

# Summits on the Air Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association Reference Manual



Document Reference	S92.1
Issue number	1.1
Date of Issue	01-Sep-2015
Participation start date	01-May-2013

Authorised	SOTA MT	Date	01-May-2013
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<b>Summits-on-the-Air</b>	<b>an original concept by G3WGV and developed with G3CWI</b>		

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## Disclaimer

Bushwalking and mountain climbing are potentially hazardous activities. Mountainous terrain is subject to rapid changes in weather and can be exposed to poor conditions coming in off the sea. The terrain may be unstable and subject to rock-falls and other hazards. Some animals such as some spiders and ants can bite with potentially serious consequences. Some people may suffer from conditions that cause those persons to enter shock from certain ants or wasp bites.

The SOTA Management Team, the Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association and their officers shall not accept responsibility for any death, injury or liability in any form resulting from participation in SOTA activities within any state or territory within Australia or anywhere else in the world. The Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association is not an incorporated or unincorporated Association under any Commonwealth, state or territory incorporation law, and any individuals involved are not providing any kind of responsible advice.

The inclusion of a summit in this Reference Manual does not indicate that it is safe, legal, or even possible to climb the summit. The Summit Reference data is not guaranteed to be accurate and no reliance shall be placed upon it.

Any participant shall check applicable local authority, state (where relevant) and Commonwealth laws to be sure that a bushwalk or climb up any of the summits listed in this manual is legal. Where a summit in this manual resides on private property, the pursuit of SOTA activities shall respect private property rights. Some summits are public land, but are subject to significant restriction to public access, including “reference areas” within parks managed by parks and reserve authorities.

As a particular caution to European hikers, please note that “Every Man’s Right” does not exist in Australia; permission to cross private lands must be expressly granted and cannot be assumed.

Some mountains are very challenging and require considerable technical skills. It is up the individual to determine his/her personal assessment of fitness level, skill, training and experience to safely attempt bushwalking or climbing to access a given summit.

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	3
1. Change Control .....	4
2. Association Reference Data .....	5
2.1. Program derivation.....	5
2.2. General information .....	6
2.3. Final Ascent and Activation Zone .....	6
2.4. Rights of way and access issues .....	6
2.5. Maps and navigation .....	6
2.6. Safety considerations.....	7
2.6.1. Becoming lost .....	9
2.7. Foreign Amateur Radio Operators in Australia .....	9
2.8. Association Awards .....	9
2.9. Process to maintain summit reference list.....	9
3. Summits Reference .....	11
3.1. Christmas Island – CH .....	11
3.1.1. Regional Notes .....	11
3.1.2. Table of Summits .....	11
3.2. Lord Howe Island Group – LH.....	12
3.2.1. Regional Notes .....	12
3.2.2. Table of Summits .....	12
3.3. Norfolk Island Group – NF .....	13
3.3.1. Regional Notes .....	13
3.3.2. Table of Summits .....	13

## 1. Change Control

Date	Version	Details
01-May-2013	1.0	First formal issue of document
01-Sep-2015	1.1	Ascent information updated. Editorial corrections. Summit points amended for VK9/NO-001 from 4 to 2 points and VK9/NO-002 from 2 to 1 point. VK9/NO-002 position changed by agreement with AM. Was latitude -29.12315 and longitude 167.94723 Was Easting 7868 and Northing 67747

## 2. Association Reference Data

Association	Australia – External Islands (VK9)
Commencement date	01 May 2013
Regions	Christmas Island – CH Norfolk Island Group– NF Lord Howe Island Group – LH
Association parameters	
Summit operation criteria	Operation must be within 25m vertically of the summit
Band 1, score 1 point	< 300 m a.s.l.
Band 2, score 2 points	>= 300 m a.s.l. < 400 m a.s.l.
Band 3, score 4 points	>= 400 m a.s.l. < 500 m a.s.l.
Band 4, score 6 points	>= 500 m a.s.l. < 600 m a.s.l.
Band 5, score 8 points	>= 600 m a.s.l. < 700 m a.s.l.
Band 6, score 10 points	>= 700 m a.s.l.
Seasonal bonus	No
Bonus rational	N/A
Min. height for bonus	N/A
Bonus period dates	N/A
Association sponsored awards	None
Association Manager	Wayne Merry VK3WAM vk3wam@gmail.com

### 2.1. Program derivation

The Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association is an extension of similar programs active in countries around the world. The list of summits is based on mapping data available from:

- New South Wales six mapping service in the Lord Howe Island Group.
- Google Maps.

