

# H44GC & H40GC DXpedition 2016

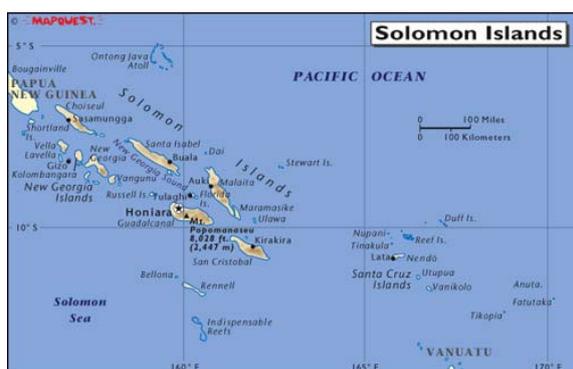
## Through the eyes of his organizer - Stan, LZ1GC

At the beginning of this article for the convenience of the readers, I submit data from Wikipedia about the Solomon Islands and Temotu Province, the object of this expedition.

Solomon Islands ( H44 ) is a sovereign country consisting of six major islands and over 900 smaller islands in Oceania, lying to the east of Papua New Guinea and northwest of Vanuatu and covering a land area of 28 400 square kilometres. The country's Capital, Honiara is located on the Island of Guadalcanal. The country takes its name from Solomon Islands archipelago, which is a collection of Melanesian islands that also includes the North Solomon Islands, but excludes outlying islands, such as Rennel and Bellona and the Santa Cruz Islands.

The islands have been inhabited for thousands of years. In 1568, the Spanish navigator Alvaro de Mendana was the first European to visit them, naming them the Islas Solomon. Britain defined its area of interest in the Solomon Islands archipelago in June 1893, when the Captain Gibson R. N. of HMS Curacoa, declared the southern Solomon Islands as a British Protectorate with the proclamation of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate.

The official name of the then British overseas territory was changed from " the British Solomon Islands Protectorate " to " Solomon Islands " in 1975. Self - government was achieved in 1976. Independence was obtained two years later.



Temotu Province ( H40 ) is easternmost province of the Solomon Islands. The province was formerly know as Santa Cruz Islands Province. It consists, essentially of two chains of islands which run parallel to each other from the northwest to the southeast. Its area is 895 square kilometres with the population about 21 000. The islands or island groups which make up Temotu Province are: Anuta Isl., Duff Islands, Fatutaka Isl., Lomlom Isl., Malo Isl., Matema Isl., Reef Islands, Santa Cruz Islands (incl. Nendo Isl.), Tikopia Isl.,

Tinakula Isl., Utupua Isl., Vanicoro Islands group including Teanu & Banie Islands. The most of the inhabitants of Tikopia Isl., Anuta Isl., the Duff Islands and some of the Reef Islands are Polynesians.

The provincial Capital is Lata, located on Nendo Isl., the largest and most important of the Santa Cruz Islands.



These two countries are so far from Bulgaria, South East Europe – more then 14,000 miles.

The idea, to activate these interesting countries for many radio amateurs , came in my head after the final of T2GC DXpedition 2015.

In late October 2015, after the finish of T2GC DXpedition, arrived in Bulgaria I was admitted at the hospital for 10 days to treat my old disease and diagnostic research associated with them. My stay in the hospital, I used to do some research via the Internet for Solomon Islands and Temotu Province.

Meanwhile contacted by e-mail with Sigi, DL7DF and Frank, DL7UFR. I turned to them knowing about their successful and well implemented activations of these countries in 2013 (H44G and H40T) and I received from them a lot of important information and tips for preparing H44GC & H40GC DXpedition 2016. Here I should thank them for their help and support with information about choosing a place to accomodation and transmitting on radio amateur bands from these two distances.

Planning an expedition to the Solomon Islands and Temotu Province, I knew in advance that the trip to this part of the world will be difficult, it will take many time.

With my accumulated experience of organizing my previous expeditions in the Pacific Ocean, in a very short time I developed a route of travel, the accomodation and draft budget expeditions of H44GC and H40GC. There were several options for travel (other

route) to these islands in the Pacific, but I decided to use a route, which for the most part already used by me for my previous DXpeditions, including various flights by plane, namely:

1. Sofia (Bulgaria), LZ – Frankfurt (Germany), DL
2. Frankfurt (Germany), DL – Seoul (South Korea), HL – Nadi, Fiji Republic, 3D2
3. Nadi ( Fiji Republic ), 3D2 – Honiara ( Solomon Islands ), H44
4. Honiara ( Solomon Islands ), H44 – Lata, Santa Cruz Isl.( Temotu Province ), H40

In a very short time, the period of activation of the Solomon Islands (H44) and Temotu Province (H40) was determined and agreed by the various flights that had to be used to reach these two distances. I had the intention both distances to be activated sequentially, for first activation of course I chose the Solomon Islands (H44). In the end of February 2016 in a conversation on the phone and after exchanged a few e-mail, I invited Emil, DL8JJ to participate in some stage of the planned DXpedition. He said that it will be his first expedition to the Pacific Ocean and we decided he should participate in the first stage of this expedition - activation of Solomon Islands (H44).

