



South African Radio League

Amateur Radio Hall of Fame

Eddie Leighton, ZS6BNE

Inducted in 2017



In 1975, while still at school, Eddie was licenced as ZS6BNE . His National Service was spent in the Signal unit of Wits Command, where he often manned the Club station ZS6VT. He later qualified as an electronics artisan in the Post Office.

For many years, Eddie was the chairman for the Lichtenburg Amateur Radio Club. He presented RAE and Morse classes. His radio students included his grandson Eduan, ZU6AAI.

Around 2000, Eddie started writing articles for *Radio ZS*, on topics including digital modes, satellite operating and portable operations.

Eddie was greatly inspired by attending an SARL Amateur Radio in Action presentation. He promptly decided to contribute to these sessions. He toured the country for a year, with a presentation on satellite operation. The following year, he repeated the same performance, this time with a focus on portable operations.

By this time, he had coined the term “RaDAR” (Rapid Deployment Amateur Radio), which has subsequently come into widespread use. The idea is to promote the ability to deploy amateur communications at short notice. RaDAR has evolved into an international activity with a considerable following. Regular activity periods are held, were participants have to deploy a station, make five contacts to prove that the station actually works, and then move at least a prescribed distance before repeating the process. The distance is dependent on the mode of transport being employed, with pedestrians having to relocate only a few hundred metres, but vehicles having to move several kilometres.

RaDAR encourages versatility, to enable amateurs to deploy much-needed infrastructure in the event of widespread disasters. Elements that are encouraged include experimentation, personal fitness and outdoor survival skills. Participants are encouraged to use any and all tools to improve their abilities, including different antennas, power supplies, modulation modes and even space technologies.

To promote RaDAR, Eddie has effectively used modern video and social media technologies. He has produced numerous tutorial and promotional videos and accumulated an international following.

Eddie was the South African Amateur Radio Development Trust’s (SAARDT) Radio Amateur of the Year in 2010, for his promotion both of satellite activity and RaDAR.

He practices what he preaches on physical fitness, being a three-time finisher of the iconic Comrades ultramarathon.

Get on the **RaDAR**....and GO!

RADAR
GOES GLOBAL

Eddie has created the RaDAR Challenge, which is a unique event aimed at promoting the use of Rapidly Deployable Amateur Radio stations. Categories may be changed at any time during the challenge. The points system is so structured as to encourage portable RaDAR operations especially moveable RaDAR stations.

RaDAR operators are encouraged to be self-sufficient during each challenge, with not only power supply and communications equipment but food, water, protective clothing and shelter, not forgetting the first aid kit.

The RaDAR Challenge is run three times per year over a 24 hour period. 24 hours will give equal opportunity to the international community of RaDAR operators. RaDAR operators can define their own operating time schedule.

The 24 hour period remains but it’s up to each individual to plan his/her maximum, single period, four hour operation. He/she should consider propagation with the ultimate goal of inter-continental RaDAR to RaDAR communications in mind. (10 bonus points!)