

NERG NEWS

Incorporated 1985 in Victoria
Reg No A0006776V - <http://nerg.asn.au>

JULY 2005

NERG Inc.
PO Box 270
Greensborough
Victoria 3088

JULY MEETING

The fantastic news this month, if you haven't already heard, is that the NERG are on the move to new premises for meetings and all other activities. We are moving just a few hundred metres up to the brow of the hill from the primary school into the BRIAR HILL COMMUNITY HALL. It's far more spacious and an excellent radio location to boot. The hall offers a great deal of potential for the NERG to expand its activities.

For a start it has adult sized seats, a modern kitchen, storage space and prospects of an amateur station, space for a hamfest, and lots more.

The July meeting will be held at the new location and features guest speaker Mark Stephenson, VK3PI, speaking with some authority in his position as communications project manager with the Victoria Police on some history of police communications and an overview of the new Metropolitan Mobile Radio (MMR).

Hope to see you at the meeting!

Mark, VK3BYY

The July meeting is on Thursday, 14th July at 7:45pm, at the Briar Hill Community Hall, 126 Mountain View Rd, Briar Hill, Melways 21 C3.

THE GAINFULLY UNEMPLOYED GROUP

Thanks go out to Alan, VK3JPK and XYL Wendy, for a great day for the NERG gainfully unemployed. The JPK shack visit is one of wonderment for a QRP operator - I've never seen so many valves! The construction projects demonstrate just how technical Alan's practice of amateur radio has developed. It is great to see important skills needed to maintain the hobby are being carried on. Those attending were Gerhard VK3EWM, Mark, VK3BYY (who experienced what the post working environment is really like), Steve VK3JSE, Dave VK3JMB, VK3KE Jim, VK3FM Ernie and VK3ZRV John.

Alan excelled at service with a continuous stream of coffee and the constant supply of delicious food in quantities to satisfy even the biggest of eaters. Next meeting will be at the home of Jim, VK3KE and Marg, VK3VOJ at 10am on Tuesday the 26th July.

73, Jim, VK3KE

- Listen out on the NERG chat channel on 146.575 MHz for directions and DX updates.

THE END OF OUR HF BANDS ? NOT IF WE OBJECT TO BPL NOW !

BPL (broadband over powerlines) puts thousands of interfering carriers right across the HF spectrum from 80metres to beyond 6 metres. This will make HF communications and SWL reception impossible in many areas!

NEXT MEETING:

7.45 pm, Thursday
14th July 2005

at the NEW NERG meeting place:
Briar Hill COMMUNITY HALL



126 Mountain View Road, Briar Hill
Melways 21 C3

GUEST SPEAKER:
Mark Stephenson, VK3PI
History of the
Victoria Police Communications
and the new MMR network

Submissions to the ACA's review on BPL closed last month, however **the ACA will still accept supporting letters** for your favourite submission. It's not too late to object - the ACA will even send you a letter saying they have received your objection. Members of the EMDRC club confirmed this after sending in letters and Fax's this week supporting the WIA and Amateur Radio Victoria submissions.

Please send in your support for an anti-BPL submission ASAP! The same goes for supporting submissions of other concerned groups such as the 4WD radio and SWL groups.

The WIA and AR Vic submissions appear on their respective web sites (www.wia.org.au and www.wiavic.org.au).

DO IT TODAY - BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE !

NERG SUCCESS AT JOHN MOYLE

At current standing the NERG station VK3CNE at Mount Macedon is provisional winner of the 24 hour Portable Multi-operator class! I say 'provisional' because it seems there was a glitch in collecting logs, with several prominent stations missing from the initial results posted on the WIA web site (the posting seems to have been removed for the moment).

In any event, congratulation goes to all that participated in the field day, and many thanks to all the other stations that made contact with the NERG. It provided us with an enjoyable and rewarding weekend (sorry to hear about the bad weather in VK2 - we thought it was your turn for a change ☺).

The scores for Multi-op, portable 24hr class appear below. Full results will appear in AR magazine and on the WIA web site soon.