This was the first stage of organizing of this expedition. I began the next stage in organizing and conducting the expedition, namely getting H44GC and H40GC licenses and purchase of airline tickets. The application for licenses and receipt took me almost two months. Helped me again so much Olga, LZ1QG living with her family in Sydney, Australia since 1995. I turned to her to help me because I was hampered by the large time difference between Bulgaria and the Solomon Islands and difficulty to contact via the phone with Telecommunications Commission Solomon Islands.

The closeness between Australia and the Solomon Islands was not a problem for telephone contacts with their telecom. After a phone conversation and the exchange of several e-mails with Mr. Aaron Hopa - manager of telecom of Solomon Islands, responsible for the issuance of amateur radio licenses were sent to me forms which I can to fill out and send to him. I was aware also, what kind of documents I must send him to obtain H40GC and H44GC licenses. Thus, after several e-mail communicating with Mr. Aaron Hopa on June 25, 2016 I received licenses H40GC and H44GC.

During those two months while we had waiting for the issuance of H40GC and H44GC licenses, we both with Emil, DL8JJ bought the plane tickets for our upcoming trip.

An important stage of the preparation of the expedition was the promotion and finding sponsors to fill holes in the draft budget. This expedition would take place, but without the great support we received from amateur clubs, associations, foundations and individual sponsors would be a disaster for our financial situation. July

and August went into the preparation and testing of technical equipment. With Emil (DL8JJ) we had agreed in advance who will prepare what.

He contacted with Spiderbeam, Wimo Ltd, Difona communication, Kush Ltd and had ensure the expedition of coaxial cable - 150 m, 2 pieces Fiberglass Poles (12 m & 18 m), 1 piece transceiver Flex 6300 and 1 piece Hexbeam antenna provided by G3TXQ.

I was committed to provide 2 pieces amplifiers - ACOM 1011 and ACOM 600 S, provided to us by the owner of ACOM Ltd - Vasko, LZ1JK. We were supported from the workers in ACOM Ltd - Val, LZ1VB and Stan, LZ1IU with testing of the equipment and software setup which we used during H40GC and H44GC activities.

Another task was to prepare 1 piece Multiband GP antenna designed for Range 40 -10 meters, including the WARC bands also and a GP antenna on 160 & 80 meter bands. This year in my hands passed more than 500 meters wire, while doing wire antennas, but this was not a problem for me. Day after day, step by step at the beginning of September we started to pack our luggage and we were well prepared for the journey to the Pacific Ocean.

On September 19, 2016, after a two-hour flight with Bulgarian Air plane I was in Frankfurt, Germany.

September 20, 2016, we made final corrections in our luggage with which had to travel. We were ready and look forward for our flight on the next day evening to Seoul, South Korea.

The day is September 21, 2016 - 18 Pm and we are now on Terminal 1, Frankfurt International Airport. Our consignors were: Virjy (DL9JJ) - Emil's wife, their daughter Laura and Barbara - our friend.



After a quick and easy Check in and check of our personal luggage, we are in the flying fortress - BOING 747 Korean Airlines. We expect takeoff. We are excited and we want as soon as possible to fly the first part of the journey to the Pacific Ocean. We will have 11 hour flight. At this time I imagine how we will be friendly welcomed in Seoul from my good friend Aves Kang (DS2AGH).



To tell you honestly, I have accustomed to these long flights for a long time. During most of the flight, my time is going to sleep. When I'm awake usually I eat and drink nice white wine.

Good service and attention which we receive during the flight from the hostesses of Korean Airlines makes us to feel comfortable while traveling in ECONOMY Class.

On September 22, 2016 at 13:05 our plane landed on the Incheon Airport, Seoul (South Korea). After the usual passport control we are at the exit of arriving passengers place.

Here, expected us the business partner of Aves Kang (DS2AGH) and after about 30 minutes drive, we are already in one of the companies of Aves Kang, where he was waiting for us.

There was a warm welcome on his part, delicious lunch and conversation about radio amateur things and other topics in his radio - room. Amazing person and friend!



