

# GUIDE TO CALLSIGNS

## 1. Introduction

ACMA has given the WIA responsibility for managing amateur callsigns, and since 2 March 2009 ACMA will not allocate an amateur station callsign without a Callsign Recommendation from the WIA.

A Callsign Recommendation is required for a first licence, a new callsign as a result of an upgrade, a change of callsign, a new callsign as a result of moving to another state or territory or a new callsign simply as a matter of choice.

This Guide describes the options for a WIA Callsign Recommendation, how to apply for a Callsign Recommendation and how it may be used.

Amateur callsigns are recommended by the WIA in accordance with the ACMA Amateur Callsign Structure requirements. To see go the WIA Website “Amateur Callsign Structure”

Certain callsigns, particularly two letter callsigns, are much sought after by amateurs, and in certain states, currently Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, the likely demand will exceed the number of two letter callsigns available, and so special arrangements have been made for applications for a Callsign Recommendation in respect of two letter callsigns in those states to ensure all have equal and fair access to such callsigns as they become available.

The ACMA policy of not re-issuing a callsign for two years after the expiry of the licence of a deceased amateur continues, with the partner, next of kin or executor of a deceased amateur able to request the release of the callsign during that period, but now administered by the WIA.

## 2. WIA Public List of Available Callsigns

The WIA provides a Public List of available amateur station callsigns on its website, updated daily.

The ACMA Register of Radiocommunication Licences is available on the ACMA website and lists, so far is relevant to the amateur service, all licences in force at the time, and so, all call signs a condition of a current amateur licence are shown. However, the fact that a callsign cannot be found on the Register does not mean the callsign is available. It may be reserved for a number of reasons, including the fact that it is the call sign of a deceased amateur whose call sign will not be re-issued for two years after the licence has expired.

The WIA Public List shows all callsigns that are currently available. It is searchable by state or territory and by licence class.

### 3. Safety Net

The WIA will not issue a Callsign Recommendation for any callsign until seven full Working Days have elapsed from the time the callsign was first placed on the Public List. This recognises that a callsign may be listed as a result of an error or mistake. It also recognises that the error or mistake may not come to the attention of the individual affected until that persons attention is drawn to the matter by the listing on the Public List.

If you see a callsign listed and think that it should not be there, immediately contact the person who you think should be holding that callsign, tell him or her your observation, and if it appears that an error or mistake has been made, encourage him or her to immediately contact the WIA office.

The reasons that a callsign may be removed by the WIA from the Public List during the seven Working Day safety net period include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) the callsign was listed in error;
- (b) the callsign was allocated to a deceased amateur to which Part 9 of this Guide would apply but neither ACMA nor the WIA were previously aware of the death of that amateur;
- (c) for whatever reason, the holder of a licence failed to renew that licence; or
- (d) the WIA considers the recommendation of the allocation of that callsign to be inappropriate.

It is most unlikely that a mistake or error will be able to be corrected after the seven Working Day period.

***Working Day means any day other than:***

- (a) *a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday (including public service holidays) for the whole of the Australian Capital Territory or the whole of or the part of the State or other Territory in which the WIA's principal office is located; and*
- (b) *a day between 20 December and 31 January (both inclusive) that is one of the WIA's designated shutdown days.*

### 4. The WIA Callsign Recommendation Levels

Callsign Recommendations shall be issued by the WIA in accordance with one of the following levels:

- (a) **Level One** The applicant does not select a callsign from the Public List but seeks the allocation of the next available callsign commencing in such block of applicable callsigns as selected by the WIA;
- (b) **Level Two** The applicant (including applicants for Club, Repeater and Beacon callsigns) selects a first and second preference from the Public List, each of which is either a two letter callsign in a state or territory other than Queensland, New South Wales or Victoria, or a three or four letter callsign in any state or territory;
- (c) **Level Three** The applicant selects a two letter callsign in Queensland, New South Wales or Victoria, indicating, if available, a first and second preference;
- (d) **Level Four** The applicant seeks a Special Callsign (Special Callsigns are special event callsigns or callsigns with the AX or VI prefix. as described in Appendix A).

## 5. How to apply for a Level One or Level Two Recommendation

### 5.1 Applying in association with an assessment

Ordinarily a first licence will involve a Level One or a Level Two Callsign Recommendation. Very often this will be in association with a successful assessment and, particularly with Foundation assessments undertaken by many WIA Assessors, with the WIA handling the application for an apparatus licence after issuing the certificate of proficiency.

