



September 5 – September 23, 2019

Western Kiribati and Nauru

Since our last expedition to 3C3W & 3C0W one year and four months have passed. During this time, I worked on different projects, however, that wasn't successful because we couldn't receive operating licenses and/or had some other difficulties for successful expedition.

In summer 2019 I decided to carry out expedition to Nauru (#54 Most wanted). Flight to Nauru from Latvia is very long distance and expensive. Because of this reason and to be more efficient I opted to visit 2nd DX entity as well – Western Kiribati (#68 Most wanted). Expedition was set for September 2019 so we had 3 months for preparations.

First task after receiving license was to book flight tickets for the team. Europe's large airline companies recently have downsized baggage limitations per passenger and for every additional weight unit they charge extra and this increases expeditions expenses significantly. To Brisbane in Australia I chose Etihad airlines and continued by Nauru airlines to Nauru with connection flights in middle. To both companies I submitted expedition support applications for



Yuris YL2GM starting expedition journey

sponsorship of additional 50 kg baggage. Nauru airlines decision to support us was positive, but Etihad airways declined. So, from Riga to Brisbane we had to pay extra for our baggage to both ways which in the end sums up more than one additional passenger ticket.

Next challenge for this expedition was the booking of hotels and acquiring visas. With Nauru everything went smooth and the visas were granted fast and in time, however, with Kiribati it was quite the opposite – it got delayed till our flight day. The usual response by the authorities was that everything is in process and we should just wait. Just on the last day when being already on the way I received email from the representatives and they told me that because of bank transfer charges they received only 145 AUD of 160 AUD. They asked which one of our team members should get declined for the visa? I had no opportunity to transfer additional funds right away and this would also take some time to be processed. This was also risky because we could have been restricted to board the plane without our visas on hand. In the end, I managed to contact our hotel owner who paid for us these necessary 15 AUD in the ministry's account. Later when being in Brisbane's airport I received visas in my email. For Latvian's the Australian transit visa application process is online – it's necessary to



Team at Riga airport. Jack YL2KA, Kristers YL3JA, Kaspars YL1ZF, Yuris YL2GM

fill out 12 pages and submit 7 documents. I never had fill so much documents to receive visa, not to mention that this is just transit visa. I submitted all necessary documents in time for all team members and three of us received visas the next day. The fourth one was declined after 2 weeks waiting. After submitting documents for 2nd time the visa was granted a week later.

For operating licenses I submitted applications in time and Nauru replied that I will get them only when arriving in the country. When this came through, they told me that I could get only 2 letter suffix callsign and that is the reason why we had to change our desired callsign to C21WW. Nauru also granted 60m band, but Western Kiribati replied that first we have to obtain visas and then only we could apply for licenses. When all of this was done and the T30L license was granted there wasn't included 60m band. Unfortunately, from the 2nd application I submitted I did not receive any response.

Three months for preparations went by fast. Its 4th of September and we meet in Riga airport for our flight: Riga (LAT) – Munich (GER) - Abu Dhabi (UAE) – Brisbane (AU). After more than 24 hours of flight time we are in Brisbane. Next flights are to Tarawa, Kiribati with Nauru airlines. Nauru airlines support with 50 kg additional baggage come in very handy, because our hand luggage consisting of transceivers, PA`s and laptops also get weighted.

TEAM

Our previous team consisting of me Juris (YL2GM) and Kaspars (YL1ZF) was joined by Jack (YL2KA), who is also our photographer and graphical designer, and Kristers (YL3JA) who is our new hope for WRTC 2022.

Operators: YL2GM, YL1ZF, YL2KA, YL3JA

Coordinator: Kaspars Pētersons

QSL manager: YL2GN

Webmaster: YL2VW

Graphic designer: YL2KA

Technical advisors: YL3DW

EQUIPMENT

Transceivers: 3x Elecraft K3

Power amplifiers: 3x SPE Expert 1.3K-FA

Antennas:

*160/80/60/40/30m bands – 18m high vertical with capacity hat RA6LBS

*2x 20-10m bands – Spider-beams

*40m bands – 2 phased vertical

*EFHW-8010 (80-10m bands)

*Beverages for receiving

EXPEDITION DIARY

Day 1 – Thursday, 5th of September

In early morning at 06.30 local time we land in Kiribati airport where we are greeted by a youngster with a poster from Dreamers guest house (our hotel and QTH for T30L). We load our bags with gear in his car and tie our antennas to the cars roof and continue to drive to our hotel approximately 15 km from the airport. During the way we get acquainted with our driver whose name is Adda and who turns out to be our hotels chef. He will be preparing meals for us during our stay.



