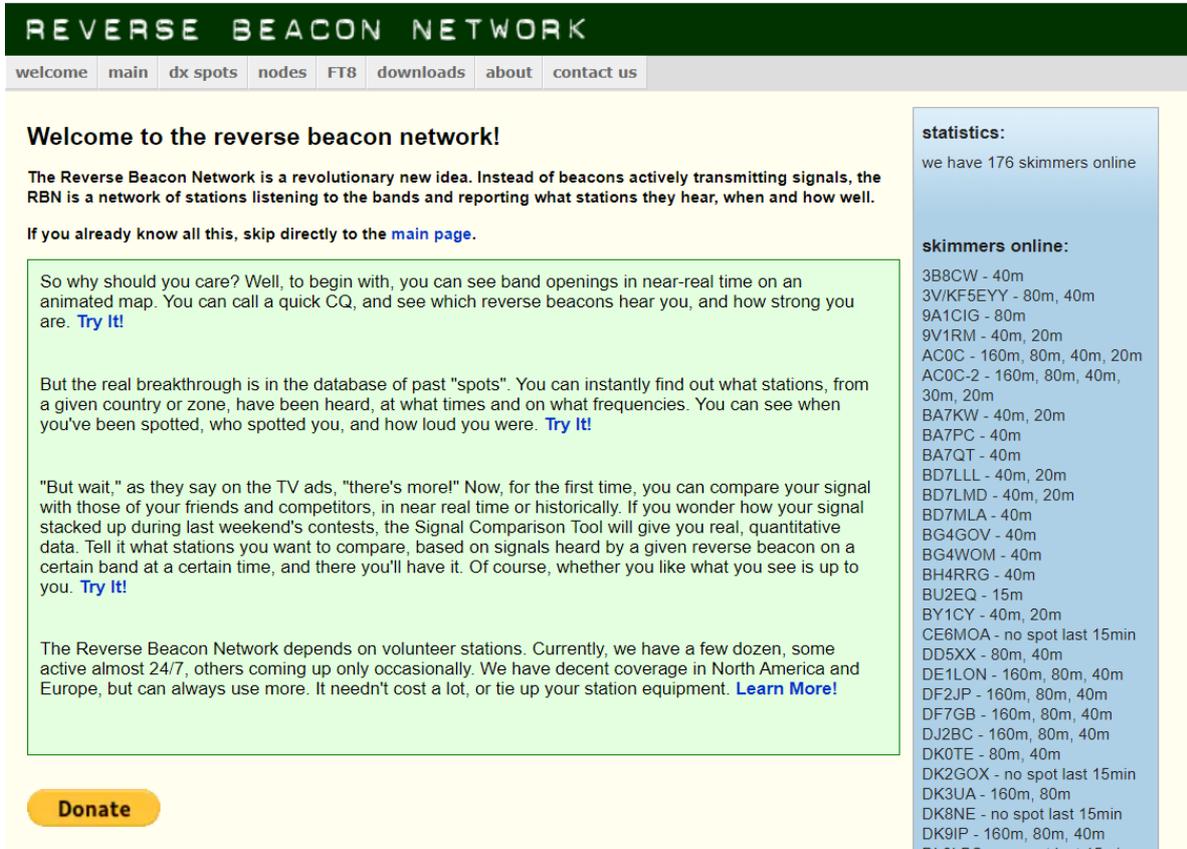
We've already received positive feedback on the new RBs in VK6 and VK3.

"Happily finding that the RASA reverse beacon frequently reports my signals. Well done. Another successful contribution to the amateur radio.

Thanks, 73, Patrick VK2PN"

In the meantime, here's a quick guide how to access RBN online and monitor your preferred RB.

1. Head to www.reversebeacon.net



REVERSE BEACON NETWORK

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Welcome to the reverse beacon network!

The Reverse Beacon Network is a revolutionary new idea. Instead of beacons actively transmitting signals, the RBN is a network of stations listening to the bands and reporting what stations they hear, when and how well.

If you already know all this, skip directly to the [main page](#).

