



# **Gold Coast Amateur Radio Society**

By-Laws

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## Section 2. Formal Role Descriptions

### 2.1. The Executive & Management Committee

*These roles are formally elected at the AGM, hold statutory and legal responsibilities under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Qld), and act as the primary signatories for the club.*

#### 2.1.1. President

**Primary Focus:**

Leadership, strategic direction, and external representation.

The President is the principal leader of the society, ensuring the club fulfills its constitutional objectives while fostering a positive, inclusive culture.

- **Strategic Leadership:**  
Develop and maintain the club's "Strategy for the Future" document to guide long-term goals and assist with capital works grants.
- **Meeting Chair:**  
Preside over all General, Committee, and Annual General Meetings, ensuring they are conducted efficiently and respectfully.
- **Statutory Compliance:**  
Sign the annual financial statement confirming the accounts are true and accurate for the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).
- **Representation:**  
Act as the primary spokesperson. Ensure an Executive member is present when interacting with regulators (e.g., ACMA), public bodies (e.g., Gold Coast City Council), or landlords, unless formally delegated.
- **Dispute Oversight:**  
Ensure grievances are handled fairly and transparently according to the club's Grievance Protocol.

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## 2.1.2. Secretary

### **Primary Focus:**

Administration, legal compliance, and internal communications.

The Secretary is the administrative anchor of the club, ensuring all legal and procedural requirements are met.

- **Compliance & Reporting:**  
Prepare and submit the annual returns to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).  
Conduct an annual review of the club's Public Liability Insurance to ensure adequate cover.
- **Record Keeping:**  
Prepare agendas, record highly accurate meeting minutes, and safely store all club correspondence.
- **Membership Management:**  
Process new membership applications for committee approval, maintain the official Register of Members, and ensure adherence to privacy guidelines.
- **Information Dissemination:**  
Distribute updates, meeting notices, and amended By-Laws to the membership electronically.

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### 2.1.3. Treasurer

**Primary Focus:**

Financial health, asset management, and transparency.

The Treasurer ensures the club remains solvent, compliant, and transparent in all its financial dealings.

- **Financial Management:**  
Maintain the club's accounting software (Odoo), ensuring all income and expenditures are accurately reconciled with bank accounts.
- **Invoicing & Dues:**  
Manage the automatic invoicing system for membership renewals and track arrears.
- **Grant & Asset Tracking:**  
Maintain a strict tracker spreadsheet for all grant-funded purchases. Ensure all physical assets (and their serial numbers) are uploaded into the accounting software to maintain an accurate balance sheet.
- **Reporting:**  
Provide detailed financial reports at Committee and General Meetings, and prepare the end-of-year financial statements for the AGM.

### 2.1.4. General Committee Member

**Primary Focus:**

Support, voting, and taking on specific operational portfolios.

- **Governance:**  
Attend committee meetings to review reports, approve expenditures, and vote on membership applications.
- **Portfolio Champions:**  
Step up to lead or assist with specific club portfolios (e.g., Hamfest logistics, facility cleanup) as required by the Executive.

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## 2.2. Operational Coordinators ("Champions")

*These roles do not necessarily need to be filled by elected Executive members. They are "Champions" appointed by the Committee to manage specific operational areas of the club, easing the burden on the Executive.*

### 2.2.1. Infrastructure Coordinator (IT & RF)

**Primary Focus:**

Keeping the club's RF and digital networks on the air.

- **Site Maintenance:**  
Manage the technical hardware at remote sites, notably the Springbrook and Wongawallan repeaters.
- **Network Stability:**  
Oversee the club's DMR, APRS, and EchoLink/IRLP nodes, ensuring internet connections and associated servers and hardware remain stable.
- **Power Systems:**  
Maintain off-grid power infrastructure, including solar regulators, battery banks, and generators at remote sites and on the communications trailer.
- **Compliance:**  
Ensure all repeater outputs and link frequencies comply strictly with ACMA apparatus licenses.

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## 2.2.2. Facility Coordinator (Clubhouse Manager)

### **Primary Focus:**

OH&S, clubhouse maintenance, and physical security.