Kiribati airport. Kristers YL3JA, Kaspars YL1ZF, Yuris YL2GM and Adda

After arriving we move into our room and right after that we start to check our hotels surroundings. Yard is not very large and we are only able to set up just one spider-beam antenna, still setting up guy-wires is quite challenging because the yard is only 12x12m and one of the cords has to be attached to an old tree log in the ocean shore. In palm tree next to the yard we hang our EFHW-8010 antenna and pull its wires towards the small islands shore in the lagoon. During the night we have to lower down spider-beam in order not to break it because of the increasing tide in the ocean.

The plan was to set up two stations so we also visited two other nearby hotels, however, none of them suited our needs regarding setting up antennas and the plans for two different stations had to be cancelled.

Day 2 – Friday, 6th of September

After breakfast we fixed guy-wires and erected Spider-beam to its intended heights. We also prepared place behind hotel for low band RA6LBS 18m vertical and we were only able to fix three guy-wires in the beach sands and the fourth had to be fixed in tide area. The problem was fixing the guy-wire poles in the beachy sands



T30L QTH – Dreamers guest house

because the poles we prepared and took with us wasn't suited for this ground. We fixed this by finding 1m long wood poles on the site that we hammered in the sands and covered with stones. After midday we finished this vertical montage and felt that we had burned in the hot sun so the remaining antenna installing had to be postponed to early morning when it's a bit chillier. Kaspars is operating and we don't bother him with these works.

Day 3 – Saturday, 7th of September

After getting up at 6 am and finishing works with the 2nd spider-beam, around midday we start operating with 2nd station on SSB. Kristers operates in AADX SSB contest on 20 and 15m and Kaspars as usual on CW 20, 17, 15m. After lunch we set up 100m beverage towards USA with intent to



Kaspars YL1ZF operating



Kristers YL3JA operating

work on 80m during the night, however, the evening comes with an electricity black out and we lose all DXing capabilities. Guest house had a 3kW generator, but the owner wasn't on the site and the mistress had no knowledge how to operate it and also, she could not allow us to work with it. During the night, electricity came back on so we started to operate on low bands mainly with JA and USA, and only some QSOs with EU.

Day 4 – Sunday, 8th of September

Early in the morning before breakfast we take down Beverages and maintain QSO logs. After that we lose electricity again because of the maintenance works after last night storm damages. On our request guest house staff turned on the generator and on this power we could operate one station with PA and other with transceiver on 100W. In the evening we get back electricity. Propagation is very bad – when operating SSB we can't hear single station and on CW QSOs are also minimal. Some of amateurs have turned to FT8 mode and during this time with bad propagation it was our only chance for operating.

Day 5 – Monday, 9th of September

Propagation does not improve. On higher bands 24 and 28 Mc there is only noise and we cannot do a single QSO. Some progress on 18 Mc where we are able to



160/80/60/40/30m RA6LBS 18m high vertical



Jack YL2KA and 20/10m Spider-beam

we have crossed our 10 000 QSO mark and again the statistics with Europe has improved to 9.8% of total QSOs. We also manage to make our first QSOs on 10 and 12m, mainly with Japan. As this expedition phase approaches its end, we have to start thinking about dismantling antennas and packing for Nauru.

make some QSOs in CW and FT8 mode. Unfortunately, in SSB we have only a little more than 500 QSOs. We can only hope that the propagation will improve in the second part of expedition in Nauru.

Day 6 – Tuesday, 10th of September

We check our statistics and see some improvements with Europe which at this time has 8% of 8700 QSOs. Around midday we lose electricity again and work with generator till the evening.

Today we also drove to Bairiki in order to buy support goods for Hams with hearts charity program. More about this please read Hams with hearts section.

Day 7 – Wednesday, 11th of September

After sending logs we see that



View from our island



View from our island

Day 8 – Thursday, 12th of September

In the evening we take down one Spider-beam and 7Mc verticals. During the night we work on low bands with RA6LBS vertical.

Day 9 – Friday, 13th of September

Before breakfast we take down RA6LBS vertical and later around midday we take down last Spider-beam. Till the evening we have to pack all our gear and get ready for our flight. In total from T30L we have made 13644 QSOs.

In the evening we have celebration dinner and our chef sets table in the garden with different Kiribati national food. The hotel staff is very kind and helpful and we promise that we will refer them other amateur radio expeditors as well. In our opinion this was the most suitable place for amateur radio activity. As it turns out our T30GC also has planned this place for their expedition in October.

Day 10 – Saturday, 14th of September

Our flight to Nauru is scheduled for 11.50am and we land there at 2pm. I call Menen hotel and the transportation minivan is sent for us. I have booked 2 rooms in this hotel and right away after checking in we start to search the surroundings for setting up antennas.



