



Backgrounder: The WIA

What is it?

The Wireless Institute of Australia – the WIA - is the national voice of Australian radio amateurs.

It is recognised as the representative organisation of radio amateurs by the Australian regulator, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). The WIA is a member of the International Amateur Radio Union, the IARU and an active participant in the IARU's regional organisation.

The WIA publishes a monthly magazine, *Amateur Radio*, and through its website and weekly broadcasts keeps anyone interested in amateur radio up to date on news, events and activities. Through many dedicated volunteers it manages activities such as contests and awards.

Since 1992 the WIA has conducted the examinations that are required to be passed to become a radio amateur, today ranging from the entry level Foundation qualification to the internationally recognised Advanced qualification.

The WIA qualifies and accredits over 200 Assessors who conduct the examinations, working with more than 100 affiliated clubs across the country to provide as easy an access as possible for those who are interested in becoming a radio amateur.

How did it start?

The WIA was founded at a meeting on 11 March 1910 held at the Hotel Australia at the corner of Martin Place and Castlereagh Street in Sydney, when a number of the wireless experimenters decided to form the Institute of Wireless Telegraphy of Australia as an organisation to better represent their interests in dealing with the authorities. Very quickly the word Telegraphy was dropped from the name.

Similar groups formed in the other states in the following years, and in the early 1920s the various states formed a national coordinating body, the Wireless Institute of Australia and the state organisations became “Divisions”.

The group that started it all was incorporated as the Wireless Institute of Australia New South Wales Division in May 1922.

The WIA today

The WIA has over 4,500 members.

It is governed by a Board of seven directors, elected by the members for two year terms. The directors come from various states, and the WIA headquarters is located at Bayswater, near Melbourne.

To learn more about amateur radio and the WIA, visit its website www.wia.org.au