

AUGUST 2020

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CHANNEL CHATTER



Austravel SafetyNet Inc.

The HF Radio Communications Network for Trips, Treks, Tracks & Tours

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-and much more!

MAREEBA BASE (4199) UNDER CONSTRUCTION

As this edition of Channel Chatter arrives into your email inbox, the work to establish the new Mareeba Base (4199) in far north Queensland is being worked on.

Two separate crews have been organised to build this new HF base, with the initial working party concentrating on getting an old cool room, purchased and transported out of Cairns, refurbished and altered to suit our HF radio needs, as a secure "radio shack"then moved its final position. The cool room features 6 inch thick insulated walls, keeping all of our equipment from being exposed to high daytime ambient temperatures.

The second stage will be the installation of all the HF radio, internet equipment and antenna array, in transit with our president Kim Rhodes (7880) all the way from Yarloop W.A.

The antenna array consists of a 54 metre long horizontal broadband antenna, installed between two new 10 metre high power poles.

Considering that this new HF radio base is the first installation by Austravel in the middle of a farmers paddock, well away from man made interference like high voltage power lines and their transformers along with solar panel inverters etc., we are banking on this base delivering high quality HF signals.

The Austravel committee has worked hard at finding the best location where a low HF background interference levels are at a minimum leading to better and clearer HF communications. The work party at different stages consisted of :

Denny Sharpe (1226), Ian & Janette Parkin 0116), Graham & Lyn Eakin (2002), Geoff & Christine Peck (0951), Bob & Carmel Carne (1750) , Clyde Robson (0129), Cliff Herod (9363), Ray & Gale Cook (7506), Alan Green (6042), Rick Shea (3097), Hazel Sleep (6455), Kim Rhodes (7880) Toni Schoen (3329), Peter Schrader (2513) Glenn & Rhonda Wood (4055), Pim & Peter Cahill (7255).



DISCLAIMER

The opinions and information contained within this newsletter are provided in good faith and whilst Austravel Safety Net Inc. has taken all care in the preparation of the material provided, Austravel Safety Net Inc. does not accept legal liability or responsibility related to articles placed by its members.

Presidents Report

I don't know where to start really with this years events and with things changing daily we can only plan and see how it goes. It has been a while since the care free evenings camping near lake Bellard WA pre-C19. Can you all remember being able to get away.

First I apologize for the off again on again AGM and dates and places moving. As you will know from other emails a parallel meeting is to be held in WA and if all goes well a Skype link. As I will be in QLD for the Mareeba base installation I am intending to drive down to Blackbutt for the AGM.

Those in the South East that may have made it to Casino but not up to Blackbutt it is the best we could pull together. I don't feel we have any serious club business happening at the AGM as it is somewhat a matter of red tape requirement, so I trust all members will be OK with the arrangements this year. Next year we can all make plans to travel as required should you wish to attend the AGM.

About the time when you are reading this, the Mareeba Base near Cairns will be coming on line. The post codes for QLD start with a (4) so therefore so does our new base. You guessed it, the selcall for Mareeba is 4199. This new base has all the Austravel SafetyNet Telall+ features and is the first base off grid, i.e. totally solar powered.

No power bills and very good ability to receive without local noise. You will see the channel list on the sked timetable and on Out-n-About from the Radio Base Station tab that Mareeba has the old channels from Casino base, 1,3,5,7,8. You all have the channels in your radios so please have a play with the new base.

The club is still growing although new membership has slowed this year. We are still developing technically and there are a number of new initiatives to be looked at next year as time permits. This will continue to keep Austravel ahead of the curve (if I may use that expression) and stay the most advanced HF radio club in Australia, perhaps the world. So for now please follow government guidelines for C19 and stay safe. Remember that the easing of restrictions does not mean the pandemic is over, it just means there is room in hospital for you.

Kim Rhodes (7880)

Vice Presidents Report

Vice President report - June 2020

It is very gratifying to see that life in our part of the world is *slowly* returning to normal after the Covid 19 virus.

There has been a noticeable growth in holiday and 'Grey Nomad' traffic on the roads and on the air at sched times.

We still need to practice safe distance and hand cleanliness to avoid any further cases as we are NOT yet totally free of the virus. We don't need any more "lock downs"

We are looking forward to all borders being opened next month so the Mareeba base can go ahead soon. The base equipment has been on test and seems to be performing very well to date and it has been tested in sched operation.

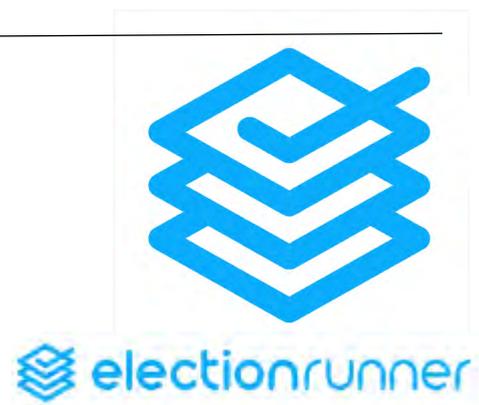
Any volunteers for President, Vice President, Secretary and committee members?

Beat the rush and jump in early with your nominations.

Roy Watkins (6001)

2020 COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

- All committee positions open for this election
- 28th. July 2020 formal email notice of AGM – nominations called for
- 11th. August 2020 - nominations closed
- 20th. August 2020 - members electronic voting begins
- 10th September - voting closed
- 12th September 2020 - AGM



I



We know its only a minor thing.....but our stocks of club stickers was starting to get a little low, so the committee reviewed the last sticker artwork which was version two (*version 1 was our original sticker dating back seven years or more, was quite different*) and this is what we arrived at - similar you say?...yes but subtly different!

We have included a sailing vessel, giving acknowledgement that Austravel welcomes mariners to the club, and we added "HF RADIO NETWORK", instead of just "RADIO NETWORK".

SENIOR TRYING TO RESET PASSWORD

- WINDOWS:** Please enter your new password.
- USER:** cabbage
- WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password must be more than 8 characters.
- USER:** boiled cabbage
- WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password must contain 1 numerical character
- USER:** 1 boiled cabbage
- WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password cannot have blank spaces.
- USER:** 50damnboiledcabbages
- WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password must contain at least one upper case character.
- USER:** 50DAMNboiledcabbages
- WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password cannot use more than one upper case character consecutively.
- USER:** 50damnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssIfYouDont'sGiveMeAccessNow!
- WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password cannot contain punctuation.
- USER:** ReallyPissedOff50DamnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssIfYouDon'tGiveMeAccessNow
- WINDOWS:** Sorry, that password is already in use.



