

ZS6KTS NEWS BULLETIN

Good evening, it is Tuesday 23rd of September 2025.

This is **ZS6KTS**, being operated by Anton ZS6WG, with the weekly news bulletin of the Kempton Park Amateur Radio Technical Society.

This bulletin is being transmitted on the 2m Kempton Park Repeater, on 145.6625 MHz

Only if Echolink is available: Echolink users can connect to ZS6KTS, or node 8041 (or if club Echolink is not available ZS0AWA-L), to listen to and partake in the news bulletin.

Welcome to everyone on frequency. Please stay tuned for some interesting SARL and Club news items.

SARL NEWS:

SILENT KEY:

It is with deep regret that we announce that the key of Barrie Brokensha, ZS6AJY, went silent on Thursday, 11 September 2025. Barrie was a member of the SARL from 1947 and will be remembered as a keen and experienced CW operator. Owing to ill health, Barrie was moved to a frail-care facility. We extend our sincere condolences to his daughter, Elmarie, his family and friends.

THE OFFICE AT THE NARC CLOSED THIS WEEK:

Kelley Dorey is taking leave from Monday 22 to Friday 26 September 2025. The Office at the National Amateur Radio Centre will therefore be closed for the week.

YOUR PICO BALLOON KIT:

To help you get all the components needed for your Club's pico balloon project, contact Gert Botha, ZS6GC, as soon as possible on WhatsApp 082 771 0663. Gert is arranging a bulk order to help reduce costs. Send your name, your QTH, your mobile number, and specify how many kits you require. Each kit includes a Pi Pico, Jetpack boards, a 60-inch balloon, and solar cells. Gert has taken over the ordering of pico balloon spares from Gideon for now.

THE FLIGHT REPORT OF ZS1ERZ-12 PICO BALLOON:

The high-altitude pico balloon ZS1ERZ-12 was successfully launched from the Ystervark Point Lighthouse on Saturday, 16 August 2025, as part of the International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend (ILLW). On Wednesday, 17 September, it completed its third circumnavigation of the planet. As of Friday, 19 September, it had completed 111,743 km over a period of 33 days with an average speed of 141 km/h. The top speed of 301 km/h was recorded on 1 September.

A summary of the flight: the first lap took about 12 days, ending 28 August; the second lap took about 9 days, ending 5 September; the third lap took about 12 days, ending 17 September; and the balloon is now on its fourth lap. On Friday, 19 September, it was over Western Australia.

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DO YOU REMEMBER THE FLIGHT OF BACAR-12 IN 2024?

Well for those that may not be aware, BACAR-13 is planning to travel to the edge of space on Saturday 11 October at around 07:30 CAT and as 2025 is the SARL centenary, this flight is going to be one to remember.

For those that may not know, BACAR means a weather Balloon Carrying Amateur Radio and BACAR-13 will be the Secunda ARC's thirteenth launch of a balloon to the edge of space. The Secunda ARC is the guru when it comes to launching the BACAR weather balloons and as they did in 2024 the Secunda Club invited all interested Clubs and individuals to fly payloads on BACAR if they would like to do so. The Secunda ARC does all the heavy lifting, they manage all the logistics, obtain the necessary flight permissions, supply the required flight transponder and recovery parachute payload. They also make all necessary arrangements with the Hamnet tracking and recovery bloodhounds, who, together with the Sasolburg ARC Club members and their tracking command and control station built into a caravan for ultimate mobility, track and recover the payloads once the balloon returns to earth.

All that those flying payloads have to do is, design, build and test their 10 x 10 cm CubeSat style payloads, ensure their payload remains under the 500 g weight limit, register their payloads in advance of the flight with the BACAR team and arrive on the flight line with their payload early in the morning on launch day, where the payload will be included in the BACAR payload string. BACAR-13 on launch is expected to soar to an altitude of 30 km or more, which is bordering on the edge of space and deep into the stratosphere. At this altitude you can obtain some beautiful photographs of the curvature of the earth and achieve amazing line of sight coverage for the onboard transmitters.

Do you have to build a payload to participate, absolutely not. All are encouraged to participate and many of the payloads will be orbiting specifically to facilitate everyone's participation and enjoyment, such as the cross-band repeaters, the SSTV transmitters and the various LORA and APRS trackers. Why not wow your friends or even help a school or the scouts to enjoy BACAR by assisting them to track the balloon and receive and decode the images broadcast from the edge of space.

Here are some of the payloads that have been registered to fly during the BACAR-13 centenary launch - ZS6SRC parachute shuttle and ADSB Transponder; ZS6BAM with a Pi camera to take stills and video; SARL Hamnet with cross-band repeater, LORA and APRS; Jeugland Club with VHF SSTV; Sandton Club with UHF SSTV; ZR6TG with APRS and SSTV; ZS6WBT with LORA and a camera; ZS6HJH with projects aerolink and lumina stratos; ZS6CYE with skunkworks project, LORA and APRS; ZR6BN with a sensor filled CubeSat and ZS6BN tribute and ZR1WT with a WSPR beacon.