For another year, despite his big business commitments which he have, Aves Kang found time and way to meet us and to ensure that we did not feel 7 hours stay in Seoul before we to get on the next plane to Nadi, Fiji Republic

We were honored with such attention that we not felt when it came the time for our flight to Fiji! On the way to the Solomon Islands we spent unforgettable 7 hours in Seoul, South Korea.



I must admit that I coincidentally travel every year via Seoul, South Korea. I knew that Aves Kang will meet us.

We did not feel the stay till the next flight, something which is very important for the long and arduous journey!

The next step from our trip to Solomon Islands was a 11 hour flight with Korean Airlines: Seoul, South Korea - Nadi, Fiji Republic. On September 23, 2016 at 8:35 we already were on International airport in Nadi, Fiji Republic. Again, passport control, baggage checking - familiar things. Because I travel on this route by 2012, I already know what I must explain about the

baggage with which I travel and therefore we hadn't any problems with the local custom officers.

Fiji - a beautiful island country with friendly people. However, one must always has a mind and do not forget, because there are different of people.

Coming out of the airport with almost 100 kg luggage, we hired a taxi and headed to Travelers hotel, located near the airport where we had a reservation for the night. We checked into the hotel and made a short rest. Our flight to Honiara, Solomon Islands was the next day - 24 September , at 13:30 local time, so we had enough time to a walk, take a look at the center of Nadi, Fiji Republic. The evening we spent a few unforgettable hours in a local restaurant - outdoor restaurant listening a good rock music for unloading.



Emil and I were very tired from the long trip, but at the same time we were very excited and happy. We look forward to the upcoming September 24th, the day of our flight from Nadi, Fiji Republic to Honiara, Solomon Islands.

The morning of the next day we met with much hope and optimism. After morning coffee at a nearby café restaurant we went by taxi to the International Airport Nadi.

On September 24, 2016, arriving at the airport in Nadi, three hours before our flight to Honiara, Solomon Islands, we were unpleasantly surprised that our flight will take place but with a 5 hour delay. Bad news, of course! And yet - is not the worst news! Because this is Fiji! Here everything is possible! The delay was large, indeed and confused our plans for the time we had announced that we will be on the air from the Solomon Islands ( H44 ), but we were pleased that although late in the evening , we will be in Honiara, Solomon Islands. This unexpected downtime at airport Nadi, Fiji Republic was wasted time for us, but what to do - we experienced it and finally after 4 hour flight to Solomon Islands at 21 hours local time we arrived at the Honiara

International Airport. And here - a nasty surprise. Seeing our specific baggage - 2 heavy paper boxes with Amplifiers ACOM, 3 pieces transceivers, long about two meters case with 2 pieces Spiderbeam Fiberglass poles, the boss (a woman) of the team of customs officers said us that we must give them 300 USD a deposit guarantee (swag). They told us that the money will be returned when leaving the Solomon Islands, before our return flight. It was clear for us that this will not happen and We insisted, they give us a paper receipt with an explanation of what we gave this "deposit". After a heated argument, it was told us that if some local guarantee for us - the money will be returned before our departure. And here next absurdity - we asked one of the customs officers where we can catch a taxi - he took off his jacket and said - I'm taxi and will drive you. My God – this was the “ top “ !

It happened - the customs officer, transformed into taxi driver drove us by his private car on double more expensive fare to Guesthouse Honiara, where we had reservation for the period from 24 September to 3 October 2016.

Our accommodation and transmit location on Solomon Islands was Guesthouse Honiara, on the top of the hill - the most high point in Honiara. This place is about 15 minutes with a car from the International Airport of Honiara, the capital of Solomon Islands.

At 22 PM local time we were in front of Guesthouse Honiara - our accommodation place.

Unloading luggage from the "taxi" and has not seen the room yet, We began to installing and lifting HEXbeam antenna. Aided by Peter, one of the occupants of the Guesthouse Honiara, and later our active helper managed quickly to put up the antenna. It was so dark outside.

As soon as we were done with the antenna was quick installation of the first workstation consisting of Flex 6300 and ACOM 600S. At 14:33 GMT, H44GC with operator Emil (DL8JJ ) was already on the air on RTTY in CQ WW RTTY CONTEST. The first contact with JE1LFX on 14 088 Mhz. Unfortunately the propagation was very bad and bands from 20 - 10m were closed at this time of the night.

