



School Radio Club - Proposal

Purpose:

The purpose of the School Radio Club is to provide an opportunity for interested students to explore and experience the fascinating world of **amateur radio communications**. It will also provide a safe, friendly and informative dialog between primary school children living in urban and regional areas of Australia. The key learning outcomes are a basic understanding of radio technology, radio operating techniques, a historical perspective and conversational skills.

Amateur radio, unlike mobile broadband and Internet services, does not rely on any established network infrastructure. It is often the first line of communications available in emergency situations. There are many fascinating forms of amateur radio communications including microwaves, shortwaves, repeaters, satellites, balloons, telegraphy, teletype, telephony, television and computers: World-wide shortwave amateur radio communications is an ethereal process powered by the sun and the earth's ionosphere. The science, skill and art of using shortwave radio makes amateur radio communications even more extraordinary. Shortwave radio also provides a historical insight into the role of outback radio in the settlement of Australia, notably: The "Royal Flying Doctor Service" and the "School of the Air"

Modern amateur radio is a community-aware, technology-based and rewarding hobby. It has become an outdoor sport for many enthusiasts engaged in portable radio operation from mountain summits, national parks, museums, lighthouses and many more. Amateur radio clubs actively support local community activities and provide free communications for public events. Recently, there has been a resurgence in amateur radio participation due to simplified licencing conditions, availability of low-cost equipment and no minimum age requirement. This has provided a new opportunity for primary school students, as young as nine, who have successfully obtained their own amateur radio foundation licence. Unlike Citizens Band, all amateur radio operators are licenced and must identify themselves using their individual call signs. Amateur radio communications is regulated by the Australian Media and Communications Authority providing an open, safe and friendly environment for children.

Format:

A small, safe, portable radio station will be set up in the school library. The radio club will operate each week on library days. It will be open to students during recess and lunch times as well as to parents and teachers before and after school. Each month a different group of 6 interested students will be selected to participate in supervised club activities. Each day there will be learning, practice and on-air sessions. Other resources will include posters, booklets, videos, games, Morse practice sets, badges and certificates. Graduates of the club can demonstrate their skills at school events.

Requirements:

The school library station is completely safe and transmits less power than a light bulb (10W). It requires a simple wire antenna, about 20 metres long, suspended from the library building, across the playground to nearby trees about 8 metres high. The antenna is safe and is professionally installed. The students will need written permission to talk on-air and to be photographed using the equipment. Photographs may be published in Amateur Radio magazine and on web sites to promote the club and encourage needed participation from other primary school libraries.

Setup and Operation:

The amateur radio station will be provided free of charge by Julie Gonzales who is licenced by the Australian Communications and Media Authority and is a member of the Wireless Institute of Australia. The antenna will be professionally installed by Joe Gonzales, who is a communications engineer.