AUSTRAVEL EVENTS CALANDER



- September 11th. > 13th. 2020**
AGM/GM East Australia
Blackbutt S.E. Qld.
 Blackbutt Showgrounds
 Austravel Annual General and General Meeting
 Contact Bob Carne Venue Organiser (1750) 0407 936 289
 Contact Rick Shea Club Secretary (3097) 0418 185 155
- September 11th. > 13th. 2020**
AGM/GM West Australia
Chittering W.A.
 Roy Watkins Place
 Austravel Annual General and General Meeting
 Contact John Hall Venue Organiser (6014) 0412 493 866
 Contact Rick Shea Club Secretary (3097) 0418 185 155
- October 24th. > 25th. 2020**
Moonambel HF Radio Gathering Victoria
 HF Radio enthusiasts weekend, open to all members of
 all HF radio networks
 Contact Rod Willison 0419 008 764

For anything and just about everything 12 volt.....JGM Direct will have a product and price to suit.

Your Channel Chatter editor visits this favourite "men's toy shop" often when needing a 12 volt this or that.

Check their webpage, delivery Australia wide.

*Looking for great quality stand alone Solar or LED lighting?
You don't need to leave the South Burnett!!!*

	* Caravan Installation	
	* Off-Grid Installations	
	* Micro Solar Systems	
	* DIY Components	
	* Rigid & Folding Solar	
	* Solar Regulators	
* Deep Cycle Batteries		

Nanango's Solar & 12 Volt Shop

Mon-Fri 9.00am -5.00pm
 13,912 D'Aguilar Hwy, Nanango
www.jgmdirect.com Ph: 41633109 Mob:0413 669 112

Most Austravel members wouldn't know what goes on in the background when planning a new base (e.g. Mareeba Base), in regards attaining approval from ACMA and attain the various licenses for our preferred channels/frequencies.

There are many logistical matters to embrace, the most obvious being the potential for our new base and frequencies will interfere with someone else's HF radio base and their pre existing frequencies. Its not just that you can build a new base (even if its in the middle of a farmers paddock) and commence broadcasting at will.

Only an accredited person nominated by ACMA may apply for radiocommunications licensing.

Accredited persons are qualified in radiocommunications. They understand the rules and what ACMA require for radiocommunications licenses.

Austravel is fortunate to not only have an accredited person in which to rely on for attaining our new licenses, we are double blessed to have him as one of our members.

On behalf of Austravel , I would like to thank Austravel member Mike Ryan (9305) for donating considerable time to Austravel for the licensing of Mareeba and Casino Bases. Mike prepped and filed the multiple license applications with ACMA for Austravel for very small portion of his normal commercial fee.



Much appreciated Mike (Communication & Wireless Services Pty Ltd)
Kim Rhodes (President)

QMAC RADIO SERVICE

The Qmac HF90 although no longer manufactured, is still a functional radio for the Austravel network.

The radio is selcall and beacon call capable and can access the Austravel interconnect phone system.

Whilst the brand disappeared several years ago, there is still users within the club who have one and use one....including me (the author). The purchase of my first new HF radio was a Qmac HF90, which in those days suited my vehicle because of its compact design.

Whilst only a 50 watt HF radio, members would be surprised how well the HF90 performs, and its hard to ridicule 50 watts of power when you consider



earlier Codan 6924's had 30 watt output, maximum 10 channels and only able to cover 2 >13 MHz. Those where the heady days of throwing a long wire over a tree, connecting the battery leads and listen into the RFDS skeds.

The good news is that the club has a member (Keith Perry 1701) from W.A. who worked in the original Qmac factory and is able to repair and update Qmac HF90's .

If any Austravel member has a Qmac HF90 or Codan 6924 story to tell, please forward them to me for use within this newsletter.

Geoff Peck (0951)
membership@austravelsafetynet.org.au

HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED.....?

For those members who operate Codan NGT's - I wonder if anyone has noticed the “# CALL LOG” key on the bottom right hand corner of the Codan NGT hand piece, and understand all of it's uses.

This key has three (3) functions depending on which screen/mode the handpiece currently sits.

In normal or idle mode one press of the # key opens up the “Calls In”, another press of the # key opens up “Calls Out”. Here you can review stored calls made and received.

Perhaps that Codan NGT feature is well known to Austravel members, but what isn't so well known is the third (3rd.) use of this key.

When entering text, as you would be doing if you were in the process of sending an SMS message from your Codan NGT to family or friends mobile phone.....the first thing you need to do is enter the 10 digit mobile phone number, followed by the message.

What some members have difficulty with, is entering the mobile phone numbers because they believe they need to keep pressing the number key several times until the number they seek comes up on the hand-piece.

The alpha numeric key pad is designed to be multi functional, in that you need to press the key pad several times to cycle through whether you need a letter or number. But you can lock it on numbers (or upper case and lower case letters).

As per the picto to the right, when in the “message” screen, press the “#CALL LOG” key until the Hash Symbol (#) is seen on the screen. When this symbol is shown, you are locked onto numbers only. One more press will give lower case (a) another press will give you upper case (A).



Its much easier locking into numbers only and less mistakes are made in this mode.....simples!

Qmac Radio Service

The **Qmac HF90** transceiver is the world's smallest high power HF SSB transceiver. The HF-90 is a commercial grade transceiver, designed for long-range manpack, portable, vehicle and fixed base station applications.

For service support contact Keith Perry

Austravel Member 1701

Email: Vk6qa@iinet.net.au

PH: 0408 092 811 (*be persistent poor mobile coverage area*)





BORDER WATCH

1800 06 1800

Help protect Australia's border

Small craft border crime: know the flags

Criminals may attempt to use small craft to bring drugs, illegal tobacco, weapons and dangerous chemicals into Australia.

Help keep your community safe by reporting suspicious activity to Border Watch.

What should I report?

Report suspicious **vessels**:

- vessels anchored or operating in an unusual area
- vessels meeting at sea with other vessels
- vessels displaying an unusual draft for vessel type
- vessels operating without navigation lights, departing at unusual times or in unsuitable weather conditions
- vessels damaged on return to the dock (scrapes along sides, fender scuff marks, signs of hull attachments, etc.)
- vessels with unusual equipment or modifications.

Let us know about suspicious **behaviours**:

- vessel owners or crew enquiring about Australian Border Force, Police or other law enforcement agencies' activities
- vessel operators who lack knowledge about local conditions or lack ability to operate their vessel.

Be on the **lookout** for:

- unusual radio activity (such as cryptic radio messages or vessels not responding to radio contact)
- unusual objects at sea or washed up on shore
- unusual activity on beaches or in remote areas (such as hidden campsites, fuel dumps).

Help protect Australia's border

Border Watch allows everyone to help protect Australia by providing information about suspicious border related activities.

All reports are confidential.

If it doesn't seem right, report it.

Call Border Watch:

- 1800 06 1800 (in Australia)
- +612 62451325 (satellite ph.)

Report online:

www.abf.gov.au/borderwatch



This button may save your life, particularly if a passenger not familiar with operating the radio needs to make a call for you.

When the **RED** button is set up correctly on your Codan NGT, Envoy or Barrett 4050 one long press (3 seconds) could save your life. However this button needs to make a correct and functional auto call.

Some members are joining or are already members of multiple HF radio networks, that's fine, why not get the most from your radio. However no other network has a H.E.L.P. (4357) emergency call system equal to Austravel's.

