

2024 Winter VHF-UHF Field Day– Rules

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Winter 2024 event dates and times:	
Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 June.	
Duration, all call areas other than VK6: 0100 UTC Saturday to 0059 UTC Sunday	Duration in VK6 only: 0300 UTC Saturday to 0259 UTC Sunday

See that e-vent comin', rollin' round the bend
Get out on that hilltop, and call from start to end . . .

— salute to Johnny Cash

The event has distance-based scoring only.

About your contest strategy

Note that all the Sections and Sub-sections featured in past events remain, as do the two-hour re-work period and the exchange of 6-character locators for all contacts. Any stalwart Rovers must travel from Square to Square, but their scoring is based on 6-character locators.

The **Single-band only** Sub-section is designed to encourage newly-licensed operators, those new to the bands above 30 MHz, those returning to the hobby after a period of absence, or any operator who takes it in mind to join in casually.

If you're in this group, but have your act rather more together, consider entering the **Four-bands Sub-section**. At a minimum, you can operate on any two of the bands 6m/2m/70cm/23cm, or three, or the whole four.

A founding principle of the Field Days is to spend time outdoors and have fun, so the Single-band and Four-bands Subsections meets that philosophy and provides a taste of that for newbies. Look out, you might get hooked!

For those who are 'old hands' at VHF-UHF Field Day *shenanigans*, why not invite a Foundation licensee or Standard to join you in the field. Or, invite either (or both!) to your home QTH for a few hours of the contest.

Likewise, if you know someone returning to the hobby, get them involved and mentor them through the process of making contest contacts. You never know what might happen.

Acquaint yourself with the **Contest Radar** website (www.contestradar.com). Enter your planned portable location (6-character locator – preferred), or your home QTH, along with other salient station details. The website will display your details on a map – along with the fleet of other stations doing the same. You can see at a glance who's where. Notably, the website is integrated with the VKCL logging software.

THE RULES

Sections

A: Portable station, single operator, 24 hours (A1) OR 8 hours (A2).

B: Portable station, multiple operators, 24 hours (B1) OR 8 hours (B2).

C: Home station, 24 hours (C1) OR 8 hours (C2).

D: Rover station, 24 hours (D1) OR 8 hours (D2).

Note that 8 hours means any period up to 8 hours (but the period must be contiguous); i.e. you can submit a log for a few contacts (even just one!). Likewise, "24 hours" means any period of more than 8 hours and up to 24 hours.

Sub-sections

(a) Single-band only: any single band permitted on the operator's licence.

(b) Four-bands: 6m/2m/70cm/23cm – any two, up to the four – only.

(c) All-bands: all bands 50 MHz-up permitted on the operator's licence.

For a variety of reasons, the use of non-voice digital modes for contacts is up to operators, but there is no longer a Sub-section in the contest and separate logs, scored separately, are no longer required.

Stations entering the all-bands sub-section cannot enter additional logs for the four-bands or single-band sub-sections.

A station operating on any number of bands cannot enter the single-band section for each band they use. *That's not in the spirit of this section!*

General Rules

A Square refers to the Maidenhead Locator system definition, as denoted by the 4-character locator. This matters to Rovers, but no-one else.

All stations are required to exchange Sub-Square locations (i.e. the 6-character locator).

Operating periods:

Stations may elect to enter either a 24-hour section or an 8-hour section, but not both. Those stations entering the 8-hour sections may operate for more than eight hours, and nominate which 8-hour period they wish to claim for scoring purposes, **but the 8-hour (or lesser) period submitted must be contiguous.**

Rover stations:

The Rover section is for all portable or mobile stations that operate from more than two Squares (as specified by a 4-character locator), or that change Squares more than twice; i.e. Square A to Square B to Square C, etc, or A-B-A-B etc. However, a station in the field that is not entering as a Rover may move from Square A to Square B and return to Square A; e.g. to check another site (which may prove no good) then return to the original site.

Entering more than one section:

If a Portable or Rover station spends part of the contest period operating from their home station, they may also enter the Home station section.

Two operators:

If two operators set up a joint station with shared equipment, they may choose to enter Section A or C as separate stations under their own callsigns, or Section B under a single callsign. If they enter as separate stations, they may not claim contacts with each other.

Multi-operator stations:

Portable stations with more than two operators must enter Section B under one callsign. Operators of stations in Section B may not make contest exchanges using callsigns other than the club or group callsign.

Home stations may enter as a multi-operator station, but only one callsign can be used, and only one operator at any one time.

Operating Rules

One callsign per station. Operation may be from any location. A station is portable only if all its equipment is transported to a place that is not the normal location of any amateur station. You may work stations within your own locator Square.

Portable stations may change location during the Field Day, provided that the station is dismantled and reassembled at each move.

Repeater, satellite, EME or crossband contacts are not permitted.

Except for CW, no contest operation is allowed below 50.150 MHz. Recognised DX calling frequencies must not be used for contest activity. Suggested procedure for SSB stations is to call on .150 or higher on each band, and QSY *up* to make the contest exchange.

