

# FSK441: Conventions, Reports, Activity and Procedures in VK-ZL

## Conventions

- Use 30-second TX/RX periods.
- Southerly and Easterly stations TX first. While there is some ambiguity at the North - East to South-West boundary this is overcome by the additional rules that ZL always TXs first to VK and VK5 always TXs first to VK2/4.
- 144.230 is designated a Focus Frequency to focus activity – thus unlike a call frequency one does not QSY to make a contact. The nature of meteor scatter is that the footprint of pings is quite small (of the order of a 10 km diameter circle) and signals rarely overlap. Thus there is no difficulty in all stations using the same frequency.
- Do not use single tones on the Focus Frequency.

## Signal Reports

A report has two numbers, the first represents the duration of the meteor burst and the second the signal strength. WSJT automatically produces reports as follows:

### First Number

- 0 = 20 ms
- 1 = 40 to 80 ms
- 2 = 100 to 980 ms
- 3 = greater than 1000 ms

### Second Number

- 6 = 0 to 10 dB
- 7 = 11 to 16 dB
- 8 = 17 to 22 dB
- 9 = greater than 22 dB

Thus a 27 report means a burst of signal of 100 to 980 ms duration peaking at between 11 and 16 dB above the noise.

It is found that the program will often decode long burns as a number of shorter bursts and in such cases the operator should ignore the report generated by the program and insert their own report based on their assessment of ping strength and duration.

## Activity

FSK441 activity in VK-ZL tends to fall into three categories:

- Activity Sessions on weekends
- Skeds
- DXpeditions to rare grid squares

### Activity Sessions

Sessions are held from 0700 to 0800 NSW/Vic time each Saturday and Sunday morning. The sessions are a good way to get started and learn about the mode. A call-back is held just prior to and just after each session on 40 meters on 7085 kHz (or close by) during which people share experiences. In order to ensure stations in the same area do not interfere, the following Types of Session are conducted and advised the week prior on 40 meters and also on the Australian VHF Reflector:

TYPE	Frequency MHz	Sequence
TYPE A	144.230	VK3/5/7 TX first to the North, VK2/4 TX second to the South
TYPE B	144.230	VK2/7 TX first to the North, VK3/4/5 TX second to the South
TYPE C	144.230	VK2/3/4/7 TX first to the West, VK5 TX second to the East
TYPE D	144.230 144.330	VK2 TX first to the North, VK4 TX second to the South. VK3/5/7 TX first to the North, VK2 TX second to the South

### Skeds

Skeds, which can take advantage of single tones where appropriate, are the most efficient way to complete an FSK441 contact. Skeds can be arranged on 40 meters after the activity sessions or on the Australian VHF reflector. Skeds are normally arranged to be on 144.330 MHz.

### DXpeditions

DXpeditions are designed to activate rare gridsquares. These are usually advertised on the Australian VHF reflector. 144.330 MHz is normally used.

## Procedures

While the procedures continue to be developed the following examples are based on the procedures presently being used:

### A. Contacts on the Focus Frequency (144.230 MHz)

Message Sent	Station Transmi tting
CQ VK7MO	VK7MO
VK7MO 2626 VK2FZ	VK2FZ
VK2FZ R1616 VK7MO	VK7MO
RRR VK2FZ	VK2FZ
7373 VK7MO	VK7MO

### B. Skeds (144.330 MHz)

For skeds tick the single tone box and use t he North American defaults as per the program. Single tones have a significant advantage in completing a QSO.

Message Sent	Station Transmi tting
VK2FZ VK7MO	VK7MO
VK7MO 2626 VK2FZ	VK2FZ
R27	VK7MO in single ton e format
RRR	VK2FZ in single tone format
73	VK7MO in single ton e format

### C. Dxpeditons (144.330 MHz)

Message Sent	Station Transmitting
CQ VK7MO QE27	VK7MO
VK7MO 2626 VK2FLR	VK2FLR
VK7MO 3737 VK2KU	VK2KU and any others
VK2FLR R3636 VK7MO	VK7MO
RRR FLR	VK2FLR
VK7MO 3737 VK2KU	VK2KU
73 VK2KU R1616 VK7MO	VK7MO
RRR KU	VK2KU
73	VK2FLR in single to ne format
VK2KU R1616 VK7MO	VK7MO drops 73 to advise VK2FLR that his 73 has been received
RRR VK2KU	VK2KU
73	VK7MO 73 in single ton e format indicates Rxed RRR from VK2KU and going QRT

Note 1: The DX station will give priority to stations fr om whom a report has bee n received so you should no t expect a report until you have sent on e.

Note 2: As meteor pings rarely overlap there is no problem in continually calling the DX station until he/she gets back to you. It also tells the DX station you are still around.

Note 3: The DX station may include Hash and a number eg “#3” to indicate the number of stations still on their list.

Note 4: The sending of 73 in single tone format indicates that the DX station will be going QRT.