Some of these other networks are trying to encourage dealers to program the **RED** button to call their network in a simplistic fashion in conjunction with Austravel.

With the Codan Envoy in particular there is a **potential that the Austravel RED button emergency call system may fail you**.

If you set up multiple network emergency calling on a Codan Envoy, it either adds menu choices

to the operator from a red button press, which may be detrimental in an emergency situation - or profiling your Envoy to include multiple networks under the one press, the radio may stop on a channel where an Austravel operator cannot get back to you to help.



If an Austravel member has multiple networks profiled in their radio, they will need to choose which network you would like the **RED** button to use for emergency call at the time of setup. The **RED** button H.E.L.P.(4357) system only works effectively within the Austravel HF radio network, where it makes a broad spectrum, full network emergency

call, engaging multiple Austravel emergency responders by SMS to their phones. If you wish it to be set up with another network under the red button, that is fine, but please do not try and combine it with Austravel. Other HF networks emergency call systems are unlike Austravel's.

Austravel supports general HELP and EMERGENCY situations via the **RED** button and I don't believe other network do. If one of our responders cannot help directly, we can phone merge to RFDS or any other organisation as required, which allows that organisation to talk to you over the Austravel HF network directly.

I believe that Austravel now has the best HF radio coverage of all of all networks and certainly the most comprehensive emergency call and response system.

In highlighting this issue, you may think that this is a Codan engineering problem.....**it isn't!**

Don't weaken your **RED Button!!!**

The small town of Thargomindah lies on the western side of the Bulloo River in far SW QLD, 1150km from Brisbane. Thargomindah was gazetted a township in 1874 and the Bulloo division followed soon after in 1880. In 1881 the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney opened a branch in Thargomindah and the telephone line to Cunnamulla was completed in the same year.

Due to the growing population of around 300, a police station, courthouse and school soon followed. A growing town needed a good water supply, so drilling commenced in 1891 for artesian water. By 1893 a very good supply of water was obtained and was then reticulated throughout the town. Thargo was the first town to have reticulated bore water and such was the pressure and quantity of water they were also able to generate electricity for the whole town from the bore.

Business was booming in Thargomindah, the Queensland National bank opened a branch, there was a cricket club, jockey club, football club, there were Agents, Auctioneers, Chinese baker, coach builder, blacksmiths, builders, brick maker, butchers, carpenters, chemist, draper, dressmaker, hairdresser, grocers, 3 pubs, a doctor, newspaper, plumbers, saddlers, shopkeepers, tobacconists and a watch maker and jeweller.

After Federation there was a steady decline in the population of the area, methods of transport were changing, the camel trains from Bourke were gradually being phased out by horse and bullock teams bringing goods from the newly completed railway line to Cunnamulla. 1892 through to 1903 also saw the Federation Drought decimate the country and work became scarcer. The first world war took many young men away and they never came back. Then the railway line was extended to Quilpie, north of Thargomindah and this was another nail in the coffin for Thar-

gomindah's fortunes as trade with this area now declined.

But still, works on roads, streets and bridges went on, the bridge over the Bulloo which is still in use today was opened up in 1929. Shire boundaries were realigned in 1931 and the Bulloo Shire went from 45,000 square miles to approximately 28,000 square miles making it, still, to this day the third largest in QLD.

The second world war almost proved the end for Thargomindah as a centre, the exodus of men and women to the services and families moving to larger centres eventually brought school attendance numbers to a point where the school was about to close, but this was averted when 2 children and their family came to town and saved the day.

The people and Council of Thargomindah continued to improve the standard of living in the little town in spite of the setbacks. The last of the pubs burnt down in 1947, the electricity supply was switched from the bore to diesel generators in 1951. The population was once again on the increase and new buildings were being erected as needed, a police station and residence, Council Chambers, a new Hotel and Hall, a cafe, a new school and a Council workshop. In 1969 a public pool was built in the middle of town.

The RFDS visited Thargomindah weekly and to facilitate this service the aerodrome was given a bitumen seal in the mid-1960s, some years later night lighting was added. A new hospital was erected in 1976. Country children were able to attend school in town and stay at the newly built Hostel which was ably run by the CWA. Roads were and are a major consideration in the shire with just over 2500 km of roads to maintain - it's a never-ending job.

The population of Thargo has fluctuated over the years, 1933 - 614 souls, 1996 - 801 and the latest census fig-

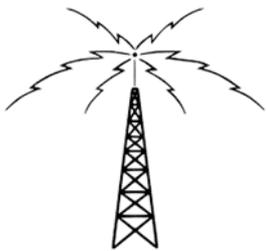
ures for 2016 show only 353 people. Drought takes its toll on the Stations, the graziers and the state of the roads when there is no water available to water the roads while they are being graded. Wild dogs, drought and declines in markets have had an impact on primary production in the Bulloo Shire, many producers had not recovered from the drought in 2000 through to 2009 and have found themselves back in a severe drought once again for the last 6 years. Commodity prices are very good now in 2020 but stock numbers throughout the shire are very low with many stations totally destocked.

The main industries within the shire are oil and gas, sheep and cattle, opal mining and tourism. The Bulloo shire has 4 townships, Thargo, Hungerford, Noccundra and Cameron Corner. National Parks are Currawinya and Lake Bindegolly which are a birdwatcher's paradise when there is water in the lakes. Many visitors come to the outback to go fishing in the Bulloo, Paroo, Wilson Rivers or Coopers Creek hoping to catch a yellow belly for dinner or a feed of yabbies. The Burke and Wills dig tree is beside Cooper's Creek along with an interpretive hut.

There are also some great Outback Pubs for the visitor to discover, four of them in fact and a few others close by. There are some great spots to camp within the shire - caravan parks, designated camping areas by some of the rivers and Kilcowera Station Stay run by Greg and Toni Sherwin. Kilcowera is on the Dowling Track halfway between Thargomindah and Hungerford and has been open to visitors since 2001. Thargo also has 2 motels, a post office, a pub, roadhouse, a Toyota dealership, mechanical services and a general store. So, when will you be visiting our shire?

(Article provided by unknown author)

EASTERN AUSTRALIA



AUSTRAVEL AGM & GM



Plan Ahead and Join Us!

Announcing the next S.E. Qld. Austravel Muster (the AGM & GM) will be at Blackbutt about 150 Km's north west of Brisbane. Open to members and visitors, especially those visitors wishing to learn more about HF radio and / or Austravel's "Telcall+" and "Out-n-About" - new complimentary HF radio technology platforms.

WHEN & WHERE ?

September 11th. > 13th. 2020

Blackbutt Showgrounds, Bowman Rd.

Powered caravan and camping sites, toilets and showers. \$8 per person per night unpowered and \$10 per person per night with power.

WHAT'S ORGANISED?