The summit reference list shall be updated on a regular basis. Your help to identify new summits is not only welcome but encouraged where you are aware of any summit not referenced in this manual that meets the association criteria. Please refer to section 2.9 Process to maintain summit reference list.

## **2.2. General information**

Regions within the External Islands are based on island groupings in proximity to each other.

The SOTA General Rules shall govern and take precedence over any rules found herein.

Full text of the SOTA General Rules can be found at: <http://www.sota.org.uk/docs/SOTA-General-Rules-1.16.pdf>

## **2.3. Final Ascent and Activation Zone**

The Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association defines the SOTA Activation Zone as an unbroken area within 25 vertical meters of the summit.

The Operating Position must be within the Activation Zone.

While it is permissible to enter the activation zone using a motor vehicle or any other form of motorised transport all equipment must be carried to the operating position by the activation team.

Operations must not be in, or in the close vicinity of a motor vehicle or any other form of motorised transport.

No part of the station may be connected in any way with the motor vehicle or motorised transport machine.

Note that some areas have government restrictions on what methods of ascent are permissible.

A Summit activated before a reference number is issued to it cannot be claimed for SOTA award points.

All regions within the Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association have the same award scheme.

Should compliance of any these rules appear impossible because of the peculiar topography of the summit or for activator safety reasons, contact the relevant Regional Manager, however it is not represented that it is possible to activate every summit included in this manual in accordance with SOTA rules.

Feel free to contact the Regional Manager for any clarification as to whether activation of a particular summit shall be valid for SOTA credit.

## **2.4. Rights of way and access issues**

Neither SOTA nor the Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association have any knowledge concerning the land ownership or right of way issues of any summit or route to a summit.

It is up to each individual to ascertain the legal rights and obtain all necessary permission from the property owners of the route taken to reach a summit.

## **2.5. Maps and navigation**

At minimum, take a compass and topographical map(s) of sufficient resolution. It is strongly recommended to carry topographical maps that use the GDA94 MGA grid as this manual provides grid references using this datum shown in the summit reference as Zone, Easting and Northing.

A GPS device should be carried only as a secondary source of navigation information. The GPS should use the GDA94 or GDA datum, and if that is unavailable, the compatible WGS84 datum. If display units are set to UTM or MGA, then these will be compatible with the grid references given in this manual.

Latitude and Longitude are expressed in Decimal-Degrees using the GDA94/WGS84 datum. All Latitudes are negative and all Longitudes are positive. This system has been chosen for its compatibility with Google Maps. You need only enter a summit's decimal coordinates into Google Maps to see a topographic, satellite or road map of a summit or to find driving directions to the closest roads. Note that for many remote summits, Google maps may give misleading or inappropriate navigational information, so please use this service with care.

Note that some older Australian maps use the AGD66 datum. References will be in error by about 130 metres using this datum. Use of this datum is not recommended, particularly for off-track navigation or accessing remote summits.

The SOTAwatch website is an excellent repository of summit access information, and all activators are encouraged to submit any mapping, trail, access permission or other specific summit advice they can acquire. Please be sure to respect intellectual property law when adding information to the SOTA watch site.

There is no 2m APRS coverage in VK9 at the date of issue of this document.

Topographical maps in New South Wales (including Lord Howe Island and Ball's Pyramid) may be obtained online at <http://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/> These maps do not cover Norfolk Island or Christmas Island.

Maps Australia wide can be obtained from <http://maps.google.com> using the terrain feature. The Google Maps data tends to be of lower quality than maps from official sources.

Maps can also be found at some retail book and outdoor adventure stores.

## **2.6. Safety considerations**

Check the Weather before going. Weather in alpine areas can change rapidly and unexpectedly so be prepared for any of the following conditions: freezing temperatures, snow, rain, strong winds and sun. These conditions are even more variable and intense over 1,200 meters above sea level. Remember temperatures will fall by as much as 3 degrees C per 300 metres. In many places, temperatures can be very hot in summer and water availability can be limited. Not all water from streams and other non-treated sources can be considered safe to drink. Giardiasis or other water borne diseases can be contracted from drinking untreated water, even in remote areas.