- **Safety Compliance:**  
Coordinate with the Gold Coast City Council for annual building, fire, and electrical RCD inspections. Perform and record the mandatory 6-month mid-point RCD tests.
- **Maintenance & Upgrades:**  
Identify and manage low-cost repairs (e.g., plumbing leaks, lighting upgrades, roof repairs).
- **Groundskeeping:**  
Ensure the lawns are mowed and the exterior property is well-kept.
- **Security:**  
Manage the Key Register, ensure physical security layers are maintained, and oversee fire safety inductions for all new keyholders.

## 2.2.3. Net Coordinator

**Primary Focus:** On-air engagement and net control logistics.

- **Roster Management:**  
Organise Net Control Operators for the club's official nets (e.g., the 2m morning net, the 80m Wednesday net).
- **Quality Control:**  
Ensure all operators using the club callsign (**VK4WIG**) adhere to the Club Code of Conduct and identification protocols.
- **Promotion:**  
Ensure net times (in both local time and UTC) and EchoLink access details are prominently displayed on the GCARS website to encourage participation.

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## 2.2.4. Education Coordinator

### **Primary Focus:**

Licensing, mentoring (Elmering), and STEM outreach.

- **Licensing & Assessments:** Coordinate with ACMA-approved Licence Test Assessors to facilitate Foundation, Standard, and Advanced exams for newcomers.
- **Technical Presentations:** Source and schedule guest speakers for club tech talks (e.g., antenna design, radio direction finding, satellite comms).
- **Community Training:** Organise relevant auxiliary training for members, such as accredited First Aid and CPR courses.

## 2.2.5. Social & Events Coordinator

### **Primary Focus:**

Building club culture, fundraising, and community events.

- **Internal Culture:** Organise BBQs, Coffee Catchups, and manage the "Welcome Pack" pipeline for new members.
- **Hamfest Management:** Act as the primary logistical lead for the annual GCARS Hamfest, handling venue bookings, table hire, coffee vans, and door prizes.
- **Community Outreach:** Coordinate the club's participation in external events where RF communications support is requested, such as the Pacific Air Show, Dementia Walk, Kokoda Challenge, or JOTA.

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## 2.2.6. Webmaster

### **Primary Focus:**

Digital presence, systems integration, and club website management. The Webmaster ensures the club's online platforms are secure, functional, and up to date, serving as the Society's primary digital face.

- **Website Administration:**  
Maintain, secure, and update the official club website ([www.gcars.com.au](http://www.gcars.com.au)).
- **Content Management:**  
Ensure that the interactive repeater status dashboard, upcoming events calendar (including guest speakers, working bees, and AGM dates), and recent activity blogs (such as POTA activations) are up to date and prominently displayed.
- **Member Services:**  
Oversee backend operations for the member portal and online Club Shop, and assist members with Help Desk requests, such as lost passwords or account access issues.
- **Systems Integration:**  
Assist the Treasurer and Executive by maintaining technical integrations between the website, the club's CRM systems, and the accounting software (Odo) to ensure seamless automated invoicing and roster management.

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## 2.2.7. Public Relations & Communications Coordinator

### **Primary Focus:**

Club promotion, external correspondence, and social media. The PR Coordinator ensures the club remains visible, engaging, and relevant to both the current membership and the broader community.

- **Internal Communications:**  
Manage the drafting and distribution of regular member updates, newsletters, and email blasts to keep the membership informed about working bees, social events, and club milestones.
- **Social Media & Broad Outreach:**  
Actively manage the club's social media presence (e.g., Facebook) and coordinate announcements with external industry bodies, such as submitting audio files or scripts to the WIA National News.
- **Event Promotion:**  
Drive community awareness, vendor engagement, and public attendance for major club events like the annual Hamfest, Jamboree on the Air (JOTA), and community 'Come & Try' days.
- **Brand Management:**  
Ensure that the club's branding, merchandise (e.g., club shirts, name badges), and promotional materials present a professional, welcoming, and unified image to the public.

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## Section 3. GCARS Member Code of Conduct

### 3.1. Purpose

The Gold Coast Amateur Radio Society is committed to providing a welcoming, safe, and collaborative environment for all members, guests, and the broader community. This Code of Conduct applies to all club activities, including physical meetings, online forums, and on-air operations.