Friday night welcome and "complimentary" sausage sizzle

Saturday 1 pm the Annual General Meeting followed by the General meeting

Happy hour Saturday & Sunday 4pm

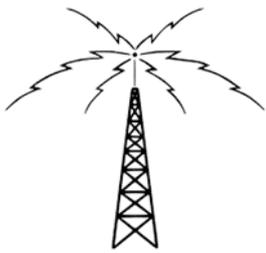
Due to Covid 19 social distancing Saturday night dinner is a group BBQ (roll up at 6pm)

- BYO BBQ
- Nothing will be provided at the BBQ, except the BBQ plate and the gas.
- No cost, but bring along your good humor.

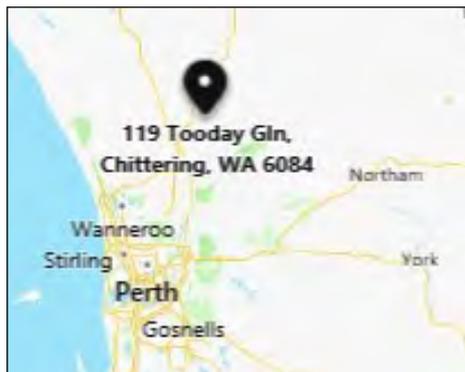


RSVP to Bob Carne (1750) 0407 936 289 Email: bobandcarmel@gmail.com

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



AUSTRAVEL AGM & GM



Plan Ahead and Join Us!

Announcing the next West Australian Austravel Muster (the AGM & GM) will be at Roy Watkins (6001) property at Chittering, which is about 80 Km's north east of Perth. Open to members and visitors, especially those visitors wishing to learn more about HF radio and / or Austravel's "Telcall+" and "Out-n-About" - new complimentary HF radio technology platforms.

WHEN & WHERE ?

September 11th. > 13th. 2020

119 Tooday Glen, Chittering W.A.

Camp Area: - Is gravelly but fairly flat. Tent pegs will go in OK. The camping area is sheltered by trees all around. Plenty of open space for solar panels to work depending on the weather.

Facilities: - Shower & Toilet available but recommend bringing your own. Large shed available for shelter should the weather turn bad.

Pets: - Dogs are permitted on leash at all times & "Scoop the Poop".

Rubbish: - No bins available so please take your rubbish with you when you leave.

WHAT'S ORGANISED?

- AGM / GM starts 11am WA time linked via Skype to the east
 - ◆ Courtesy of Col Ingham (6355)
- Light refreshments will be available following the AGM/GM
- Due to Covid 19 social distancing Saturday night dinner is a group BYO BBQ (roll up at 6pm)
- BBQ will be available through the weekend
- Nothing will be provided at the BBQ, except the BBQ plate and the gas.
- No cost, but bring along your tall stories and good humor



RSVP to John Hall (6014) 0412 493 866 Email: hfradio@bigpond.com



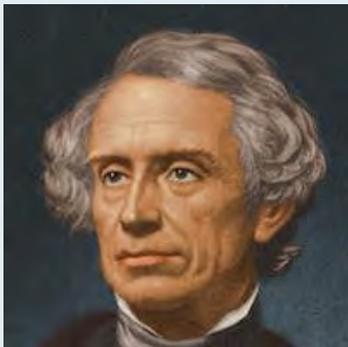
DID YOU KNOW.....

Samuel Morse, in his earlier career, was an accomplished painter.

He studied philosophy and mathematics at Yale University before turning his attention to the arts, eventually travelling to England in 1811 to study painting.

Following his return to the USA, he received commissions to paint portraits of former Presidents John Adams and James Monroe, several wealthy merchants in Charleston, South Carolina, and a series of allegorical works depicting the inner workings of the U.S. government to hang in the halls of Congress.

For the ardent nationalist Morse, an offer in 1825 to paint the Marquis de Lafayette—the French nobleman so inspired by the ideal of liberty espoused by the Declaration of Independence that he fought alongside the colonial army—was likely the pinnacle of his career.



In the 1800s a system of dot and dash signals was developed to convey telegrams over a single wire Telegraph system. Alfred Vale of the Bell telephone company, in America, developed this system which replaced the extremely cumbersome Telegraph systems that were English at the time. They were many different codes used on the Telegraph systems run by various groups, such as the railways and the Postal Service. Eventually one code was developed called the international code, which is more commonly known as Morse code after Samuel Morse.

Communications, via wide telegraphy using Morse code, became an economic reality in the mid 1840s, with systems in North America, Britain and Europe. Most were using overhead lines but a significant amount was buried using rubber insulated wire. There were many failures with the insulated wire in this early stage due to faults in the insulation created by the imperfect manufacturing processes of the time.

It wasn't until 1853 that an electric wire telegraph system was installed in Australia. It was between Melbourne and at Williamstown, and commenced operation in January 1854. That you saw a number of lines installed, connecting various places in the young Victorian colony.

Not to be outdone, the South Australian colony sought a Superintendent of telegraphs from Britain. Charles Todd accepted the appointment and arrived in Australia in November 1855. Within three months of arriving in Australia he had the first line operating between Adelaide and port Adelaide.

The first intercolonial Telegraph line was commissioned for business between South Australia and Victoria in July 1858. In October 1858 New South Wales was connected to Victoria and South Australia. Queensland was not connected to these three colonies until 1861. Tasmania was connected to Victoria in 1859 by undersea cable. Unfortunately it soon broke down and a reliable cable was not laid until 1869. Whilst Western Australia built telegraph lines to various parts of the colony, it was not until 1877 that it was connected to all other colonies. Once connected to the other colonies it was also automatically connected with the overland telegraph line through central Australia to Darwin and, as a consequence, two most places within the developed world.

Whilst all of this activity of installing telegraph lines around the coastal fringe of the Australian continent in the 1850s was happening, nothing at all was happening in the centre of Australia. In fact the centre of Australia from Adelaide through to where Darwin is now located, via the Alice Springs area, had not even been visited by a European. A number of small outposts were established around the coast of the Northern Territory, that was soon closed down due to the problems that they experienced. There was a lack of knowledge by the British colonists, of the great difference between conditions of living and working in temperate Britain, and in the tropical areas like the Northern Territory.

On the southern edge of the unexplored centre of Australia around the Flinders ranges, enterprising squatters had explored and utilised some land to graze their sheep, cattle and horses. Even so, there was only a handful of white people in this area. Communications with the outside world from the Flinders Ranges, still took several weeks, even when a conscious effort was made to contact anyone. Contact from the coastal area of the Northern Territory could take months by ship.

(Source: Outback Radio by Rodney Champness)

Members,

It has been decided that we should include a Treasurer's Report in "Channel Chatter" so you all have an idea how we stand financially. We have had a couple of busy months getting things together for our new base west of Mareeba – to be known as Mareeba Base. A lot of planning has been put into this project by many members – in particular our President, Kim and our Membership Officer, Geoff.

Most of the items required for the new base have been purchased and I am pleased to advise that our bank accounts are looking healthy with just over \$22,000.00 sitting there at the moment. With the number of new members joining this can only improve in the future.

The grant we received from the Queensland Government (\$18,500) has been spent on the new base plus some of our funds raised during the past year or so.