Lightning is always a danger! Know the early signs of weather associated with lightning. Upon the first sign of visible thunderstorms, lightning, or thunder, reduce your exposure immediately by descending below the tree line. Proximity to an antenna puts you at greater risk. Do not seek shelter under trees or rock outcrops. Some mountain areas in Australia are known for attracting lightning.

Bushwalking is an inherently risky endeavour. The consequences of the lack of preparation can be tragic. While the risks you assume by participating in SOTA activities can never be dismissed, they can be greatly diminished through knowledge, preparation and experience. Each person shall judge for themselves whether an objective is achievable. The listing of a summit in the reference list does not imply that it is easy to reach the

summit. Assess your skill and fitness levels realistically and travel well within your limitations. Remember, once you make the summit, you are only half the way home. Often the down climb is where most accidents occur due to fatigue and lack of focus.

Vehicle Condition must be appropriate for the roads you intend to travel. You can expect many of the access roads to be no better than steep gravel forestry roads. Many roads in remote areas are 4WD access only, and may be subject to seasonal closures. Heavy penalties apply for travelling on roads during seasonal closures.

Carry the Ten Essentials. The “Ten Essentials” is a list of essential items bushwalking authorities deem necessary for safe travel in the bush.

1. Map(s)
2. Compass (optionally supplemented with a GPS receiver)
3. Sunglasses and sunscreen
4. Extra food and water
5. Extra clothes
6. Headlamp (outdoor)/flashlight
7. First aid kit
8. Fire starter
9. Matches
10. Knife

Note that many summits are subject to limitations or permanent bans on non-emergency use of fires. All areas are subject to declarations of Total Fire Bans.

Beware of wildlife. They can severely injure you and in some cases there may be fatal consequences. Understand their range and behaviour so you can take necessary precautions.

Physical Fitness is required. Some of the summits listed in this manual require a significant degree of physical exertion to reach the summit. Some summit access is only off track. Know your limitations, listen to your body and put your health before amateur radio. Check your pulse under heavy exertion and remember to slow down, bring plenty of water and enjoy the activation. Medical evacuation from many of the listed summits is slow and difficult. A heart attack in remote areas is likely to result in death as medical and rescue services require some time to respond. Refer to Bush Search and Rescue Victoria for additional information about remote area activity at: [www.bsar.org/](http://www.bsar.org/) and consider using the Trip Intentions service at [www.tripintentions.org/](http://www.tripintentions.org/)

Some islands do not have regular search and rescue services and this may result in significant delays in receiving assistance if you are in a distress situation.

Proper Clothing is necessary. You should never venture into major mountains areas without walking boots, layered clothing to match the conditions and protection against possible rain or other adverse conditions.

Mobile phone coverage cannot be guaranteed in areas away from major roads and towns. Norfolk Island has a local mobile service but this is separate from mainland Australian service. Telstra has a limited service on Christmas island. Lord Howe Island does not have a mobile service at time of writing.



Mobile phones that support 3G in both the 850 and 900 bands will have greater coverage, especially in an emergency. Note that dialling 112 may work where dialling 000 does not.

Proper track etiquette is expected. Keep to the walking tracks where they can give access to the summit. Off-track walking requires significantly greater navigational skill, but is required for access to some summits. Permits or other controls may apply to off track walking. Where authorities require such compliance, SOTA activators must comply in order for the activation to be valid. Private land requires permission from the owner or organisation in control of that land.

Respect other bushwalkers and the environment and take out what you bring in.

Bushfires are an increasing threat with global warming and drought. Fire bans are strictly enforced with heavy fines for noncompliance. It is your responsibility to be aware of any fire ban that has been declared.

### **2.6.1. Becoming lost**

If you become lost and unable to recover to a known position, then you should call 000 or 112 and ask for Police. Call 000 first, and if it does not work, then try 112. If unable to make phone calls to either of these numbers, then attempt to reach higher ground where mobile phone coverage might be found. Coverage may not necessarily exist even at higher ground. If you can obtain service at a given location, it may not necessarily improve if you then attempt to reach higher ground.

If you have limited service, you may attempt to SMS a contact person, who can then ring 000. There is not a direct SMS emergency service available at the date of this document.