So why should you care? Well, to begin with, you can see band openings in near-real time on an animated map. You can call a quick CQ, and see which reverse beacons hear you, and how strong you are. [Try It!](#)

But the real breakthrough is in the database of past "spots". You can instantly find out what stations, from a given country or zone, have been heard, at what times and on what frequencies. You can see when you've been spotted, who spotted you, and how loud you were. [Try It!](#)

"But wait," as they say on the TV ads, "there's more!" Now, for the first time, you can compare your signal with those of your friends and competitors, in near real time or historically. If you wonder how your signal stacked up during last weekend's contests, the Signal Comparison Tool will give you real, quantitative data. Tell it what stations you want to compare, based on signals heard by a given reverse beacon on a certain band at a certain time, and there you'll have it. Of course, whether you like what you see is up to you. [Try It!](#)

The Reverse Beacon Network depends on volunteer stations. Currently, we have a few dozen, some active almost 24/7, others coming up only occasionally. We have decent coverage in North America and Europe, but can always use more. It needn't cost a lot, or tie up your station equipment. [Learn More!](#)

[Donate](#)

statistics:
we have 176 skimmers online

skimmers online:

- 3B8CW - 40m
- 3V/KF5EYY - 80m, 40m
- 9A1CIG - 80m
- 9V1RM - 40m, 20m
- AC0C - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- AC0C-2 - 160m, 80m, 40m, 30m, 20m
- BA7KW - 40m, 20m
- BA7PC - 40m
- BA7QT - 40m
- BD7LLL - 40m, 20m
- BD7LMD - 40m, 20m
- BD7MLA - 40m
- BG4GOV - 40m
- BG4WOM - 40m
- BH4RRG - 40m
- BU2EQ - 15m
- BY1CY - 40m, 20m
- CE6MOA - no spot last 15min
- DD5XX - 80m, 40m
- DE1LON - 160m, 80m, 40m
- DF2JP - 160m, 80m, 40m
- DF7GB - 160m, 80m, 40m
- DJ2BC - 160m, 80m, 40m
- DK0TE - 80m, 40m
- DK2GOX - no spot last 15min
- DK3UA - 160m, 80m
- DK8NE - no spot last 15min
- DK9IP - 160m, 80m, 40m
- DL1DR - no spot last 15min

2. By scrolling down the list of online beacons on the right hand side of the screen, you'll be able to find the VK RBs.



- VE6JY - 160m
- VE6WZ - 160m, 40m, 30m, 20m
- VE7CC - 40m, 30m, 20m, 17m
- VK3RASA - 20m
- VK4CT - 20m, 15m
- VK6ANC - no spot last 15min
- VY0ERC - no spot last 15min
- W1NT-2 - 160m, 80m, 40m
- W1NT-6 - 160m, 80m, 60m, 40m, 30m
- W2AXR - 160m, 80m, 40m, 30m, 20m
- W2LB - 40m

- Click on the “Main” menu item at the top of the screen and then click on “search spot by callsign” – highlighted in yellow below.

REVERSE BEACON NETWORK

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The RBN map is coming back!

A beta version of RBN maps is available for general use at: beta.reversebeacon.net. It now has the ability to filter on band, mode, callsign, dxcc, itu zone, cq zone, and continent. It also supports legacy filtering URLs, for example beta.reversebeacon.net/dxsd1/dxsd1.php?f=45, which indicates RTTY mode.

options:
[show/hide](#)

[show/hide my last filters](#)