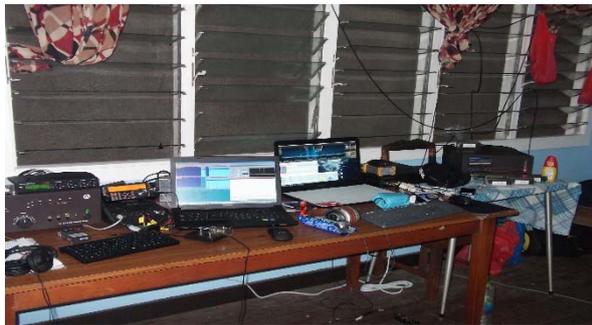
For this reason until the morning local time H44GC made only 20 QSOs! Later, around 20 Z - 20 m band began to "awaken" and Emil, DL8JJ started work on CW and cause a decent PILE UP.

Outside, already approached the local sunrise. Although it was still dark, I left Emil working on 14 Mhz, CW and started preparing for lifting Multiband GP antenna designed for 40 -10 m bands (including the WARC bands). When the antenna was assembled and ready for lifting, I called Emil (DL8JJ) and we both, together quickly stood the mast in vertical

position and We fixed wires and elements with provided for this purpose ropes. The antenna was ready! After this Emil continue work on 20 meters CW. At this time I quickly prepared the second workstation consisting of Kenwood TS -480 SAT and ACOM-1011. I checked the SWR of multiband GP antenna. It was good with values from 1.0 to 1.4 for different bands. I began operating on 18,070 Mhz, CW. Immediately get a big Pile Up!

Was great!

At 22:30 Z of September, 24<sup>TH</sup> 2016, H44GC already was on the air with two transmitters, working then on 20 and 17 meters, CW.



So, mutt and worked about two hours, but during that time in my head out was the thought to stop and to preparing to lift the antenna for 80 & 160 meter bands. So I left Emil (DL8JJ) to work on 17 meters - CW, where there was a good pile up! Coming out blew me heat wave. It was midday, local time and very hot - over 45 degrees C. I had difficulties with the crucifixion of 18 m mast "Spiderbeam fiberglass pole."

It was so hot that the elements of the mast were Between September, 24 and October, 03 2016, H44GC was constantly on the air, on all radio amateur bands with two working places in CW, RTTY and SSB modes. For this period of time, although extremely poor propagation were made 16,216 QSOs on all HF bands (160-10 m).

heated and burned in touch with my hands. Although, not as quickly as at the morning, when lifting Multi band GP fast, this antenna was ready to straighten. Peter - our local assistant helped me to stand eighteen meters mast, to fixate the mast by guyed, to mounted radials, tuning box and to pitched coaxial cable. Followed tuning and testing of the antenna with excellent results - the SWR on 160 and 80 m was 1.0!!!

Immediately, I began to work on 80 meters, CW. The first contact on 80 meters, CW was with ZL1TM at 08:38 GMT on September 25, 2016. Shortly thereafter began Pile Up from JAs. The rate was good - 2 QSOs per a minute. At this time, Emil (DL8JJ) worked

Europe on 17 meters CW with a rate -3 QSOs per a minute.



I emphasize again, that H44GC activity was actually held in very poor propagation on all HF bands. We had beat insomnia. We slept no more than 2-3 hours per day, but poor propagation we were not able to overcome. The poor propagation is the main reason to work less time on SSB mode. However, I think we got good activity from Solomon Islands on CW and RTTY, especially 160 & 80 meters bands on CW.

I will remember Solomon Islands with friendly people, with heavy traffic (congestion) on the road in the center of Honiara and of course with the big Pile Ups on the air!



During our stay in Honiara we had only small problem with stray dogs. By analogy of C21GC DXpedition in 2014 - they again showed "appetite" to our wire antennas. The coaxial cable and 3 of wired active elements of Multi band GP were gnawing by them. We had a technical problem with the tuning device of 160 & 80 meters antenna, but these were correctable things.

The locals treated us very friendly, helped us with whatever they can. They watched amazed and curiously our antennas, that we were raised and many of them asked us for what we are using them. Throughout our stay into Solomon Islands, we had the full support of Mrs. Sarah and Mr. Peter responsible for the management of Guesthouse Honiara.

I will remember forever my meeting with Mr. Aaron Hopa, manager of Telecommunications Commission of Solomons Islands - Extremely accurate and honest man, facilitate our maximum in acquiring licenses. I will remember the obtaining moment of my paper H40GC & H44GC licences!

Despite our meager time for walking, we saw sightseeing, as their government building, local telecom, shops and open markets. I will remember all my conversations with locals - very talkative people, most of them often asked are you married and how many children you have. In these conversations they frankly said that the mean of their lives are their children, their families. Despite poverty and difficult life, usually locals have families with 6-8 or more children.