The Sandton Amateur Club is also putting out a challenge to the Amateur Radio community to strive to obtain bragging rights, by utilising the BACAR payloads, recording and publishing cross-band QSOs, capturing and publishing the SSTV images received and as an added incentive, to attempt to decode the quiz embedded in the UHF SSTV images for an opportunity

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to win a Takealot voucher. All frequencies and details to follow. There is now three weeks to go to the BACAR centenary launch. Get ready.

THE 2026 SARL NATIONAL CONVENTION:

The Port Elizabeth ARS will be the hosts of the 2026 SARL National Convention over the weekend of 1 to 3 May 2026. PEARS is busy with arrangements at the Willows Resort and Conference Centre just south of Port Elizabeth - <https://thewillowspe.co.za/>. There is accommodation in chalets, cottages, rondavels and bungalows as well as caravan and camping sites. The Conference Centre will be used for the AGM and the Awards Dinner.

The nomination forms for the various SARL Awards are available from the SARL website, as well as the forms for submitting a motion or a point of discussion at the AGM <https://mysarl.org.za/sarl-agm-2026/>. The closing date for Award nominations, motions and points of discussion is midnight on Saturday 31 January 2026 and must only be sent to secretary@sarl.org.za.

THE CENTENARY BACAR FLIGHT:

Do you know that it is almost October and what this means is you better get ready for the Centenary BACAR flight. For those who do not know anything about BACAR, this is the shortened term for Balloon Carrying Amateur Radio and the Secunda ARC, the BACAR and Pico Balloon guru's will be launching the next Weather Balloon BACAR flight at around 07:00 CAT on 10 October, weather permitting. These flights contain multiple 10 cm x 10 cm cubesat style payloads coupled together in a long string hanging down below the balloon. All amateurs and Clubs are invited to include their payloads on the flight. The balloon is likely to get deep into the stratosphere and fly at a height of around 30 km with a flight time of between two and three hours if all goes to plan.

We have it on good authority that once again there will be several cross-band repeaters onboard for making QSOs across the country via the BACAR balloon, several cameras taking pictures of the curvature of the earth, a VHF SSTV transmitter, LORA and APRS transmitters and perhaps even a WSPR beacon.

The Sandton Amateur Club will also be represented with two payloads this year, one of which is being built by Nathan, ZR6BN, and the second will be a UHF SSTV transmitter built by Keith, ZS6Hi, but that is not all. In certain of the UHF SSTV images there will be embedded clues and besides the pleasure of successfully decoding the transmitted images, the first person to identify the answer to the embedded clues will also once receive a Takealot gift voucher as an added incentive.

For those that do not know how to receive SSTV images, do yourself a favour and do a bit of googling and preparation, as it is relatively easily done. All that is really needed is a mobile phone with the Robot36 app and a handy talkie tuned to the SSTV transmitter frequency, or alternatively a laptop/pc with a programme like MMSSTV loaded and a speaker to listen to the

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audio from your receiving radio. An AMSAT Yagi or satellite antenna for your radio pointed at the balloon may also assist, but it's not 100% necessary.

With only four weeks to the BACAR centenary launch, everyone is racing to get prepared. Are you excited yet? Well then, get that heart pumping, that mind working, and your systems prepared. It is going to be a flight for the history books.

PROPAGATION REPORT:

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels during the week. There are currently seven sunspot regions with simple to slightly complex magnetic configurations visible. There is a high probability for C-class and a low probability for M-class solar flares. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 82. The 30- to 10-m bands may provide some DX fun. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

DIARY OF SOME UPCOMING EVENTS:

24 September – National Braai Day and the Sandton Power Hour Tech Talk

27 and 28 September – The CQ WW RTTY contest

28 September – The ZS1 QSO party

CLUB NEWS:

OCTOBER CLUB MEETING:

Please save the date 11th of October 2025. We are looking forward to enjoy our monthly club meeting on Saturday the 11th of October 2025 at our clubhouse in Ysterhout Street, Birchleigh from 14h00 onwards.

Call Jacques ZS6MAV, for any AMSAT feedback and update:

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES:

We have no birthdays or anniversaries on our list for this week.

If we have missed out on your big day, please contact any committee member to update our records.

ADDITIONAL NEWS:

If there is anyone who would like to share any additional or any specific club news with the listeners, you are welcome to call in now.

1. _____ 2. _____

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SWOP SHOP:

This is your opportunity to advertise a swop, or any amateur equipment for sale.

Please note that NO prices are to be quoted on air. Only a description of the items and your contact details must be provided.

1. _____ 2. _____

That brings us to the end of tonight's bulletin.

You have listened to the weekly news bulletin of the Kempton Park Amateur Radio Technical Society, read by Anton ZS6WG and compiled by Corrie ZS6CDB.

Thank you for having listened!