no filter selected, showing all spots rows to show: 50

search spot by callsign

de	dx	freq	cq/dx	snr	speed	time
NN3RP	W4E	7025.5	CW CQ	4 dB	14 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
OE9GHV	W2NRA	7029.0	CW CQ	10 dB	17 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
W9XG	K8JD	3550.0	CW CQ	11 dB	13 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
W9XG	W2NRA	7029.0	CW CQ	7 dB	17 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
W9XG	N5DY	3528.0	CW CQ	8 dB	22 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
K9LC	K8JD	3550.0	CW CQ	12 dB	13 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
WS3W	K8JD	3550.0	CW CQ	15 dB	13 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
W3UA	CT1BQH	7022.0	CW CQ	13 dB	28 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
DO4DXA	SN5O	3555.0	CW CQ	8 dB	15 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
K3PA	W2NRA	7029.0	CW CQ	8 dB	17 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
WA7LNW	KW9M	10103.0	CW CQ	9 dB	24 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
N5RZ	KT8Z	3555.5	CW CQ	4 dB	20 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
N5RZ	KW9M	10103.0	CW CQ	26 dB	25 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
N5RZ	N5DY	3528.0	CW CQ	28 dB	26 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
OE9GHV/9	W2NRA	7029.0	CW CQ	10 dB	17 wpm	2348z 06 Dec
N0OI	AA7FV	18077.2	CW CQ	7 dB	17 wpm	2348z 06 Dec

news
RBN blog: [stay tuned!](#)

we have 177 skimmers online

skimmers online:

3B8CW - 40m
3V/KF5EYY - 80m, 40m
9A1CIG - 80m
9V1RM - 40m, 20m
AC0C - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
AC0C-2 - 160m, 80m, 40m, 30m, 20m
BA7KW - 40m, 20m
BA7PC - 40m
BA7QT - 40m
BD7LLL - 40m, 20m
BD7LMD - 40m, 20m
BD7MLA - 40m
BG4GOV - 40m
BG4WOM - 40m
BH4RRG - 40m
BU2EQ - 15m
BY1CY - 40m, 20m
CE6MOA - no spot last 15min
DD5XX - 80m, 40m
DE1LON - 160m, 80m, 40m
DF2JP - 160m, 80m, 40m
DF7GB - 160m, 80m, 40m
DJ2BC - 160m, 80m, 40m
DK0TF - 80m, 40m

- Enter the preferred callsign/identifier – in this example we’ve chosen VK3RASA, and select the “de” filter.

REVERSE BEACON NETWORK

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options:
[show/hide](#)

[show/hide my last filters](#)

no filter selected, showing all spots rows to show: 50

search spot by callsign

search callsign: DX DE

wildcard * allowed

de	dx	freq	cq/dx	snr	speed	time
9V1RM	JH1VIG	14027.0	CW CQ	8 dB	21 wpm	2350z 06 Dec
N5RZ	KI6KU	14015.5	CW CQ	24 dB	16 wpm	2350z 06 Dec
AC0C-2	KI6KU	14015.5	CW CQ	6 dB	15 wpm	2350z 06 Dec
K2PO/7	W4E	7025.5	CW CQ	7 dB	15 wpm	2350z 06 Dec
K2PO/7	KI6KU	14015.5	CW CQ	33 dB	16 wpm	2350z 06 Dec
KC4YVA	N4QR	1816.0	CW CQ	14 dB	12 wpm	2350z 06 Dec
K9LC	W2NRA	7029.0	CW CQ	27 dB	16 wpm	2350z 06 Dec
W4KAZ	N4QR	1816.0	CW CQ	20 dB	12 wpm	2350z 06 Dec

news
RBN blog: [stay tuned!](#)

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3V/KF5EYY - 160m, 80m, 40m
9A1CIG - 80m
9V1RM - 20m, 17m
AC0C - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
AC0C-2 - 160m, 80m, 40m, 30m, 20m
BA7KW - 40m, 20m
BA7PC - 40m
BA7QT - 40m
BD7LLL - 20m
BD7LMD - 40m, 20m
BD7MLA - no spot last 15min
BG4GOV - 40m
BG4WOM - 40m
BH4RRG - no spot last 15min
BU2EQ - 15m
BY1CY - 40m, 20m

- Click on search and the screen will refresh with the latest spots being heard by VK3RASA. For more information float your mouse pointer over an entry