If you are unable to contact Police, then you should remain near your current position, if safe to do so. Fires attract attention and smoke can be seen from the air. Construct the best possible shelter from the materials that may be available to you and conserve food. If forced to descend into gullies and valleys to obtain water, again remain in a position near the water source, and do not attempt to continue down the valley. Terrain in valleys can be impassable and is often more hazardous than ridges, which you would have likely been using to access the summit before coming lost. It is also easier to locate a “static” alert missing person than a “dynamic” missing person who is still moving around.

### **2.7. Foreign Amateur Radio Operators in Australia**

Please refer to: [http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC\\_1311](http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_1311)

### **2.8. Association Awards**

There are no Australia – External Islands (VK9) Association specific awards.

### **2.9. Process to maintain summit reference list**

The summit list is maintained by each regional manager. Additional summits that have been identified shall be added on a periodic basis.

A new summit may be requested to be included in the list by contacting the regional manager.

Following a review and verification, including approval by the SOTA Management Team, to whether the summit meets both the General and Regional criteria the summit shall be

added to the list.

All potential new summits must meet the guidelines found under the SOTA General Rules <http://www.sota.org.uk/docs/SOTA-General-Rules-1.16.pdf> and have a prominence higher than 150 meters.

### 3. Summits Reference

#### 3.1. *Christmas Island – CH*

Association	Australia – External Islands (VK9)
Region	Christmas Island (CH-xxx)
Region Manager	Wayne Merry VK3WAM vk3wam@gmail.com

#### 3.1.1. Regional Notes

Christmas Island is a mountain that rises from the floor of the sea. There is no continental shelf. Much of the island has cliffs or other shore that cannot be accessed from the water. Entry is via air or at Flying Fish Cove.

#### 3.1.2. Table of Summits

Code	Name	Points	Zone	Easting	Northing	Height	Height ft	Latitude	Longitude	Valid from (dd/mm/yyyy)	Valid to (dd/mm/yyyy)
VK9/CH-001	Murray Hill	2	48L	4285	58410	330	4501	-10.48333	105.58083	01/05/2013	

### 3.2. Lord Howe Island Group – LH

Association	Australia – External Islands (VK9)
Region	Lord Howe Island Group (LH-xxx)
Region Manager	Wayne Merry VK3WAM vk3wam@gmail.com

#### 3.2.1. Regional Notes

Lord Howe Island and Ball's Pyramid provide the summits of this region (which is included as part of the state of New South Wales, but not in the VK2 call area). Some are quite straightforward, some significantly not. Some of these summits are not ordinarily accessible.

#### 3.2.2. Table of Summits

Code	Name	Points	Zone	Easting	Northing	Height	Height ft	Latitude	Longitude	Valid from (dd/mm/yyyy)	Valid to (dd/mm/yyyy)
VK9/LH-001	Mt Gower	10	57J	5071	65053	866	2841	-31.58696	159.07541	01/05/2013	
VK9/LH-002	Mount Lidgbird	10	57J	5079	65076	777	2549	-31.56603	159.08360	01/05/2013	
VK9/LH-003	Ball's Pyramid	6	57J	5237	64868	570	1870	-31.75376	159.25018	01/05/2013	
VK9/LH-004	Malabar Hill	1	57J	5058	65135	201	659	-31.51269	159.06096	01/05/2013	

### 3.3. Norfolk Island Group – NF

Association	Australia – External Islands (VK9)
Region	Norfolk Island Group (NO-xxx)
Region Manager	Wayne Merry VK3WAM <a href="mailto:vk3wam@gmail.com">vk3wam@gmail.com</a>

#### 3.3.1. Regional Notes

Norfolk Island was first established as a penal colony. The pine trees were of interest to shipbuilders. The island has gentle hills, with only one summit having sufficient prominence. The second summit is located on Phillip Island to the south.

#### 3.3.2. Table of Summits

Code	Name	Points	Zone	Easting	Northing	Height	Height ft	Latitude	Longitude	Valid from (dd/mm/yyyy)	Valid to (dd/mm/yyyy)
VK9/NO-001	Mt Bates	2	58J	7866	67871	319	1047	-29.01148	167.94229	01/05/2013	
VK9/NO-002	Jacky Jacky	1	58J	7870	67742	280	919	-29.12803	167.95007	01/05/2013	