On October 3, 2016 in the late afternoon Emil, DL8JJ dismantled the Hexbeam antenna and later - around 23:00 local time, we together dismantled also Multi band GP antenna that was use for the ranges of 40 - 10 m + WARC band. Almost all night we packed the luggage and equipment in preparation for our upcoming trip the next day - I to Lata, Nendo Island -Temotu Provice (H40), Emil (DL8JJ) to Frankfurt, Germany.

Early of the morning of October, 04 2016 was dismantled very fast also 160 & 80 m antenna.

Thus was end of the first stage of H44GC activity, realized by Stan, (LZ1GC) and Emil, (DL8JJ). A first stage, because I had planning another one activation of H44GC for three days, after end of H40GC DXpedition, before my return flight back to Europe.

The flight from Honiara, Solomon Islands (H44) to Lata, Nendo Island, Santa Cruz Islands Group, (Temotu Province) scheduled had to be at 11:20 local time on October 4, 2017, but unfortunately the flight departure happened at 13: 30 local time, more than two hours late. Anyway! I experienced it!



At 15:30 local time, after a two-hour flight, the plane of Solomon Air lines landed successfully on a large meadow - local Airport of Lata, Nendo Island, Temotu Province. Outside was indescribable heat. I arrived on Nendo Island in the hottest part of the day.



With my descent from the plane, the first thing that impressed me was the vision of "waiting room " of the local " airport ". I was impressed by the fact that the greeters were repeated more than the arriving passengers! Because the flight was "Domestic" there was no passport control and baggage checking. Deplaning, you take your luggage and went! When you're with more luggage only transportation to move are private taxis (1-2 cars), that typically await incoming flights from Honiara, Solomon Islands operated twice a week by Solomon Airlines.



I had an appointment with the owner of Lata motel - Lionel to waiting for me with a car, when I arrive. After receiving of my luggage, which was about 70kgs and I made sure that no one waiting for me, I took the only taxi which currently was on the local "Airport", to drove me with the baggage to Lata motel.

It turned out that Lata motel is very near the local airport. After about five minutes away by Taxi I was greeted by Jenefer, wife of Lionel - owner of the motel. Jenifer as saw my luggage realized, who I am. Without ever seen me before, she called me by name and greeted me with a welcome! The first thing that she said me was that Lionel has went, a few days ago on a business trip

to Honiara and will be at home in a few days. She told me that she knows about my visit! Later explained to me, that I'm not the first radio amateur who stayed at Lata motel and I realized, that except Sigi (DK9FN) - known as H40FN, the group of Sigi (DL7DF), here years ago were also radio amateurs from Australia.

It was already 16:00 local time. I had - less than three hours before local sunset to picked up the antenna and started work on the air as H40GC. I decided to do 10-15 minute break that I used to explain to Jenifer, that I will be need the help of 1-2 locals to pick up the antenna.

Meanwhile, on arrival very careful, I looked with my eyes where is the place there, which I can to use for my antennas. The place for antennas was limited, but still enough for my both antennas - Vertical on 160 & 80 meters and Multiband GP for 40-10 meters, including WARC bands.

I had limited time until the evening and I was the reason to decide to pick up the antenna for 160 & 80 m - Vertical with 4 radials.

I still unpacked my baggage and I saw three boys, almost of the same age, who approached me. Their eyes asked me - what can we help you! It turned out that these are the sons of Jenifer and Lionel. Their mother quickly they had explained that the need to help and they were already online!

To tell you frankly I was amazed because it turned out that the people of Temotu Province are not lazy like most of the people on the islands (Nauru), who I have visited in previous years.

The guys helped me a lot! Definitely what we did in lifting of the antenna them was interesting. While preparing the mast, guyed and radials, I explained them what we are doing and why. They listened with interest and helped me. They even called a friend with a boat and so we were able to quickly locate 2 radials in the salt water of the ocean. They did not hesitate to dive into not so calm waters of the Ocean to fixed these radials to rocks. During the tension of a guyed, one of them climbed on top of the 15 m high Palm. He did this with great ease, deftly using only hands and feet, without any reassurance and without any effort. I was truly amazed. Such support and assistance I've never met in my previous expeditions in the Pacific.

Although, it was already dark, 160 & 80 m antenna was lifted and ready to use. I Immediately stepped to slowly and carefully mounting of the equipment, consisting of transceiver Kenwood TS - 480 SAT, linear amplifier ACOM - 1011, laptop Lenovo B590 and MicroHam decoder for RTTY. Testing the antenna showed the best result: SWR of 160 and 80 m was 1.0 and there wasn't any reflected power.



I was pleased and very grateful to the guys and Jenefer for their help and support.