REVERSE BEACON NETWORK

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show/hide my last filters

showing spots for spotter call: VK3RASA rows to show: 50

search spot by callsign

de	dx	freq	cq/dx	snr	speed	time
VK3RASA	ZM4T	14001.9	CW CQ	9 dB	28 wpm	0457z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL1TM	14052.2	CW CQ	28 dB	24 wpm	0456z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	IR4E	14033.4	CW CQ	6 dB	27 wpm	0455z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL2AGY	14003.1	CW CQ	6 dB	25 wpm	0455z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL3X	14028.6	CW CQ	14 dB	26 wpm	0453z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZS1C	14005.4	CW CQ	6 dB	26 wpm	0452z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZM1M	14010.0	CW CQ	8 dB	25 wpm	0452z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL4YY	14068.4	CW CQ	4 dB	21 wpm	0451z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL1IF	14027.1	CW CQ	16 dB	29 wpm	0449z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	BA4MY	14034.9	CW CQ	3 dB	28 wpm	0448z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZM4T	14000.9	CW CQ	11 dB	28 wpm	0447z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL1TM	14052.2	CW CQ	6 dB	23 wpm	0446z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZM1M	14010.0	CW CQ	11 dB	25 wpm	0445z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL2AGY	14027.7	CW CQ	8 dB	25 wpm	0444z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	VK2IA	14023.8	CW CQ	22 dB	32 wpm	0444z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	IR4E	14033.4	CW CQ	11 dB	30 wpm	0440z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL3X	14028.9	CW CQ	13 dB	26 wpm	0439z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZM1A	14011.9	CW CQ	17 dB	28 wpm	0439z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL1IF	14027.1	CW CQ	8 dB	31 wpm	0439z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	S57DX	14025.0	CW CQ	3 dB	34 wpm	0439z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZS2DL	14006.9	CW CQ	7 dB	29 wpm	0437z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZM4T	14000.9	CW CQ	2 dB	28 wpm	0437z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	VK3GK	21019.3	CW CQ	16 dB	28 wpm	0436z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL2AGY	14027.7	CW CQ	6 dB	25 wpm	0434z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	VK2IA	14023.8	CW CQ	15 dB	30 wpm	0434z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	IR4E	14002.9	CW CQ	8 dB	26 wpm	0430z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL1TM	14052.2	CW CQ	2 dB	24 wpm	0429z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL1IF	14026.9	CW CQ	6 dB	30 wpm	0429z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZM1A	14011.9	CW CQ	23 dB	28 wpm	0429z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	IR4E	14002.9	CW CQ	8 dB	28 wpm	0429z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL3X	14028.9	CW CQ	13 dB	26 wpm	0428z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL1IF	14032.4	CW CQ	9 dB	30 wpm	0427z 29 Nov
VK3RASA	ZL2AGY	14027.7	CW CQ	7 dB	25 wpm	0424z 29 Nov

options:
[show/hide](#)

Do you enjoy the RBN?
 Please consider supporting us!

Donate

we have 189 skimmers online

skimmers online:

- 3B8CW - 20m, 15m, 10m
- 3V/KF5EYY - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- 9A1CIG - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- 9V1RM - 20m, 15m, 10m
- AA4VV - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- AC0C - no spot last 15min
- AC0C-2 - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- BA7KW - 20m, 15m, 10m
- BA7PC - 20m, 15m, 10m
- BA7QT - 20m, 15m, 10m
- BD1RX - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m, 15m, 10m
- BD7LLL - 20m
- BD7LMD - 40m, 20m, 15m, 10m
- BD7MLA - 20m, 15m, 10m
- BG4GOV - 20m, 15m, 10m
- BG4WOM - 20m, 15m, 10m
- BG8PA - no spot last 15min
- BH4RRG - 20m, 15m, 10m
- BU2EQ - 20m, 15m
- CE6MOA - 40m, 20m, 15m
- CT7AHV - no spot last 15min
- CT7ANO - 160m, 40m
- DD0VS - 80m
- DD5XX - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- DF2JP - 160m, 80m, 40m
- DF4XX - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- DJ2BC - 160m, 80m, 40m, 30m, 20m
- DK0TE - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- DK2GOX - no spot last 15min
- DK3UA - 160m, 80m
- DK8NE - 6m
- DK9IP - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- DL0LBS - no spot last 15min
- DL0PF - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- DL1AXX - 40m
- DL3DTH - 160m, 80m, 40m, 20m
- DL5RMH - no spot last 15min

You're away! The RBN resource is a very useful tool for analysing propagation paths and assessing your station's performance. Even if you're just wondering where you are being heard... check out RBN.