Celebrational dinner. Yuris YL2GM, Jack YL2KA, Kristers YL3JA, Kaspars YL1ZF

REPUBLIC OF NAURU INTERNATIONAL AIR TERMINAL



Kaspars YL1ZF, Yuris YL2GM, Kristers YL3JA

Unfortunately, this hotel was not suited for our operations – the rooms were in the middle part of hotel and there was no place for our antennas. On the island there is three more hotels and we head to look for them. In the end, most suitable is Budapest hotel located right on the ocean beach on the North side of the island. Hotel staff is very helpful and we rent 2 rooms there. After today's activities we are very tired so get some sleep.

Day 11 – Sunday, 15th of September

We start our day together with the sunrise and as soon as the first Spider-beam is finished, Kaspars starts to operate on CW. The rest of us continue with the RA6LBS vertical and in the evening we are able to start working on low bands. We have some problems with the radials placement because one side of the yard is with regular traffic. It looks like in the hotel we are the only one guests. Unfortunately, because of this hotel can't provide us at least one breakfast meal a day so we have to



Yuris YL2GM and Kristers YL3JA setting up Spider-beam

prepare meals for ourselves and for dinner we go to Chinese restaurant.



C21WW QTH and antennas

Day 12 – Monday, 16th of September

We manage to acquire for our use kitchen room that is located on the other side of hotel and we use it for SSB station. Only problem is that there is no air conditioning and the temperature at the hottest times of day peaks to 34 degrees Celsius. We have one fan; however, it breaks down during first day.



Jack YL2KA shooting Kristers YL3JA in our kitchen station

Just before midday we complete 2nd Spider-beam and 2 phased verticals for 40m. We start to operate on SSB and in the evening we already have 1000 QSOs (5000 in total). We have concluded with antenna building for now and the last antenna beverage will be set up tomorrow evening towards Europe. Overall, the noise levels in hotel are high, so it's hard to

anticipate what results we will get on low bands. Today we also acquired 12GB internet card for 95 AUD (which was enough for the rest of expedition to upload logs, check mail, read news and etc.)

Day 13 – Tuesday, 17th of September

Comparing to western Kiribati the propagation is much better. The QSO daily count also is showing that. In addition, beverage towards USA gives good results, however, we can't set the beverage towards Europe as it was anticipated.



Sea storm on approach

Day 14 – Wednesday, 18th of September

Today I received message from Nauru Airlines about changes in our flight schedule – our flight for 25th of September from Nauru to Brisbane is cancelled and we are offered to take this flight one day earlier. This changes our plans because we will operate one day less and we will have to spend additional night in Brisbane.

Day 15-18



Yuris YL2GM operating

While operating in our usual everyday routine we had some problems with RA6LBS vertical because of humidity that got into communication box and caused high SWR. Monday we will take down and pack antennas. Total in nine days we made 27315 QSOs. Every one of us is tired and longing for home. Two DX locations in one expedition is exhausting.

Day 19 - Monday, 23rd of September

Before our flights home we go for a quick sightseeing tour on the island. We visit main port and phosphate mines and after sending postcards home from local post office we catch our plane for Brisbane. There we land around 7 pm. Baggage formalities go by fast and it is delivered to our hotel next morning.



One of many very beautiful sights on the island

Day 20 - Tuesday, 24th of September

This additional and unplanned free day in Brisbane we are using for excursion and sightseeing. We take a 4-hour tour with small ferry through the city. These small ferries called "Sea cats" are used for public transportation. With a lot of stops on rivers both shores it's possible to get to different city locations fast during rush hours.

In the evening we are in airport and getting ready for our more than 24-hour flight back home. We land in Riga airport in the evening on 26th of September, where our families and friends welcome us home.



On "Sea cat". Yuris YL2GM, Kristers YL3JA, Kaspars YL1ZF and Jack YL2KA taking pictures

HAMS WITH HEARTS

During this expedition we were planning to conduct two “Hams with Hearts” activities – one in Western Kiribati and other in Nauru. The 2nd activity got cancelled due to unforeseen flight schedule changes.