The WIA has encouraged new amateurs to get on the air as soon as possible by handling the applications for a certificate of proficiency and the application for an apparatus licence on behalf of the successful candidate, and now, with the WIA issuing the certificate of proficiency, and obliged to provide a WIA Callsign Recommendation, the WIA is continuing to offer that service.

A successful candidate for a first amateur qualification has the option, after completing the Assessment Sheet to provide the necessary details for the issue of a certificate of proficiency (including the signed photograph) to, if the WIA Assessor is agreeable (and most are), of requesting the WIA to forward the candidate's application for an apparatus licence (or the variation of an apparatus licence) to ACMA with the ACMA fee. If the candidate does this, he or she will also have to complete a WIA Callsign Form.

The WIA Callsign Form to be used in association with an Assessment Sheet involves less detail than the other forms of application for a Callsign Recommendation, as the necessary details are already on the Assessment Sheet, and the WIA Callsign Recommendation Form is linked to the Assessment Sheet.

The WIA fee for a Callsign Recommendation must also be paid. The Assessment Sheet incorporates all the necessary details.

A WIA Callsign Form for use in association with an Assessment will ordinarily be held by WIA Assessors and is among the forms routinely forwarded to Assessors, and is among the documents included in every Foundation Assessment Pack.

Otherwise, to obtain a WIA Callsign Form, call the WIA office at (03) 9729 0400 between 10 am and 4 pm any Working Day, or the WIA Callsign Form may be downloaded [HERE].

Note that a WIA Callsign Form can only be used in association with a WIA Exam Service Assessment, otherwise the other forms referred to below must be used.

Whether or not a successful candidate has applied for an apparatus licence or the variation of an apparatus licence through the WIA, the candidate will receive an original WIA Callsign Recommendation from the WIA. If the candidate has applied for an apparatus licence or the variation of an apparatus licence through the WIA, the WIA will confirm that the application has been forwarded to ACMA in the letter forwarding the WIA Callsign Recommendation.

In that case, the WIA Callsign Recommendation should be retained by the applicant as confirmation of the callsign that has been recommended.

If the successful candidate for a first amateur qualification does not want to apply for an apparatus licence or the variation of an apparatus licence through the WIA but does complete a WIA Callsign Form with an Assessment Sheet, then the Callsign Recommendation will be sent to the candidate.

There after the WIA Callsign Recommendation should be used as set out in Part 5.2.

## **5.2 Applying separately from an Assessment**

To apply for a callsign for a new apparatus licence or to vary an existing apparatus licence ACMA Form R 057 is required by ACMA and must be accompanied by the appropriate ACMA fee and a WIA Callsign Recommendation.

To apply for a Callsign Recommendation a Request for Recommendation Level 1 form or a Request for Recommendation Level 2 form must be used.

To obtain a form telephone the WIA office at (03) 9729 0400 between 10 am and 4 pm any Working Day, or the Request for Recommendation Level 1 or the Request for Recommendation Level 2 form may be downloaded from the WIA Website under “Guide to Callsigns.

The completed form may be sent by mail, facsimile, scanned and sent by email or delivered by hand to the WIA office. It must be signed and accompanied by the appropriate fee.

If it is a Level 2 Recommendation (that is a two letter callsign in a state or territory other than Queensland, New South Wales or Victoria, or a three or four letter callsign in any state or territory) the applicant must choose a first and second preference from the Public List and list them on the form.

When any callsign is recommended by the WIA it is removed from the Public List and ACMA is advised of the Recommendation.

A Callsign Recommendation shall only remain valid for 28 days and shall expire on the date indicated on the Callsign Recommendation, unless a longer period is requested and an acceptable reason is provided.

If a Callsign Recommendation is not acted upon within its period of validity the callsign to which it relates shall be returned to the Public List.

## **6. How to apply for a Level Three Recommendation**

A Level Three Recommendation only applies to a two letter callsign in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

A Request for Recommendation Level Three form must be used.

To obtain a Request for Recommendation Level 3 form telephone the WIA office at (03) 9729 0400 between 10 am and 4 pm any Working Day, or the Request for Recommendation Level 3 form may be downloaded from the WIA Website under “Guide to Callsigns”.

Applications may be sent by mail, facsimile, scanned and sent by email, or delivered by hand to the WIA office. Applications for a Callsign Recommendation must be signed by the applicant and accompanied by the appropriate fee.

No Callsign Recommendation will be issued until after seven full Working Days from the day the callsign was first placed on the Public List have elapsed.

The date the application is received at the WIA office shall be recorded on the form.

Each application shall also be given a unique number which shall be endorsed on the application.