Provisional 24 Hour Portable Multiple Operator scores:

Call	Ops	Mode	Band	Score	Contacts
VK3CNE	Multi	Phone	All	5440	618 *
VK3ER	Multi	All	All	4966	272 *
VK2SRC	Multi	Phone	All	4548	488 *
VK3QM	Multi	Phone	VHF	2473	197 *
VK5AR	Multi	Phone	All	2032	196 *
VK5BP	Multi	Phone	All	1934	387 *
VK4IZ	Multi	Phone	HF	1750	875 *
VK3GH	Multi	Phone	All	1720	307 *
VK4BAR	Multi	Phone	All	1444	252 *
VK5BAR	Multi	Phone	HF	652	326 *
VK4WAT	Multi	All	All	484	235 *
VK4WIP	Multi	Phone	HF	180	90 *
ZL4AL	Multi	Phone	HF	134	67 *
VK4TWR	Multi	Phone	HF	112	56 *

* Certificate Awarded

REVITALISED RD CONTEST !

The popular Remembrance Day Contest not only has a new manager, Chris Edmondson VK4AA, but also has some radical rule changes that should really liven things up! The contest runs 24 hours from **0800 UTC (6pm AEST) on the 13 August, 2005** and is open to all VK, ZL, and P2 stations and SWLs.

An important change is the method for determining the overall winning state - it's now the highest ratio of submitted logs to number of licensed amateurs in each state. So it becomes **extremely important to submit your log**, regardless of your score if you want your state to win.

Removal of the old "improvement factor" method should eliminate the 5 year cycle of in-activity in the larger states. It's quite feasible that VK0 could win if it gets just three or four of its 8 callsigns on air!

Relevant changes for VK3s are:

- Double points for contacts exceeding 1000 km on HF bands and exceeding 100km on VHF+.
- Double points for contacts with VK8, VK9 and VK0 stations.
- Separation of 10m FM (above 29MHz) from SSB or CW (below 29MHz), allowing a station to be worked with both modes in the same time period.
- Separation of FM, SSB and CW modes on VHF bands - you can work a station using each mode in the same time period.
- A single log for VHF - all modes are recorded in a single VHF log; however your still need to separate VHF and HF logs.
- Bonus points and incentives for higher frequency UHF and long distance contacts.
- 160m & 10m HF contacts within home state are now allowed.
- New 4 hour re-work period on HF (remains 2 hours on VHF+).
- Double points for contacts between 1am-6am local time.

Full rules appeared in the July edition of Amateur Radio magazine and appear on the WIA web site (www.wia.org.au).

Don't forget to make at least one contact and submit your log!

GIPPSLAND GATES HAMFEST

Don't forget Saturday 16TH July 2005. It's the GG Hamfest at the CRANBOURNE PUBLIC HALL, on the corner of Clarendon St and High St, Melways 133 K4 (runs parallel to the South Gippsland highway near the shopping centre in Cranbourne).

- Doors open to sellers at 8.30 am & buyers at 10.00 am
- Buyers can gain entry for \$5.00

All proceeds from the sale will go towards the Gippsland Gate Radio & Electronics Club (GGREC) Club Shack project. Persons wishing to reserve a table position must contact Dianne Jackson VK3JDI before the event on 03 5625 2545 or email to hamfest@ggrec.org.au

COMPLETE STATION FOR SALE!

Ron, VK3BKH, is offering his entire station for sale, consisting of:

- Kenwood TS-520S HF transceiver with 2nd VFO, 160-10m, CW/SSB, 100W
- Yaesu FT-980 HF transceiver, 160-10 m + WARC, (RX: 0.15-30 MHz), AM/FM/SSB/CW, 100 W
- FT-747GX HF transceiver, 10-160 m + WARC, AM/FM/SSB/CW, 100 W
- KDK 2m transceiver
- Nally free standing ½ tilt-over tower (approx 8m)
- Kenpro rotator & Controller
- "VK" 13.8 Volt power supply
- Kenwood SWR meter & Low Pass Filter
- 5-port antenna switch
- Triband beam
- Various cables, coax, and manuals

Asking Price: \$3,000

Items will NOT be sold separately.

Contact Ron Rowe, at QTH in Mill Park on 9404 3841

YET ANOTHER ACA NAME CHANGE !



Australian Government
Australian Communications
and Media Authority

Yes, it's time for another name change - the ACA merged with the ABA (Australia Broadcast Department) this month to form the

Australian Communications & Media Authority (ACMA). The ACA name joins a long list of previous names including the Postmaster General's Department, the Postal and Telecommunications Department, Spectrum Management Authority, Dept. of Transport and Communications, as well as a few dozen or so I've forgotten...

