

THE WORLD BELOW 400 GHz

The Periodical Newsletter of the
WAIKATO VHF GROUP Inc.,
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WAIKATO VHF GROUP EXECUTIVE

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An Update from the Committee

At the last Committee meeting, it was decided to send out a Newsletter to members, to keep them up to date with some of the activity that has been happening. It's disappointing we have not been able to meet in person, but hopefully we will be able to meet face-to-face for the Annual General Meeting in March.

WAIHI NORTH '5475 REPEATER – OPERATIONAL AGAIN – from Ian Brown ZL1TAT

We welcomed our Waihi North repeater back on the air on 20th November following an absence of 141 days. A longer than anticipated absence commenced when the repeater radio plus power supply shelves were removed for repairs following discovery of serious rat damage when the storm damaged antenna was replaced in late June. An interim report including a photo of the chewed battery voltage panel meter was published in our August 2021 newsletter. Here's a summary of work carried out on that installation:

Extensive cleaning of surfaces covered with rat urine and faeces.

Rat urine had eaten through paint within the power supply rack-mounting shelf causing the underlying steel to rust. This was stripped back, cleaned and re-painted.

Chewed wiring within power supply shelf was repaired, plus the panel meter, and a triac and fuse in the battery charger were replaced.

Failed Tx PA (repeater power output had dropped to under 5W, that fault wasn't caused by rat damage). Icom NZ agent repaired this after delayed importation of replacement semiconductor from Japan.

A perforated aluminium cover has been fabricated and is now fitted over the power supply shelf to block vermin access within (see photo below).

Peppermint oil (which rats don't like) has been laid along and near trails they appeared to have followed to gain access under the canvas cover enclosing our repeater equipment. One trail appeared to be along a wooden brace penetrating the canvas cover to secure the top of the rack to the wall behind, this also supports the mains supply cable plus an auxiliary earth. Rats had chewed the hole through the canvas cover larger! An aluminium guard has now been fitted over this brace, to obstruct vermin access similar to the guards fitted on boat mooring ropes.

Our intention to reinstall this equipment and recommission the repeater before the end of August was foiled when Hamilton's Covid19 lockdown was imposed, resulting in six weeks additional delay. When our equipment was eventually returned to site, the site owner advised the automatic rat trap installed earlier had caught two rats! Those probably won't be the last who'll seek shelter and warmth inside the shed, however we trust additional anti-vermin measures now installed do the trick – a clear message awaits them now! The test will come with the onset of winter next year when vermin again seek a warmer home. It costs real money to keep these repeater networks operational (which annual subscriptions to the Waikato

VHF Group help fund). Waihi Branch 43 has generously donated \$1139.18 to offset the significant cost of these repairs, which is much appreciated.



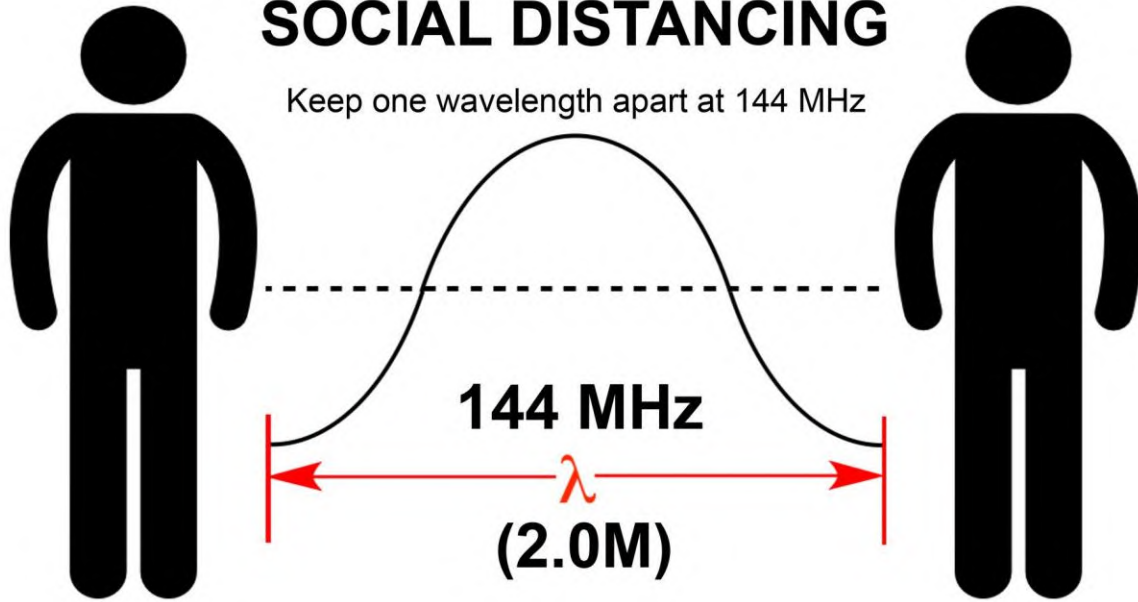
Perforated aluminium cover now fitted over power supply shelf. The plywood block at its rear (left) has been doped with peppermint oil as an additional rat deterrent.

This photo was taken prior to re-installation of the canvas cover enclosing the rack.

Amateur radio enthusiast guide to

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Keep one wavelength apart at 144 MHz



AMATEUR RADIO FILLS MY LIFE

(AND EMPTIES MY WALLET)

**IT ALSO FILLS MY JUNK DRAWERS,
MY ATTIC, MY GARAGE, MY CLOSETS,
THE SPARE BEDROOM, AND DOZENS
OF BOXES IN MY BASEMENT.**

The Waikato VHF Group financial year starts on 1 January - a reminder that from that date subscriptions for 2022 will be due, as follows:-

Member & Associate Member - \$25.00;

Family & Club membership - \$30.00

Student membership - \$15.00.

See [HERE](#) for renewal details.

See [HERE](#) for new member details

The committee wish you all compliments of the season and we hope that in 2022 we shall be able to have meetings as near as to normal as possible.

Seasons Greetings from:-

David King (ZL1GDK)

Neill Ellis (ZL1TAJ)

Gavin Petrie (ZL1GWP)

Ian Brown (ZL1TAT)

Tom Bevan (ZL1THG)

Morris Beale (ZL1ANF)

David McMillan (ZL1TLQ)