Anyone wishing more information can contact Janette (the treasurer) and she will be more than willing to pass it onto you.

STORY OF A LAND LOCKED SAILOR

Having sailed past Australia last year as part of my solo nonstop circumnavigation of the globe, I planned this year to come to Australia and see as much of it as possible.

With that in mind, I hired a campervan, knowing that living on that would be quite similar to living on my boat - but without the stormy seas and weather problems to contend with!

Kim, 7880, immediately offered, very kindly, to set me up with Austravel (which I'd started using last year when I got unexpectedly close to the Sth. Australia and Victoria coasts) and he ended up coming to Sydney, where my travels started, to bring a Codan radio and aerial for my van. Tony (VK2RI), another ham friend from Sydney, with whom I'd made radio contact a lot as I sailed around, had also generously offered to set me up with a ham radio rig. The idea was for me to keep in contact whilst on my land travels with a lot of the Aussie radio friends I'd made during my sailing, as well as keeping in contact for safety reasons with Kim, Colin (6355) and other operators via the regular Austravel scheds.

Because the Codan radio could be programmed for use on amateur frequencies as well as the Austravel commercial frequencies, I ended up with just that. Both Kim and Tony were kept very busy, one day soon after I arrived, installing the radio on my van. Tony also lent me a small radio to make contact with truck drivers if I wanted - "Ch40 is often useful if wanting to overtake," he said.

Fast forward to the Covid-19 pandemic taking hold By the time lockdown was being talked about, I'd visited the Blue Mountains, Canberra, the Riverina and Victoria and reached the Mt Gambier home of another ham friend via the lovely coast road. By then, a planned town talk and also a talk to the South. Australian Yacht Squadron in Adelaide, Dunsborough Y.C. and Fremantle S.C. were all being cancelled. I had to hurry over the S.A. border into W.A. three days after restricted entry came into force - quarantine was required of me but it was agreed it would start that Friday (27th March) and I'd self-isolate in Yarloop once I got there (a very kind border officer!).

With WA regional lockdown about to start on 1st April, I then had to hurry to get across the Albany-Walpole border... but managed to see a lot of the beautiful coast and Great Southern forests from Esperance to Denmark and then drove on westward to Cape Leeuwin, arriving just in time.

There I met with Kim who was to lead me the 'scenic way' via Cape Naturaliste and more lovely forests up to Yarloop to complete my quarantine (the police in Waroona did phone to check on me one day). The plan had been for me to stay for a week or two with Colin and Kim, exploring the SE and Perth areas but staying put over Easter weekend - "Traffic will be bad," Kim had said. Of course, Covid put paid to that... I stayed put but the roads were empty - no-one was allowed to travel anywhere! Thanks to Kim, I saw a lot of the lovely SE coastal areas and, eventually, with regional borders opened, got to see Perth and Fremantle.

My 1-2 week stay in Yarloop became almost 3 months because of the WA regional and State border closures - thanks to Colin and Di for putting up with me for that length of time! (I've also had two flights back to Canada, in June and August, cancelled by Qantas.) It was great to be able to make use of Kim's radio to chat to Austravel members and others - and it has also been good to meet up with quite a few members at the Yarloop 'bush camp' over a fabulous camp fire in the big ex-WWII-mine container - a wonderful heater in the cold winter's night air!

With NT and QLD borders looking to be opening in mid-July, I took off, finally, to explore WA to the north of Perth in late June, hoping to get over to Mareeba, via Kununurra and Alice Springs, by early August. The new Austravel base in Mareeba is already being worked on and expected to be ready for use soon. During those travels, I've been gold prospecting near Mt Magnet with Ian (1207) & Barb (also Allan (1957) & Joan turned up as well) and kept in fairly regular touch with people on Austravel scheds.....*continued page 19*



It's nice to just go camping with like-minded people, and so it was again in 2020 where other HF enthusiasts gathered (pre-covid) on what turned out to be a wet weekend. We arrived in the rain and left in the rain, but we did have two and a half days of good sunny weather.

16 vehicles and 31 campers arrived and braved the weather which made our weekend great.

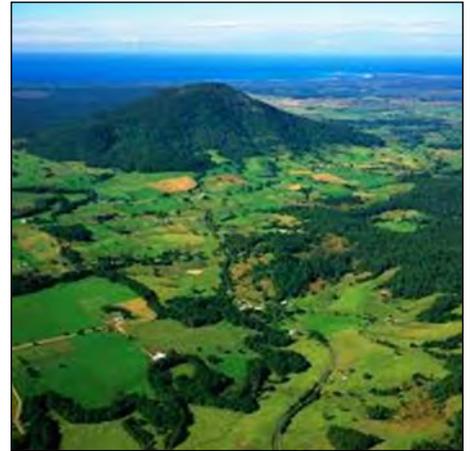
Thursday, we took a short drive to Harrington with morning tea at the Golf Club and the golf club made us very welcome I may add. We then moved along lunch at Crowdy Head for fish and chips.

Pumpkin soup and damper for dinner.....thanks to Reg for the pumpkins and Bob and Lorraine for helping us with the dampers and slices for dessert, which went down a treat.

Friday saw us drive up to Hannam Vale for morning tea, a very pretty area of the mid north coasts of NSW, we took up most of the room with our lot, but the café made more room.

Onto Comboyne for a scenic drive and a great lunch and look around, back to camp....a very pretty drive. Sausage sizzle and ice cream for dinner. (gees where are hungry lot of buggers aren't, we!)

Saturday saw markets open and trading and following lunch from the Hall, we all drove to Diamond Head and Laurieton with a necessary trip to the supermarket to pick up BBQ chickens, salads and desserts for dinner, which also went a treat.



A big thank you for all our helpers with the rain not blunting their enthusiasm for one bit!

Sunday breakfast was a no go. But morning tea at Rosie's cafe and a sausage casserole and more ice cream for dinner accompanied by more rain and mud.

Monday we all left in the rain after another visit to Rosie's. All in all, we think that attendees enjoyed our Johns River experience and hope to do it again in 2021, also it was great to see Margaret and Steven up for the day from the Hunter Valley.....see you all again very soon all the best wishes Lindsay and Jeannie (2262).

PS \$367 was raised which was donated to the Johns River hall committee!

EMERGENCY+ MOBILE PHONE APP...HANDY TO HAVE!

I have highlighted this mobile phone app (not associated with Austravel) in previous editions of Channel Chatter before and I feel all travellers should consider this as a "should have" tool.

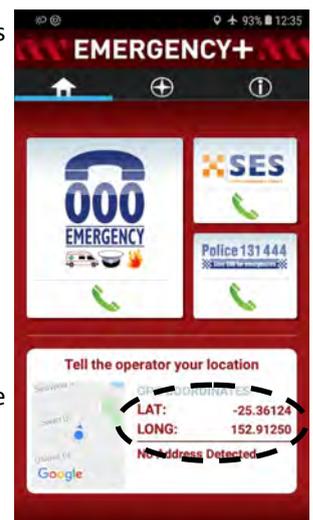
As soon as we leave home, we are most likely traveling in unfamiliar territory. If someone was seriously injured, your life or property being threatened, or you just witnessed a serious accident or crime, you are going to want to report it to triple zero.