Unfortunately, I was very, very tired. Sleepless days and nights during the H44GC activity, difficult and the lengthy flights by plane - all these loads said their heavy word. I needed for a short rest!

Despite the fatigue, I started to work on the air from Temotu Province, Nendo Island IOTA OC-100. After the first short CQ at 16:14 Z on October 4, 2016, on 3507 Khz called me JH0BBBA. After this followed fast QSOs with : WH7W, RK4FF, IZ8VYU and about 10 other QSOs for about 10 minutes.

Unfortunately though the need for a sleep prevailed and I had to stop. So, at 16:30 Z ,I passed in forced QRT for a few hours.



Only after 3 hrs and 20 minutes-at 19.50 Z, H44GC was again on air. Already on 18,070 Mhz, CW even though with the antenna for 160/80 m, I was working USA and other NA stations. It was big Pile-up. The score was 3-4 even some next minutes 5-6 QSO's per minute in a period of hours. Thus is, when there is looking for real DX station. Here is the place I recall at that time Temotu Province (H40) was number 30th in the list of most searched countries of CLUBLOG! So I continued work on different bands, I could say in NONSTOP mode and also in the next day. Pile-Ups were everywhere so big, that there was not time I stop work to lift other antenna-multi band GP on 40-10 m, plus WARC bands. On 3th day from my arriving at Temotu Province (H40),

I decided to lift and other that antenna. I made that in a

period between 12-15 h local time a period when the propagation is worst on all bands. Even though in the hottest part of the day time when everybody looks for shadow, I managed to lift the other antenna, again with the help of the sons of Jenifer and Lionel. After that, I made some tests of the antenna with good results. The SWR was between 1.0 and 1.5 on the different 7 bands. I use those antennas by the time of my expeditions in the Pacific, since 2013. With them and with power amplifier produced by ACOM Ltd, I am calm, I do know there not be any problems. In the next 10 days, I continued, almost without any interruption working on all HF bands. The propagation was very bad, determine as "poor" on all bands, but although that, by day, I was making about 1700 - 1800 QSO's. During all days of H40GC activity, I was diligent to work more and more time on 160 and 80 m, but at the same time, I did not disregard and the work on other bands ,using the maximum, although bad propagation the "windows" for NA, SA and EU. So, the QSO's on CW and RTTY by day increased. Definitely I am obliged to the SSB operators, because during this activity H40GC made only about 2000 QSO's on SSB. The reason is not only that SSB mode is not my favorite kind of work, but the propagation also was really bad. In this poor propagation, the SSB signals were very weak. In that case, I think, I correctly chose my strategy to be most the time active on CW and RTTY. Many DXpeditions do not like work on 160 m, even on 80 m. They do not want "lose" time on those bands and by that method, they make more QSO's. But, they do not understand, how much they lose the pleasure, which the operator feels, when He works on those "MAGIC" bands!!! Except the bad propagation and stopping of the electricity two days ( 8 to 10 hrs by day ),by the time of H40GC activity, I had not any other problems, which could be make difficult my work on all HF bands-CW, RTTY and SSB. I have used the stopped of the electricity during the two days of H40GC to walk around, as in that time I have had meets with teachers from the local high school, I went to the local Telecom, Post office, the one only Hospital on the Island - Lata Hospital, the house of the local Government, Police, open market. I visited also the local office for civil protection against calamities and damages.

I would like say my thankfulness to George - the chief of that office for his support and help, He allowed to me, I use his official Internet, so I put my QSO's on CLUBLOG. Really, I have tried to use the services of the local Telecom, but because of bad quality of Internet my trials were unsuccessful. Sharing that problem with George, He immediately helped me, with use his office Internet, which was better. Thanks to his kindly assistance, I just managed one every two days to put the Log of H40GC on CLUBLOG! George helped me also with a lot of information about - from that kind of help the people live in Temotu Province need! The teacher Gasper acquainted me and shared the most necessaries things the local school needs.



Since October 4<sup>TH</sup> to October 17<sup>TH</sup> 2016 almost NONSTOP mode of work on air in very bad propagation H40GC made 18448 QSO's on all ham bands ( 160 - 10 m ),on CW/RTTY/SSB.

The pauses I took the liberty by the activity of H40GC were no more than 3 - 4 hrs by day. I have used these pauses for sleeping (2-3 hours), also for uploaded the QSO's on CLUBLOG, but also for eating and taking a shower, coffee with a cigarette - to surmount the sleeplessness.