Zoom Sessions on using RBN



Would you like to join us for a short online Zoom presentation and Q&A session on how to use the Reverse Beacon Network? FISTS Down Under and RASA will host a series of Zoom sessions over the coming two week – we'll run as many or as few as required.

If you'd like to join just drop us an email with your preferred date.

secretary@fdu.org.au

Zoom Sessions – Using Reverse Beacon Network

17th December 2020 at 0900UTC

22nd December 2020 at 0900UTC

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Clublog Leagues Table

Do you enjoy chasing DX and a little bit of friendly competition? If so, why not upload your log to Clublog.org and get in on the action.

With thanks to our FISTS friends in the UK, we have a nice extract from Clublog just for us!



FISTS CW Club

Promoting Morse Code for 33 years 1987-2020
 The European Chapter serves members in Europe and the UK

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frequencies
members area
activities & awards
resources
links
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Home > DXCC League

DXCC League for FISTS CW Club

FISTS Chapter: Data from [Club Log's DXCC Leagues](#), 06 December 2020

Rank	Callsign	Slots	160m	80m	60m	40m	30m	20m	17m	15m	12m	10m	6m	4m	2m	70cm	23cm	13cm
1	VK3HJ	207	29	21		46	36	42	21	11			1					
2	ZL3PAH	195		13		64	20	86	4	6		2						
3	ZL2AIM	132		3	1	81	20	22	2	2			1					
4	VK7CW	76	3	5		12	15	23	13	3	1	1						
5	VK3QB	60	3	14		27	14	1					1					
6	VK3VB	53	1	3		24	8	10		5		2						

Source

The data is from [Club Log's DXCC Leagues](#) using:

Name	Value
Mode	CW
Rank	by slots
Rank by band	Totals
Bands	160m - 13cm excluding 8m and 5m
Entities	Current and deleted
Worked/Confirmed	Worked
Date Filter	2020
Filter by	FISTS - FISTS CW Club



The list is downloaded from Club Log once per day. The 'Slots' column contains the number of DXCC entities for each band added together. Only callsigns known to belong to current members are included.

Visit the link below for more information.

<https://fists.co.uk/dxccleague.aspx?c=du&fbclid=IwAR3tiwr1TtysBwD1J2r-r5qi ygFQel7ISLPNiX5tDdCNDv3gkRSNiXWuryE>



On-air – the higher bands are waking up

Some very positive signs Cycle 25 is waking up. Members have reported some good openings on the higher HF bands...with solid openings to EU on 17 and 15 metres... even ten and six metres are showing some activity. The SFI has regularly been above 100. So.... watch the Clusters (www.dxsummit.fi), www.reversebeacon.net and spin the dial to the higher bands.

The ARRL CW 10m contest is this weekend... have a listen.