The ACMA has wasted no time in killing off the old ACA web site, so all your favourite ACA bookmarks now return the infamous "404 Not Found" error. Instead you'll have to go to www.acma.gov.au. If you are lucky, changing www.aca to aaa.acms in an old address may still get you what you want.

One good thing about the change is that I won't get the ACA confused with "A Current Affair" nor the ABA with the "Australian Bowmen Association". However I don't expect the Australian Computer Music Association will be too pleased!

NERGS AT THE 2005 SERG CONVENTION

Quite a few NERGs went to the SERG convention in Mount Gambier, S.A. over the Queens Birthday weekend last month. Many participated in the foxhunting as it was the Australian Championships, while others were content to meet old friends and browse the white elephant stalls.

(Photos courtesy of John VK3ZRV)



Lining up for the start of a hunt.

I know Doug likes running, but all the way from the start??? Now that's dedication...



The VT team - NERGs Greg VK3VT, Chris VK3CHR, and Doug VK3JDO



Gavin VK5TN in charge of sniffer with his wife driving – proving you don't really need a hi-tech all terrain vehicle and a super computer to go fox hunting!



The VK3YDF team – being presented with the cup as overall winners.

Proving that all those supercomputers do help, achieving 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in the various categories.



The Overall Winner - the VK3YDF team, set up for a HF hunt.



A good assortment of new and pre-loved items at the hamfest. A handy source of spare parts when you wipe out an antenna on a pine tree during the hunts.

WILL 6M BE LOST TO DIGITAL AUDIO BROADCASTING ?

The Problem:

The Australian Broadcast Authority (now part of ACMA) is currently planning the future of digital broadcast radio for Australia with the 50-52 MHz portion of the 6 meter band is being seriously considered as a potential new broadcast band.

The story so far:

Lyn Maddock, Acting ABA Chair, says 'With the policy and regulatory framework for the introduction of digital radio in Australia under active consideration by the Government, it is timely to seek views on the related spectrum issues.'

This is not as simple as you may think – the AM and FM bands are too crowded to squeeze in the new digital channels, and there aren't too many other empty bands available. For this reason the ABA would like to embargo some lightly used bands to make space for the future broadcasters. In a discussion paper titled 'Spectrum for Digital Radio', several bands have been considered including TV Channels 0 and 1 in the VHF TV Band I, and channels 9A and others in TV Band III.

The bad news for Amateurs:

Choosing Band I is of concern to amateurs because the lower half of our 6 meter band overlaps channel 0 TV – one of the Band I TV channels being considered for digital broadcasting. Band I looks like the band of choice at present because it is lightly used for analog TV and is not used at all for digital TV. Eventually the analog channels will close, leaving the lower channels clear for Digital audio, whereas Band III will always be in demand for digital TV channels.

The prospect of losing the DX portion of 6 meters has naturally caused some concern amongst amateurs. In fact it comes as a shock - amateurs have come to expect that TV services on channel 0 would eventually vacate the 50-52MHz end of the amateur band with the phasing out of analog TV. Amateurs hoped to become primary users throughout Australia and continue to work amateurs in many other countries around the world that only have access to the 50-52 MHz band. The prospects of high power broad band digital transmitters adjacent to the remaining 52-54 MHz band are not good either!

Luckily 50MHz is not the best band for broadcasts and isn't used overseas at this time. Its fickle propagation characteristics and large antennas make it unsuitable for broadcasting but ideal for amateur radio. Let's hope that channel 0 is not chosen!

More background:

The ABA is considering the relative merits of four bands:

MF Band – 526.5-16065 kHz

VHF Band I – TV channel 0 (45-52 MHz) and channel 1 (56-70MHz)

VHF Band III – TV channel 9A (174-230 MHz)

The VHF FM radio and L-Band (1.45-1.49GHz) have also been considered but were dropped due to spectrum over-crowding on the FM band and incompatibility with other countries and short range of L-band.

