

TEN TIPS FOR CRUISING SAILORS

1. **ZLM/Taupo Maritime Radio** offer a continuous 7/24 Trip reporting service, see www.maritimenz.govt.nz/about/what-we-do/safety-and-response/maritime-radio.asp

The HIGH SEAS forecast for the area SUBTROPIC from MetService is read out in English via ZLM at 0903hr, and 2103hr NZST/NZDT on 6224 and 12356KHz and repeated an hour later on 8297 and 16531 KHz.

(www.metservice.com/marine/radio-schedule)



NZ MetService ceased their ZKLF Radio fax 1 July 2023

Australia's Bureau of Meteorology still sends weather maps by HF Radio fax. The nearest transmitter to the South Pacific is VMC in Charleville, schedule is at www.bom.gov.au/marine/radio-sat/radio-fax-schedule.shtml

2. **Gulf Harbour Radio ZMH286** www.ghradio.co.nz ghradio@extra.co.nz

Patricia and David keep track of boats that listen to their rollcall/weather service. Firstly, contact them via email or radio with your details - boat name, MMSI, boat type and length and number of crew. Then let them know when you are about to take off and whether you will be on air each night. They operate on 8752USB at 0515 UTC which is 5:15pm NZST and an hour later during daylight saving, 6:15pm. Each broadcast is live streamed so friends and family can hear your check in and follow along. David gives a weather update each night for the passage routes and the islands. And their web site has articles of general interest and specifically on weather.

3. **Passage Guardian passageguardian.nz** peter@passageguardian.nz

Passage Monitoring is operated by Peter Mott and provides a global free-of-charge service (donations welcome) that monitors the progress of recreational vessels conducting ocean passages.

Peter uses a range of tools, including satellite trackers, AIS and email, and multiple maritime radio frequencies to keep a constant watch on yachts that have filed a float plan prior to departure. The service has a formal policy for dealing with a missed

check in.

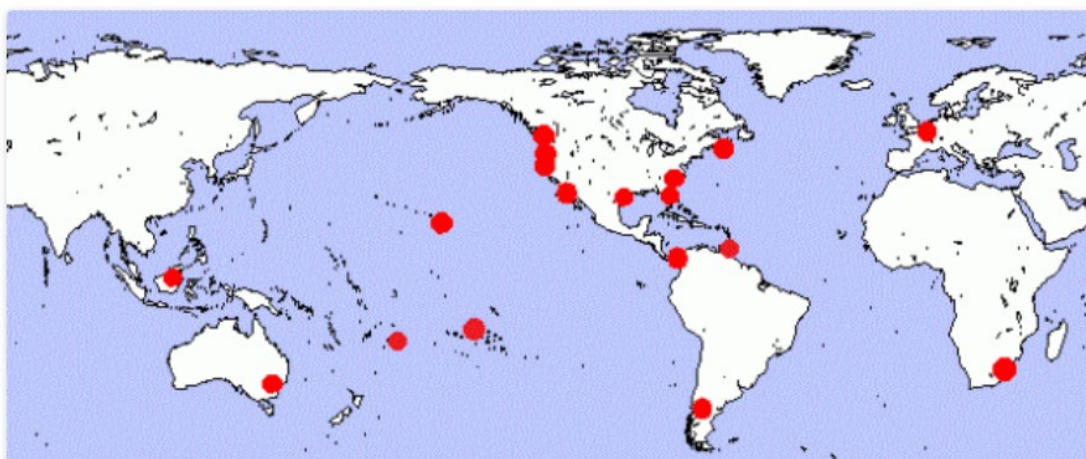
Whilst available to all yachts, Passage Monitoring is especially suited to shorthanded and solo sailors, in particular circumnavigators.