Continent By Band

Band	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	Total	Total %
AF	1	1	3	5	11	7	8	1	0	37	0.2%
AN	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.0%
AS	86	462	578	797	862	1859	1973	791	679	8087	43.8%
EU	40	169	312	322	1958	841	759	146	14	4561	24.7%
NA	216	574	569	399	222	1185	1040	486	200	4891	26.5%
OC	15	50	33	45	58	106	145	48	19	519	2.8%
SA	2	13	26	33	57	57	117	32	15	352	1.9%
Totals	360	1269	1521	1602	3168	4055	4042	1504	927	18448	

Simple saying - "Spartans" kind of living! During the short breaks I made some time, I spoke with the owners of the motel-Lionel and Jenifer exceptionally polite and nice people.



At the time of my stay in Lata motel, there were not other tourists staying there. In that motel was living also the brother of Jenifer and his family. I was impressed of their smaller boys-twins. They were so playful and their mother always was running after them. I do not

know whether, you can understand me, but the conversations with those friendly temper people helped me, I be cheerful and in a good shape!



October 17<sup>th</sup> 2016, at 16.07 GMT (local time 03:07 Z, Oct 18<sup>th</sup> 2016), H40GC went in QRT. The last QSO was with JA4ZA on 160 m, CW.

The flight back to Honiara, Solomon Islands was by schedule that day at 12.30 hr local time. I had no more than 6 hrs to remove the two antennas and packing-up the baggage. The short time, behind me to sunrise I have used for preparation and packing the luggage including the equipment, I was ready, soon, before the sunrise, I called Lionel, We have talked the last day about that and We both removed the two antennas and prepared the rest of the luggage for my coming trip. After that, with his help, we made together some pictures with flags of some from our Sponsors. I had at 10:30 local time, very kind farewell with Jenifer and others. Later, both with Lionel went with a taxi to the local "Airport".

Arriving to the Airport-the result was just surprise. There was no anybody! Lionel immediately said Me that, the reason probably is passing over the flight, but also He tried make me calm-in day or two will be flight! Actually, I did not be surprise, but also I did not worry, because I have already predicted that kind of things! The flight from Honiara to Europe via Fiji and South Korea was on October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016 – next 4 days. Because of that, I was planning second stage activity from Honiara, Solomon Islands. At that moment the one only thing made me was angry, I have already removed and packaged the antennas, so in that case I could work one more day and night from Temotu Province. I have already planned to lift the antennas again, if the flight to Honiara is the next two days. With the taxi, we went to the office of Solomon Airlines in Lata, Temotu Province. There we were welcomed from Mr. Gromyko, agent of Solomon Airlines, who just at the time of our introduction, He emphasized is proud, because He has the name of the popular Russian statesman at the recent time-Gromyko. That man said, that there not be flight, because of some technical reasons, but also mentioned to 16.00 hr local time will be give us some information, when will be flight, next 1-3 days.

Coming back to the motel, I hoped and would like, the flight will be no earliest then next day. It would be

better, because there was possibility I start again work from Temotu Province (H40) at least one more day. Unfortunately, at 16.30 local time Lionel got a phone call and the information was, that the flight to Honiara will be next day at 13:30 local time.

The same day in the motel the electricity stopped, because of exhausted limit. So, my hope to have a chance working day or two more from Temotu Province (H40) failed, but I said myself, I must activate this place again in October 2017! During the night, I was not slept well, because I just was getting accustomed working on the radio station at that time! Next day, October 19<sup>th</sup> 2016, at 14:00 local time (with 30 minutes delay), with the small airplane of the Solomon Airlines, I flew from Lata to Honiara, Solomon islands.

Thus finished the H40GC DXpedition by Stan (LZ1GC) to Nendo Island, Santa Cruz Isl. Group, Temotu Province. At that part of the article refers to H40GC DX pedition,

**I would like cordially thank:**

**Thanks to all individual sponsors for their support!**

**Thanks to all other Associations and Foundations: GDXF, CDXC (The UK Foundation), DXers**

The second stage of the activity of Solomon Islands – H44GC was between October, 19<sup>th</sup> till October, 21<sup>st</sup> 2016 and it was realized only by myself – Stan, LZ1GC.

The flight on October 19, 2016 from Lata, Nendo Island (Temotu Province) to Honiara, Solomon Islands was not directly as usually. The flight was with a stop into Kirakira, Makira Island, Solomon Islands to take also other passengers. We, the travelers had about 30 minutes stay there.



Because of that reason, instead of 15:30 local time, the airplane arrived in Honiara at 16:30 local time.

It was coming again activate of Solomon Islands near 3 days, before my trip to Bulgaria, Europe.