One of the most important questions your triple zero responder will ask is the location where the emergency service needs to be sent. This app uses **GPS functionality** built into smart phones which provides an address and GPS data when in a mobile phone network, or out of mobile phone range - **it provides GPS data only**.

In amongst the various uses for this free app, which has no affiliation with Austravel SafetyNets' own Out-n-About app.....is its ability to provide the user with GPS data which in itself maybe very useful in an emergency.

For those Austravel members who have older HF radios with no inherent GPS capability, selcalling Austravel's H.E.L.P. (4357) emergency system with the knowledge that you have GPS information at your finger tips, adds a level of location accuracy that can make significant difference in attaining the assistance you need, where you need it!

Of course vehicle GPS systems associated with Navman, Tom Tom and Garmin etc. also have the same data. Which is also OK in these situations, but you need to know where to find it, if you choose to use those platforms, then practice how to find it, but the Triple Zero app, is right there on the home screen and easy to find.



I'm sure that all members have a coronavirus story that involves details of your lockdown adventure. I'm sure that at future gatherings, many of those stories will be shared. I'm also sure that when you leave home on your travels you have some sort of a plan that involves a return date sometime in the future.

We (9618 Ken and Jan) are no different, departure from home 10 January with an expected return date sometime in September. Off to Tasmania arriving Monday 3 February and departing the island on Anzac Day. The Great Ocean Road, a trip up the Centre and onto Mareeba to hopefully contribute to the development of the North Queensland Austravel Base.

It was our long-awaited trip to the Apple Isle with the intention of an anti-clockwise trip enjoying as many of the sights and experiences as we could in late summer and early autumn. On Friday 14 February at Stanley, Bonnie our border collie punctured her foot requiring a visit to the vet in Smithton. Serious infection followed requiring surgery and nearly five weeks of daily dressings.

Meanwhile, the Corona virus discussions and related travel restrictions developed rapidly in Tasmania. It was suggested to visitors from the North Island that going home was a smart move. The procession to the Spirit of Tasmania was evident and caravan parks, camping areas and free camps began to close. Visitors were permitted to stay in caravan parks until their scheduled date of travel on the ferry.

Bonnie's treatment at the vet was not complete and fortunately for us, we were deemed as permanents in the Smithton caravan park and could sign documentation to become citizens of Tasmania. That meant we would be parked up at Smithton until such time as the travel restrictions were lifted. 15 June was to be the magic date when the wheels could start turning and we could once again become tourists. In the meantime, we adapted well to life in Smithton and have many cherished and treasured memories.

We felt safe at the Smithton Caravan Park, socially distanced from everyone

parked by the Duck River.



Following is a summary of some activities in which we engaged to maintain sanity.

- Daily walks around Smithton were always interesting. Many days required wet weather protection. Bonnie was unable to walk very far so we adapted life for all of us with a second-hand stroller purchased on the Smithton buy and sell page. We were known to many, spoke with regulars, waved to by many, pointed at by many, photographed by a few, and laughed at often. That was Bonnie's transport to and from the vet most days with a few exceptions because of weather.



- Vet visits were a daily ritual for five weeks. For some time, the amputation of Bonnie's foot was on the cards unless infection could be kept



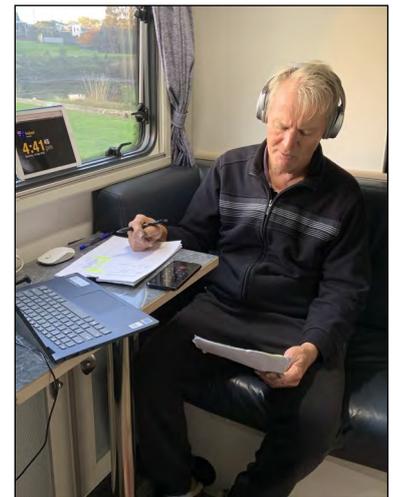
in check.

- In the last seven years, the grey water tank on our caravan has increasingly developed an unpleasant odour. I had time on my hands to think about a permanent solution to the odour so I installed inspection port holes. It was not a pleasant job initially but I'm pleased to report that the problem



is solved.

- For those of you who have done or do skeds when travelling, you know that having good phone reception makes doing skeds much easier. Four bars of 4G signal in Smithton meant great connections to all the bases. Whilst I did a few skeds in Tasmania, I really enjoyed talking



with many others in lockdown.

- Jan's suggestion to keep my mind engaged and to ensure her sanity, was for me to enroll in some online study. None better than the Radio and Electronics School. Link included <http://www.res.net.au/index.php?cmd=home>. For a very nominal fee, I was able to study for my Standard Amateur Radio license.

On returning home, I look forward to doing more learning through the school.

As an Austravel SafetyNet member, I believe I can now speak with authority on how well the Shepparton Base 3199 provides support to members travelling in Tasmania. The sked operators of a morning on Channels 1 & 3 can be heard unbelievably well. Making phone calls on the radio and transmitting GPS positions were always so clear.

We also had the opportunity to travel via Shepparton Base on our way to Tasmania to collect a radio part for return to Brisbane. We met Geoff Russell who hosts and supports the base for the club with his expertise and an amazing antenna high in the sky. We also saw him at work doing some work on the base.

It's back to the north island for us shortly knowing that we will take many special memories with us. We will keep adding the memorable moments to the list until we board the Spirit of Tasmania in the near future. Hopefully we will catch up with many members at the Annual Meeting in Blackbutt in September and hear about what you did during the lockdown.

In hindsight, maybe we should have known this adventure would not be without its challenges as one was thrown our way 40 kms from home on day 1.



A bad omen 40 kilometres from home
.....bugger!



Geoff Russell (7646), our benevolent Shepparton base host, switching out a piece of hardware that decided to go "belly up".

HAS YOUR MEMBER DETAILS CHANGED LATELY?

Just a reminder to all members that if your membership details have changed recently, have you told us? Its important to update any of your Austravel membership details so we have the correct information to satisfy our obligations to AMSA, and to ensure accuracy for your Out-n-About subscription and H.E.L.P.(4357) emergency details.