The choice between the VHF bands and the MF band is determined partly by the type of digital signal transmitted. The main contenders are the wide band Eureka-147 (DAB) standard, and the narrow band DRM (Digital Radio Mondiale). Eureka needs a lot of bandwidth and cannot be used in the MF band. In fact it can only go into TV Bands I and III, putting 6m at most risk. The narrow band DRM is currently designed for MF & HF bands, although the international standard could be extended to 120MHz, making 50MHz a candidate. Hopefully DRM can (eventually) be integrated into the AM and FM bands, thus saving 6m.

As you would expect, choice of a broadcast standard and band for digital broadcasting is not going to be based purely on technical capabilities. Spectrum availability and industry requirements are also important factors. The most powerful industry group is Commercial Radio Australia (CRA), which has been pushing the Eureka-174 standard. Perhaps this is because in addition to audio broadcasts Eureka can transmit digital information such as news and sports updates, still images, and other subscriber services that can make the broadcaster money. DRM is much more limited in this respect.



Greg VK3VT browsing the tables.



Greg VK3VT presenting a shiny new cup to the VK3BLN team for being first-in on the night hunt.

Results for hunts at Mount Gambier 2005:

Event	VK3 YDF	VK3 YQN	VK3 TVB	VK5Z MG	VK3 OW	VK3 BLN	VK5 TV	VK3 VT
3	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
4/1	5	4	8	9	3	10	7	6
4/2	9	0	4	8	5	10	7	6
4/3	9	4	6	7	5	10	3	8
4/4	9	4	7	5	6	10	0	8
5	10	9	8	6	5	7	3	4
6/1	8	7	9	3	5	10	4	6
6/2	8	6	9	4	5	10	0	7
6/3	8	6	10	4	5	7	0	9
8	9	7	4	8	3	10	5	6
9	8	10	6	3	7	4	5	9
10	10	9	5	3	6	7	4	8
11	8	5	10	0	9	4	6	7
Totals	111 1 st	80	94 3 rd	67	70	104 2 nd	48	87
Night hunt	VK3 YDF	VK3 YQN	VK3 TVB	VK5Z MG	VK3 OW	VK3 BLN	VK5 TV	VK3 VT
	32 2 nd	12	25	29 3 rd	19	40 1 st	13	28
Hidden TX	VK3 YDF	VK3 YQN	VK3 TVB	VK5Z MG	VK3 OW	VK3 BLN	VK5 TV	VK3 VT
	24 3 rd	19	28 1 st	11	15	27 2 nd	4	22

On the other hand public broadcasters, especially the ABC, are concerned that none of the VHF bands can cover the huge rural and outback areas currently served by AM transmitters. Community broadcasters are likewise concerned that Eureka transmitters, with their broadband spectrum licenses, will be too expensive. Since each Eureka transmitter has many audio programmes embedded in it, it will be difficult for small community broadcasters to afford a local community transmitter for just one programme. It's likely the commercial stations will take up most of the available spectrum in capital cities, leaving fewer channels for the small players. DRM would make more sense for community and rural broadcasters.

With all these mixed requirements, we could ultimately end up needing a multi-band, multi-mode receiver capable of Eureka on Band III, DRM and FM on 88-108MHz, and DRM and AM on MF. This sounds like it's going to be expensive and possibly unique to Australia. (Let's hope it doesn't become another fudged system like Australia's unique and expensive Digital TV service).

By Mark Harrison VK3BYY

See the WIA web site for the WIA's submission on the ABA discussion paper.

For more on this subject see:

http://www.aba.gov.au/newspubs/news_releases/archive/2005/54nr05.shtml

UPDATE - VK/TRANS-TASMAN

The 160m CW contests is the last in the series this year, and will be held on Saturday evening, July 23.

Rules were published in the WIA AR and NZART magazines and appear with scoring software on the contest web site:

See <http://home.iprimus.com.au/vktasman>

Contact Bruce, the Contest Manager at: [vktasman \(at\) hotmail.com](mailto:vktasman@hotmail.com)

FOX-ORING – DAREBIN PARK – 24TH JULY

24th July, at Darebin Parklands, Ivanhoe/Fairfield (just near the Alphington rail station). Access via Separation St.

What's FOX-oring?

It's a combination of Radio foxhunting and orienteering. You use orienteering skills to visit several areas marked on a map that each contain a transmitters. You then use a radio direction finder to locate the actual transmitter within the marked area. All the transmitters run continuously on the same frequency, so even if you could hear them from a distance they would be very difficult to find without the map.