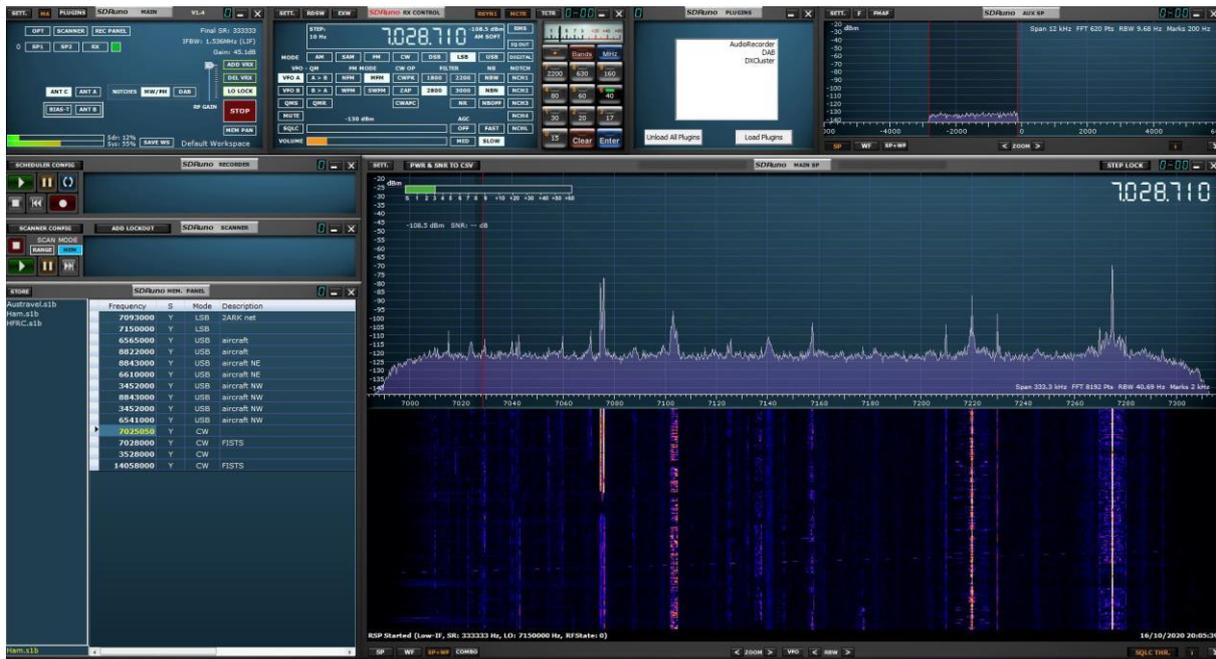
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FISTS Down Under Web site

Our new web site was up and running nicely. Regrettably, it's down and time constraints have delayed its recovery. We're hoping to get it back online over the coming few weeks. Stay tuned for updates.

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SDR and CW



If you have been looking at the newer rigs with colourful scopes, or maybe even a Flex or similar, but you are not ready to make the plunge all is not lost - you can simply add a Panadapter to your current radio.

Why would you want to add a Panadapter? Quite often I tune around the bands, hear nothing and turn the volume down or the radio off. It is amazing how often now under the same conditions you see the signals and the band is actually alive. I have just finished a QSO with Mexico on 40m CW and only found him because I saw a weaker signal on the Panadapter.

You can run the SDR independently from the radio or synched. When synched you just click on a signal on the display and radio is straight there. Normally when doing this I listen through the TS590S. If you are working away on 40m but want to check conditions on 30m you can unsynch the SDR leaving the radio on 40m and listen on 30m with the SDR. I have had the SDR running on multiple bands at once - pretty much if you think "can it do xxx", the answer is probably yes.

While you can tap into the IF in the radio and run the panapter of that, I am using mine in the antenna line, via a relay switch. The SDR I am using is from SDRPlay, and the model of this one is RSPdx. The entry model is the RSP1A. I use the software available from SDRPLAY website called SDRUNO. This seems to have heaps of features, and lots of updates going on as well. There is also spectrum analyser software which seems to work very well. SDRPLAY have lots of YouTube video's on different aspects of using the SDRPLAY SDR's.

Now for a word of warning - you need to have a decent switching setup if you are using the SDR in your transmit antenna feed, or into a different antenna that is in the near field of your transmit antenna. I am on my second SDR, after I had a failure in my switch while playing on 30m FT8 - end result was a burst of 50w data straight into the SDR.

The good news is I could not recommend this enough as it truly transforms your HF experience.