- Home address
- PO Box address
- Email address
- Mobile phone number
- HF Radio details- make/model
- Vehicle details-make/model/colour/rego number/rego statehood
- Do you have a sat phone?
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- H.E.L.P. (4357) In Case of Emergency details
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Rod Meres	NSW	2218	Donald Atkinson	WA	1883
Matt Fox	NSW	1022	Mark Tomsett	WA	5590
Travis Perry	NSW	7771	Rikky Gibbons	WA	6363
John Harper	NSW	5675	Ray & Clare Archibald	WA	1923
Jamie Sonogo	NSW	4211	Jack & Sue Robbins	SA	4020
Austin Taylor	NSW	3220			
Gavin Deneen	NSW	3840			
Stephen Pescod	QLD	0984			
Phillip Hall	QLD	0174			
Greg King & Sue Madden	QLD	1963			
Aaron Dwyer	QLD	5053			
Nicholas Taylor & Erin Buttimer	VIC	1027			
George Croatto	VIC	3071			
Peter Murphy	VIC	1371			
Adrian Robinson	VIC	0328			
Gary Alder	WA	7284			
Dave Willis	WA	5953			
Christopher Raffaele	WA	6169			
Andrew Williams	WA	0981			
Keith Perry	WA	1701			
Wayne Douglass	WA	6430			



Out and About 4 x 4 Club

4 Wheel Driving, Camping, Social events, Meetings

For all enquiries or membership questions,

Email president@outandabout4x4club.org.au

Or secretary@outandabout4x4club.org.au

Come to our next meeting: Tuesday November 20, 7:15pm

Beechboro Scout Hall, Lot 17 Lord St, Caversham 6055 WA.

Find us on Facebook

Out and About 4x4 Club Inc



<http://www.outandabout4x4club.org.au/>



Four Wheel Drive Western Australia
(WA 4WD Association INC.)

I made good use of the Austravel H.E.L.P.(4357) emergency call system when I suffered a flat tyre in the middle of nowhere and could not get the wheel nuts to budge - Kim was able to contact Colin (I had no phone signal) who got help to me fairly quickly by phoning the camp site I'd not long left. Thanks, Kim & Colin!

Unfortunately, I'm now in Paraburdoo with a broken down Mercedes van and no Mercedes authorised centre closer than Perth... Time will tell how this will work out but the nearby Rio Tinto mine management have been wonderfully supportive in 'hosting' me for over a week in their FIFO accommodation (with great food!) and towing my van in to Paraburdoo for repair. Two of their botanists had luckily come by just as I was talking to Kim on the radio quite soon after I'd had to stop (again, in a place with no telephone signal) and they got the mine's Emergency Services into action to give me a lift into town!

My travels have shown me a few of the many varied and wonderful places in Oz - and I've met a lot of great people. I'm looking forward to more of the same!



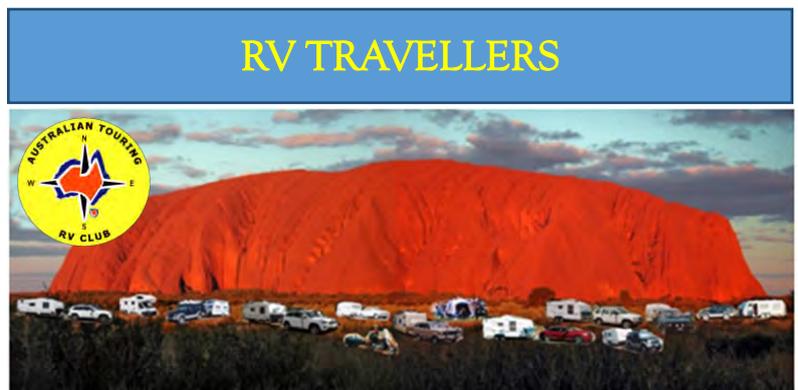
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Do you have any social media items to share with fellow Austravel members?

Need help or guidance, or wish to submit something?..... Pim Cahill (7255) is our Social Media officer.

Email Pim: -
socialmedia@austravel.org.au



Members Market

Colin Ingham (6355) frequently have used Codan NGT HF radios complete with 9350 autotune antennas and GPS. These units are refurbished and come with a limited warranty for \$1,800 each.

Contact Colin Ingham (6355) 0417 097 043
E: colin.ingham@netwest.com.au



Netwest's Radio & Electronics Repair

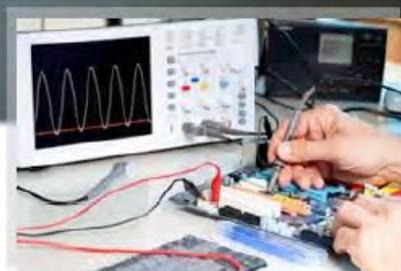


Home Services About

Netwest's Radio and Electronics Repair Centre

- Transceivers, Auto tuner repairs, Power supplies
Codan antenna repairs
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Services



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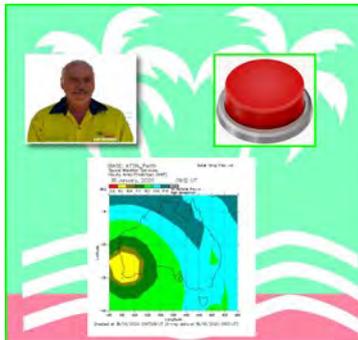
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South Australia comes up trumps again.

Forget the fact that South Australia has some of the best wines in the world. Forget that it has some amazing outback roads and tracks to travel and sights to see.

Forget even that it is home to legendary Golden North ice cream. South Australia's latest scoop....the return of the Polly Waffle!

The Polly Waffle was invented in 1947 by Melbourne based Hoadley's Chocolate. After Hoadley's, the Polly Waffle was acquired by Rowntree's in 1972 and then by Nestlé in 1988 and disappeared from sight 10 years ago.

But now a family-owned South Australian chocolate company, Robert Menz, has signed a deal to buy the brand off Nestlé for an undisclosed sum. They also got their hands on the famous recipe.

The fourth generation family-owned business are the one's behind acquiring Violet Crumble from Nestle last year — because of that it has helped them employ 100 staff and turn over more than \$30 million. Mr Sims, whose grandfather founded Robert Menz in 1908, said since buying the iconic Violet Crumble, he has been "bombarded" with questions as to when he is going to bring back the Polly Waffle.

Polly Waffles should be available on confectionary shelves soon.

IT'S COMING BACK!!!



THATS FUNNY!

AN IRISH BLONDE IN A CASINO

An attractive blonde from Cork, Ireland arrived at the casino. She seemed a little intoxicated and bet twenty-thousand Euros on a single roll of the dice.

She said, *"I hope you don't mind, but I feel much luckier when I'm completely naked."* With that, she stripped from the neck down, rolled the dice and with an Irish brogue yelled, *"Come on, baby, Mama needs new clothes!"*

As the dice came to a stop, she jumped up and down and squealed: *"YES! YES! I WON, I WON!"*

She hugged each of the dealers and then picked up her winnings (and her clothes) and quickly departed.