This is a fun activity, especially for people wanting to try ARDF for the first time.

For further information, including directions and arranging sniffer hire contact [brucep \(at\) netpace.net.au](mailto:brucep@netpace.net.au)

ARDF EVENTS

3rd IARU Region 2 ARDF Championships & USA Champs, USA 1-5 Aug, Albuquerque Amateur Radio Club. See: <http://www.ardf.us> or Reg-2 site: <http://www.ardf-r2.org>

World Orienteering Champs, Japan, 3-15 August, 2005 (comps on 7-14).

World ARDF Champs, Japan 19-24 September.

For further information on ARDF events, including directions and arranging sniffer hire, please email [brucep \(at\) netpace.net.au](mailto:brucep@netpace.net.au)

July Sun 24 th	Fox-or	80m	Darebin Park	With Micro orienteering event
Aug Sat 6	Fox-or/SnowDF	80m	Lake Mountain	With Ski-O
Aug Sun 7 th	Fox-or	2m	Gellibrand	Metro/Micro event
Aug Wed 31 st	StreetO		Blind Creek	
Sept Sat 3 rd	ARDF	2m	Glenluce	Australian ARDF Championships!
Sept 19 th -24 th	ARDF	2 & 80m	Japan	Region 3 Champs
Oct Sun 23 rd	Fox-or	80m	Latrobe University	Final: Series Cup

From Vic ARDF Group newsgroup

2005 AMATEUR RADIO EVENTS

- July 16 Gippsland Gate Radio and Electronics Club annual Hamfest, Cranbourne
- July 16-17 CQ WW VHF contest (All mode)
- July 23 VK/trans Tasman Contest - 160m CW (see above)
- August 5 QRP Day Contest (CW/SSB/FM/PSK31)
- Aug 6 TARA Grid Dip (PSK/RTTY)
- Aug 6-7 2nd Asia-Pacific Air-Internet Jamboree - involving amateur radio and the Internet. National JOTA/JOTI Coordinator, Scouts Australia, Stephen Watson [VK4SGW jota.joti@scouts.com.au](mailto:VK4SGW.jota.joti@scouts.com.au)
- Aug 13-14 Remembrance Day Contest - 0800z Sat. - 0759z Sun.
- Aug 20-21 International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend
Info: www.vk2ce.com/illw
- Aug 27 ALARA Contest (CW/SSB)
- Sept 24 Wadda Cup Contest – 80m dash, SSB only, 1030-1130 UTC (8:30-9:30pm EST). Rules in AR mag July 2005
- Oct 15-16 48th Annual Jamboree on the Air (JOTA)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE

The annual General Meeting of the North East Radio Group, Inc. (Registration No A0006776V), will be held at Briar Hill Community Hall on Thursday 11th August at 8.00pm.

The agenda will include exciting things like the reading of the previous minutes, tabling of the treasurers report, and election of the office bearers and committee. Nominations for office and items for discussion should be submitted to the secretary in writing in advance, in accordance with the rules of incorporation (available from the secretary). Post to Secretary, NERG, PO box 270, Greensborough, Vic., 3088
Once the business items are dealt with the real business of enjoying the NERG's Birthday party will follow!

Members are also reminded that 2005/2006 memberships become due in August and can be paid in advance to the treasurer. (new members since February are exempt)

2005/2006 Fees are: Full membership: \$30 Family: \$40 Concession: \$20

The NERG Inc. RegNo A0006776V <http://nerg.asn.au>

The North Eastern Radio Group, Inc. is an amateur radio club devoted to encouraging members and others to enjoy the hobby of amateur radio. It tries not to hang on ceremony and endless reporting but rather participate in the fun aspects of this fascinating hobby.

Membership Fees (due each August):

Full: \$30 Family: \$40 Concession: \$20

Send to: NERG Treasurer, PO box 270, Greensborough, Vic., 3088

Committee

President	Greg Williams	VK3VT	9432 0563
Secretary	John Weir	VK3ZRV	9431 0667
Treasurer	Marg Baxter	VK3VOJ	9467 1253
Committee	Betsy King	VK3HBK	
	David Aston	VK3THY	
	Peter Cosway	VK3DU	9379 3626
Repeaters	Mark Harrison	VK3BYY	9435 3043

Meetings

2nd Thursday of each month at 7.45 PM (excepting Dec. & Jan.)
Briar Hill Community Hall, 126 Mountain View Road, Briar Hill (Just north of the intersection with Sherbourne Road) Melway map ref 21-C3

Classes

NERG occasionally runs classes and exams for Amateur license candidates.