### 3.2. General Behaviour and Respect

- **Inclusivity and Respect:**

Members must treat all other members, guests, and members of the public with respect and courtesy. Discrimination, harassment, or bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

- **Meeting Etiquette:**

Members are expected to conduct themselves respectfully during General and Committee meetings. Members should refrain from disruptive interjections and follow the Chairperson's direction to ensure orderly proceedings.

- **Respect for Volunteers:**

Members must recognise that GCARS is managed by volunteers who often have full-time jobs, families, and other commitments. Members are encouraged to actively assist with club tasks rather than expecting a small group of dedicated members to carry the additional workload.

### 3.3. On-Air and Technical Conduct

- **Regulatory Compliance:**

All members must comply strictly with the ACMA Radiocommunications (Amateur Stations) Class Licence regulations and the conditions of their specific operator qualification.

- **Club Representation:**

When operating on GCARS repeaters, participating in nets, or using the club callsign (**VK4WIG**), members act as ambassadors for the society. Transmissions must remain polite and constructive, and must not bring the club into disrepute.

- **Interference and Etiquette:**

Members must not intentionally cause harmful interference to other users or repeaters. Members should actively promote a family-friendly on-air environment.

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### 3.4. Facility and Asset Use

- **Shared Spaces:**

Members utilising the Harper Street clubhouse or remote repeater sites (e.g., Springbrook, Wongawallan) must clean up after themselves and treat the facilities with care.

- **Safety First:**

Members must adhere to all safety guidelines, including fire evacuation protocols and electrical safety reporting. Any damaged or unsafe equipment must be reported to the committee immediately.

- **Keyholder Responsibility:**

Members granted Keyholder status hold a position of trust. They are responsible for securing the building upon departure and must complete a formal induction talk. They must not grant unescorted access to non-members.

- **Standard Operating Procedures**

To the extent that a Standard Operating Procedure has been developed and published by the Management Committee and distributed to a member, that member is responsible for ensuring that if and when the procedure is performed, it is performed to the minimum standard represented by the Standard Operating Procedure.

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## Section 4. Administration and Amendment of By-Laws

### 4.1. Authority and Approval

- **Committee Authority:**

In accordance with the Constitution, the Management Committee has the authority to make, amend, or repeal these By-Laws for the internal management of the Association.

- **Approval Process:**

Any proposed changes, additions, or removals to these By-Laws must be formally moved, voted upon, and accurately minuted at a properly convened Management Committee meeting.

### 4.2. Dissemination and Availability

- **Electronic Distribution:**

Within 7 days of approval of any amendments, the Secretary (or a delegated committee member) must electronically distribute the updated By-Laws document to all current members.

- **Website Access:**

The most current and active version of the By-Laws must be uploaded and maintained on the official GCARS website to ensure it is readily accessible to all members and prospective members at all times.

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## Section 5. Grievance and Dispute Resolution Protocol

### 5.1. Complaint Submission and Acknowledgment

- **Written Submission:**  
All formal grievances or complaints must be submitted in writing to the Management Committee.
- **Acknowledgment Timeframe:**  
The Management Committee will formally acknowledge receipt of the written complaint and provide a written response within **14 days** of its submission.

### 5.2. The Conciliatory Process

- **Member Participation:**  
Members involved in a grievance are expected to actively participate in a conciliatory process when requested by the Committee.
- **Initial Meeting:**  
As the first step in the investigation, the complainant will be invited to a formal meeting to discuss the details of their complaint to ensure the Committee fully understands their perspective.

### 5.3. Meeting Structure and Support

To ensure a fair, transparent, and comfortable environment, all grievance meetings will adhere to the following structure:

- **Committee Presence:**  
No more than three (3) members of the Management Committee will be present at the meeting.
- **Support Person:**  
The complainant or respondent is welcome to bring a support person. The support person is present solely to provide emotional support and comfort; they are not permitted to advocate or speak on behalf of the member.
- **Transcription and Record Keeping:**  
To maintain a highly accurate record, the meeting will be transcribed. Following the meeting, the member will be provided with a copy of the transcript and asked to formally confirm that it accurately reflects the discussion.