Hams with Hearts is radio amateur humanitarian aid project organized by INDEXA. More detailed information about this you can find on this website:

<http://indexa.org/hamswithaheart.html>

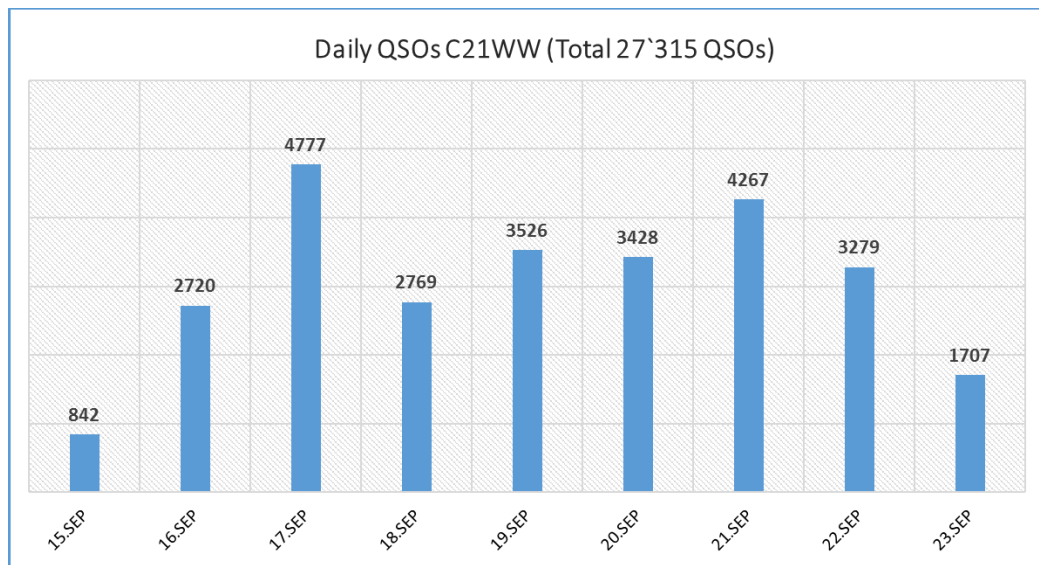
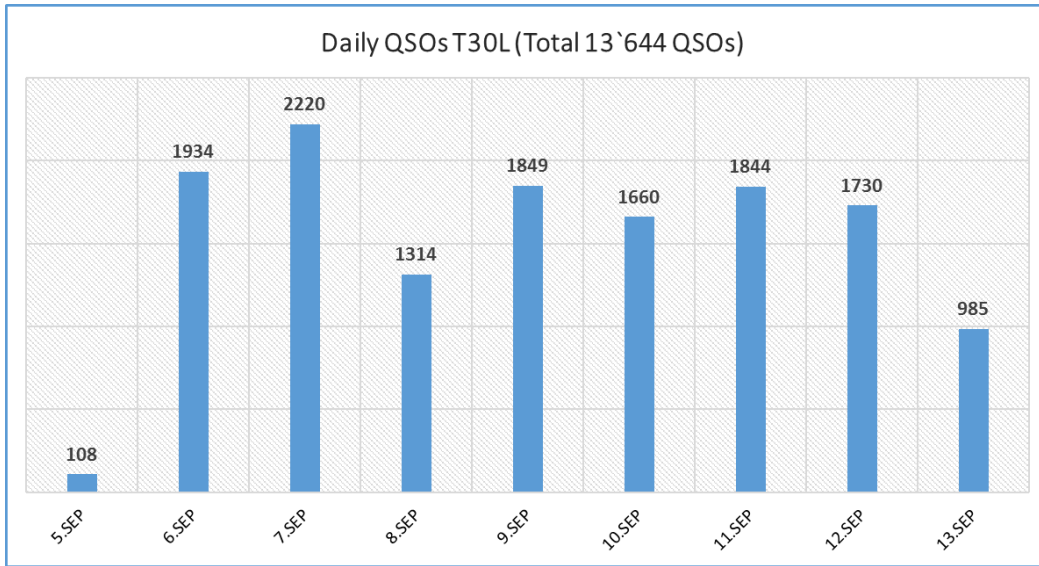
As in previous expeditions we were aiming to support young pupils and local school with first need goods. This time amateurs supporting this charity was not as active as in our previous expeditions. INDEXA supported this activity with 150\$ and the total budget after conversions and fees was 165\$ + 30\$ added by our team.

For activity in Western Kiribati we went to Bairiki local shop and acquired exercise books, pencils and other school things. We wrapped total of 50 packages with school goods and presented them to school children.

Thanks to INDEXA, N4EFS and 5P1KZX for putting those smiles on little school children faces and contributing to their education.