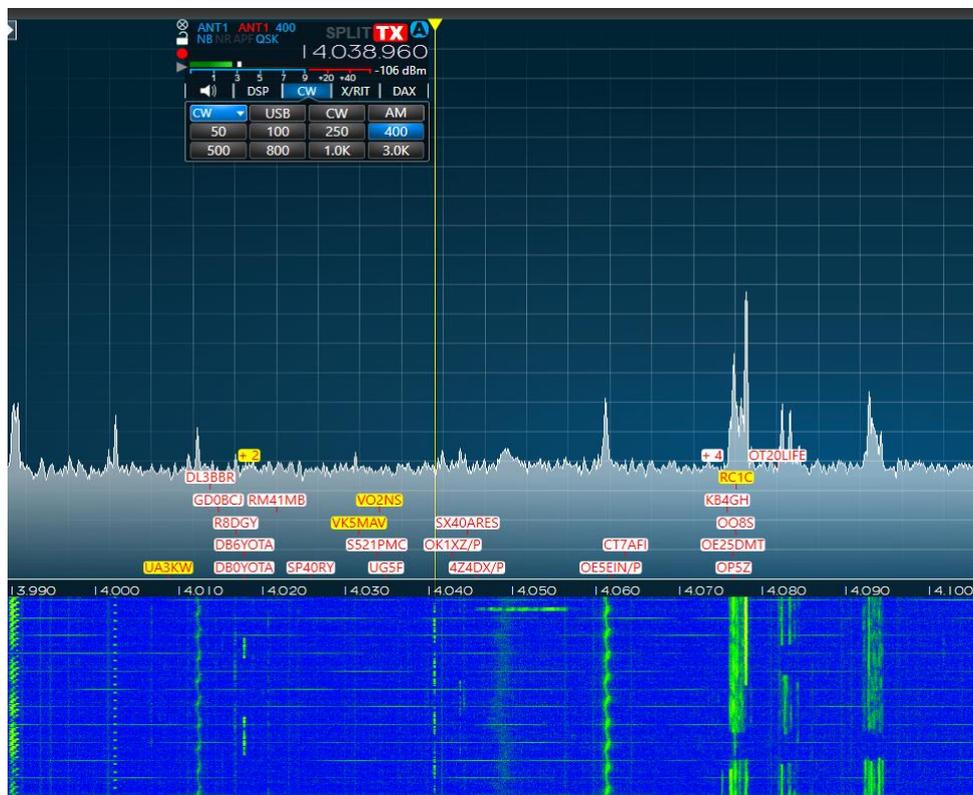
73 Phil VK3VB

(courtesy QTC Magazine)

Editor's note: Phil is happy to help people interested in delving into SDR – just drop him an email secretary@fdu.org.au

I recently upgraded from an ICOM 7610 to the Flexradio 6400. Phil's comments ring true. SDR radios and panadaptors add a whole new dimension to listening around the bands. Below is a screen shot illustrating how the SDR integrates spots from the various networks – if I see a station I am interested in, I can just click on the callsign and the radio will QSY to that frequency.

The tech even decodes and reports on digital signals... seen below the FT8 and JS8 activity. (14.076-14.080MHz)



Upcoming events

Bug Off! (FDU Event)

20th December 2020 – 0900UTC through 1500UTC

80/40m bug & straight key session (centre around 3528 and 7028kHz but look in the CW segments for activity)

Get on-air with your key/bug. Exchange FISTS numbers where possible.

Entry: Summary of your log, commentary of band conditions and contacts, description of your station & antenna and photos of your bug or key. Send entries to secretary@fdu.org.au

ARRL Straight Key Night

1st Jan 2021 0000UTC through 2359UTC

Objective: This 24-hour event is not a contest; rather it is a day dedicated to celebrating our CW heritage. Participants are encouraged to get on the air and simply make enjoyable, conversational CW QSOs. The use of straight keys or bugs to send CW is preferred. There are no points scored and all who participate are winners.

<http://www.arrl.org/straight-key-night>

FISTS Down Under AX Activity Day

26th January 2021 – Australia Day

Use the AX prefix on higher bands 15 and 10 metres only – 0100UTC through 0900UTC.

1 point for VK

4 points for DX

If you'd like to activate AX2FDU for the day, please contact secretary@fdu.org.au

Entry: Summary of your log, claimed score, commentary of band conditions, description of your station & antenna and photos of your station. Send entries to secretary@fdu.org.au

Other CW Contests

Keep an eye on this web-site for upcoming CW contests.

https://contestcalendar.com/contestcal_cw.html



Fighting QRM



It's something we all face. We regularly see people calling for help on Facebook, and even on-air. Some interesting cases have been reported by members in recent times.