The dealers stared at each other dumbfounded. Finally, one of them asked, *"What did she roll?"*

The other answered, *"I don't know - I thought you were watching the dice."*

MORAL OF THE STORY:

*Not all Irish are drunks.
Not all blondes are dumb.
But all men.... are men.*



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Watts Communications	Codan, Barrett, Icom, Bushcomm Antennas www.wattscm.com.au / sales@wattscm.com.au	Fyshwick ACT 02 6280 6416
Wes Follett	Codan, Barrett, Icom, Bushcomm Antennas wfollett@bigpond.com /0412 885 817	Deniliquin 03 5881 3189
Eacom Communications	Codan www.eacomm.com.au / ian.blackburn@eacom.com.au	Griffiths NSW 02 6964 2033
D.L. Communications	Codan, Barrett dlcserv@hotmail.com	Merimbula NSW 0418 280 270
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Fettell Communications	Barrett www.fettell.com.au	Port Macquarie NSW 02 658 11341
Action Communications	Icom www.actioncommunications.net.au	Kingswood NSW 1800 802 948
Karera Communications	Icom www.karera.com / sales@karera.com	Tuggerah NSW 02 4355 1599
Phoenix HF Communications	Servicing most brands of HF	Kareela NSW 02 9544 6355
Independent Communications	Servicing most brands of HF radios www.independentcommunications.com.au	Tamworth NSW 02 6765 7555
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Central Communications	Codan, Barrett www.centralcomms.com.au / sales @centralcomms.com.au	Alice Springs NT 08 8952 2388
Comspec (NT) P/L	Codan, Barrett www.comspec.com.au / sales@comspec.com.au	Alice Springs NT 08 8953 1903
Combined Comms Solutions	Barrett www.combinedcom.com.au / info@combinedcom.com.au	Darwin NT 08 8941 0644
ITS Communications	Codan, also servicing most brands of HF radios info @itscomm.com.au	Winnellie NT 08 8984 4855
Multi Voltage Maintenance	Codan, Barrett, Scout All HF radios catered for, older units channelized (Andrew Sutherland)	Yeppoon Qld. 0418 814 978
hfradiosales.com On-Line Store	Codan, Barrett Sales Service (incl. Qmac) and spare parts. www.hfradio.com.au / email: sales@hfradio.com.au	Brisbane Qld. 0408 345 208
Mobile Communications	Codan, Icom www.mobilecomms.com.au	Brisbane Qld. 07 3373 2345
RF Technologies	Servicing most brands of HF radios www.rftech.com.au / maxr@rftech.com.au	Brisbane Qld. 07 3279 7177
Kyle Communications	Codan, Barrett, Icom www.kyle.com.au / kylecomms@specsafe.com.au	Burpengary Qld. 07 3888 7899
Miles Electronics	Codan, Barrett www.mileselectronics.com.au / john@mileselect.com.au	Cairns Qld. 07 4035 1133
Reids Radiodata	Codan reidsradiodata@bigpond.com	Cowra NSW 02 6341 1544

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Linemaster Marine Electronics	Barrett www.linemaster.com.au / sales@linemaster.com.au	Maroochydore Qld. 07 5479 6851
TCQ Communications	Codan, Barrett accounts@tcq.net.au	Mount Isa Qld. 07 4743 4388
Capricorn Communications	Codan, Icom www.capcom.com.au / sales@capcom.com.au	Nth. Rockhampton Qld. 07 4926 1172
Beaney's Communications	Barrett, Icom www.beaneys.com.au	Rockhampton 07 4927 5049
Advance Communications	Codan, & Barrett (www.advancecomms.com.au) E: peter.wrensted@advancecomms.com.au (mobile 0418 987 356)	Roma 07 4592 1111
Comptel P/L	Codan www.comtel.com.au / enquiries@comptel.com.au	Toowoomba Qld. 07 4639 8999
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Norcomm P/L	Codan, + servicing of most brands of HF radios www.norcomm.com.au / sales@norcomm.com.au	Townsville Qld. 0408 722 833
Digital Radio Solutions	Codan, with service to most makes of HF www.marktek.com.au / contact@marktek.com.au	Adelaide S.A. 0418 845 518
Electric Bug	Codan, Icom, Barrett www.electricbug.com.au / sales@electricbug.com.au	Adelaide S.A. 08 8346 9234
International Comms. Systems	Codan, Barrett, Icom, Wagner, Hawk www.intcomsys.com.au / intcomm@intermode.on.net	Port Adelaide S.A. 08 8447 3688
Marktek Installations	Codan, servicing most brands of HF www.marktek.com.au / mark@marktek.com.au	Adelaide S.A. 08 8250 2888
Northern Communications	Service of all brands of HF radios phil.48@bigpond.com	Gawler S.A. 08 8522 6081
HF Radio Solutions	Codan & Codan Auto Tune Repair www.hfradiosolutions.com.au / ivan@hfradiosolutions.com.au	Renmark S.A. 0428 882 719
Desmond Communications	Codan, Barrett, Icom desmondcomms@dodo.com.au	Howrah Tas. 03 6228 1331
Marcom Watson	Codan, Barrett, Icom, www.marcomwatson.com.au / info@marcomwatson.com.au	Launceston Tas. 1800 630 611
Weeks Radio Communications	Codan sales@weeksradio.com	Alexandra Vic. 03 5772 1292
Bairnsdale Communications	Codan, Icom sales@bcomms.com.au	Bairnsdale Vic. 03 5152 4622
Lara Electronics	Codan & Codan Auto Tune Repair www.laraelectronics.com.au / sales@laraelectronics.com.au	Geelong Vic. 0418 599 355
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AUSTRAVEL SAFETY NET Inc. HF Radio Allied Traders List

Connecting Austravel Members To HF Radio Sales / Service Providers'
(Last update April 2018)



South Eastern Communications	Sales & service of most brands of HF radios. www.secomms.com.au	Rosebud Vic. 0434 720 006
AA Radio Services	Codan, Icom, + service of most brands of HF radios. www.aaradio.com.au / sales@aaradio.com.au	Vermont Vic. 03 9264 8333
Earth 2 Ocean Communications	Barrett, Codan, Icom sales and service www.earth2ocean.com.au / sales@earth2ocean.com.au	Bunbury W.A. 08 9721 1730
Esperance Communications	Barrett, Icom + servicing of most brands of HF radios www.esperancecomms.com.au / service@esperancecomms.com.au	Esperance W.A. 08 9071 3344
ACS Communications	Codan, Icom www.acs-marcomm.com / faith@acs-marcom.com	Perth W.A. 08 9277 4655
Allcom Communications	Codan, Icom www.allcom.com.au / allcom@allcom.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9479 4997
Barrett Communications	Barrett www.barrettcommunications.com.au / information@barrettcommunications.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9434 1700
Mobile Masters	Barrett (sales no service) www.mobilemasters.com.au / mail@mobilemasters.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9492 1777
Transair Two Way Radio	Codan, Icom www.transair.com.au / transair@transair.com.au	Perth W.A. 08 9209 2225
RF Waves Australia	Codan, GME, Motorola HF VHF Repair & Service www.rfwaves.com.au / email: cpg@rfwaves.com.au	Hammersley W.A. 08 934 271 161

Austravel Safety Net Inc. Members please note.....The purpose of this list of "Allied Traders" is to offer a ready reference which may provide you with a source of sales and/ or service assistance when travelling away or near your home location.

Please provide feed back to the "Channel Chatter" newsletter editor if you find information contained misleading or incorrect.

Allied Traders...please review your listing and advise the "Channel Chatter" newsletter editor of any listing detail that is incorrect or requires review. Additionally, if you wish to be removed from our Allied Trader e-mail contact list, please advise.

(editor contact details contained on page one)