

## Sean McQueen

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**From:** Sean McQueen  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 8 April 2020 1:37 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Call sign format for holders of the Amateur Operators (Foundation) Certificate of Proficiency [SEC=OFFICIAL]

**Categories:** Yellow Category

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the follow up email. I am afraid I cannot offer you any further advice at this time. My response of 2 April accurately describes the situation, and any amateur licensee making an enquiry to the ACMA about this matter will receive a response advising of same.

For the avoidance of confusion, we have provided for use by both the WIA and RASA a set of words, consistent with those conveyed to you on 2 April, which it appears from your email have been reported by the WIA.

I hope you will understand that I do not intend to comment on how either the WIA or RASA choose to report on the issue, or on social media discussion amongst amateur licensees.

As advised, we will communicate with stakeholders and the amateur community when we have reached a decision.

Kind regards

**Sean McQueen**  
Acting Manager  
Spectrum Allocations Branch | Communications Infrastructure Division

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**communicating** **facilitating** **regulating**

*The ACMA acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live. We recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, 5 April 2020 2:41 PM  
**To:** Nicholas Brody <Nicholas.Brody@acma.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Sean McQueen <Sean.McQueen@acma.gov.au>  
**Subject:** RE: Call sign format for holders of the Amateur Operators (Foundation) Certificate of Proficiency [SEC=OFFICIAL]

*Good morning Nicholas*

*Thank you and Sean McQueen for the prompt reply to my email of 2 April 2020.*

*I remain somewhat confused due to material issued in the public domain since your advice below and would welcome your further advice as to the actual situation.*

*On the 5 April 2020 VK1WIA broadcast, WIA Director John Williams VK4JJW delivered the following news:*

You may have heard about, or seen some information that was published this week about the ACMA having made a final decision about the Amateur Radio Foundation Callsigns issue.

THAT WAS INCORRECT.

To set the record straight and avoid any more confusion, I'm going to read, word for word, a statement issued last Tuesday from the Manager, Spectrum Licensing Policy, Australian Communications and Media Authority, and with his authorisation.

I quote:

"ACMA staff have been considering submissions on call sign policy from both the WIA and R.A.S.A, chiefly to facilitate access to digital modes by foundation licensees. This follows the ACMA making the enabling regulatory changes to the amateur LCD in 2019. The Australian Maritime College (AMC) administers aspects of amateur radio on behalf of the ACMA, and the ACMA will seek the views of the AMC before making a decision on call sign policy. The ACMA will notify amateur radio stakeholders, and will update its website, when it makes a final decision on this matter."

Unquote.

I'd just add here that breaking ACMA confidentiality by releasing prematurely, unconfirmed privileged information is inappropriate, and the WIA will not breach the ACMA's trust and as such, won't release ACMA information until ratified to do so.

I'm John VK4JJW

[http://www.wia.org.au/members/broadcast/wianews/display.php?file\\_id=wianews-2020-04-05&fbclid=IwAR3J8RdPUVeW2ZLZnldt6zFxaU1yLGGJOLC609wZBb31AGsqppBa4HXOZLo](http://www.wia.org.au/members/broadcast/wianews/display.php?file_id=wianews-2020-04-05&fbclid=IwAR3J8RdPUVeW2ZLZnldt6zFxaU1yLGGJOLC609wZBb31AGsqppBa4HXOZLo)

*However, on 4 March 2020 RASA issues the following:*

3-LETTER CALLSIGNS FOR FL – SECTOR DYSFUNCTION – WHAT NEXT?

04/04/2020

RASA notes the somewhat colourful piece from WIA Director VK4JJW on the news broadcast this weekend regarding the recent ACMA decision on three letter callsign suffixes.

This matter is of significant importance, and one would have thought the WIA President, to whom the ACMA communicated, would be front and centre... where is he?

The facts of the matter are:

- in an email to both Presidents of 30<sup>th</sup> March, ACMA advised that they had reached a decision on three letter callsigns for Foundation Licensees;
- the information was not embargoed; and
- the RASA press release noted that the arrangements would be discussed with AMC, and that implementation could take some time.

What this is really about is that the ACMA made it plain in their email that they were unhappy with the current conflicting representations by the WIA and RASA...and that this situation could not continue.

The ACMA are, in fact, representing the views of the sector – every amateur we speak to is sick and tired of the politics that beset Amateur Radio in VK.

RASA have advised ACMA that, on numerous occasions, we have sought cooperation with WIA management.

On 20th March we received correspondence from Mr Peter Clee, the WIA Secretary stating, "*Please cease and desist sending unwanted emails to me.*" This is hardly helpful...

The inability of the WIA and RASA to cooperate over the three letter callsign issue has effectively wasted five months. Five months in which FLs could have fully utilised their new privileges.

FLs are the future of our hobby, and yet they are effectively pawns in a pointless battle between the two sector bodies....

The current enmity between RASA and the WIA is *seriously disadvantaging all amateurs* and impeding progress of our hobby.

It has reached farcical proportions.

It has to stop.

It isn't all doom and gloom, however. We are pleased to report that on 31<sup>st</sup> March, the Presidents of the WIA and RASA had a productive 30-minute telephone call to discuss how the current situation could be resolved.

From our perspective, it often seems like we are dealing with two separate WIA management structures...

We do not engage in futile and divisive debates on social media and we encourage others to do the same. RASA will continue our work in supporting the hobby, representing amateurs to the ACMA and helping newcomers.