After the expiration of the seven full Working Days, and if there is more than one application for a particular two letter callsign:

- (a) a card bearing a number corresponding to that given to each application for that two letter callsign will be placed into a container;
- (b) cards shall be drawn at random from the container in the presence of any one of a WIA Director, the WIA Secretary or the WIA Treasurer; and
- (c) the numbers so drawn shall be recorded as the order in which the applications for that callsign shall be processed.

If the Callsign Recommendation made in accordance with the first drawn card during the ballot does not result in the allocation of that callsign, then a Callsign Recommendation shall be made for the applicant who was drawn next and the same procedure shall apply, and so on, until a callsign is allocated.

The Callsign Recommendation (if any) shall be sent to the applicant, who shall forward it to ACMA together with a completed ACMA form R057 and the appropriate ACMA fee for an apparatus licence or the variation of an apparatus licence.

The WIA shall retain the fees for each application for that callsign until a callsign is allocated.

If the WIA is unable to recommend a callsign listed in an applicant's Request for a Recommendation Level Three form because the callsign was withdrawn within the seven Working Days safety net period, or because they were not successful in the draw for a particular two letter callsign, and no alternative acceptable to the applicant is available, the WIA shall return the Callsign Recommendation fee to the applicant, or reverse the payment if paid by credit card.

#### **7. How to apply for a Special Callsign – a Level 4 Recommendation**

Telephone the WIA office at (03) 9729 0400 on a Working Day between 10 am and 4 pm, or email the WIA at [nationaloffice@wia.org.au](mailto:nationaloffice@wia.org.au) .

#### **8. How to apply for a Repeater or Beacon callsign – a Level 2 Recommendation**

Telephone the WIA office at (03) 9729 0400 on a Working Day between 10 am and 4 pm, or email the WIA at [nationaloffice@wia.org.au](mailto:nationaloffice@wia.org.au) .

## 9. WIA Fees for a Callsign Recommendation

The Deed between ACMA and the WIA pursuant to which the WIA performs these callsign management functions requires the WIA to adhere to the Commonwealth Cost Recovery Guidelines, and so it must charge a fee that represents what it actually costs it to provide the service. These fees have been reviewed and approved by ACMA and are subject to a full review at the end of the first year, and thereafter the annual submission of audited cost information.

The fees are as follows:

<b>Level One</b>	\$5 including GST;
<b>Level Two</b>	\$20 including GST;
<b>Level Three</b>	\$48 including GST;
<b>Level Four</b>	\$25 including GST.

Payment may be made by cheque or money order, or by credit card by completion of the card details on the form or by telephone to the WIA office, or included in the moneys accepted by a WIA Assessor in accordance with the Assessment Instructions.

## 10. Callsigns of Deceased Amateurs

Where an Amateur licensee dies while holding an Amateur licence, the WIA will not place the applicable callsign on the Public List or issue a Callsign Recommendation in respect of the applicable callsign, for a period of two years following the expiry or cancellation of the licence.

The callsign of the deceased Amateur is reserved for two years after the date of the expiry of the licence period upon ACMA or WIA being made aware of the death of the Amateur licensee.

It is important that the WIA or ACMA are advised of the death of any amateur holding a current amateur licence. The WIA can be advised of the death of an amateur by mail to WIA Callsigns, P.O. Box 2042, Bayswater, Victoria 3153 or by telephone to the WIA office at (03) 9729 0400 on a Working Day between 10 am and 4 p.m., or by email to the WIA at [nationaloffice@wia.org.au](mailto:nationaloffice@wia.org.au).

If a partner, next of kin, personal representative or executor or administrator of a deceased Amateur's estate writes to the WIA requesting that the callsign be allocated to a particular person after the expiry of the Amateur licence and prior to the end of the reservation period, the WIA shall issue a Callsign Recommendation accordingly.

If a partner, next of kin, personal representative or executor or administrator of a deceased Amateur's estate writes to the WIA requesting that the callsign be released after the expiry of the Amateur licence and prior to the end of the reservation period, the WIA will make the callsign available on the Public List.

The WIA will not charge any fee for providing this service.

## **11. Transfer of licences**

Nothing in these arrangements for the management of callsigns by the WIA shall diminish the right of a licensee to transfer an apparatus licence to another person qualified to hold the licence.

# Amateur Callsign structure

Callsigns are a unique combination of letters and numbers allocated to a radiocommunications user to identify a station.

Callsigns must be used for all on-air communications including testing. Callsigns allocated to amateur stations conform with International Telecommunication Union (ITU) *Radio Regulations* (see Table 1 for callsign construction). Table 2 contains information about the callsign templates allocated to the amateur licensing options.