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## 5.4. The Investigation Process

To ensure procedural fairness under the GCARS Constitution and the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Qld)*, the general process for handling disputes is as follows:

- 5.4.1. **Oversight:**  
A dedicated individual will be nominated by the Committee to oversee the investigation process.
- 5.4.2. **Information Gathering:**  
The Committee will receive and review all relevant information, beginning with the initial meeting with the complainant.
- 5.4.3. **Respondent Interview:**  
The Committee will formally interview the respondent(s) named in the complaint to gather their account of the events.
- 5.4.4. **Reporting:**  
The investigating body will generate a formal report outlining the established findings, a proposed decision, and any operational recommendations.
- 5.4.5. **Ratification:**  
The formal report will be presented to the full Management Committee for acceptance of the findings and ratification of the final decision.
- 5.4.6. **Resolution:**  
The final decision will be distributed to all involved parties in writing. Where applicable, recommendations may include proposed amendments to the GCARS By-Laws or operating procedures.

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## 5.5. Potential Outcomes

Following the conclusion of the investigation, the Management Committee will determine one of the following outcomes:

- **No Jurisdiction:**  
The matter is deemed to fall outside the Society's jurisdiction or scope of rules, facilities, or authorised activities (e.g., disputes arising on private, third-party messaging platforms).
- **Complaint Upheld:**  
The complaint is found to be valid and substantiated. Corrective or disciplinary action may or may not be taken, depending on the context and severity of the breach.
- **Complaint Dismissed:**  
The complaint is found to be unsubstantiated and is formally dismissed.

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## Section 6. Financial and Spending Procedures

### 6.1. General Finance Policies

These policies provide guidance to the Management Committee, and information to Members about basic mechanics not contemplated in the Constitution.

- **Discretionary Limits:**  
Committee members are authorised to spend up to **\$100 per month** on necessary low-cost club items. This expenditure is at the committee members' risk.
- **Reimbursement:**  
Receipts for such expenditures must be submitted to the Treasurer for reimbursement, which is subject to subsequent ratification at the next committee meeting.
- **Grant Tracking:**  
A dedicated tracker spreadsheet must be maintained to monitor the expenditure of all grant funds. Serial numbers must be documented for all high-cost items purchased with grant funds.
- **EFT Evidence:**  
All reimbursements or payments to members must be supported by a supplied invoice, bill, or receipt prior to electronic funds transfer (EFT).

### 6.2. Accounting Policies

#### 6.2.1. Handling of Grants

This section is under development

#### 6.2.2. Handling of Donations

This section is under development

#### 6.2.3. Handling of Reimbursements

This section is under development

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## Section 7. Facility Safety and Maintenance

- **Fire Safety Inductions:**  
All key holders must receive a formal induction talk regarding the building's fire safety and evacuation guidelines.
  
- **Safety Testing Schedule:**
  - **RCDs (Residual Current Devices):**  
In addition to the annual checks performed by Council electricians, the club must perform and record a secondary earth leakage test at the six-month mid-point - this is to be noted in the committee minutes
  
  - **Fire Extinguishers:**  
Inspection date to be considered at each committee meeting, with formal testing scheduled annually on or before the expiry date.
  
  - **Defibrillator:**  
The operational status and battery life of the clubhouse defibrillator must be checked at each committee meeting and confirmed by the Committee.

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## Section 8. Operational Use of the Club Callsign (VK4WIG)

- **Authorised Use for Nets:**  
The **VK4WIG** callsign may be adopted by any financial member of GCARS for the purpose of operating any "net".
- **Identification Protocol:**  
Before adopting the club's callsign to operate a net, the member must first identify themselves using their own personal callsign.
- **Standard of Conduct:**  
Members choosing to use the **VK4WIG** callsign are required to do so in a manner that does not bring the club into disrepute.
- **Committee Oversight:**  
The committee maintains an obligation to the broader membership to sanction any member who acts inappropriately while using the club's callsign.

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## Section 9. External Communications and Representation

- **Official Representation:**

When communicating or interacting with regulators, public bodies, or other external organisations on behalf of the club, a member of the Executive must be present. This requirement may only be waived if a member of the Executive has formally delegated the activity to a specific committee member or ordinary club member.