About Contest Exchanges

For a valid contact, operators must exchange RS or RST reports, a serial number, and your **6-character** Maidenhead locator (the Sub-Square). The Maidenhead locator is optional if it has already been exchanged in a previous contact during the Field Day and neither station has moved since then.

For digital contacts, as RS or RST reports plus serial number make for a cumbersome exchange, it is sufficient to exchange callsigns and 6-character locators, plus two further digits that cannot be predicted by the other station.

This is similar to the practice used in the annual Ross Hull contest. However, when compiling your log to enter the contest, include a unique serial number for each successful contact.

Repeat Contacts – Re-work Period

Stations may be worked again on each band **after two hours have elapsed**. If either station moves to a new location in a different Square, repeat contacts may be made immediately.

If the station moves back into the previous locator Square, the re-work period limit of two hours still applies to stations worked from that Square previously.

Your Log

Your log should cover the entire operating period and include the following information for each contact: UTC time, Frequency, Station worked, Serial numbers and locators exchanged.

- All-band stations cannot submit a separate log for a single-band or four-band entry.
- Logs for a single-band operation must not include any contacts on other bands.
- Logs for a four-band operation must not include any contacts on other bands.

Scoring

All contacts are scored on the basis of one point per kilometre, multiplied by the scoring Multiplier for each band in Table 1, with points/100 km applied after 700 km for 6m, 2m and 70cm, to 'flatten' scores for DX experienced under enhanced propagation conditions. A 200 km contact on 432 MHz would be $200 \times 2.7 = 540$ points. A 1000 km contact on 50 MHz would be $703 \times 1.7 = 1195.1$ points¹. (The score is rounded up to the nearest point).

For Single-band and Four-bands entrants, note that the Multiplier for 6m is greater than that for 2m!¹

The distance error of using Sub-Square (6-character) locators is small and accuracy is sufficient for the purposes of this event. Distance is calculated from the Sub-Square centre.

Table 1

#NB: to be updated at a future date

Band	Multiplier	Distance Scoring
50 MHz	1.7	1 point / km to 700 km; thereafter 1 point / 100 km or part thereof
144 MHz	1.0	1 point / km to 700 km; thereafter 1 point / 100 km or part thereof
432 MHz	2.7	1 point / km to 700 km; thereafter 1 point / 100 km or part thereof
1296 MHz	3.7	1 point / km
2.3/2.4 GHz	4.4	1 point / km
3.4 GHz	5.4	1 point / km
5.7 GHz	6.4	1 point / km
10 GHz	7.4	1 point / km
24 GHz & up	10	1 point / km

Total the scores for the band or bands used.

Submitting Your Logs

For direct import into log checking software with no transcription, **logs in ASCII text or Cabrillo format**, as produced by VKCL, are now essential; other formats may be rejected. No cover sheet is required with VKCL logs as the program generates one for you.

Note: If any operator participating in the contest has a genuine disability or other impediment preventing submission of an electronic log, a paper log will be accepted, provided it reaches the WIA National Office via post or fax by the deadline time and date. JPG images of a paper log will not be accepted.

The free VK Contest Log (VKCL) software, developed by Mike VK3AVV (SK), caters for these VHF-UHF Field Days as well as a host of other contests. You can download it from: www.vkcc.com/2022/11/09/vk-contest-logger-version-4-15/

Logs prepared by other electronic means, such as Excel, Word, PDF, etc. are no longer accepted.

All logs must be accompanied by a declaration that the operator has abided by the rules for this event. For “belt and braces” please include your name, call sign/s, email address and postal address (or, for multi-operator stations – those of the operator submitting the entry).

Upload your logs via the WIA website Field Day Log File Uploader, at: www.wia.org.au/members/contests/upload/

If you need to revise your log, upload it again. Only the last log uploaded is used.

Logs must be received by midnight EAST, Monday 8 July 2024.

Early logs would be appreciated.

Certificates

As detailed on the VHF-UHF Field Days web page, the untimely passing of Mike VK3AVV has led to a hiatus in determining Field Day results. However, efforts are continuing to resolve this. Every participant’s forbearance is much appreciated.

As the compilation of results for each outstanding event is achieved, the top-scoring station in each Section & Sub-section will receive a colour certificate in PDF format, sent to the contact email address included with their log. In addition, colour certificates will also be sent to the top-scoring Foundation station operator.

Check Website for Updates

Check for any updates or advisories on the VHF-UHF Field Days website at: www.wia.org.au/members/contests/vhfuhf/

The Next Event

Using “*An Algorithm to Determine VHF-UHF Field Day Dates*” (on the web page), the **2024 Spring event** will be held over **Saturday 23** and **Sunday 24 November**.

References

1. Roger Harrison VK2ZRH, *The basis of distance-based scoring for the VHF-UHF Field Days*, Amateur Radio, June 2014, pp 11-13. Also posted on the VHF-UHF Field Days web page.