**Table 1 - Amateur callsign construction**

Prefix	Suffix
VK\$, where \$ is the State/Territory Indicator. This is a number from 0-9 indicating the State or Territory in which the station is operating:  0 = Antarctic 1 = Australian Capital Territory 2 = New South Wales 3 = Victoria 4 = Queensland 5 = South Australia 6 = Western Australia 7 = Tasmania 8 = Northern Territory 9 = Australian External Territories	Suffix of two, three or four letters.  The first letter in the three or four group indicates the licence type of the amateur station transmitting.  For example, VK\$Taa, where 'T' signifies that the amateur transmitting this callsign holds an Advanced licence.  See Table 2 for template details.

**Note:** State/Territory indicators (\$) are used to indicate a station's licensed location. When an amateur moves interstate to live, he or she will be issued a new callsign to indicate the new State or Territory of residence.

VK9 prefix callsigns are allocated to amateurs residing in or visiting Australia's External Territories, other than Antarctica. Licences with VK9 callsigns allocated to visiting amateurs will only be issued for the duration of their visit and will not be renewed.

**Table 2 - Callsign templates allocated to the amateur licensing options**

Licence Option	Template
Advanced	VK\$aa, VK\$Aaa, VK\$Baa, VK\$Caa, VK\$Daa, VK\$Eaa, VK\$Faa, VK\$Gaa, VK\$Iaa, VK\$Jaa, VK\$Kaa, VK\$Oaa, VK\$Saa, VK\$Taa, VK\$Uaa, VK\$Waa, VK\$Xaa, VK\$Yaa, VK\$Zaa, VK\$RAN, VK2RAS, VK\$WIA-WIZ (WIA), VK\$GGA-GGZ (Guides Aust), VK\$SAA-SDZ (Scouts Assoc.), VK7OTC, VK\$IYA - IYZ (International years)
Standard	VK\$Haa, VK\$Laa, VK\$Maa, VK\$Naa, VK\$Paa, VK\$Vaa
Foundation	VK\$Faaa
Repeater	VK\$Raa
Beacon	VK\$RSa, VK\$RTa

### Special events callsigns

Callsigns other than those normally allocated to an amateur station may be allocated on occasions of international, national, state/territory or local significance. The event must be of broad interest to the Amateur or wider community.

Requests for special event callsigns will not be accepted for the purposes of:

- gaining an advantage in on-air competitions; or
- for use during Islands on the Air (IOTA) competitions, DX expeditions, or fox hunts and the like; or
- annual events.

Special event callsigns will not be issued for recurrent events unless it is a particularly significant event (such as a 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> or 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary). Note that Amateurs may use the AX prefix on every Australia Day, Anzac Day and ITU Day without seeking allocation of a special event callsign.

The WIA will only recommend special event callsigns where the Amateur station concerned is actually participating in the event. ACMA will generally issue only one such special event station licence in relation to a particular event.

The callsign may employ special prefixes (e.g. AX or VI) and/or special suffixes. All special callsigns will include the appropriate state/territory indicator. WIA may authorise the use of callsigns with suffixes comprising two or more characters (letters and/or digits). ACMA will issue a short term licence for the period of the event or celebration.

## **Allocation of the AX prefix**

This prefix is only available for occasions of special national or international significance, such as the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Occasions warranting the use of the 'AX' prefix will be determined by WIA in consultation with ACMA. Under such circumstances:

- the 'AX' prefix, which will be made available to all amateurs, may be used in lieu of the normal 'VK' prefix;
- allocation of the prefix will be restricted to the duration of the occasion;
- the allocation of specific 'AX' prefix callsigns for individual particular events, where the callsign does not comply with usual amateur callsign construction (AX\$aa, AX\$aaa or AX\$aaaa (where \$ is the State/Territory indicator)) cannot be guaranteed.

## **Allocation of the VI prefix**

This prefix is only available for occasions of special state/territory or local significance during such times when this prefix is not required by ACMA for use by other services. Occasions warranting such use will be determined by WIA in consultation with ACMA.

Use of the 'VI' prefix usually involves 'VI' being substituted for the normal 'VK' prefix. The allocation of specific 'VI' prefix callsigns for individual particular events, where the callsign does not comply with usual amateur callsign construction (VI\$aa, VI\$aaa or VI\$aaaa (where \$ is the State/Territory indicator)) cannot be guaranteed.

The WIA will only accept requests for the allocation of the 'VI' prefix from clubs, organisations or amateur groups.

## **Use of the IYA - IYZ suffix group**

The IYA - IYZ suffix group will continue to be reserved for use by groups wishing to commemorate United Nations' declared years, for example, International Year of the Child (IYC).