Callsigns and Repeaters (25km North East of Melbourne)

Club call - VK3CNE <http://www.qsl.net/vk3cne>

6m rpt VK3RMH FM 52.550 MHz in 53.550 MHz out

70cm rpt VK3RMH FM 433.325 MHz in 438.325 MHz out

IRLP node 6350, EchoLink node 140587

6m beacon VK3RMH CW 10 Watts 50.295 MHz –Off air

10m bec'n VK3RMH CW 20Watts 28.2565 MHz

Occasionally home to the Scout Radio & Electronics Group repeater:

2m VK3RSR FM 146.375 MHz in 146.975 MHz out

NETS

NERG NETS run on 146.575 MHz FM Simplex (8.30 – 9.30 pm Thursdays). Please join the discussions. NERGs often monitor this frequency and the 70cm VK3RMH repeater.

WEB Sites: <http://nerg.asn.au> and <http://www.qsl.net/vk3rmh>

NERG NEWS submissions and comments invited:

editor: Mark Harrison VK3BYY

ph: 9435-3043 hm

post: 266 Nell Street West, Watsonia, 3087

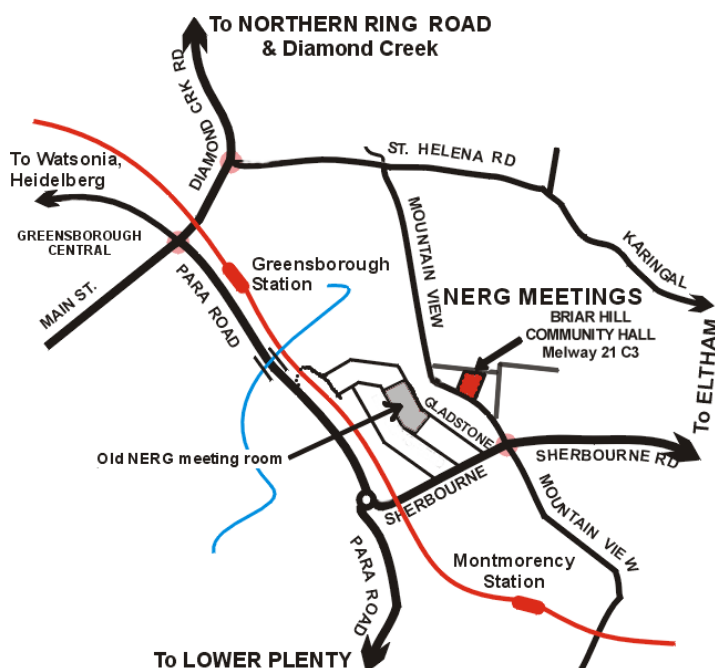
email: vk3byy (at) nerg.asn.au



NERG

North-East Radio Group VK3CNE

NERG Incorporated 1985
BOX 270 GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088



NEXT MEETING:

7:45 PM Thursday 14th July 2005

With Mark VK3PI on Police Communications and the new MMR

2005 CALENDAR (NERG ACTIVITIES IN BOLD TYPE)

- July 9 VK/trans Tasman Contest - 160m Phone
- July 9-10 GippsTech 2005 Technical Conference, Gippsland Campus, Churchill. <http://www.qsl.net/vk3bez/>
- July 14 NERG MEETING – AT NEW MEETING PLACE: BRIAR HILL COMMUNITY HALL**
- July 16 Gippsland Gate Radio & Electronics Club Hamfest, Sat. @10, Cranbourne Public Hall, Melway 133 K4
- July 23 VK/trans Tasman Contest - 160m CW
- August 6-7 2nd Asia-Pacific Air-Internet Jamboree
- August 11 NERG Annual General Meeting and Party.**
- Aug 13-14 Remembrance Day Contest - 0800z Sat. - 0759z Sun, HF/VHF/UHF, Phone/CW, with new rules!
- Aug 20-21 International Lighthouse/Lightship Weekend, Info: www.vk2ce.com/illw
- Sept 8 NERG Meeting**