STATISTICS



Band/Mode breakdown T30L

Band	CW	FT8	SSB	FT4	Total	Total %
160	370	121	0	0	491	3.6%
80	847	1100	0	0	1947	14.3%
60	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
40	817	1323	457	0	2597	19.0%
30	1033	1020	0	0	2053	15.0%
20	1488	2043	704	108	4343	31.8%
17	579	764	17	0	1360	10.0%
15	329	381	74	0	784	5.7%
12	0	52	0	0	52	0.4%
10	0	17	0	0	17	0.2%
Totals	5463	6821	1252	108	13644	100.0%

Band/Mode breakdown C21WW

Band	CW	FT8	SSB	Total	Total %
160	473	136	0	609	2.2%
80	1361	882	0	2243	8.2%
60	42	50	0	92	0.3%
40	1769	1553	1305	4627	16.9%
30	1253	1260	0	2513	9.2%
20	3811	1760	3150	8721	31.9%
17	1623	1634	1361	4618	16.9%
15	1062	1213	758	3033	11.1%
12	262	201	23	486	1.8%
10	127	243	3	373	1.4%
Totals	11783	8932	6600	27315	100%

DXCC by Band/Mode breakdown T30L

Band	CW	FT8	SSB	FT4	Total
160	8	10	0	0	13
80	21	59	0	0	61
60	0	0	0	0	0
40	47	55	19	0	72
30	53	68	0	0	77
20	45	82	20	4	89
17	20	27	1	0	35
15	14	20	4	0	23
12	0	3	0	0	3
10	0	2	0	0	2
Totals	75	100	28	4	111

DXCC by Band/Mode breakdown C21WW

Band	CW	FT8	SSB	Total
160	17	12	0	19
80	46	49	0	60
60	3	17	0	19
40	64	69	53	81
30	52	66	0	74
20	84	72	91	113
17	40	69	52	81
15	28	55	16	66
12	6	9	2	10
10	2	10	1	10
Totals	91	96	95	120

Continent by Mode T30L

Band	SSB	CW	FT8	FT4	Total	Total %
AF	0	2	8	0	10	0.1%
AN	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
AS	861	3005	3671	76	7613	55.8%
EU	4	322	1058	0	1384	10.1%
NA	260	1802	1554	23	3639	26.7%
OC	114	244	395	9	762	5.6%
SA	13	88	135	0	236	1.7%
Totals	1252	5463	6821	108	13644	100.0%

Continent by Mode C21WW

Band	SSB	CW	FT8	Total	Total %
AF	1	4	12	17	0.1%
AN	0	0	0	0	0.0%
AS	3205	6454	4464	14123	51.7%
EU	2278	2264	2577	7119	26.1%
NA	888	2659	1584	5131	18.8%
OC	212	355	260	827	3.0%
SA	16	47	35	98	0.4%
Totals	6600	11783	8932	27315	100%

Continent by Band T30L

Band	160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	Total	Total %
AF	0	3	0	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	10	0.1%
AN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
AS	309	1005	0	1502	1068	2057	1008	600	48	16	7613	55.8%
EU	0	284	0	263	460	357	17	3	0	0	1384	10.1%
NA	159	520	0	558	383	1613	267	139	0	0	3639	26.7%
OC	23	111	0	186	106	238	56	37	4	1	762	5.6%
SA	0	24	0	84	35	76	12	5	0	0	236	1.7%
Totals	491	1947	0	2597	2053	4343	1360	784	52	17	13644	100%

Continent by Band C21WW

Band	160	80	60	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	Total	Total %
AF	0	0	0	1	1	13	2	0	0	0	17	0.1%
AN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
AS	412	1122	9	2265	1378	3112	2699	2305	460	361	14123	51.7%
EU	76	504	40	1402	623	3211	881	382	0	0	7119	26.1%
NA	102	524	42	791	420	2115	882	255	0	0	5131	18.8%
OC	19	82	1	141	78	236	144	88	26	12	827	3.0%
SA	0	11	0	27	13	34	10	3	0	0	98	0.4%
Totals	609	2243	92	4627	2513	8721	4618	3033	486	373	27315	100%

QSL CARDS



EXPEDITION SUPPORTERS

Clubs and associations



INDEXA



Equipment and corporates



VOACAP.COM

Individual supporters 100\$+

W3ACO

DJ8NK

W9EWZ

K0XP

K1USA

AA6VB

LY2BAW

CONCLUSION

During this expedition we made 13`644 QSOs from T30L and 27`315 from C21WW. All together this was tough expedition because of the long flights and the two times we had to build up stations. Propagation also was not on our side and could have been better, especially during T30L.

All together we are satisfied with this expedition who also had to be our first Pacific expedition.

In the end, I want to thank all our supporters and amateurs who worked with us and also thank you for reading our story.

73, Yuris/YL2GM/, Kas/YL1ZF/, Kris/YL3JA/, Jack/YL2KA/

You can find more information on expedition webpage: http://www.lral.lv/c21ww_t30l/