

NZART Hamcram Guideline

This document has been compiled to assist branches with the successful running of a hamcram weekend. It is intended to be read in parallel with the examination procedure document. Should this document conflict with the examination procedure document, the examination procedure document shall take priority.

Planning

Planning a hamcram weekend may seem daunting but when you break down the tasks they can be delegated out – many hands make light work.

You will need to assign someone to complete the following tasks before the hamcram weekend

- Arrange a venue
- Advertising and marketing
- Set and collect fees
- Arrange catering (if required)
- Assign tutors, exam supervisors
- Registering candidates
- Printing the exam
- Overall project manager / team leader

Nominate a person to complete each of the tasks above – one person may undertake several tasks. For some of the tasks the person need not be a ham.

Project Manager

Above all else, it is worth appointing one of the team members to act as a project manager or team leader. It is this persons role to ensure that each task is completed as required and that communication between team members is maintained. This could be as simple as status reports amongst the team or minuted meetings. You will likely find that while the first hamcram may take a bit more effort subsequent hamcrams become easier as team members understand their roles and tasks.

Marketing

It is advisable to market your hamcram as far and wide as possible. The following might be good avenues to consider marketing your hamcram.

- Club newsletter. Yes all the recipients are likely hams but they will have relatives and friends that may have expressed an interest in the past.
- Local facebook groups (the modern equivalent of the community noticeboard)
- Search and rescue and civil defense groups.
- Infoline (send an email to NZART HQ)
- Make sure you also update NZART HQ so the hamcram calendar can be updated

Any other ideas you might have, do that too. There is no such thing as too much marketing. Think – if there is an interested member in the community – how would they find out about this?

It is also worthwhile keeping a track of any casual enquiries the club has had regarding amateur radio from the community, whether from casual communication or via club activities. Reach back out to these people when preparing for your hamcram.

Fee structure

There are many ways to consider how much to charge candidates for attending the hamcram, and how much the club wishes to subsidise or sponsor candidates.

When forming a budget consider the following

- Venue costs (if any)
- Printing costs (if any). This includes whether or not you intend to print the study guide for candidates, as well as exam printing expenses
- Catering for morning and afternoon tea, and lunch (if any)
- Any reimbursement costs for the tutors or other helpers (eg travel and accommodation)
- ARXing costs. This can be collected and paid in bulk at registration or paid for by each individual candidate as they pass the exam.

Venue considerations

You may already have a venue in mind, however please consider the following points when selecting a venue for running a hamcram

- In the main learning room ensure there is a usable white board, and a screen for the projector. The white board should not be considered as the screen as it will be needed independently.
- The room should be large enough for the number of candidates expected. Sufficient desk space should be considered.
- The room should have sufficient heat, light, and be free from external distractions from learning.
- There should be access to ablution facilities, and fresh drinking water. Tea and Coffee facilities is an extra bonus if available. Remember to task someone to bring fresh milk.
- Room for the examination should also be considered. While this could be the same space as the learning room, a separate space will be required for marking and for candidates to mingle after the exam, while not disturbing those that may still be sitting their exam. The requirements for the examination environment is set out in the examination procedure document.
- Also for consideration is who should supply consumables such as whiteboard markers + eraser, and a data projector. If this is to be the tutor(s) make sure this has been communicated with them.
- If there is space it is a good idea to have a functioning radio or two on display for candidates to listen to and observe during the various breaks. If not, access to a KiwiSDR site may be used.

Registering Candidates

Ensure that the appropriate information is collected for each candidate, and is stored securely (ie not shared where data could be harvested for means other than the purpose it was collected for). Ensure you have the full name, contact email address and phone number for each candidate.

2 weeks before the hamcram send a reminder email (remember to use BCC unless the candidates have agreed to their email addresses being shared within the group) regarding the details of the hamcram weekend, and the fact that 3 topics (1, 2 and 25) are required to be studied prior to the hamcram weekend. Encourage candidates to quiz themselves on these topics, or to find a partner to quiz them. Discuss whether they are expected to bring their own lunch or whether the course is going to be catered, whether

they need to bring a study guide or whether the club will provide one for them, what time to arrive, and what to expect for the weekend. Introduce the tutors to the candidates. Show the candidates where to find the question bank and the exam generator online (NZART website). Ensure that an offer is made to reach out to the organisers or tutors if they have any questions relating to the weekend or the study material. Also remind candidates to bring photo ID with them on the Sunday, and if they were not born in New Zealand, to also bring their permanent residency or citizenship papers. If they hold a New Zealand passport, this suffices as evidence of citizenship.

Tutors

The hamcram can be delivered with one tutor however it is advisable if more than one tutor is available to deliver the material. Different subject matter experts may exist within the club that can deliver a number of different topics. The following points are to assist with tutoring. Please read this in conjunction with the exam procedure document.