At the Airport of Honiara I was welcoming from Mathias and his fascinated wife Vivian-friendly family of Lionel and Jenifer - the owners of Lata motel in Temotu. Lionel phoned them, before my flight from Temotu and said of them, to wait me at the airport and to drove me to the Guesthouse Honiara. All was OK! I was quickly transported by Mathias and Vivian to that Guesthouse. I was thankful of them and We all undersood, they again to transport me at October 22<sup>nd</sup>

2016 to the International Airport Honiara at the day of my flight back to Europe. At the parting with them, I immediately started prepare myself for lifting the antenna on 160 & 80 m bands. It was passing 17.30 local time.

There was not much time to the local sunset, but I had to lift the antenna before darkness. After that, I could install as easy and fast the equipment and start work again from Solomon Islands - H44GC.

I knew, there is small time to darkness, so I assembled a Spiderbeam Fiberglass mast, mounted the active element and capacity hat, I repaired the radials and cords to fixing the mast.

About lifting the mast in vertical position and stretching the cords it was necessary with out the help of Mrs Sara – the manager of Guesthouse Honiara and her daughter. Although already there was dark, I managed to set the radials and coax cabel. Later, I installed the equipment and started work on air on 80 m band CW. In that stage of H44GC activity, I worked more on SSB and RTTY on 17/15/12/10 m by day and during the night on 30/18/160 m CW. Fortunately, at the last 3 days of H44GC activity, the propagation on 160 m was better and before the local sunrise I had about 20 minutes possibility to work Europe, I have used that time very well! October, 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016 at 21:09 GMT, H44GC went in QRT with final result – 18 306 QSOs on all HF bands, on CW, SSB and RTTY modes. The last QSO of H44GC activity was with KB8VAO on 20 m, CW at 21:09 GMT on October 21, 2016.

Band	CW	RTTY	PH	Total	Total %
160	610	0	0	610	3.3%
80	1368	0	0	1368	7.5%
40	1191	246	0	1437	7.8%
30	1816	353	0	2169	11.8%
20	2096	388	411	2895	15.8%
17	3296	1063	503	4862	26.6%
15	2061	550	567	3178	17.4%
12	537	442	172	1151	6.3%
10	351	208	77	636	3.5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>13326</b>	<b>3250</b>	<b>1730</b>	<b>18306</b>	

Continent By Band

Band	160	80	40	30	20	17	15	12	10	Total	Total %
AF	1	2	3	7	10	9	2	0	0	34	0.2%
AN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
AS	384	687	684	1005	1510	2465	1720	747	556	9758	53.3%
EU	65	354	528	611	912	1463	414	196	37	4580	25.0%
NA	146	265	186	434	305	781	904	188	39	3248	17.7%
OC	12	57	33	86	102	108	98	15	3	514	2.8%
SA	2	3	3	26	56	36	40	5	1	172	0.9%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>1368</b>	<b>1437</b>	<b>2169</b>	<b>2895</b>	<b>4862</b>	<b>3178</b>	<b>1151</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>18306</b>	

It is not regular, I make a valuation, what me and Emil (DL8JJ) made by the time of H44GC activation, but because of the reports and valuations of many ham

operators over the World, I do think, that was a difficult, but successful Dxpedition! Although, the propagation was extremely bad during the time of H44GC and H40GC activities we are very happy to give "NEW ONE" for many radio amateurs!

October, 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016 - I was together with Mathias and Vivian on the Honiara airport.



At 14.30 local time of October, 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016 with flight FJ 268 of Fiji Airlines began my trip back to Europe and Bulgaria. Again very long and hard trip via Seoul (South Korea), Nadi (Fiji Republic) and Frankfurt (Germany) with two stops – in Nadi, Fiji Republic per 2 days and Seoul, South Korea (HL) per a night. Finally, October 27<sup>th</sup> 2016, I was already at my home, after 38 days absence from Bulgaria!

I was very, very tired, but also happy because we coped with all of the provocations, have written in that article.

**Once again, Thanks to all our individual sponsors!**

I am impressed the Support that we have got from many clubs with no so many members and not so much financial possibilities!

Thanks to Jack (W3KX) from National Capitol DX Association, Jonathan (W6GX) from Mile-Hi DX Association and many other radio amateurs, who contributed to be support from the clubs and Associations, they are members! Thanks to the support of European Foundations, Associations and Clubs: **GDXF**, CDXC (The U.K. Foundation), GM DX GROUP, LADXG, CLIPPERTON DX CLUB, who supported not for first time my Dxpeditons!

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**To all, who supported us - THANK YOU!**

Till next meets by the radio on the HF bands!

**73! Stan, LZ1GC (H40GC & H44GC)**

Edited to GDXF Format by Prof. Dr. Uwe Jaeger, DJ9HX