4. **AMATEUR RADIO**/Ham net: **PACSEANET** pacseanet@gmail.com

The Pacific Seafarers Net is a ham (amateur radio) network providing a free of charge check in service on amateur frequency 14300KHz USB in the 20-metre band at 0300UTC. To participate, operator needs to hold an Amateur Radio Operators Certificate (General class or above). In the amateur radio service, the callsign is assigned to the licensed operator, so this is a different callsign from using a maritime callsign. Position reports are received and reported in the well-know YOTREPS format (but missed calls may not be followed up). They have 12 listening station dotted between Australia and Alabama. See pacseanet.blogspot.com

5. **EMAIL via HF requires a PACTOR modem or VARO**

See <https://sailmail.com/>



SailMail HF SSB stations worldwide. No data charges.

6. **INTERNET via EMAIL**

if you **only have email**, **Saildocs** (saildocs.com) relays details of a TEXT BASED webpage. See weather.mailasail.com/Franks-Weather/Home

They allow you to download, e.g., the latest Fiji Met Service High Seas by sending an email, no subject necessary, to query@saildocs.com with message:

SEND http://www.met.gov.fj/aifs_prods/10140.txt

For a list of useful links see <https://www.y2ksail.com/meteo-link.html>

7. **Fiji Fleet code. How to download a map via HF (thru email)**

This is real old school stuff, but it still works if you need it.

To download the latest Nadi Fleet Code, send an email to query@saildocs.com, no subject needed, saying SEND nadi-fleetcode

Or SEND <https://tgftp.nws.noaa.gov/data/raw/as/asps20.nffn.txt>

This can be viewed within the Fleet Code plug in OpenCPN.

Download this at opencpn.org/OpenCPN/info/downloadopencpn.html

Open the email and select and copy the data (right click, Control A then Control C on a PC). Then, in OpenCPN's Fleet code plugin, there are 4 options: Files, Text, Raw and Downloads. Select Raw and then <paste> or CTRL-V and Voila! the map appears.

I still have a copy of the old, no longer supported Fleet code viewing program call Phys Plot. If you want to try it, let me know.

8. **Smart phone apps**: Some satellite phones now provide Wi-Fi that allow nearby smart phones to use apps.

www.predictwind.com provides an app that supplies forecast model data, observations and, at the Professional Account level, tools for routing and comparing departure dates. It also has a position tracking tool and can help with iridium Go! and some other GPS devices. A moderate subscription gives access to its universal AIS package with a regional search option.

9. The **Windy.com** App has a free basic option. It also has a subscription option that can be used to compile route plots.

To make one: - "right click" anywhere on the map, this will open a small context window. - choose "Distance & Planning"; - place your points on the map; chose 'Boat' and enter your average likely speed, click on "more options" bottom left and in the "table of points" you just made, click the button label "share" in the bottom right corner; - remember and use the short URL link provided or the long URL in the top of your browser. You can also make one by building the URL manually if you are familiar with this. Each time you plug this URL in your browser, Windy will show the map and your planned route. Shift the start time to see which gives the best voyage.

10. **YiT, Yachts in Transit**, at **www.yit.nz** or **mike@yit.nz** has a smart phone app, and offers a subscription service to plot your reports and blogs on the web and to request weather information via coded emails. They also provide info on how to use iridium Go!, YB Tracking, or Garmin inReach for communications. This site was closed for a while but is back again this year. (2025)

11. Consolidated Weather Links Hub: Y2K Sail Meteo Page

Building on point 6, the webpage <https://www.y2ksail.com/meteo-link.html> serves as a valuable, curated hub for marine weather resources specifically relevant to cruising sailors, particularly in the South Pacific. Instead of searching disparate sites, use this page as a quick starting point to access a wide range of information, including:

- Direct links to key official meteorological services for the region (e.g MetService NZ, Fiji Met Service, Météo-France New Caledonia) and other relevant forecast providers.
- Links for accessing satellite imagery, weather charts, and sea state analysis.
- Access points for text forecasts suitable for low-bandwidth connections (complementing services like Saildocs mentioned in point 6)

Bookmark this page (www.y2ksail.com/meteo-link.html) for easy access during passage planning and for daily weather checks at sea. It consolidates many useful resources mentioned throughout these tips and elsewhere, saving you valuable time finding reliable weather information for your voyage.