Visit www.qrm.guru for loads of useful references, tools and ideas to help you fight your local QRM, including:

- Tips 'n tricks for locating the noise
- Using Phasing techniques to eliminate local noise with commercial and kit offerings
- Suppressing noise with ferrites
- Filtering noise
- Removing the source of the noise
- Good housekeeping to stop problems before they start

QRM Guru is the work of hams from all over VK... and some great case studies from international sources. The resource has been created by local VK hams and is supported by the Radio Amateur Society of Australia.

www.vkradioamateurs.org

www.qrm.guru

If you need help, you can email the QRM Guru team.

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Seen around the web

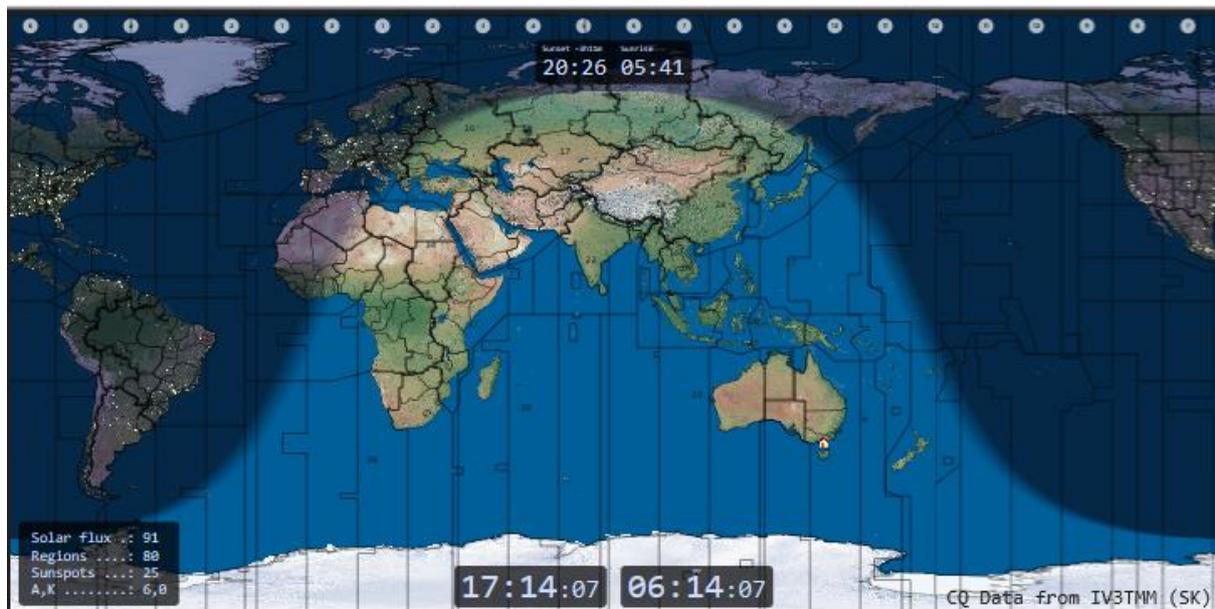
If you see something of interest on the internet, send it in and we'll share with members.

Theodore Roosevelt McElroy - World's Champion Radio Telegrapher

The Man, The Legend and The Keys

http://www.telegraph-office.com/pages/mcelroy.html?fbclid=IwAR0gV0qLshzE_EYnv5Aklqzb_7n04dfpCru1Dyw7vACZv9Octd0DI4UVW6s

SIMON'S World Map



Are you looking for a great world map with grey-line, UTC/Local time and other useful amateur radio information? If so, then visit [this site](#) and check out Simon's World Map.



RASA & RES launch online regulations guide

The Radio Amateur Society of Australia (RASA) and the Radio & Electronics School (RES) have launched an online guide to Australian amateur radio regulations: vkregs dot info.

The guide is a joint publication of RASA and the Radio and Electronics School. It is designed to provide an easy to understand, single point reference for Australian amateur radio regulations.

Users can either browse the regulations on the website or download a complete regulations handbook as a pdf file.

The website will be updated as regulations change.

It may be found at: www.vkregs.info

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Well, that's it for this edition.... Please email us with your feedback, questions, ideas and articles for the next edition.

73, es c u on air from the FISTS Down Under Committee

Chris VK3QB, Derek VK3KX, Phil VK3VB, John VK2JSE es Glenn VK4DU