More updates as they come to hand.

<https://vkradioamateurs.org/3-letter-callsigns-for-fl-sector-dysfunction-what-next/?fbclid=IwAR1TgHLcw7XACNhNykNz1tdKPRWHKY9eARVpDmhYbCmjSgadoa0rpTOTgNM>

*Why and how the RASA post was able to be issued one day prior to the WIA broadcast is a mystery.*

*More to the point, the RASA response appears to question the veracity and tone of the WIA's statement on its broadcast today where the WIA quotes ACMA, and goes on to state, inter alia, that "...breaking ACMA confidentiality by releasing*

*prematurely, unconfirmed privileged information is inappropriate, and the WIA will not breach the ACMA's trust and as such, won't release ACMA information until ratified to do so." The RASA response also appears to question correspondence, or aspects of same, issued to it by ACMA.*

*Today, much discussion about the above has taken place on social media. A position has been put on social media by*

*The above begs the question: What is the other position [REDACTED] to in the RASA statement?*

*My reading of the situation is that there is much confusion around who is right or otherwise, and exactly what the ACMA position is. WIA has quoted what it claims to be a verbatim extract of correspondence to it from ACMA, whereas RASA appears to be offering more of a commentary, justifying its earlier and premature release of information from ACMA. The problem this is creating is some are not able to decipher which organisations' statements are correct, nor comprehend the ACMA official position despite the WIA making it plain today.*

*I welcome your further advice.*

*Regards*

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**From:** Sean McQueen <[Sean.McQueen@acma.gov.au](mailto:Sean.McQueen@acma.gov.au)>

**Sent:** Thursday, 2 April 2020 14:47

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Call sign format for holders of the Amateur Operators (Foundation) Certificate of Proficiency [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your enquiry, which has been passed to me for a response.

ACMA staff have been considering submissions on call sign policy from both the WIA and RASA, chiefly to facilitate access to digital modes by foundation licensees. This follows the ACMA making the enabling regulatory changes to the amateur LCD in 2019. The Australian Maritime College (AMC) administers aspects of amateur radio on behalf of the ACMA, and the ACMA will seek the views of the AMC before making a

decision on call sign policy. The ACMA will notify amateur radio stakeholders, and will update its website, when it makes a final decision on this matter.

Regards

**Sean McQueen**

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, 2 April 2020 1:07 PM

**To:** Nicholas Brody <[Nicholas.Brody@acma.gov.au](mailto:Nicholas.Brody@acma.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Call sign format for holders of the Amateur Operators (Foundation) Certificate of Proficiency

Good afternoon Nicholas

I'm somewhat confused about recent surveys and a media release regarding call sign formats and would appreciate your help please.

On 19 November 2019 a survey was commissioned to attempt to determine opinions regarding the call sign format for holders of the Amateur Operators (Foundation) Certificate of Proficiency in the Amateur Radio Service. [https://vkradioamateurs.org/fl-callsign-survey-results/?fbclid=IwAR0iEJEShtVjxGpz1lyb7LXYq7r428oABwdXITcE\\_KjCnJOLU658LAOn2kM](https://vkradioamateurs.org/fl-callsign-survey-results/?fbclid=IwAR0iEJEShtVjxGpz1lyb7LXYq7r428oABwdXITcE_KjCnJOLU658LAOn2kM)

The result was approximately 55:45% in favour of allocating a new prefix (e.g. VJ) with a three-letter suffix. The sample size was small (974) and, for what it is worth writing as a former designer of Gallup Polls for AGB McNair Anderson, did not utilise accepted polling methodology and rigor to realise a quality result. Matters I am happy to expand upon if requested.

On 3 February 2020 the WIA commissioned its own survey of 2294 respondents to determine the ARS communities view <https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/news/2020/20200203-1/index.php> On 24 March 2020 it published the results <https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/news/2020/20200324-2/index.php> tabulated on page seven at <https://www.wia.org.au/newsevents/news/2020/20200324-2/documents/WIA%20-%20Future%20of%20Amateur%20Radio%20-%20Poll%201.pdf> Option one (permit any operator to have a three letter callsign) was the clear preference garnering approximately 60% of votes.

On 30 March 2020 a media release was issued "ACMA decides on callsign suffix issue" indicating that ACMA has decided on this matter. [https://vkradioamateurs.org/acma-decides-on-callsign-suffix-issue/?fbclid=IwAR3Fdi7\\_bYLPEYtOk4h5gCUrhoYRBEY63RGPYHFAuj7yXKwMU72uCo\\_kWnI](https://vkradioamateurs.org/acma-decides-on-callsign-suffix-issue/?fbclid=IwAR3Fdi7_bYLPEYtOk4h5gCUrhoYRBEY63RGPYHFAuj7yXKwMU72uCo_kWnI)

The survey of 19 November 2020, consisting of 42% of the WIA survey respondents, resulted in a diametrically opposite result to that of which has publicly announced in the media release as the ACMA determination.

- Are you able to confirm that ACMA has formally adopted the 2x3 callsign format for holders of the Amateur Operators (Foundation) Certificate of Proficiency in the Amateur Radio Service as canvased in the poll commissioned by the WIA please?
- I cannot find an official ACMA published document in the public domain that supports the media release. Does one exist and where may I find it please?

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your reply.

Regards



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