- When delivering the material, don't be tempted by rabbit holes (going too deep into the science). Ensure the information imparted is at the same level that is to be examined. There is much to be learned in amateur radio. The advanced technical theory can be taught after the certificate has been obtained if there is a desire for further learning.
- Ensure a clear, and open dialogue is maintained. If unsure of volume and clarity seek feedback from the candidates or others in the room. Ensuring engagement with the students is important, so feel free to add personal experience, or humorous anecdotes to weave into the dialogue.
- Tutors are encouraged to bring along samples of relevant radio parts and equipment to the topics they are delivering to demonstrate, or any teaching aids to help visualize specific topics.
- As well as the tutor and candidates there may be other spectators in the room (most often club members interested in the process). While spectators are welcome, ensure that they are briefed beforehand that the tutor has the lead, and that interjections from the spectators should be kept to a minimum and only if necessary. While a conversation between the tutor and a spectator during class may be useful for the tutor and the spectator, it rarely adds useful value to the candidates.
- None of the tutors should have access to the exam before the candidates.

Exam and paperwork

A person should be assigned to print the exam paperwork in line with the examination procedure document. Ensure sufficient copies are printed in accordance with this document, and that the tutors are only given access to the examination papers at the same time as the candidates.

The process post exam for issuing callsigns is also detailed in the exam procedure document.

Candidate follow-up

It is vital that each candidate is welcomed into the hobby after they receive their certificate. An email should be sent to all candidates outlining the various forms of hobby participation. A template email is included in Appendix 1 of this document and may be modified to suit your specific branch. Make sure you update the highlighted sections with your own specifics, and feel free to add any other useful information as you see fit. Also include a sample log sheet for the candidates to record their 50 contacts on (either electronically via this email or physically at the end of the exam or at the hamcram+). A log template is available on the NZART webpage (on the same page as the question bank and study guide).

Ensure the new hams are welcomed into the club at meetings in what can sometimes be perceived as an old boys club. Ensure that they are provided an opportunity to be included and, if appropriate, delegated tasks within the club activities.

Hamcram +

It is recommended that 2 or so weeks after the hamcram course a half day course is put on introducing hams into the various aspects of amateur radio. Where the hamcram covers the theory required to obtain the certificate, the hamcram + is designed to introduce the candidates into the real world of amateur radio, and potentially provide an opportunity to make some contacts. The following topics are recommended for the hamcram+

- AREC
- Club activities
- Local repeaters and simplex frequencies
- Contests (eg Jock White Field Day, CQWW, VHF Field Day)
- Awards (eg DXCC, SOTA, Portable activities)
- Any other special interest members may have that would be relevant to new hams to consider

Take some time to encourage the new hams to make some contacts on the radio and get past the mic shyness. Simplex contacts between rooms are an ideal way to do this, or have someone standing by on the local repeater to pass out contacts.

Many clubs have slide packs to cover some of these topics already, or you can develop your own. Ensure an agenda is set before the session so that time is adhered to – we know hams can lose track of time when discussing their favourite topic in amateur radio.

Appendix 1 – Post Hamcram email template.

Welcome to Amateur Radio

Well you have done it. You have passed the exam and have now been issued a license.

So what comes next? There are lots of things to be thinking about. And a lot of the answers will depend on what you want to get out of amateur radio.

Here are some starters.

You have been made a member of The **Ekatahuna** branch that hosted your weekend. This will keep you in touch with local activities. If you have traveled from afar ensure you also reach out to your local branch. Branch contact details can be found here:

<https://www.nzart.org.nz/contact/branches/list>

Subscribe to Infoline. Email nzart@nzart.org.nz to request to join.

New radio equipment can be purchased from New Zealand outlets

RWB Communications (Icom distributors) here: <https://rwb.co.nz/>

Techoman here: <https://techoman.co.nz/>

Or Trademe or a local used equipment sale.

Your local branch meetings are held on:

- **Third Tuesday of every month at 1930 at XXXXX, 111 ZZZZZ Street.**

Your local club contact is **Someone**. He is copied into this email.

Branch nets are held on **999** repeater on **Wednesday evenings at 2000.**

Your local repeaters are on **147.200 (+ split) or 147.050 (+ split). National System on 434.900 (+ split, no tail).**

Facebook groups

Join the following groups on Facebook

- ZL Amateur Radio & Friends
- ZL SOTA and other /P
- Newbie Hams Support Group

Other useful sites to visit

www.qrz.com

Set up a profile on there, other hams may look you up if they hear you. Share as much or as little as you feel comfortable.

www.sota.org.uk.

If you wish to activate or chase in the sota award program – Start here.

Also local sota website here - <https://zl-sota.org/>. You can subscribe to the zl-sota email reflector (join tab) as well.

You can use this log sheet to keep track of your first 50 contacts – and any contacts going forward. **See attached.**

Or you can use logging software (I use logger32 but there are plenty of others).

If you wish to join AREC – go here: www.arec.nz

Jock White Field Day is the last weekend of February. Your local branch will be hosting a station. Please come forward to your branch and offer to participate or even assist with the organizing in some way. [Jock White Memorial Field Day | New Zealand Association of Radio Transmitters](#)

Someone will be in touch with you whether they run a hamcram + session to recap some of the “real world” amateur radio activities about including AREC, awards, contests, and other activities.

There is a lot of other information available.

Please maintain your membership with NZART (you will receive an invoice late next year for the following year). This is the association that protects access to our frequencies and our ability to have a hobby.

List of everyone that has passed

- ZL1ZZZ Joe Blogs

My contact details are

Insert your contact details here

Well done everyone. It was great to meet you all this weekend. I hope to work you on the air.

73's.